

# Grant Prospectus

## Disabled Children and Young People's Short Break Activity Grants

Strategic grant opportunity: Short Breaks 2024-2026

Two Year Grant Agreement

### **Introduction:**

This strategic grant opportunity is released by Kent County Council (KCC) as part of its on-going commitment to the provision of short breaks for disabled children, young people, and their families/representatives in Kent. We are seeking grant bids from short break providers that will stimulate and enhance the availability of short break activities for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities.

Short breaks provide children and young people with an opportunity to spend time away from their parents or carers, having fun with their friends, experiencing the same range of activities, challenges and environments as non-disabled children and young people. In addition, short breaks provide parents/carers with a necessary and valuable break from their caring responsibilities and have regard to the needs of different types of carers. Short breaks can include day, evening, weekend, and school holiday activities. Overnight stays are not part of this grant opportunity.

The focus of this grant programme is to commission imaginative and creative projects which aim to support families in building positive, challenging, engaging and developmental experiences for their child/young person while also allowing parents/carers to take a break to pursue other activities or simply take a break. Providers are trained and able to respond to a range of needs via their assessment process that will be in line with Strengthening Independence Service eligibility criteria. The criteria are available within the short break grant application form. We will also require a copy of the providers' assessment criteria as part of the application.

### **Name of grant pot:**

Disabled Children and Young People's Short Break Activity Grants: School holidays, after school, weekend activities and family days.

Grants are not provided to fund holidays for individuals.

With due regard to the Children Act 1989 and Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations 2011, KCC need to make available short break activities for disabled children across the county.

For the purpose of these grants the definition of disability is taken from section 20 of the Children and Families Act 2014.

This will include the following:

- Learning disabilities or/ and Physical impairment
- Sensory impairments
- Neurodiversity both with and without a learning disability.
- Life limiting or life-threatening conditions.

The individual needs of the children and young people may include:

- personal care
- medication
- communication
- mobility
- sensory needs
- behaviours that challenge.

### **What KCC outcomes does the grant support?**

The grants will be awarded to support the KCC strategic outcome of:

Working together to improve outcomes for children and young people with SEND.

Respond to national policy changes on SEND provision, work with SEND families to rapidly improve the services provided to SEND children and work with mainstream schools so more can accept and meet the needs of children with SEND, increasing choice and proximity of school places.

To achieve this, the activity supported by these grants will:

- Have regard to the needs of those parents/carers who would be unable to continue to care, or care more effectively, unless breaks from caring were available to them.
- Ensure that disabled children and young people are supported to optimise their physical and emotional wellbeing whilst having fun, being safe and having opportunities to develop new skills to support independence, within their local community.
- Ensure children and young people have better physical and mental health.
- Enable Kent young people to be confident and ambitious with choices and access to work, education, and training opportunities.
- Optimise the use of venues available to provide inclusive activities for children and young people, including the use of local school buildings.

## **Who can apply for this grant pot?**

The grant is for activity providers who support disabled children and young people who:

- have a disability and/or additional needs that mean they require support to participate in leisure and recreation activities
- are aged between 5 to 18 years
- live in the Kent County Council area.

## **Level of need:**

Children and young people who access short breaks will have a range of needs from moderate to complex, including personal care requirements. This is in line with Strengthening Independence Service eligibility criteria. Providers will be asked to provide a copy of their referral criteria as part of the application.

It is essential that there is an equitable offer of short breaks across all districts that can respond across all levels of need. This should include those with more complex needs and those who are Neuro Diverse without a learning disability. Following assessment by providers, low-level mild/moderate needs should be signposted to local universal/open access services where applicable.

## **5-8yr old:**

KCC would like to see a Play and Stay model - a 2-hour session supported by a minimum of 2 staff who offer support to parents to play with their child whilst meeting other parents.

## **9-18yr old:**

KCC would like to see a programme of activity that offers regular short breaks across the year including regular weekend activities, after school clubs, school holiday activities and family days in all districts.

Within this age range we will be looking at how you support individuals taking into consideration their age and level of need.

When awarding the grants, consideration will be given to:

- what the level of need is for the locality
- what is already available in the locality
- the age group or specific needs of the group
- the type of activity being offered.

The short break activity will take referrals directly from families and Strengthening Independence services. It is important that there is clear information available to social workers, parents, children, and young people about how they can access the

activity. Where an assessment is made and need is identified as mild/moderate, as well as no other contributing factors, signposting to open access/universal services should be considered. We will also expect bidders to demonstrate how they would step down provision when a moderate need referral is accepted, and the contributing factors have been addressed.

If the project/activity is open to disabled and non-disabled children and young people, then any funding secured through this grant process must be used to provide the additional support required to enable disabled children and young people attending to be included in that environment and not for any universal or mainstream element of the service.

### **Areas of Need:**

Recent analysis from projects that were delivered during April 2022 – March 2023, previously funded through the Short Breaks Grant Programme, has shown that attendance at after school club activities is often lower than those activities that are offered during school holidays or at weekends.

Attendance at weekend clubs was reported as generally in line with a provider's expected target countywide. Providers should be able to demonstrate that there is a local need for an after school provision and have given consideration as to whether local transport needs will impact upon whether young people attend after school activities. This is possibly the case for those families who are reliant on school transport.

Performance data showed that activities delivered during school holidays did not always have as high attendance as the provider had originally forecast. However, our engagement with parents and carers identified that school holiday activities are valued.

Short Break Activity Grants should be creative and imaginative but also be delivering something that is not being offered through another provision and therefore may not attract children and young people to attend.

Kent County Council, through this grants programme, is aiming to achieve a varied offer that can meet needs ranging from moderate to complex and be equitable across the County. We are keen to receive bids that can make use of local resources, for example special schools to provide activities for children and young people with complex needs.

### **What we expect successful projects to achieve:**

Parents/carers, children and young people have told us that they would like the short breaks to provide the following:

- have readily available short break places to book.
- be affordable.

- be available during weekends, school holidays and after school.
- have services in the right place at the right time and can meet a range of needs, including services for complex needs, and Neurodevelopmental needs.
- cover a variety of activities that both engage and challenge.
- where Short Breaks services are aimed at young teens and young adults, the offer includes supporting the development of life skills which will assist with preparing young people for adulthood.
- the development of leadership roles for older young people participating in short breaks where appropriate.

A good project must ensure that there are appropriately trained and experienced team members to meet the identified needs of individual children and young people with needs ranging from moderate to complex, as well as children and young people with Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC).

**Projects should aim to achieve some of the following:**

- enable children and young people to feel safe and have workers they can trust
- enable children and young people to build their confidence and strengthen their independence
- enable children and young people to try out new things
- support children and young people to make connections through social interaction
- support children and young people's well-being, health, and development
- enable children and young people to develop life skills, e.g., learn about using money, working in a team, communication, feeling good about themselves, managing stress and feelings
- enable children and young people to go to places and enjoy activities with their family
- enable children and young people to be involved in planning and deciding what the activity is
- help to improve support and information to families
- help to promote self-supporting groups and empowerment of families
- help to support families' well-being, knowledge and understanding, and capacity
- support families' access to professional advice and support.

**A fundable project outline will evidence the following:**

- how models of support will be developed and delivered
- how co-production with young people and their families will inform project design and delivery
- a robust approach to Quality Assurance including the assessment of risk
- a clear plan for evaluation, continuous improvement, and evidence of impact

**Evaluation and reporting:**

Successful applicants will be required to monitor the outcomes that they are expected to deliver.

- projects will be required to give monthly updates via a platform communicated via email
- projects will be required to produce a short final report at the end of each funding year, on a template supplied by KCC.

**Monthly submissions will be required detailing the following:**

- how many activities or events were delivered within the reporting period
- the total number of hours delivered within the reporting period
- how many children and young people took part in each event or activity
- the age and demographic area of the children and young people who took part
- outcomes for children, big or small
- at least one anonymised qualitative case study demonstrating the project's impact
- any feedback received about the activities or events
- numbers of children on the waiting list and length of wait.
- Child data: Date of Birth and Name.

Grants are not provided to fund holidays for individuals.

**Short Break Service Promotion:**

Successful applicants will be required to develop and share promotional material for both professionals and potential service users. Service details and outlines of programmes available will be included within the [SEND Local Offer | Local Kent Directory](#) and will be the service providers' responsibility to be kept up to date.

**Funding:**

**We will fund:**

- Registered charities
- Voluntary or community organisations
- Companies limited by guarantee
- Community Interest Companies
- Social enterprises
- Parent Teacher Friends Association

**Funding available:**

Kent County Council has up to £1,060,000 funding available and has indicatively allocated funding levels to each district to provide an equitable and consistent offer across the Kent County Council area.

KCC has used the following to inform district allocation.

1. Children with an active Education, Health, and Care Plan
2. levels of deprivation
3. level of needs – those living in low-income families, in receipt of disability benefits, aged 0-24 yrs
4. Strengthening Independence service caseload data

<b>District</b>	<b>Indicative Allocation</b>
Ashford	£92,042
Canterbury	£101,347
Dartford	£84,331
Dover	£83,544
Folkestone and Hythe	£70,233
Gravesham	£76,639
Maidstone	£109,611
Sevenoaks	£62,539
Swale	£122,543
Thanet	£119,739
Tonbridge and Malling	£85,084
Tunbridge Wells	£52,350

Bids may be made for any sub locality of the KCC area or any subdivision of age range or disability.

Short break bids will be in the range of £1,000 - £25,000 per district. Providers can apply for multiple districts or a countywide offer. A service is considered county-wide if it is available to disabled children, young people, and their families across Kent rather than being based in a particular district.

Short break providers will charge a parental/representative contribution in line with local market rates and apply a concessions policy. To establish equity across the county it is advised a parental contribution of at least £2.50 per child, per hour and must be levied by the provider for the service.

It is expected that the level of the contribution to be charged is clearly advertised on the provider referral form, along with the payment methods to be used and concessions guidance.

Funding will be allocated to ensure activities are fairly distributed across the county of Kent to ensure that as many children and young people with disabilities from Kent will benefit, including those with complex needs.

- The organisation or service must not receive funding from other sources to fund the activity in the application where this would create double funding. If the applicant is seeking to add funding to that received from another source to enable them to deliver more opportunities, their application must make this clear and explain how they will account for the additional activity (e.g., a specific number of additional sessions or operating for a longer timeframe). We reserve the right to request a copy of any funding agreement

or application specifying the commitment and obligations made by the applicant to a third party in this respect.

Providers may also apply for additional funding from other sources such as trusts, district/borough councils, businesses, sponsorship, or charities to further develop short break opportunities. The bid must demonstrate the activity levels the short breaks grant will provide.

## Timescales

The grants are offered for the financial period 1 April 2024 - 31 March 2026.

## How to apply:

Application is online only at

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/leisure-and-community/community-grants-and-funding/our-current-funding-opportunities/grants-to-benefit-children-and-young-people/short-break-grants>

Bids will be considered by a small panel from Kent County Council, including representation from Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND), Children's Social Work Teams and Kent Parents and Carers Together (Kent PACT).

## What happens next?

When we receive your application, we will acknowledge receipt. Applications will be assessed by an appraisal panel. Based on your application, and any further information you may have been asked to supply, the panel will make its recommendations to the Corporate Director for Children Young People and Education to inform a final decision. We will advise you of the decision to either:

- offer a grant; or
- offer a grant with some specific conditions; or
- reject the application with reasons why.

This timeframe is indicative only. The Council reserves the right to change it at its discretion.

## Timeline:

Stage	Date(s)/time
Issue of bid opportunity	11 December 2023 Midday
Deadline for submission of bids	12 January 2024 Midday
Evaluation of bids	18-24 January 2024
Evaluation Outcomes agreed by Corporate Director	W/c 12 February 2024
Notification of result of evaluation via email	W/c 19 February 2024
Expected date of award of Grant	31 March 2024

**FAQ's**

**Any questions regarding these grants should be emailed to [commissioningfordisabledchildren@kent.gov.uk](mailto:commissioningfordisabledchildren@kent.gov.uk)**