

Short Breaks Admissions and Charging Policy

1. The Hamlet Charter

We provide a high-quality service and ensure all our children/young people have an equal opportunity to be part of our Short Breaks Services where they can explore choice and opportunities in a happy and safe way. We aim to set fees that are realistic and will cover our core costs. We aim to be efficient and fair in the way we administer bookings and fees and we have terms and conditions for using the service that are clear and fair.

2. Purpose of this policy and why we have it

The Hamlet Children's Service is committed to being transparent about how children can access our service, being fair in our practices, and ensuring a smooth admission process for everyone involved. We want to ensure that we cover the cost of providing the services so that they remain sustainable.

3. Scope of this policy

This policy applies to Short Breaks only, i.e. children attending Short Breaks and their parents / carers.

4. Policy - implementation and monitoring

The following is in place to ensure this policy is adhered to:

4.1. Admissions:

Our setting is listed with Norfolk County Council as an approved provider to offer Short Breaks provision for children and young people aged between 3 and their 18th birthday.

We cannot guarantee a space for every child who wishes to attend our services. We will make our own assessment to ensure that we can meet the individual needs of the child based on a number of factors including individual care needs, space, resources, staffing and impact on the care and social needs of all children attending.

We try to ensure that we meet the needs of our families, but families are informed that it may not always be possible to provide them with the sessions they would like due to a cap on the number of children we can have at any one time in accordance with our staff ratios.

Parents/carers are informed of our booking procedure at registration. Parents/carers are encouraged to book sessions when they have their contracts if they have a personal budget or have completed a private funding agreement. Parents/carers are given verbal and written confirmation of the sessions booked and reminded about our cancellation procedure.

4.2. Charges:

Our policy sets out the different ways in which children can access our services:

- Through allocation of a Personal Budget
- Privately funded.

The service has a clear charging procedure. Charges are dependent on the assessed needs of children. They have been worked out taking into account the cost of providing the service. They will be regularly reviewed.

Increases in charges:

- If the care needs of a child increase or decrease this will have an immediate effect on the cost of care and charges may change. Inevitably, there will be little or no notice period.
- When The Hamlet reviews its overall charging structure as a whole due to increases in our costs, at least 28 days' notice will be given before any change is introduced. The Board monitors these changes.

Cancellations (sessions funded by Personal Budgets):

The Hamlet follows the guidelines of Norfolk County Council for cancellation or missed sessions. This states that families are charged for these sessions.

Invoicing and cancellations (private funding agreements):

Private payers will be invoiced monthly, if a payment has not been met, a reminder will be sent with a copy of the invoice and the amount owed. We reserve the right to cancel a booking or not take further bookings should a payment / money owed not be paid or be paid persistently late.

Our registration form with parent / carer agreement clearly states the terms and conditions regarding fees and charges

4.3 Monitoring:

This policy may be reviewed at the discretion of the CEO or the Board of Trustees.

This policy should be read in conjunction with other relevant Hamlet policies and accompanying procedures.

Date approved by the Board: September 2020

Date of next review: September 2022

Post holder responsible for this policy: Senior Manager Children's Services

Signed by Chair of the Board of Trustees:

