



## Max Card Pilot for SEND Families

### Evaluation Report November 2022

#### Introduction

Max Cards are the UKs Leading Discount Card for SEND Families and Foster Carers. The cards enable families to access discounted and free activity days out.

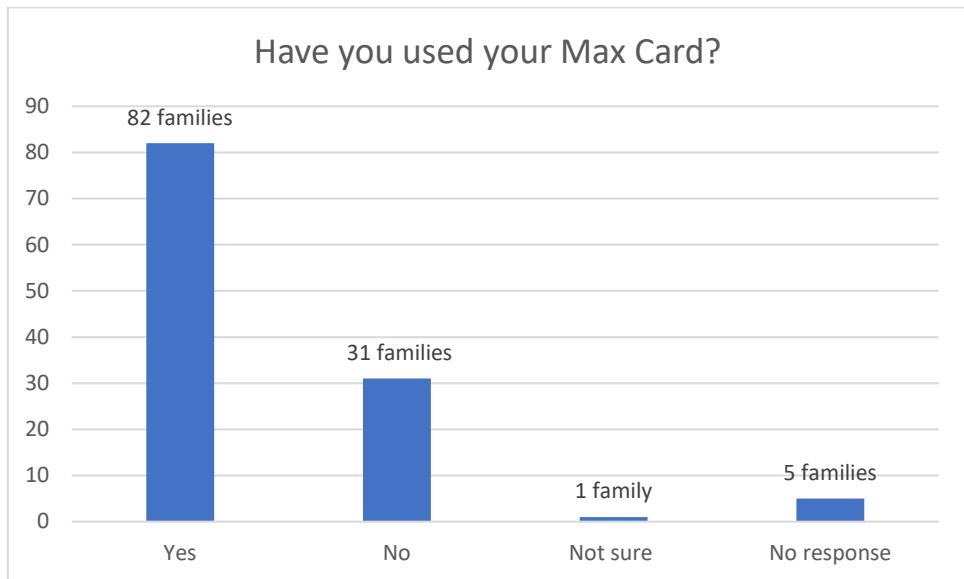
Max Cards were previously made available to Redcar and Cleveland SEND Families via Families Information Service, however, this offer ceased a number of years ago. Max Cards have since been requested by families via various Short Breaks consultations, however, due to mixed feedback on the benefits of the cards, rather than introduce on a permanent basis, the cards were offered as a pilot between September 2021 and February 2022.

Families were able to request a card for a child/young person aged 0 – 25 with a disability by emailing the Short Breaks Team. In October 2022, 11 months after the start of the pilot the Short Breaks Team issued an evaluation survey to all families who requested a card to evaluate the usage and benefits of the cards.

#### Survey Feedback

	Children 0 - 17 years	Young Adults 18 – 25 years	Total
<b>Number of cards requested between November 2021 and February 2022</b>	332	20	352

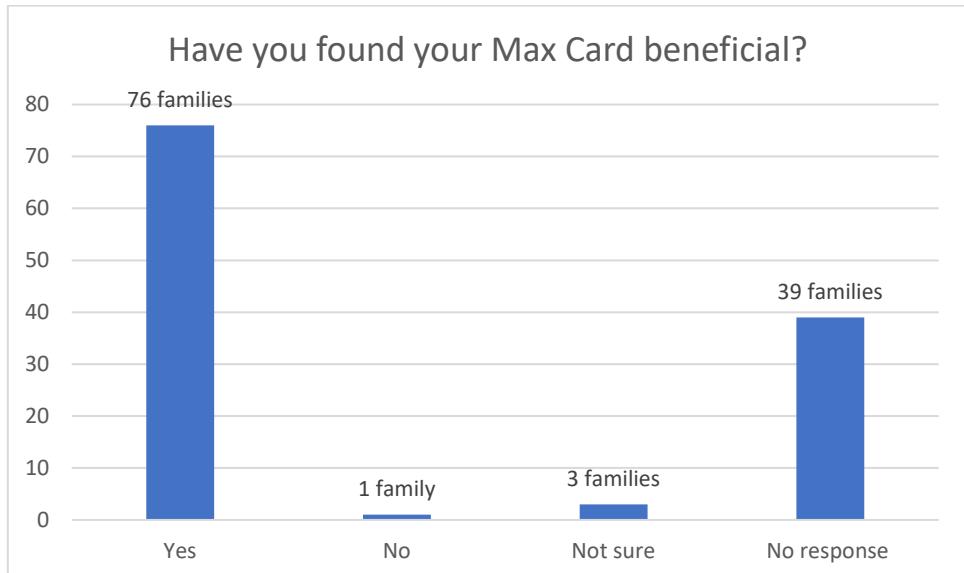
<b>Number of survey responses received</b>	119 responses out of 352  A number of families had multiple children/young adults who were eligible for a card, in these cases one survey response covered multiple cards.
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#### If you haven't used your Max Card what is the reason for this?

- My little one has been very poorly since getting it
- I didn't go to any of the places where you can use it
- No opportunity as child had major op and been too unwell for 1 year
- Not sure where i can use it
- Nothing local my child is interested in
- Only just becomes max card owner
- But going to be using it on Saturday
- Have not seen where can use it yet been away
- Didn't look into the offers in detail. Many of the offers seemed more appropriate for younger children. My son is 15
- Forget about it.
- The places I have been don't use them
- I haven't been anywhere where I could use it
- Little availability
- Places i have gone to haven't accepted it
- haven't found anywhere to use it
- We've not long had the card, I've just had a baby and not get been able to travel to the places that accept max card. I intended to start using it once fully back on my feet
- I've never been asked for it, the majority of places request DLA letter for discount
- I haven't attended any of the places on the list
- Company's said they don't offer the discount
- The places that took it weren't accessible for me and the booking arrangements were complicated and I struggle with such tasks and it wasn't worth the stress for sometimes small discounts.
- No time
- Not visited anywhere eligible
- daughter has been ill over the summer
- Not sure where it can be used, I haven't seen it advertised anywhere as they accept it
- Haven Holiday

- Moving house over the summer
- Unable to take our son out to do activities due to behavioural issues including challenging behaviour.
- There wasn't any suitable location in our location to use it



**Please can you provide some information about how the Max Card has benefited your family?**

- To help with small outings and venues ,also short breaks
- Been able to go places for less money
- Allowed us entry to attractions that we were reluctant to pay to enter in case we had to leave to due our child not coping. We could spend as little or as long as we wanted. Also, we were able to skip queuing, something my child really struggles with.
- I received discount when we booked a Haven holiday, visited Lightwater Valley and at Sea Life Centre.
- Eureka in Halifax let's in 2 carers per max card for free. This is my children's favourite place so the max card saved us a fortune.
- Saving money and helping getting my kids out on trips out
- Made trips out possible financially
- Benefitted financially, saving money on days out and finding things more affordable and in our price range
- It has enabled us to visit some places we otherwise wouldn't be able to.
- Discounts to see
- Made it more cost effective to go on days out/explore new places
- Made days out easier financially
- Used to gain free carer entry to stokeld park
- The max card helped us to have some lovely days out over the summer at York Museum, Castle Howard and light water valley. Thank you
- We holidayed in Devon, we managed to get significant discount when attending world of country . We have limited funs and took us year in advance to pay for the holiday. We had a fantastic day out and our send child got to have lots of new experiences. Thank you.

- It's been incredibly valuable and helpful. When taking my daughter out places thank you so much for this card
- Trips to the farm which my child loves
- We used it over the holidays and it saved us money
- helped financially with days out, allowing to visit more places that would be able to without the card
- Allowed us to enjoy some days out by making them more affordable
- Made days out more affordable
- Reduced cost of entry for places
- Helped us save money on family days out.
- With cost of living so expensive helped to enjoy family time more affordably
- It has been great for reduced entry/ free carers entry. The Haven breaks look like a good deal too.
- It enabled us to visit somewhere that we would otherwise have not been able to afford.
- Discounts and saved money
- a day out
- We are a family of seven three with an autism diagnosis so day trips out can become problematic and expensive
- I used it when we went on holiday and saved quite a bit which meant we were able to go to more places
- We have used the Max card to visit Castle Howard, the card used here entitles you to free admission for 1 adult and 3 children which we think is an amazing offer for such a beautiful place which would otherwise be quite costly meaning we may not be able to go without the amazing offer. It has lots of wide open spaces which is ideal for our Autistic Son.
- Helps save money on a lot off days out which can be expensive. As my son doesn't want to interact or likes going places.
- We've enjoyed lots of family days out at amazing attractions, which normally, we couldn't have afforded. Our daughter's condition makes holidays impossible therefore on the days she's well we try to have a day out, especially in the school holidays. Maxcard meant we were able to have more varied and exciting experiences and build memories.
- It showed that the venue cares about disability and I was also able to obtain a small discount for my child.
- We have been able to use it for various days out etc. This is helpful as we often have to leave early from places so are able to try new things without the worry of cost as much.
- Max card helps us to have special times together at a lower cost which is really helpful at the moment due to the cost of living. I will get good use out of it over the coming year as I have in previous years.
- Used as proof of entitlement to concession, but not used for any of the discounted entry offers yet
- It's allowed us cheaper entry to some attractions without having to worry about taking proof e.g. dla letters
- Saved us money on family days out which has really helped lately with current expenses
- We use our max card all the time, its been a great help allowing us more family days out that we usually couldnt afford, it also allows for things like if the day becomes to

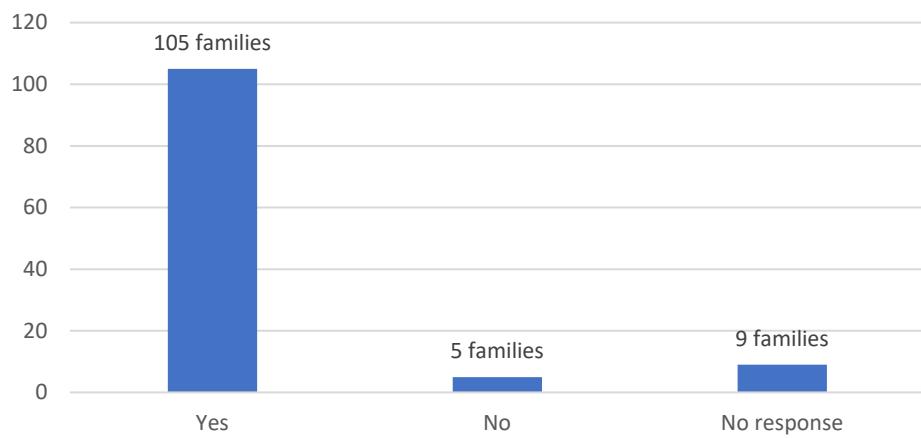
much for my son and we have to leave early it means we aren't losing a lot of money and can go back another day allowing a trip to spread over shorter days.

- We've used it to gain access to Stockeld Park
- We have used it to get discounted days out with our children
- Lightwater Valley great discounts.
- Financially helped
- We've been able to access a number of activities & although we do not get to spend the amount of time we would like to suit sensory needs we have still enjoyed the days out & activities.
- It's helped us to have family days out
- It's given us opportunity to visit places that were too expensive to visit before having the card.
- Helped reduce admission costs for family day out
- Gives us a discount on entry to venues. If we can only stay a short while due to our daughter's needs we haven't had to pay the full price and then had to leave.
- We have used it for Hollywood Bowling because of the price reduction we have been able to play more games which has kept my son more focused
- Managed at least 2 extra family trips this summer because of it
- Got in cheaper to places
- We have used it in places to be able to prove proof of benefit and not needed to take around a DLA letter with us
- Only used once. Seems post covid many places not accepting anymore
- My son has a new diagnosis of Epilepsy. As soon as I received the Max card we used it that week, I thought we may be treated awkwardly but that wasn't the case at all they were lovely about it.
- We have used it to access numerous days out over the summer that we would have been unable to otherwise
- Used it for discounted access at Eden Camp and we have plans to use it shortly for a family day out in York.
- It has given us access to wristbands at places/parks which mean my two autistic kids don't have to wait in busy queues to then get restless and have a meltdown
- We had a day out in York and used it to access the Jorvik Viking Centre and York Castle Museum for all the family. It meant that even though we rushed through Jorvik we didn't feel like we had wasted money. It's hard to balance everyone's needs and to get out and about at times but having the card has encouraged us a little more
- Discount on Haven holiday £20
- We have had 2 family days out and have used the Max card at 3 venues so far.
- Managed to save money as it's so expensive at times when it's so hard and I can't work full time due to my son's disabilities
- We have used our card but I also wish it would go to more places. It would also be useful if the Max card was accepted at more places
- We used it several times. In places like Fountains Abbey, where we couldn't spend the whole day as my daughter got too tired with her legs (cerebral palsy) but it helped us to be able to return again at no extra cost so we could see the things we previously didn't get round to. We've also used it in The Bowes Museum & Washington Wetland Centre which saved us quite a bit of money. This really helps seeing as I myself don't work & only receive an income as a carer for my daughter. I anticipate that it would help in the future for my son who has autism. As he can have melt downs & decide not to want to do some things. If we have to pay then not go

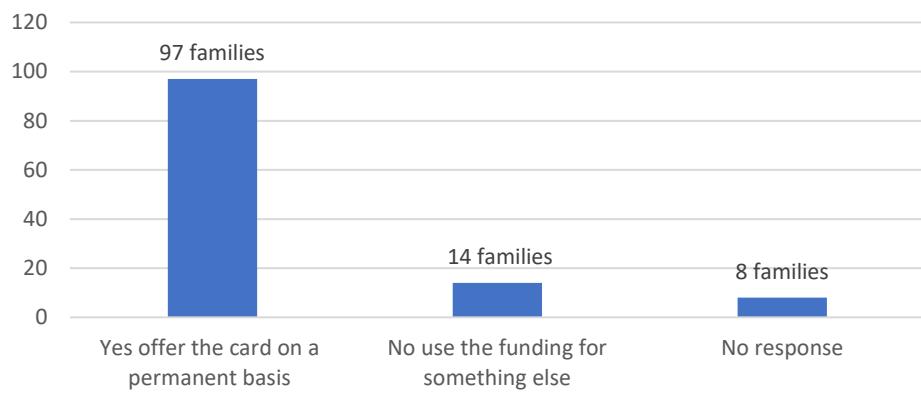
to/use a place... it would be such a waste for us. So yes... to confirm, it is a massive benefit to us as a family.

- good reductions on days out. This is helpful as having a child with special needs means sometimes cancelling or changing plans at short notice and if you've paid full price for tickets in advance it gets pretty costly.
- Saved money
- It saved money on some fun trips out which means we can get out more often
- Allowed us discounted access to some venues, this is helps as sometimes we end up leaving quickly as it's not suitable and it can get expensive paying out for failed trips .
- We used it to visit Eureka in Halifax for our first adventure. My son could not settle or focus as it was a new place. The max card meant we were free to visit again any time free for a while year. We also had discount at a farm with free animal feed. Max card relieve so much financial pressures so the focus is on the SEND child. Thank you.
- Allowed us to visit places that would be un affordable to us without the card
- We have used the max card at several places including Stockeld Park & Eden camp, we have found the saving very beneficial. Also, because my son can't always manage to stay for a full day with the max card providing us with the discount it didn't feel as bad when we had to leave because we weren't losing as much money. It's a shame that a lot of places have stopped taking the max card but the ones that do have been great
- Cheaper days out if not free, easier to show that our son has disability without having to say
- We were given lower price for admission and were given "passes" for our day out. We have also shown it, when prompted for disabled and carer tickets (alongside DLA letter)
- The max card has enabled us to have more family outings
- It has made days out more affordable
- It Benefits days out and holidays.
- Discount into days out ect

Would you recommend the Max Card to other SEND families?



Do you think R&C Short Breaks Team should offer the card on a permanent basis or use the funding for something else?



**If you have any other comments or feedback you would like to share please use the box below:**

- Could the Max card also include young people and adults with special needs
- I think the Max cards are great and I have received some considerable discounts. It's a shame that there isn't many places in Redcar and Cleveland where you can actually use it. My son has severe autism and very complex needs and I do not drive it's a shame places like swimming baths or the Owl centre don't know what a Max card is.
- It's an excellent idea and would benefit lots of families. It's just very bad timing that I couldn't use it
- Not enough sen friendly local activities
- The max card is great, it enables us to do things with our autistic son we might not otherwise and makes it less painful financially if an activity proves to much for him to cope with.
- If you could filter the area where you could use max card
- There isn't much for young send children in the area to use the max card but will definitely become useful as she gets older.
- More places added to it
- The card has been amazing we've used it lots of times and it's helped queue times in my laces as we could queue in another place thank you so much for the card it's amazing xx
- None to give! I think it's great
- Many places offer concessions if a child receives DLA. I'm unsure if the deals for max card holders are any better.
- Would be better if it was an app so easy to see where to use.
- I would like more local venues to take part if at all possible
- A SEND suitable location for DP people / carers / parents to use
- No
- The max card has been beneficial to my family helping us have days out for free / discounted prices making lovely memories
- It would be great if there could possibly be more places to use the card in the Redcar & Cleveland area.
- Thank you!!!

- More venues should offer families to use a max card. Disability awareness is essential.
- A list of local places as well as national would be really helpful
- More places in the lovmcak area would be great, for eg recognising them at swimming baths etc
- Max card is good for days out for the family.
- There aren't many places locally which accept the max card... We would normally have used it more than we have, but due to illness have not travelled far this summer
- Not sure if the funding could be better used elsewhere as a lot of places allow free entry for a carer with relevant paperwork although the max card did reduce the stress of remembering the paperwork
- we recommend the max card to everyone we know in the send community , its hugely beneficial and i hope it continues to be offered
- I've always found the MAX card useful
- Please find new venues and share information on where we can use them. I'm sure I've missed information
- The same with more benefits and more attractions
- I think max card is a brilliant service to allow family's to be able to enjoy taking there children to enjoy actives and experiences, it give those with a little less money a great opportunity to be able to have the option to go places
- We have found it extremely beneficial & it has really helped our family.
- I'm not sure we would get the use out of the card that other families may be able to.
- In theory it's a great idea but due to fallout from lockdowns businesses can't afford the discounts they perhaps would once give. Also, it's a struggle post pandemic to go to such places due to anxiety and then to make additional arrangements to access discounts is too much. Thank you for trialling it but as I don't drive I can't fully utilise the options. I think it's better to go with a list on local offer or somewhere with places that offer discounts or carer tickets.
- Thanks for having the opportunity of trying something new.
- Thank you for the max card
- it is a difficult question to answer number 6 as whilst I believe the card is good and will benefit people, I also know that the same result can usually be used with a DLA letter so the funding could be used elsewhere with more beneficial results to SEN families
- Seems DLA or other forms as proof of disability now
- Didn't use it. Not much places in Teesside accept it.
- Thank you for having such an amazing scheme that really does benefit the disabled person. Who ever thought of this program needs a good well done because we got one love it so thank you.
- Just very grateful for the pilot!
- Using the max card also lets others know we have a child with additional needs without it being obvious. My child is older and doesn't always like people knowing he struggles so the max card is a discreet way of doing this.
- It would be much more helpful if we knew where it could be used and if those places could put up a poster or something advertising the use of the max card, it feels a bit awkward asking if they accept it without knowing before hand
- There isn't much offered locally. Would like to see more offers for local places not somewhere we have to travel to. I also found booking confusing on attractions sites and had to contact them

- The Max card has been great but I would like to see more venues taking part within the Redcar and Cleveland area. We have only used our Max card at York and Barnard Castle so far as there is little on offer in our region.
- Acceptable more places More awareness about the scheme.
- I would just like to thank you. Like I said previously, the max cards for both of my children have been of great benefit to us. We can enjoy family time with a whole lot less stress by using them. I sincerely hope that you continue to provide them.
- I deffinatly think it would benefit SEND family's on a more permanent basis
- I'm very grateful. Thank you
- I had one a while ago and was very disappointed when rcbc removed the scheme. I was delighted when it was brought back and let all NY send family friends know about it
- We are really grateful to be part of this pilot, we've been able to go on days out that we wouldn't otherwise have had. I want you to know that we appreciate our card and we are grateful for it.
- We have used ours in a number of places during summer and plan to continue using it for as long as possible
- The max card has been a great benefit to our family and would love this to continue to enable us to keep doing things with our little one
- Max card is vital for families.
- Although we haven't used it yet we may do in the future when our sons behaviour has been addressed.

## **You Said We Did**

**The majority of families who took part in the survey confirmed the cards have been beneficial and requested these were made available on a permanent basis.**

We are pleased to confirm following the feedback from families, Max Cards will be available to SEND families on a permanent basis.

The Max Card Scheme will be advertised on Redcar and Cleveland's website and a poster will be shared with families on the Disability Register, schools and key support organisations.

Max Cards can be requested via the Short Breaks Team  
[shortbreaks@redcar-cleveland.gov.uk](mailto:shortbreaks@redcar-cleveland.gov.uk).

**Some families stated there weren't many local venues signed up to the scheme or were unsure how to search for participating venues.**

Participating venues can be found on the Max Card Website:  
[Venues – Discounts for fostered and disabled children – MaxCardMaxCard \(mymaxcard.co.uk\)](http://Venues – Discounts for fostered and disabled children – MaxCardMaxCard (mymaxcard.co.uk))

In addition to this we have created a flyer listing all local venues that accept Max Cards, this will be advertised on the Max Card Webpage and has already been shared with those families who have a Max Card:



MAX Card List of  
Local Venues Oct 22.pdf

The Short Breaks Team will also continue to contact local venues to encourage them to join the scheme. Families can suggest local venues by emailing [shortbreaks@redcar-cleveland.gov.uk](mailto:shortbreaks@redcar-cleveland.gov.uk)