

Short breaks targeted allowance scheme Frequently asked questions

Which children are being targeted by the scheme?

Children who live with their own family and have an education, health and care (EHC) plan or statement of special educational needs (SEN) and are supported in 'Tariffs D and E'

How do I know if my child is in the target group?

- You can check your child's EHC plan or SEN statement to see which Tariff applies
- If tariffs D or E apply to your child, we will contact you annually about targeted short breaks

What if my child isn't in the target group?

There is a range of universal activities available in local communities that you can consider, further information is available at www.herefordshire.gov.uk/shortbreaks. We will be continuing to develop the range and information about universal activities in Herefordshire. The organisations approved to provide targeted short breaks, see menu below, also provide other activities that can be accessed without an allowance.

How much is the allowance?

Up to £350 for 12 months (April-March). Allowances will be offered on a pro-rata basis for applications approved during the year or up to the child's 18th birthday.

How will the allowance be paid?

For 2017-2018, allowances will be paid directly into your nominated bank account.

How do I apply for a targeted short breaks allowance?

From 20th February, 2017, you can apply on-line at www.herefordshire.gov.uk/shortbreaks.

Do I need to complete separate applications for more than one child?

Yes, as each child will have their own individual needs.

We will have to apply each year?

Yes, allowances are approved up until the end of March each year.

How will I know if my application has been successful?

Once your application is received, it should be processed within two weeks. We will contact you to confirm whether your application has been approved, and if so the amount of the allowance your child will receive.

Are there terms and conditions I would need to follow?

Yes. These are included in the application process, which can be accessed at www.herefordshire.gov.uk/shortbreaks

Can the allowance be used to pay for siblings and/or friends?

No. An allowance is relative to the disabled child. However, some service providers may be able to include siblings or friends for an additional cost.

What can't the allowance be used for?

The allowance cannot be used to purchase items, goods or services that do not provide positive activities for your child and a break for their parent/s and carer/s.

It also cannot be used to fund family activities, outings or holidays, as the allowance is to provide a short break for you and opportunities for disabled children and young people to have enjoyable experiences.

How can the allowance be used?

There is an approved menu of targeted activities available at www.herefordshire.gov.uk/shortbreaks. Families can choose how to use their allowance from the menu of activities and book places directly with the provider, using the reference number the council will give to you. Activities will be funded by the allowance and a contribution will be paid by the child's family.

Some children and families may prefer to use their allowance for other activities, which have not been approved by the council; information about universal activities is available at <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/shortbreaks>. Information about other opportunities can also be found:

- in your local community
- through your child's school
- [WISH](#) (wellbeing information and signposting for Herefordshire)
- [Herefordshire Local offer](#) - information for young people and families on special educational needs and disabilities
- Marches Family Network [services and resources handbook](#)
- [Herefordshire Carers Support - short breaks and activities](#)

Can the allowance be used to access short breaks activities outside of Herefordshire?

Yes, if these meet your needs.

Do I have to pay for anything?

Yes. Activity providers may ask families for a financial contribution. Please check with your chosen provider about their charges before booking a place for your child on an activity. Families remain responsible for any transport costs for their child to attend activities and return home.

What if the allowance is not enough to pay for the number of activities I want my child to attend?

Families may top-up the allowance by self-funding activities themselves.

Not all children and families will need the same type or level of short break. Some will need more than others because of the nature and severity of their child's disability. Some children and families may need more specialised support because of their individual family circumstances. This is why the Local Authority may need to assess a child / young person and their family to ensure the right amount of support can be provided at the right time. If a family feels that an allowance is not sufficient to meet the needs of their child or themselves, and would like to know more about the children with disabilities assessment process, please contact the [Herefordshire MASH team](#) on 01432 260800.

Do I have to use the allowance by 31st March?

Yes. Any allowance unspent by 31st March each year, will not be carried forward to the next financial year and will be returned to the council.

Will I have to keep any records to show how the allowance has been used?

Yes. You are responsible for using the allowance for the purpose it has been provided and you will need to keep financial records including receipts of how the allowance has been spent. You will need to complete the council's monitoring form and return it to us when the

allowance period ends. The council may contact you during the year for information on how the allowance is being spent.

Failure to provide a completed monitoring form may affect any future applications you may make for an allowance.

What do I do if I have a complaint about an activity and/or provider?

Any comments, complaints or compliments about activities that you or your child have accessed with their allowance, should be addressed to the service provider in the first instance

What if my question isn't answered here?

Full details of Herefordshire's short breaks offer is available at www.herefordshire.gov.uk/shortbreaks. You can also send questions by email to shortbreaks@herefordshire.gov.uk or call 01432 260123. Where appropriate, we will the questions asked to update this document and other published information.