

## Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar - Respite Policy and Procedures

### Assessment

- **Assessment of respite needs will be undertaken by members of the Children and Families Social Work team in accordance with s.23 of the Children's (Scotland) Act 1995.**
- **Respite options are: school term daytime respite (out with school hours)including long weekends as appropriate; holiday daytime respite (Easter, Summer, October and Christmas as appropriate); and, overnight respite in the home or, out with, in a residential setting**
- **A referral to the Respite Review Panel (RRP) should be accompanied by the following documentation;; Request for Respite – Supplementary Evidence Form (See Appendix A) ; My World Assessment; and, the Child's Plan. This documentation should be received by the RRP at least two weeks before the panel date at which it is to be reviewed (the RRP will meet on the first Thursday of every month and at other times as required)**
- **Assessments should include a clear statement of the need for respite, followed by a description of, to what extent this need can be met by the child's family and/or wider family network**
- **Assessments should also include information on the desired outcomes of the respite as detailed in the Child's Plan. The assessment should also include the views of the parents but should not be agreed as finalised with the parents until it has been approved by the RRP**
- **Assessments should include a clear recommendation for: the number of hours respite required; the regularity of the respite (if it is holiday respite, then the holiday periods should be defined); where the respite should take place; what the staffing requirements are; and, information on any other specific needs relevant to the respite including any transport needs**
- **Referral Documentation should be approved and agreed by the Children and Families Team Leader prior to being forwarded as a referral to the Head of Children's Services. If the referral is agreed by the Head of Children's Services, she will arrange for the assessment to be reviewed by the RRP**

## **Review and Allocation**

- **All completed respite assessments, if agreed by the Head of Children's Services, should be considered by the RRP which will review the assessment and make a decision regarding the allocation of resources**
- **The RRP will meet monthly or more frequently if more urgent decisions are needed – meetings will be convened by the Children's Services Manager (Resources)**
- **The RRP should consist of three members and be made up of: Children's Services Manager (Children and Families); Children's Services Manager (Resources); and, a third panel member (ie a Principal Teacher of Learning Support, a social worker from adult services, an educational psychologist, an independent third party). The relevant Social Worker or Lead Professional will be asked to attend the RRP as appropriate.**
- **The RRP's decision on eligibility for respite will be based on the Children's Services Eligibility Criteria set out in the CNES policy document '*Assessment and Access to Children and Families Social Work Services: Eligibility Criteria*'. This policy describes four risk categories which provide a guideline for staff and managers making prioritisation decisions (Low, Moderate, Substantial and Critical) and recommends that where risk is assessed as substantial then support might include respite care. The four risk categories are detailed below:**

<p><b>Low</b></p>	<p>There is not an immediate or foreseeable risk of the child suffering harm or impaired health and development, but the provision of additional services would significantly improve the child and family's life chances and quality of life. The child's need may not be consistently met. Improvements are desirable but there are no acute risks present. Social Work help is not essential to the monitoring or maintenance of the child's well-being, but this requires additional support from universal services.</p>
<p><b>Moderate</b></p>	<p>There is some risk of impairment to health and development. Without support some considerable deterioration is likely; there may be a risk of a family breakdown or of harm befalling the child. The child may move to the substantial category without the provision of services.</p>
<p><b>Substantial</b></p>	<p>There is a significant risk of the child suffering ill health or impaired development. There is a significant risk of eventual family breakdown and of the child requiring to be accommodated. The child and family may be in need of intensive support and this might include respite care or daytime care. There is a need for urgent assessment, but may not require a same day response.</p>
<p><b>Critical</b></p>	<p>There is a risk of serious harm to the child or a serious concern about the child's care, health or development; or the child's current living arrangement will breakdown without immediate interventions; the child is in need of care and/or protection; or the child poses a danger to others. The child has been assessed as needing to be accommodated away from home or closely supervised at home due to serious family difficulties</p>

- **RRP decisions should include a clear statement of: the number of hours respite to be provided; the regularity of the respite to be provided (if it is holiday respite, then the holiday periods should be defined); what the staffing provision should be; and, any other provision required to meet specific needs.**
- **RRP decisions should also specify how the provision will meet the desired outcomes of the respite as detailed in the Child's Plan and indicate the timescale for review of the approved respite provision**
- **RRP decisions should be fully documented and sent to the relevant Social Worker or Lead Professional who will communicate the decision to the family**
- **If the RRP is unable to make a decision, further information should be requested from relevant parties and a follow-up review hearing held**
- **If a RRP decision is appealed then all information should be passed to the Head of Children's Services who will review the decision. Appeals must be made within 21 days of families receiving the decision.**

#### **Resource Provision**

- **After communicating the RRP's decision to the family, the relevant Social Worker/Lead Professional should liaise with potential providers, agree a respite provider and request written confirmation that the provider is able to deliver the respite requested (including any transport, equipment and training needs identified)**
- **When a respite provider is identified, the Social Worker/Lead Professional should cost the respite and include it on a RTCR which should then be passed to the Children's Services Manager (Children and Families) for authorisation**
- **Reports on progress of the respite provision should be submitted to the RRP on a regular basis (regularity of reports will be decided by the RRP in relation to individual cases)**
- **All respite decisions should be reviewed at least annually and more regularly if required**

**Appendix A**

**REQUEST FOR RESPITE  
SUPPLEMENTARY EVIDENCE**

<p>1. What is the current, provided respite package?</p> <p>2. Is there any part of the respite package currently unable to be met?</p>				
<p>3. What circumstances have changed? (i) for the child (ii) for the carers</p>				
<p>4. What <b>additional impact</b> does <b>the change</b> have on the family to care for the child?</p>				
<p>5. What is the additional respite required and, for how long?</p>				
<p>6. What are the <b>additional risks</b> for the child and family if the additional respite is <b>not</b> granted?</p>				
<p>7. On the scale of 0-4, please indicate how urgent this request is:</p>				
<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
No risk - parents have requested to have increased respite considered	<b>Low</b> – no foreseeable risk - understand the beneficial reasons behind request	<b>Moderate</b> – some risk - the child/family are not coping well, are currently under increased pressure and there is sufficient cause for concern based on knowledge	<b>Substantial</b> – significant risk - the family will eventually break down without further help/support	<b>Critical</b> – risk of serious harm - crisis intervention. The family will break down without immediate support
<p>8. Any other supporting information relevant to your request?</p>				

**Signed:**.....

**Date:**.....