



***"Every disabled child in
Liverpool has the right to
inclusive short breaks"***



Welcome to Little Lights

At Little Lights, we want every child and family to have the best quality of life possible. We understand that finding the right support, services and opportunities can sometimes feel overwhelming, especially when you're already navigating so much.

That's why we've created this guide to help you find useful sources of support and information, all in one place. You'll find signposts to services and organisations that can support your family, including short breaks and Direct Payments, sports and social activities, funding opportunities and advice around Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs).

The guide includes services across Merseyside, as well as organisations offering support nationally. Information is correct at the time of publication, but we recommend contacting services directly to check their current availability and eligibility.

If there's something you think we've missed, or you know of a service that could benefit other Little Lights families, we'd love to hear from you. Please get in touch and help us keep this resource useful and up to date.

*Michelle & Amanda
Disability Champions – Little Lights*

Short Breaks

What are short breaks?

Caring for a child with additional or complex needs can be rewarding, but it can also be demanding. Short breaks give children and young people opportunities to have fun, spend time with others and enjoy new experiences, while giving parents and carers some time to rest and recharge.

Short breaks can range from a few hours at a club or activity, support from a carer at home or in the community, to longer breaks of a few days. The type and amount of support available will depend on your child and family's individual needs and the assessment carried out by your local authority.



Direct Payments

Direct Payments are funds provided by your local authority following an assessment of your family's needs. They give families greater choice and flexibility in arranging support that works for them.

For example, Direct Payments may be used to employ a Personal Assistant or carer to support your child at home or help them access activities and opportunities within the local community.

If you live in Liverpool and think your family could benefit from Direct Payments, you can ask for an assessment through Liverpool Children's Advice and Support Service (CASS) on 0151 459 2606.

The amount of support available will depend on your individual circumstances and needs and can be reviewed if those needs change.

Liverpool's SEND Local Offer

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Fusion

Fusion is a Liverpool City Council service supporting children and young people aged 0–25 with SEND and their families.

Support can include:

- Friendship groups and social opportunities
- Short breaks
- Direct Payment support
- Accredited volunteer training
- Support to access childcare, play and youth services
- Ofsted-registered short break sessions at Croxteth Children's Centre

Parents and carers can self-refer to Fusion for short breaks by calling 0151 233 3620.

[Find out more about Fusion →](#)

Barnardo's

Barnardo's Liverpool provides a range of support for children and young people with SEND, including short-break opportunities for children aged 6–18.

Support may include:

- Overnight care in approved carers' homes
- Holiday leisure and activity programmes
- After-school and Saturday clubs
- Outreach support

[Find out more about Barnardo's support →](#)



Other organisations that may help

There are also a number of charities and organisations offering activities, support and opportunities for disabled children and young people. Some services may have eligibility criteria or charges, so please contact the organisation directly for the most up-to-date information.

Henshaws – Support for children and young people with sight loss and additional needs, including activities, days out, holidays and family events.

Daisy Inclusive UK – Inclusive clubs, activities and support for disabled and vulnerable children and families.

Jake's Sensory World – Sensory activities and experiences based in Netherton.

Liverpool Aiming High – Opportunities and accessible holidays, including the adapted caravan at Haven Presthaven Sands. Support and activities for eligible families living in Sefton.

Greenbank Sports Centre & Greenbank Giants Boccia Club – Inclusive sports and activities.

Wheels for All – Inclusive cycling opportunities for disabled children and adults.

Stick 'n' Steps – Specialist support and activities for children and young people with cerebral palsy.

Sense – Support, advice and activities for children and adults with complex disabilities.

Your Step-by-Step Guide to Travelling with Complex Medical Needs

For the definitive guide on how to holiday with a seriously ill child, scan here



SCAN ME



The guide includes:

- Step-by-step planning support
- Handy checklists
- Conversation prompts
- Real-life tips from parent carers



WellChild

Making Holidays Possible

A practical guide for families of children with complex medical needs



This guide has been co-produced with clinicians and parent carers with lived experience of taking their children with complex medical needs on holiday. Inside you'll find prompts, checklist, tips from other parent carers, and practical considerations for planning trips across the UK or abroad. It aims to help you feel more confident, supported, and better prepared so you can focus on enjoying your time away together.

WellChild

wellchild.org.uk/holiday-guide