


31 March 2026

Direct payments for care - Children's Disability Social Work Team

I am writing to you under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to request the following information from BHSCT Children's Disability Social Work Team(s). Please may you provide me with the below information around direct payments for care as outlined on '<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/direct-payments-care>'

- 1. Eligibility criteria for direct payments for 'short breaks', and policy on how much and how often these can be had**

Please see link which outlines the policy for direct payments.  [Direct-Payments---Operational-Policy-and-Procedural-Arrangements.pdf](#)

With reference to 'how much and how often these can be had', this is dependent on a social work assessment of need. The outcome of which, if indicating an assessed need for direct payments, is presented to the BHSCT Allocation and Resource Panel which then considers the social work assessment, recommendations and any approval of direct payments. How much and how often is dependent on the specific circumstances relating to each individual child/young person and their family.

- 2. Eligibility criteria for direct payments for 'after-school or holiday care to help you stay in work' including 'employing someone to support your child' as outlined on the aforementioned nidirect webpage**

As per the link above, the criteria and eligibility for direct payments is outlined. Similarly to question 1, an assessment of need is undertaken by social workers and any recommendation regarding an assessed need for direct payments is dependent on the specific circumstances of each individual child/young person and their family. The assessment by the allocated social worker is a holistic assessment which considers the child/young person's needs, parenting capacity, extended family/services input and is multi-disciplinary, engaging professionals involved with the family and the wider family network. Analysis of this then informs any recommendations regarding the assessment of need for direct payments and eligibility for same. This is then presented to Allocation and Resource Panel for consideration and approval by the panel members.