

Kent County Council – Disabled Children’s Service.

Parent’s Guidance for the use of Direct Payments for overnight support in the home of a Personal Assistant

Some disabled children and young people need extra support during the night and this support can be provided via a direct payment. Your Social Worker will advise you if your child is eligible for this level of support after an assessment of need. The decision will be confirmed at the Disabled Children’s Service Panel. The Panel will decide if this is the right kind of support for your child. If this is not the right kind of support, alternative suggestions will be offered to meet your child’s needs.

It is essential that you are confident that the person that you are entrusting your child to knows your child’s needs in great detail.

It is also essential that you have visited the Personal Assistant’s home and are sure that the environment will be safe for your child, both day and night. You will need to think about who else lives in the house and who else visits the house. You will also need to think about any pets, and if they are safe for your child to be around. A social worker will help you to assess how safe the home is.

If your child is under 8 yrs their Personal Assistant (PA) must be a registered childminder.

If you are unsure about what to look out for and what questions to ask your PA after reading the guidance below then please contact your Social Worker for advice.

1. All PA’s must have a Disclosure and Barring Service (previously Criminal Records Bureau) disclosure at the enhanced level. You must see this and check that there is nothing of concern entered on the form. If there is please contact your Social Worker for advice. You are also strongly advised to check with the Home Office Disclosure and Barring Service (see contact details below) that your PA or a member of their household is not listed on a DBS Barred List. Most people are honest about their past but there have been a few occasions when a small number of PA’s have been deceptive. It is essential that you are confident that your child will be safe in your PA’s care
2. Your child cannot stay with their PA for more than 7 nights consecutively.

3. The PA and your child must have spent sufficient time together in order to get to know each other and to have developed a trusting relationship before an overnight stay can go ahead. The PA must have cared for your child on at least twenty separate occasions previously.
4. The PA must know all about your child: how their health and other care needs are met, their likes and dislikes, their routine, and very importantly how they communicate. We have attached a communication passport for you to use, in order that you can complete it with your child and the PA so that everyone is clear about the plans. The passport must stay with your child.
5. You must visit the PA's house with your social worker before any overnight arrangements are in place. It is essential that you see where your child will sleep and where other members of the household will sleep. You will need to know what arrangements are in place if your child wakes in the night and needs support. This visit will also give you the opportunity to see any household pets and decide if they are safe for your child to be around.
6. You will need to check with the PA that their contract of employment allows for this arrangement.
7. Once the stay has taken place we recommend that you spend time with your child to hear how the stay went from their perspective and if they would like to stay with the PA again.

Home Office Disclosure and Barring Service:

This service allows employers to check if someone has been barred from working with children.

The website is at <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/agencies-public-bodies/dbs/contact-us1/barring-contacts/>

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