

Committee: **Children's Services Scrutiny Committee**

Date: **7 June 2010**

Title of Report: **Report to focus on the take up of provision of short breaks for disabled children and their families following the development of Aiming High for Disabled Children**

By: **Director of Children's Services**

Purpose of Report: **To update the scrutiny committee on the development and implementation of Aiming High for Disabled Children short breaks programme**

RECOMMENDATION: The Committee is asked to consider and comment on current progress in extending the availability of short breaks for disabled children and their families

1. Financial Appraisal

1.1 There is and has been a considerable government grant available for this work.

1.2 For East Sussex County Council this is:

- A £534,000 revenue funding in 2009-10, and
- B £1,720,000 revenue funding in 2010-11 to increase short breaks provision;
- C £256,000 capital funding in 2009-10, and £598,000 in 2010-11.

1.3 This grant funding is in addition to the £300,000 per annum invest to save funding from the County Council to provide out of school activities for disabled children.

1.4 From April 2011 the local authority will be under a statutory duty to provide short breaks for disabled children. The Department for Education (DfE) is currently consulting on the content of the regulations for this and the accompanying guidance. Continued funding to local authorities for short breaks will be considered by the government as part of the coming Comprehensive Spending Review in autumn 2010. It is expected that any funds provided will not be ring-fenced as currently.

2. Supporting information

2.1 The Committee will be aware of the national agenda to improve the lives of disabled children and their families – Aiming High for Disabled Children. A key strand of this is the short breaks initiative.

2.2 The work of the local authority and its partners in transforming the provision of short breaks is closely monitored by Together for Disabled Children on behalf of the DfE. East Sussex has received the highest rating and is very highly regarded nationally for our innovative approach and partnership with parents.

2.3 Working with the PCTs and other key stakeholders, and especially parents, a three year plan has been developed for East Sussex. It is a refresh of, and builds on, the Aiming High for Disabled Children Short Breaks Commissioning Plan which was approved by the Lead Member in March 2009. The plan identifies a range of provision that will be funded ranging from highly specialist provision e.g. additional residential short breaks for children with autism as well as very challenging behaviour; to universal provision e.g. improved access to community leisure activities. This breadth of additional provision will ensure that families and children are able to exercise choice about the short break provision they use and offer provision without the

requirement for time consuming specialist assessments to be completed. This matches with the expressed views of parents.

2.4 On 2nd February 2010 a very successful workshop was held for parents and providers which focused on the strategic priorities for short breaks in East Sussex. One of the purposes of the event was to provide a key opportunity for the views and comments of parents to be built into the plan from the start. The appointment of a specialist participation worker through the Aiming High additional funding has ensured an even greater involvement of children young people in the updating and implementation of the plan.

2.5 The DfE Implementation Guidance makes it clear that the government expects that Local Authorities should ensure that the Director for Children's Services and the Lead Member for Children's Services are aware of the short breaks transformation programme and engaged in its development. It also asks that PCTs should ensure that a similar connection is made with the Executive Director for Children and Young People and the Commissioning Lead for Children's Services. The Commissioner for Children within the PCTs, Alison Smith, has been involved throughout the creation of the attached plan.

2.6 To expand the range of short break provision it is imperative that the commissioning plan priorities are successfully implemented. The tendering process is underway for the commissioning of new and additional services with the others to follow. There are also a range of grants available to specialist and universal service providers and also free online training for short break carers, including parent and service providers, in particular those from universal mainstream services, to achieve a good basic level of competence and confidence in working with children with disabilities. A list of the current projects supported by the Aiming High for Disabled Children Grant in East Sussex is in **Annex 2**.

2.7 **Annex 1** provides information on the number of additional short breaks provided in 2009/10 in East Sussex. This was the first year of the substantial grant programme and the additional funds in 2010/11 will allow an even greater range of activities to be supported and a higher number of children and young people will be able to access them.

3. Conclusion and Reason for Recommendations

3.1 The Committee is asked to consider and comment on current progress in extending the availability of short breaks for disabled children and their families.

MATT DUNKLEY
Director of Children's Services

Contact Officer: Bernadette Dawes, Short Breaks Development Officer Tel: 01273 818243

Local Members: All

Background Documents:
East Sussex Aiming High for Disabled Children: three year plan for short breaks
Draft Regulations and Guidance

The Aiming High for Disabled Children initiative monitors very closely the additional short breaks provided by local areas. For this purpose the short breaks are divided into categories. Data is collated for central government reports on both existing short breaks funded by 'core' money and new short breaks funded by the Aiming High initiative.

1. Category 5. Overnight provision for children with disabilities

This category includes traditional 'core' services such as the ESCC short breaks centres (Acorns in Bexhill and The Bungalow in Eastbourne) and hospices. New services include overnight breaks for Children with Severe Learning Difficulties at Mayfield Children's Home short breaks unit and Outward Bound breaks with Activenture. This category will also include overnight breaks for children with autism at the new ASD unit at Sorrel Drive, in Eastbourne (which is being built with Aiming High capital funding) when it is operational in 2011.

Figure. 1 shows the number of nights provided for disabled children during the four quarters of 2009-10. The slight decrease in number of nights from Q3 to Q4 is due to no holiday provision in Q4 and the short February month.

Figure 1

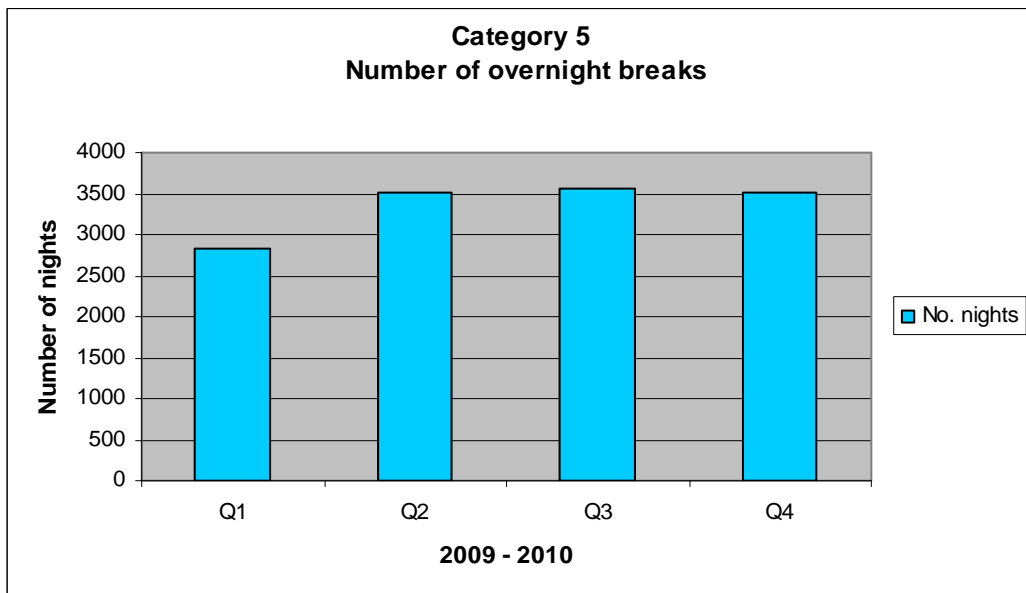
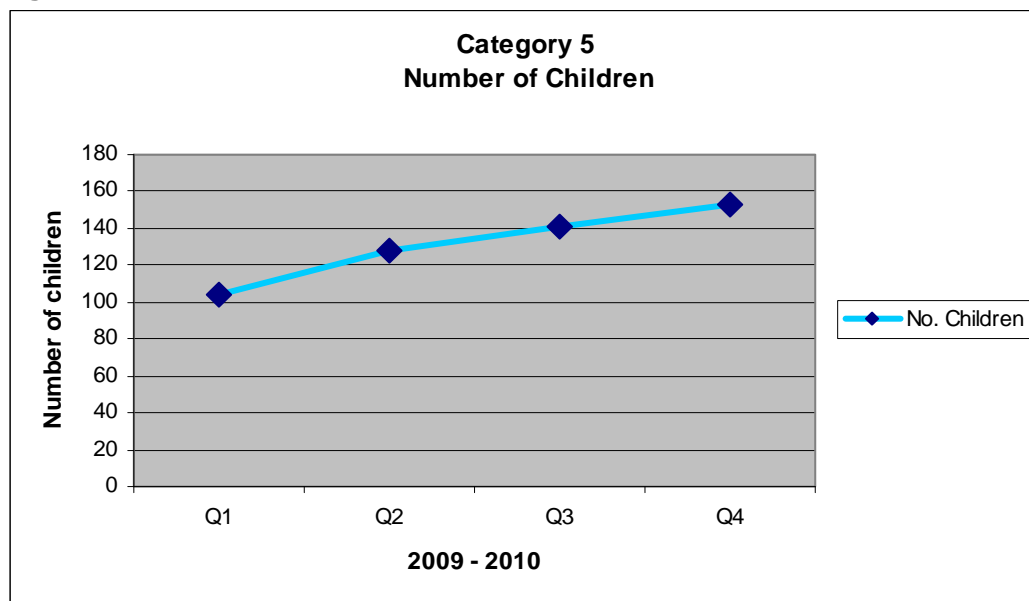


Figure. 2 shows the number of children accessing overnight breaks during 2009-10.

Figure 2



2. Category 7. Family Based/ Individual Day/Sessional Short Breaks for children with disabilities

This category includes 'core' services such as the carers' contract. New services include the Buddy service (Barnardo's), Sitting, Befriending & Outings (Families for Children), the Children's Disability Service Outreach Team and the Childminding Network.

Figure 3 shows the number of hours provided for disabled children accessing family based, individual day and sessional short breaks during the four quarters of 2009-10.

Figure 3

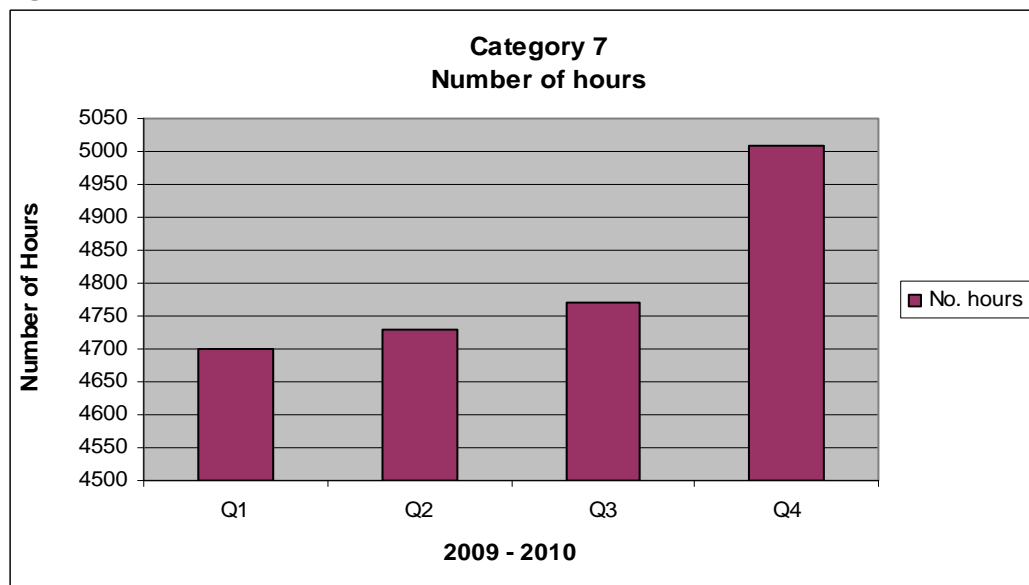
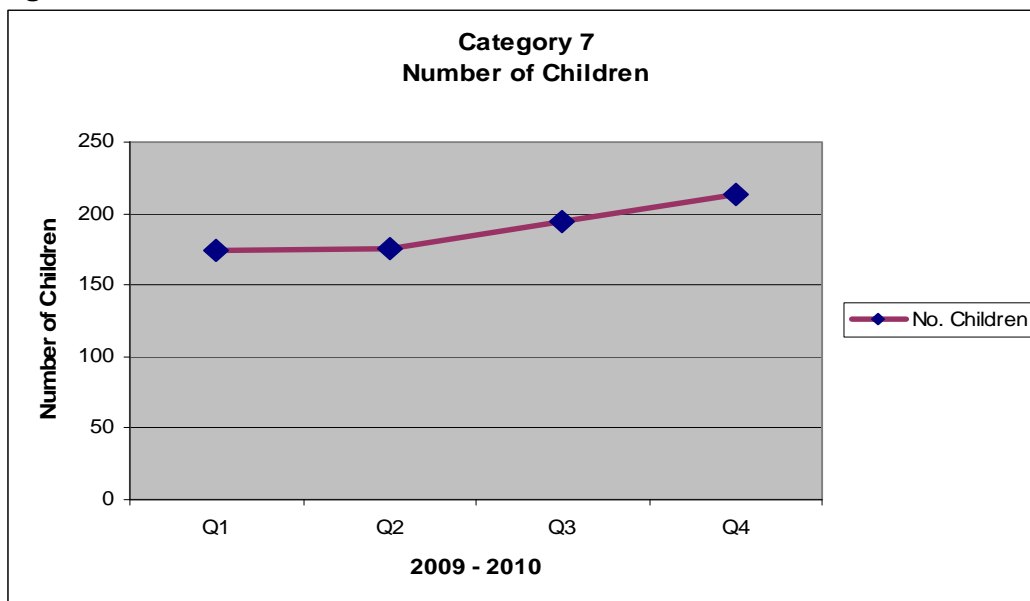


Figure 4 shows the number of children accessing family based, individual day and sessional short breaks during 2009-10.

Figure 4



3. Category 9. Group Based Services (Specialist) for children with disabilities

This category includes the extended schools scheme, school holiday and Saturday clubs, Funky Teens, British Blind Sports and Project Artworks.

Figure 5 shows the number of hours provided for disabled children accessing specialist group based services during the four quarters of 2009-10.

Figure 5

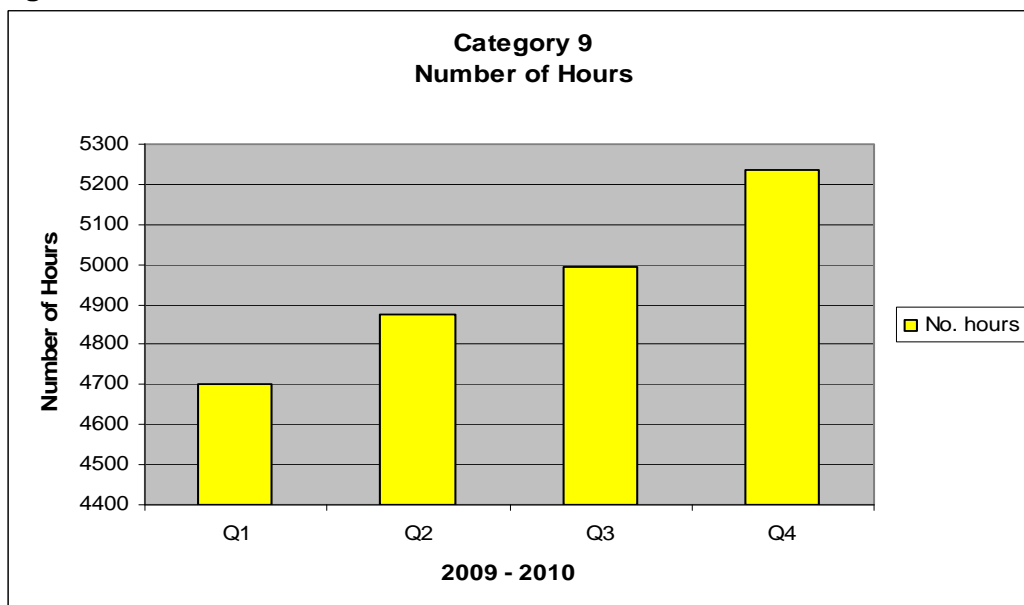
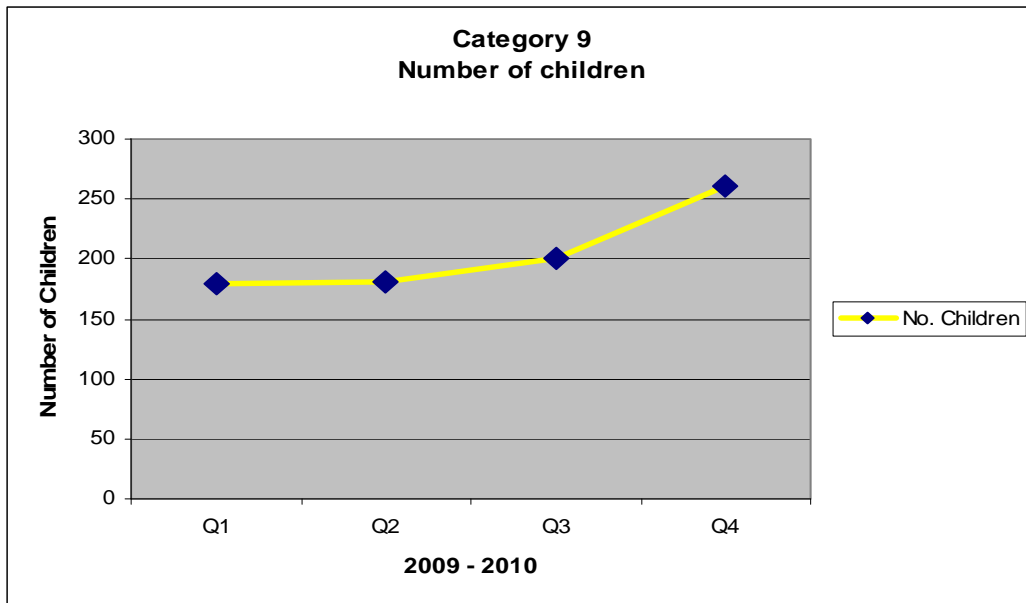


Figure 6 shows the number of children accessing specialist group based services during 2009-10.

Figure 6



4. Category 10. Group Based Services (Non-Specialist /Universal) for children with disabilities

Includes Spectrum, Haven holidays, Inclusion Bursary Fund, Siblings scheme and YouthBank

Figure 7 shows the number of hours provided for disabled children accessing non-specialist and universal group based services during the four quarters of 2009-10. The decrease in number of children and hours in Q3 is due to no YouthBank grants being awarded during this period

Figure 7

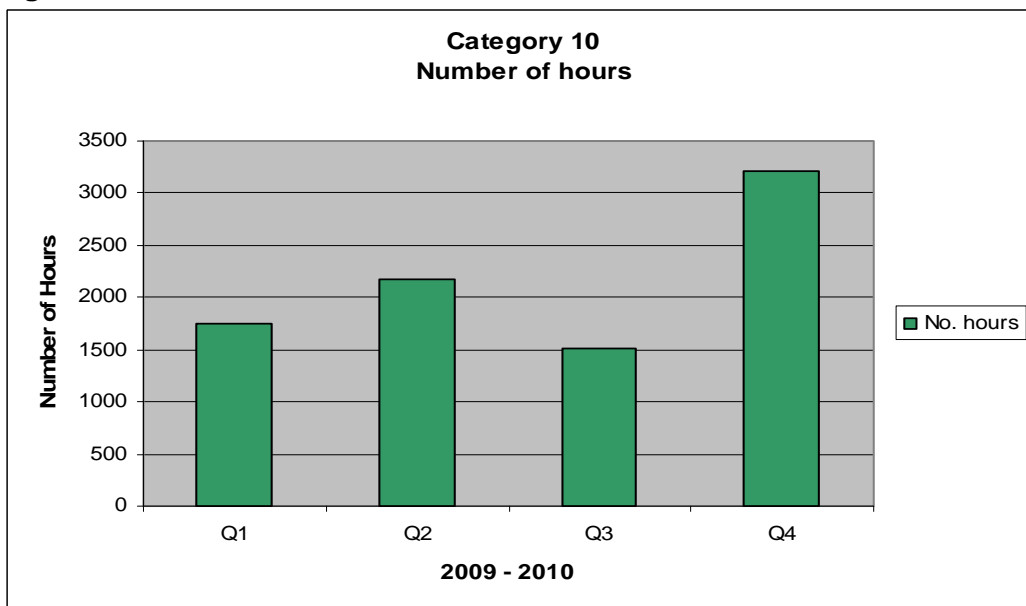
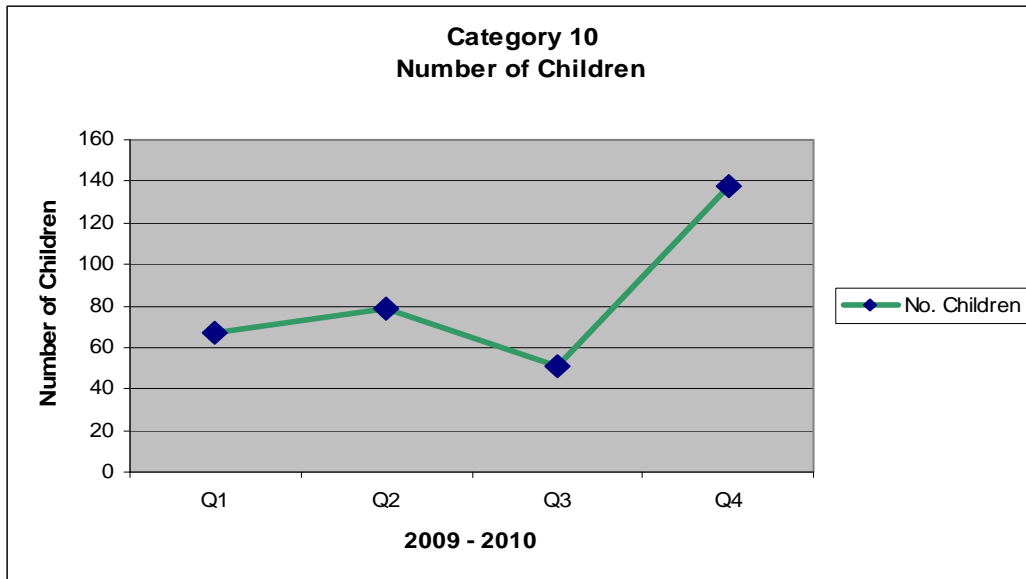


Figure 8 shows the number of children accessing non-specialist and universal group based services during 2009-10.

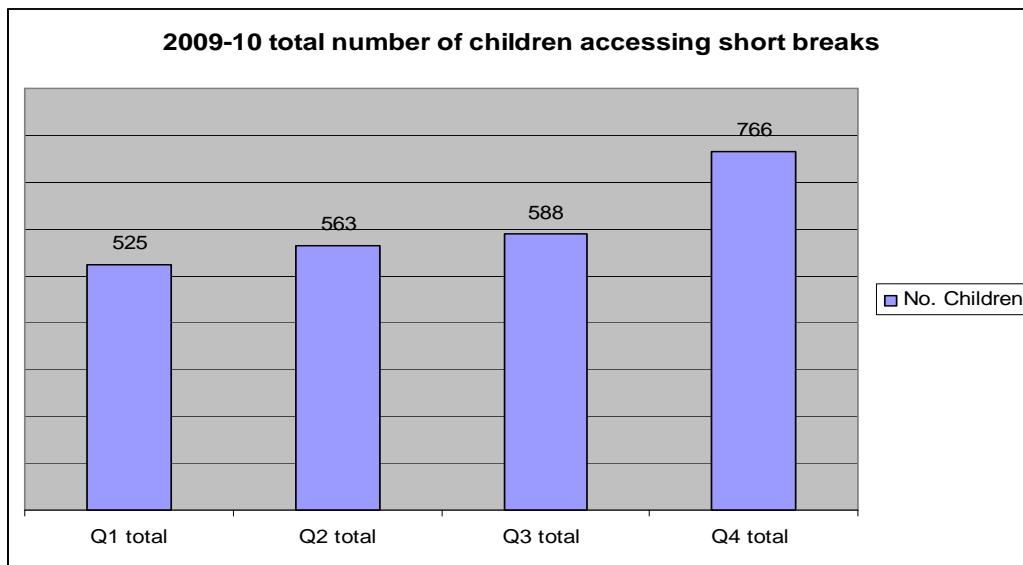
Figure 8



5. Total numbers of children accessing short breaks

Figure 9 shows the total number of children that have accessed short breaks in each quarter from March 2009 to April 2010. The figure shows that the overall total number of children that accessed short breaks in 2009-10 in its entirety amounts to 2,442.

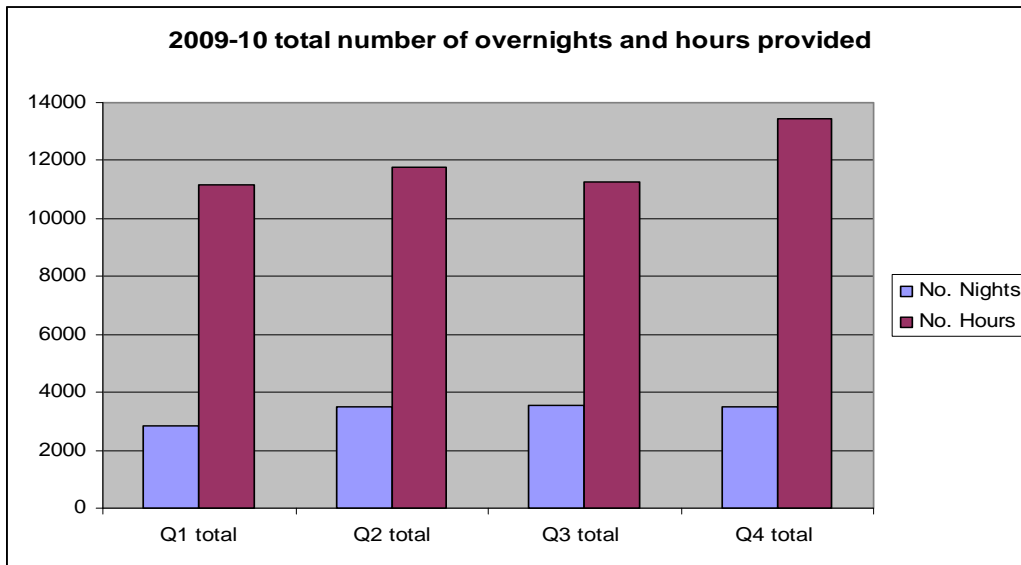
Figure 9



6. Total number of overnight breaks (category 5) and day time hours provided (categories 7, 9 and 10)

Figure 10 shows the total number of overnight breaks and day time/sessional hours provided in each quarter from March 2009 to April 2010. The figure shows that the overall total number of overnight breaks in 2009-10 amounts to 13,434 and day time/sessional hours provided in 2009-10 amounts to 47,667.

Figure 10



Service descriptions

Provided below is a short description of the services mentioned in each of the categories shown in Annex 1.

Category 5

Mayfield Children's Home

Mayfield is a home specialising in permanent and short break residential care for children and young people with learning disabilities. Children and young people can enjoy a range of activities within and outside of the home during their stay.

Activenture

Activenture is a residential adventure short breaks organisation. They provide sociable, carefree and adventurous time away from guests' daily routine.

Category 7

East Sussex Buddy Service

This service is provided by Barnardos. The aim of the service is to provide one to one buddy volunteers to give young disabled people the opportunity to take part in leisure activities in the community or just be a friend by spending time with them.

Sitting, Befriending and Outings service

Aiming High for Families provides a Sitting, Befriending and Outings service in East Sussex. Outings provide opportunities for young people to have new experiences and pursue interests.

Outreach service (ESCC)

The Children's Disability team operates the ESCC Outreach service. They provide short breaks in the form of after school and Saturday clubs, youth clubs, 1:1 work with behaviour difficulties, personal care support within the family home and child protection e.g. supervised contact

Specialist Childminding network (ESCC)

Aiming High for Disabled Children has provided a specialist childminding coordinator to the existing team of coordinators. Their role is to recruit, train and match specially trained childminders to families with disabled children.

Category 9

After school clubs and holiday play schemes (ESCC)

The short break provisions offered allows children and young people to express themselves through activities they choose. The sessions operate outside of school hours and are always fun, stimulating and play centred.

Funky Teens (ESCC)

Funky Teens are youth clubs for young people with mild to moderate disabilities. The clubs are for young people that find accessing mainstream youth clubs difficult either because of past experiences, bullying, their disability or behaviour not being fully understood or supported.

Project Artworks

In Transit - A significant award from The Paul Hamlyn Foundation, together with support from East Sussex County Council will enable the voices of 36 young people with complex needs to be heard at the crucial time of their transition from childhood to adult social services.

Category 10

Spectrum (ESCC)

Spectrum is a county-wide service that helps young people with autism to access clubs and leisure activities.

Inclusion Bursary Fund (ESCC)

The Inclusion Bursary Fund provides finance for additional staffing, specialist equipment and training to childcare settings in East Sussex to encourage the inclusion of children with additional needs. To increase opportunities for disabled children, AHDC provided extra funding to target the under 3's and school aged children.

Siblings group (ESCC)

We arrange activity days and social events and help to build local support groups for children/young people who have a sibling with disabilities.

YouthBank (ESCC)

YouthBank is a national scheme where young people can apply for money for a project or scheme, and other young people decide who to give the money to. AHDC has provided additional funding to offer more opportunities to disabled young people to get a grant that will enable them to access more of the same activities that other young people enjoy.