

**EUREKA! THE NATIONAL CHILDREN'S MUSEUM  
REVIEW OF CONCESSIONARY RATES FOR DISABLED VISITORS**

**SEPTEMBER 2018**

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## 1. QUESTIONS ASKED

### I posted on these Facebook groups on 12 September:

Autism Friendly UK (21 responses)

Pardon? I'm deaf (23 responses)

Special Needs Holidays and Day Trips (25 responses)

These groups are parent networks offering contact and advice.

### The post:

Hi everyone, I'd really appreciate your thoughts on a topic that's under discussion at Eureka! the national children's museum, where I am the Inclusion Manager.

Currently, we offer free entry to an adult accompanying a disabled child. We call such adults "essential carers". However, this term causes confusion, for example, grandparents bringing their (non-disabled) grandchildren identify as essential carers. Which they certainly are! but don't qualify for free entry in this case. I should say that all children always pay - the discount is for the adult bringing them.

As a charity, we receive no government funding and the entrance fee is vital to our operation. We have wondered whether, as a children's museum, we should attach the discount to the child - i.e. disabled children have free entry.

I have three questions I'd like to put to you. Please feel free to email me too - [trizia.wells@eureka.org.uk](mailto:trizia.wells@eureka.org.uk)

- 1) What would be the best way of describing the parent or carer of a disabled child when offering free entry?
- 2) What would you think about a disabled child having free entry instead of their carer?
- 3) We're a children's museum. Do you think disabled adults should have free entry too?

Thank you very much for your time and thoughts. If we decide to make changes, we want to make sure they're right for our visitors!

### The following questions were posted on the GEM forum (8 individual responses but multiple postings) on the same day. GEM is a networking forum for professionals in the museum/cultural attraction sector.

- Do you have concessionary rates for both disabled visitors and their carers?
- If a visitor has more than one carer, do both receive the discount?
- Do you offer free entry or a discounted rate?
- What terminology do you use for the carer? (We use essential carer, but this sometimes causes confusion)

The next section gives a summary of results which reflect both the Facebook groups and the GEM forum. Responses are detailed after the results. I've kept the original spelling and grammar. Names have been changed.

## 2. RESULTS

**Terminology** – The term carer was favoured by the majority of respondents on the Facebook pages, although there was strong feeling against this on the GEM forum. . The term “disabled guest” was suggested by many to cover both children and adults.

**Who should have the discount/free entry – carer or child?** - Most people supported our current model – disabled guest pays and their carer goes free.

A third as many people felt the disabled guest should also receive discounted entry.

A sizeable minority suggested a joint discount ticket for disabled guests and their carer – i.e. 2 for the price of 1.5

**Should disabled adults have free entry too?** The majority said yes.

## OTHER ISSUES ARISING

**Thanks for asking:** Two of the Facebook parents began by thanking me for asking their opinion. It's the 21<sup>st</sup> century and some parents of disabled children are still surprised to be consulted about the things that affect them.

**Evidence:** There was a lot of discussion on the Facebook pages about providing evidence. Many said they were used to, and happy to provide evidence, although some disagreed. The majority of GEM comments around this aspect felt strongly that proof of disability should NOT be requested.

### 3. BREAKDOWN OF RESULTS:

1) What would be the best way of describing the parent or carer of a disabled child when offering free entry? (results include those taken from the GEM forum)

Carer	6
Disabled guest	6
Parent carer	3
Essential carer	4
Adult carer	3
Personal assistant/assistant	2
Disabled person/child	2
SEND entry fee, child/entry, additional needs, disabled accompanied	1
Anything but carer	1

2) What would you think about a disabled child having free entry instead of their carer?  
Various models suggested:

i.	Paying disabled child, free carer	14
ii.	Disabled adult pays, carer is free	6
iii.	Discounted disabled guest and 1 carer free	5
iv.	Disabled guest and 1 carer each pay half price on a single ticket	4
v.	Separate SEND or assistance entry entitling disabled adult or child with one carer	2
vi.	Child pays, adult carer free	2
vii.	Both free (Cadw)	3
viii.	Both pay	2
ix.	Free carers for disabled guests under 25 years	1
x.	Discounted carer	1
xi.	Second carer free	1

Several suggested that the disabled child entry could be discounted and includes the carer, i.e. 2 people for the price of 1.25 (e.g.)

3) We're a children's museum. Do you think disabled adults should have free entry too?

Yes

11

No

0

#### **4. RESPONSES FROM FACEBOOK GROUP SPECIAL NEEDS HOLIDAYS AND DAY TRIPS**

We have to show dla paperwork for child and I pay for me if I have my grandkids I pay for -them I'm his carer and get carers allowance

-what about just saying 1 accompanying adult gets in free with a paying disabled child?

-If you offered a slightly concessionary rate for evidence supported disabilities and then stated that 'this ticket also allows entry for one adult carer' you'd be more specific in what constitutes the difference in 'essential carer' role

This would also be massively helpful to those families who can only visit for much shorter periods than others die to sensory/rest/personal care issues or medical needs and paying full ticket prices for children who can't access the facilities as fully as others for whatever reason

-I think an adult carer should go free - the disabled child pays. You could ask for DLA note if you want to be sure on hidden disabilities. Concession for over 60/ disabled adults is the norm - carer free if needed still.

-Definitely think disabled adults should be included. My daughter is 19 however she is size of 11 year old and developmentally like a baby/toddler.

-Description of Parent/Carer/Personal Assistant/Assistant.

-Either child or carer free would be appropriate.

- split the price so disabled child and carer both pay half price

-My understanding of the law is that no one should be charged more admission due to disability. So if someone needs two carers and can evidence that then both carers should be allowed in under the admission fee of the child or adult. It would be discriminatory to charge them more when their being there has to be supported. My just adult son is 2:1 and has paperwork from health

saying so. So he should pay to enter but carers shouldn't. It's actually a grey area with children who would need an adult in most cases. However it's good practice to let a carer go free. Hope that helps.

-I agree with this (comment above) When it gets difficult is that most children require an adult to access these facilities. They wouldn't be attending alone!

Our daughter is 17 and is unable to go anywhere alone, even things younger children could access! We always have 2 of us when out and about as she needs that!

-Our local zoo has insisted I buy an annual pass, which gives her 1 carer and then pay for an adult annual pass which gets added on to her card.

Would be less annoyed at this if they actually had a changing place. But she definitely needs 2 carers as I can't lift her on and off the floor to change her by myself!!!!

-Carer goes free with supporting evidence

-Thank you firstly for asking our opinion it means a lot asking advice from those in the situation. I find just the simple term free carer is enough then in brackets with supporting evidence. I feel disabled adults should get free entry or charge them at a reduced fee like a child's fee? As I presume their carer would get in free? As long as I am getting at least one carer in for free or reduced rate I am happy. (I have 3 disabled kids all one to one) x

-With the disabled adult question. At what age do you consider someone an adult? My son is 18 and classed as an adult now. He has learning difficulties and would find a children's museum far more enjoyable than an adults. In fact, I very much doubt that I would take him to an adult museum.

-I think parent/carer is the perfect description.

-Please remember that some over 18s with a learning disability are very child like and would enjoy the museum.

-Definitely free carer/parent. Our local authority will pay for some respite activities with a carer. We can use this to cover the cost of the child's entry but not the carer.

-imo disabled people (whether adult or child) should be offered a discounted ticket if their opportunity to enjoy/experience it is less than for a non disabled person....for example as long as my child can access every zoo exhibit in her wheelchair then I wouldn't expect her to get discounted entry but if there's some places that she can't get to (because of limited space or steps) or if there's stuff others can do that she can't (like holding/feeding animals in the petting zoo) then discounted entry is fair because she's not getting as much for her money.

-As for carers, I don't expect to get free carer entry if we're out without a carer. If it's just me and my three kids then that's one adult, 3 children. They wouldn't be there without me so I'm their parent not their carer. However, once they are over 16 and I STILL have to accompany my disabled daughter (when she'd rather go on her own) then I'm her carer and should be free entry. Or sometimes we need an extra pair of hands so we do have our daughter's carer with us. I'd pay for my adult ticket and be looking for free carer entry for my daughter's carer.

-That's the point, the equality act is person centred so should be around the individuals needs. That makes writing blanket policies really hard.

-Yup disabled adult could have learning disabilities and actually a disabled adult could be a parent as well (I am a parent and in wheelchair and have a disabled child so sometimes a carer each to help make life easier

-I have been to places that have the entry as 'disabled person + 1 carer'

-Maybe change the 'essential carer' to 'disabled persons carer'

-Parent / carer I'd say the right description

-Adult fee is always higher than child , so it makes sense to have the higher priced tickets free (sorry) but does make a huge difference in deciding to visit an attraction

And finally yes disabled discount should be to adults as well. I appreciate it's a children's museum however especially with a neurological disability adults age doesn't match up with their mental age

-Please include disabled adults as many like my own are still children in their ability. Donna's comment is a great suggestion.

-Because it's a children's museum I think you should pay for the disabled child and have a free carer to go with it. My son is 2-1 so has 2 Carers to keep him safe. I think as long as people have a letter that should be allowed too. We visit eureka a lot but we use the max card which is also a great offer. Disabled adults with a learning disability should also be allowed in with a free carer too. Grandparents are not Carers! Unless they are the legal guardian of the disabled child which is different.

-Definitely include disabled adults. My 21 year old loves any kind of museum or children's museum...

-would say one free parent/carer and discount for disabled child/adult. My daughter wouldn't be able to access the whole attraction and needs 2:1 care

- don't see the issue in granting one free carer free admission when accompanying a disabled person. I think it should be for children and adults as although aimed at children it is also an ideal place for adults with profound disabilities. Cognitively my daughter will never be an adult so she would get enjoyment from your venue for many years.

-Definitely include disabled adults for same reasons as above comments and Chanelle's wording for pricing info is great.

## **RESPONSES FROM PARDON? I'm deaf. Facebook Group**

I think that it would be much better placed on the child as opposed to the adult with it being a child museum . And how about just disabled guest < 15 or whatever your child age is and then price x I think the confusion lies as all children require an adult to accompany them as it's not a place you leave children unattended therefore that's why there will be confusion x

- 1) essential carer is a good enough title, we all know we have a disability and it's daft to be embarrassed by admitting it.
- 2)if the disabled child gets free admission why not offer a subsidy for the carer.
- 3)why not offer free admission to disabled adults .. you could slightly raise the general admission to cover what you'd lose



-separate signage making it absolutely clear, A4 size by each till?

-My experience in London museums is that the disabled person gets in for free be they a child or adult but that the carer pays. That way essentially it's buy one get one free, which might eliminate any confusion. I definitely think the disabled person should be able to enter for free due to issues around low income.

well I was more referring to my experience in London but tbh it would be great if parents/carers or disabled children had a discounted rate also, I was just trying to be mindful of your need for revenue. Ideally you could offer one free ticket to one adult carer as well (so not both parents) I guess the descriptor for discounts is around "disabled" rather than "carer".

-A carer is someone who takes Extra care of someone with additional needs. You are Not a carer to a "regular" child. I am carer and parent to our son, I am parent to our daughters. Sounds like people trying to fiddle the system. Disabled guest is a good term

-Hi and thanks for asking..... I think I would expect my son to pay, and on provision of DLA/PIP letter or other evidence...and an adult carer if free to accompany them. Usually you go to places for the child, so the carer/parent should be free IMHO. I believe that all disabled should be welcomed with the same concession..... I know my son is not as mature as others his age and that this will continue into adulthood.

- will use Cadw as an example. I was shocked to find that both myself and a carer go in free to any Cadw site. I'm happy to pay something eg. Harry Potter studios I pay and my carer is free so essentially we both pay half the rate. You still pay something

-I personally think that if I am taking my Deaf granddaughter out for the day we should both pay as she wouldn't be allowed in on her own anyway, however as she gets older a free entrance for an additional carer / Interpreter would be appreciated.

-As adults I always ask for concessions for myself and pay for children as we are both deaf. So I do expect to pay half price.

-It seems to me that the main problem is around the term "essential carer" - in a place created specifically for children it could be argued that even a parent of a non-disabled child is an "essential carer".

-As a disabled adult the usual done thing in my experience is that I pay for entry to events/museums etc and am allowed a carer to attend for free.

Maybe you could do away with the "essential carer" term as it's meaningless and just have it as everyone pays admission but the carers of disabled kids get free or reduced fee access?

-I'd suggest 'essential carer' also. That being said when we've been to visit places where I get in free (due to being carer for my daughter) I've provided either her DLA letter - if it's free entry for her, or my carers allowance letter - if it's free entry for myself.....we looked to go to Disneyland and it's the same there.

-I think it's dependent on age for free entry (most of the places we've visited are free for under 10s anyway)

Wouldn't know for disabled adults, I'd say so if the kids are in for free....but that's just my opinion

-Why not describe it as "Disabled Child and Free carer: £..."

-o can all visitors have Equality of access to everything you have on display or for visitors to interact with. Is it access all areas

-One free 'Disabled Accompanied' ticket (for registered carer) per Disabled child or Disabled adult which must be made at the same time the Disabled child's ticket booking.

-Disabled adults get discounted tickets.

Grandparents purchase Senior/standard tickets

Evidence supplied by the true holders is needed to qualify for discounts or free tickets.

-“assistance entry”

### **Email response:**

Hello,

I have just seen your post that someone shared on Facebook. I can see that it is a bit of a conundrum for you! My suggestion would be to have one discounted ticket - whatever price you see fit, either cheaper or free - for a disabled child and one companion. So this could be whatever adult is with them at the time, whether parent, grandparent, aunty etc or perhaps a paid carer who is taking the child out as respite. The rest of the party pays full fee.

I would include disabled adults as well. It's probably not that likely that most disabled adults would want to visit, however people with learning disabilities might still really enjoy visiting.

Best wishes, Laura Conley

## RESPONSES FROM AUTISM FRIENDLY UK FACEBOOK PAGE

-Carers discount

-Free entry for one essential carer of a child or young person upto 25 with a disability?

I have always just been grateful for any discount we received never really thought too much about how the place works etc x

-With the Max card you get one adult and one child free so people can use that but otherwise I would just say that essential carer free makes total sense. Every child will have some type of carer with them so I don't think that grandparents etc can have a problem with the term essential carer. As child and adult tickets cost the same it doesn't make a difference to the customer which one they are paying for but psychologically it makes a difference as it seems unfair to have to pay for a carer who you have to have in order to function. But it's a total minefield to navigate though and I'm sure you'll get lots of different answers x

-Just my opinion, but I have no issue as a parent with paying, same as any other parents have too. It makes sense to me for disabled adults, as if they weren't disabled then they wouldn't need to bring a carer, but as a child, disabled or not the parent still needs to come, so I never really get why it's free! I personally would prefer a place to charge me and put the money towards making the most accessible environment possible, more sensory things, staff having autism training, etc xx

-This is a fair point but on the flip side it makes days out more affordable as due to my child's disabilities I am no longer able to work full time and therefore earn a lot less I still work and therefore do not receive carers allowance so when places accept his DLA and diagnosis letter and give a discount it feels like a lovely treat for me to be able to afford to then use that cash for ice creams and souvenirs etc for the kids

-I do get that point, but I don't think it's as straightforward as that. We are often forced to leave early by the kids' needs, and just wouldn't bother if we didn't get the discount as it wouldn't be worth it. We have three kids - I can't take them anywhere on my own and need to take additional adults, with the sole purpose of making sure we all keep safe. If we were an entirely neurotypical family, we wouldn't have two additional adult entries to pay for as one adult would be able to manage all three kids. Sometimes I am paying for the time of a carer as well as the entries.

-How about having a SEND entry fee (admitting 1 disabled with carer)?

-I think the simplest way is to state that a guest who has paperwork to show they are disabled (i.e. yellow card or DLA letter) is entitled to be accompanied by a carer who accesses the attraction for

free. Not sure it matters whether the disabled guest is a child or an adult - appreciate it is an attraction aimed at kids, but you wouldn't want to exclude disabled adults who have a lower mental than chronological age for whom the attraction may be appropriate.

-For me, the issue is that my child needs 1:1. So I could quite ably take him if it was just me. The problem is that I have two children, and hence always need to be accompanied by another adult when I take both my children out. And one of us definitely acts as an essential carer on these occasions. I simply cannot take both of my children out on my own, though I could take my autistic child out alone if I did not also have the responsibility for his sister.

A second point, I feel, is that, like me, many carers are on a low income, much the same as senior citizens and students, and often I see the discount for carer as recognition of this financial fact, rather than acting in the capacity of an 'essential' carer to a child who is so young that he would require adult accompaniment anyway, with or without his disability x

-It's also worth pointing out that sometimes children with SEND are unable to access full days out and quite often trips out have to be cut short. I know a lot of mine have-including Eureka which I live locally too. For many families with SEND children a "day out" is maybe only an hour or two due to sensory difficulties as opposed to a full day for most typical children. The free carer is what gives them a chance to keep trying on days out even if it proves a short trip or too difficult. However I do not feel the wording matters too much and it shouldn't matter to the grandparents of children who do not have special needs. X

-Stating 'disabled guests are entitled to one free carer' or similar would get around this issue anyhow.

-Or disabled guest plus carer? Some disabled adults have the mental age of a child. But I agree 'essential' carer isn't the right term.

- yes disabled guest and carer sounds perfect

- wouldn't mind if it was the disabled child or carer that was free. I feel disabled adults should be free if their disability is related to their intellectual development or maturity levels as they may be not experience the world in a way related to their physical age.

-Even a trip to the swimming pool is tough - I do get carers entitlement to go in free, but still have to pay for my mum to go too as someone needs to stay with my little girl if my ASD son needs to leave within 5mins of arriving! And, as an aside, as his disability is hidden...,the amount of times I have had to publicly defend and explain his needs to an incredulous receptionist, looking at my fully able bodied and, seemingly, coping (at the time!) son is very disheartening

-Could you just do 'child entry' and 'adult / seniors entry', then have 'Admit 1 free carer per paying disabled guest with proof of disability'? That would cover a disabled adult or child, they pay the usual entry and a carer goes free. I'm sure other places do it this way. I'm disabled and so is my son, we both have proof of disability (dla/pip) so attractions admit my husband and daughter as 2 carers, 1 each for me and my son.

-Disabled guest gets free carer ticket. Yes it's a children's museums, but plenty of disabled adults have and will continue to use it too. It's an interesting place, and I enjoyed our visit as much as my daughter. You shouldn't exclude adults who are disabled for whatever reason, as they could need a carer but benefit from the experience, no matter the reason for their disability. Essential carer isn't the right term imo. Who decides how essential they are?! Look at other big attractions and their wording and use similar.

-Personally, I think the person (adult or child) who's disabled should have reduced entry. Many are unlikely to get the full benefit of the experience in some way. Xx

-Most places i have been to let one carer of a disabled person in free

-I was under the impression the child and carer come in free as we have a max card (only available to disabled children) i would just sell the disabled child ticket \*\*with a free carer

-I think the issue is that without a carer a disabled person would not be able to attend. It does get messier with children as people see that parents/guardians would take them anyhow. But often a parent/guardian is also the official carer and has had to leave work etc and financially as a family they really wouldn't afford it without. I think stick with a free carer , we have 2 children with complex needs and we bring our friends with us to help out also. A free carer is a reasonable adjustment as many disabled people need them whereas a free disabled ticket is more like a special offer and you could find yourself foul of reasonable adjustments

-I look at it this way my son is 5 so you could argue he wouldn't be going in without an adult but as I'm the adult who knows his care needs , provides those care needs he is not able to spend long periods of time with someone who dosent understand his needs then I'm his essential carer. Also please don't make it DLA only , so many children who should receive DLA are denied it without an almighty battle. Often parents are unable to work so every little helps.

-Perhaps a card could be issued from eureka upon presentation of evidence of a disability whatever that may be . I personally think it should be the disabled person who gets free entitlement.

- I would word it as people with additional needs.

-I think applying it to the child is the easiest way to make the difference clear to grandparents, they're quite right that all children under a certain age need an essential carer.

-Please please do extend to disabled adults, my brother has cerebral palsy, he's an adult but mentally he's still a child and would enjoy somewhere like Eureka as much as any child. Maybe you could have a disabled adults day as often young children can find disabled adults like my brother scary, or they stare making the adult uncomfortable.

-The person with the disability should be free not the carer. Some people with disabilities can go on their own though. So really it should say disabled person free when accompanied by a carer.

-It's a tough one. I have two children, one of which needs one to one support. Often I end up paying for two adults, when one of us is only there in case my son needs to leave within the first 5 minutes.

**GEM responses:**

**Suggested pricing models/terminology:**

Carers/Assistants are half price on long trips, free on short ones (Canal )

Discounted disabled visitor, carer free

Both child and adult enter on child's rate

Disabled person

Carer/Assistant/companion

Free entry to those on DLA

Personal assistant

**Other points raised:**

Consensus that we shouldn't request to see proof

the term 'carer' really is difficult for most disabled people and their families.

Disabled versus person with disabilities

Disabled adults may not want their partner/spouse/friend to be identified as a carer

Disabled adults may not want to disclose disability in front of others

No labels – families self identify.

Dislike Essential Carer – parents consider themselves parents first.