

Family-based Short Breaks for disabled children and young people



Information for parents

**Specialist
Children's
Services**

Richmond Family Link

The London Borough of Richmond upon Thames Family Link offers planned short breaks for disabled children and young people (up to the age of 18). The breaks are with link carers or families that have been assessed and approved by the Borough. A short break may be a regular after-school visit, a day time visit, or an overnight stay at the home of the link carer or family, usually at the weekend or in school holidays.

Who benefits from Family Link?

Family Link is an opportunity for children and young people to make new friends and enjoy outings or home-based activities with their link carers. It also offers parents a short break: time to relax or have a day out with other family members. Parents feel reassured that their child is being looked after by someone they have come to know and trust and who also has a good understanding of their child's needs.

Who are the Family Link carers?

They can be single people or couples, with or without children, from all different backgrounds and living in or close to Richmond Borough. Prospective Family Link carers are approved in a similar way to foster carers. This includes comprehensive checks and references, and a detailed assessment completed over three to four months. The final report is presented to a panel that includes childcare and health professionals, parents and carers.



How do you access Family Link?

You need to speak to your allocated social worker or the duty social worker in the Disabled Children's Team at the Croft Centre. They will complete an assessment of your child and family's needs. If it is agreed that Family Link is appropriate, they will make a referral to the Short Break Care Team. A member of the team will arrange to visit you at home, to explain more about Family Link, and to hear from you about any training or equipment a carer might need to help them look after your child. They can also meet your child, hear what activities they enjoy and answer any questions.

How do we match your child with a Family Link carer?

The Family Link social worker will take into account all the things that are important to you and your child, for example, whether a single carer or a family with children is preferred. If an appropriate carer or family is available, a link may happen quite quickly. However, sometimes it may take longer to recruit Family Link carers specially for your child. If this happens, we will keep you and your social worker informed of our progress.

What happens next?

The Family Link social worker will arrange for you to meet the link carer or family, usually at their home. This is an opportunity to share information and ask questions. If everyone agrees, introductory visits are carefully planned so that everyone has a chance to get to know each other. When everyone is happy to go ahead, the Family Link social worker arranges a meeting where practical arrangements are discussed, for example, how often your child will visit.

The Family Link social worker will keep in touch, and regular review meetings will be held. These provide an opportunity for everyone to say how things are going so that we can ensure that the link continues to be a positive experience for all concerned.

How can I find out more?

If you already have a social worker, please talk to them about Family Link.

If you do not have a social worker, please contact the duty social worker in the Disabled Children's Team at the Croft Centre. Phone: 020 8831 6048.

The Short Break Care Team is committed to ensuring that all children and young people who use our services, and the people who work with us are offered fair and equal treatment regardless of race, religion, culture, gender or disability.

The Short Break Care Team for Disabled Children

Croft Centre, 16 Windham Road
Richmond TW9 2HP

Phone: 020 8831 6047

Textphone: 020 8831 6049

E-mail: shortbreakcare@richmond.gov.uk

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Translation advice

If you have difficulty understanding this publication, please visit reception at the address below, where we can arrange a telephone interpreting service.

إذا كانت لديك صعوبة في فهم هذا المنشور، فنرجو زيارة الإستقبال في العنوان المعطى أدناه حيث بإمكاننا أن نرتب لخدمة ترجمة شفوية هاتفية.

Arabic

اگر در فهمیدن این نشریه مشکلی دارید لطفاً به میز پذیرش در آدرس قید شده در زیر مراجعه نمایید تا ترتیب ترجمه تلفنی برایتان فراهم آورده شود:

Farsi

ਜੇਕਰ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਸ ਪਰਚੇ ਨੂੰ ਸਮਝਣ ਵਿਚ ਮੁਸ਼ਕਲ ਪੇਸ਼ ਆਉਂਦੀ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਹੇਠਾਂ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਗਏ ਪਤੇ ਉੱਪਰ ਰਿਸੈਪਸ਼ਨ 'ਤੇ ਆਓ ਜਿੱਥੇ ਅਸੀਂ ਟੈਲੀਫੋਨ ਤੇ ਗੱਲਬਾਤ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਇੰਟਰਪ੍ਰਿਟਰ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧ ਕਰ ਸਕਦੇ ਹਾਂ।

Punjabi

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Phone 020 8891 7500 or Minicom 020 8891 7539