



## **Disability Service Update – COVID 19**

**13<sup>th</sup> April 2020**

Dear All,

We held a virtual meeting with 3 parents who attend our Working Together group last week to discuss how best we can continue to communicate. We agreed that having a regular update in writing every 2 weeks was important. We'll also arrange a virtual Working Together meeting every 2 weeks for those who are able to make it.

Obviously, in these extraordinary times we'll keep this under review. Please see the below update.

### **1. Children's Disability Team & Transition Team**

Our managers, Social work staff and health staff continue to be available and working from home. We have asked workers to contact families regularly and check in with them. We are all getting used to using Skype and other social media platforms to see each other and this is something we will try and use with families too. Let your keyworker know if this is something you would be ok with.

We have arrangements to receive calls to the teams on the normal numbers. These will be picked up by business support who will then pass messages onto staff.

Childrens Disability Team – 01267 246400

Transition Team – 01267 246766

### **2. Early Help & Tim Camau Bach**

Our managers and staff are available. We have asked workers to contact families regularly and check in with them. We are all getting used to using Skype and other social media platforms to see each other and this is something we will try and use with families too.

The team have a lot of resources that they are collating that might help in relation to COVID, activities for children/young people and managing all aspects of wellbeing at the moment. We are in the process of updating the Tim Camau Bach pages on the Family Information Service (FIS) website for everyone to see. Let us know if there's anything you need and someone will give you a call and help you find it and advise where needed.

Early Help Team - 01267 246673

### **3. Respite Provision**

We have written to all families to outline the measures we are taking in our residential settings at the moment:

1. There are enhanced cleaning protocols in place during the day, with a focus on contactable surfaces. We would also have a deep clean each day.
2. There is a focus on ensuring enhanced personal hygiene; i.e. regular handwashing for staff and children.
3. There is a focus where possible on social distancing between children. This means we won't have as many children attending for respite at the same time as we would normally.
4. We have provision of hand sanitizer in each centre and other protective equipment as we need it.
5. Managers will risk assess each child prior to attending respite to determine if they are able to attend safely. This will consider if your child or family have had any COVID symptoms.
6. Managers will risk assess each member of staff, each day to determine if they are able to attend safely.
7. We have measures in place already for staff who maybe required to self-isolate or shield in line with government guidance.
8. If we do have a child or member of staff who becomes unwell then we have measures in place to manage this. This can involve closing the area they accessed or even the building for 72 hours to allow for deep cleaning. These are precautionary measures.

Where we can do so safely we will continue to offer overnight respite to those families most in need. We will try and offer day time support where this is not possible.

### **4. Direct Payments**

Carmarthenshire County Council have, in discussion with Diverse Cymru, have made some changes to the delivery of Direct Payments. These will be kept under review.

Between 27<sup>th</sup> March 2020 until 26<sup>th</sup> April 2020 a PA can be employed without a DBS check if

- that person has had a DBS completed within the last 12 months for another employer and
- On receipt of a satisfactory reference from that employer (via telephone or email)

In addition, we recognise that it maybe difficult for PAs to safely deliver services at this time. We'd encourage you to speak to your worker to discuss any alternative solutions there may be.

## **5. School and Childcare Hubs**

You'll be aware that there is childcare provision being made available for 'keyworkers' and the most vulnerable children.

Welsh Government states that "Every child who can be safely cared for at home should be and only where there is no safe alternative provision should be made in schools or other settings".

If you feel that your child requires childcare provision please speak to your worker. They can apply for you and speak to colleagues in Education about how this might be possible. With your consent they will share care and support plans and other information that will help.

## **6. Leaving your home and travelling**

The Government guidance which has placed restrictions on unnecessary travel is now being enforced by Dyfed Powys Police. We know that this can significantly impact upon the care and support of disabled children and their families who sometimes just need a break from home.

Where this is absolutely necessary and can be done so safely the Police have agreed to allow this to happen. If you speak to your worker we can provide a list to Delta Wellbeing (our contact centre) which can be checked by the Police if needed.

## **6. Crossroads Domiciliary Care / Community Support**

Crossroads have endeavoured to continue their support as much as possible in a safe way. If you have Crossroads worker to help your child socialise, Crossroads will speak to you about supporting you and your child in a different way e.g. help at home.

## **7. Crossroads Afterschool, Holiday and Weekend Clubs**

We keep in touch with Crossroads regularly and understand the Crossroads Team are looking at ways to keep in touch with you and provide children interaction with others. We are already discussing how we can work together to deliver services once the current restrictions are lifted.

I hope that is a helpful update for now. As ever, please get in touch if you have any questions or concerns and we will do our very best to help.

In the meantime and with our very best wishes, please take care.

Kelvin