

Summary of Sensory Support Service Engagement Work

Parent carers and Children and Young People (CYP) have told us that they would welcome changes to the way the Sensory Support Service is currently delivered so that it has a greater impact on the long term outcomes for CYP who have sensory impairments. This feedback was gathered through:

- A review undertaken in 2016 by the National Sensory Impairment Partnership
- [Stakeholder and service user engagement and co-production carried out in 2018.](#)
- A wide ranging review of SEND and High Needs Provision in 2019 that aimed to plan improvements to the service for CYP with sensory impairments
- Over the past twelve months we have been in focused discussions with sensory impairment experts and professionals working in this field.
- Collaborative working with the Joint Operations Group which comprises of parent carer representatives for different sensory impairment need types and age groups, voluntary sector partners including SENSE, RNIB and NDCS and joint authority officers.

A summary of this feedback can be found below highlighting the views of service users, providers and other experts on what is currently working well and what changes they would like to see

Summary of engagement feedback

Stakeholder	What is currently working well?	What could change?
Young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialist teachers increase confidence • Visits to school • Working with a specialist teacher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More work on feelings and socialising • More activities to make friends with other people who have sensory impairments • More training for teachers • More regular visits by specialist teachers
Parent carers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge and expertise of specialist teachers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gaps in educational attainment need to be addressed

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Years Support and early identification of impairments • Involvement in transition planning • Quality British Sign Language support • Positive experience of home visits • Lots of assistance from specialist teachers with EHC Needs Assessments, EHCP Annual reviews, understanding what happens in assessments and help with medical and funding forms • Facilitated opportunities for peer-to-peer support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More time spent with children and families • The annual report received by service users from their link specialist teacher needs to be relevant to individual children and young people and contain up to date advice and recommendations • Specialist teachers need to make time to talk to parent carers when they visit education settings • Communication from the service needs to improve • A consistent offer of support and provision is needed across the four areas • All year round support rather than just term-time
<p>Education, Health and Social Care professionals</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexibility and responsiveness of the service • Breadth, depth of knowledge and experience of service staff • Quality of training and advice • The support provided by the service needs to be consistent, regular and ongoing • Level of support to staff and families across the four joint authority aread • High quality Education, Health and Care (EHC) Needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More resource is needed to ensure the service continues to be responsive to the changing needs of children and young people in the four areas • Thresholds for eligibility need to be clear and transparent • The Local Offer needs to be clear • Professionals wanted more face to face meetings and networking opportunities • Service awareness of delivering

	<p>Assessment advice and annual reports about individual children and young people</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Acorns Group for pre-school children with hearing impairments is invaluable • Early intervention provides better long term outcomes 	<p>specialist teaching in mainstream environments needs to be improved</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service awareness of mainstream settings' access to funding across the four areas • Fewer part-time staff in the service • Increased habilitation provision across the four areas
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As part of the stakeholder and service user engagement and co-production in 2018, respondents said they wanted more say in how provision is developed and what a new model of provision should include. A summary of what respondents said they wanted is provided below:

Stakeholder	What must the new service model include?
Young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More activities out of school to make friends • Better training for school and college staff • More regular visits
Parent carers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Views and aspirations of the family/ young person must be central to all decisions made • Video training to share and educate on sensory impairment awareness, rather than just leaflets • More training to education staff to ensure that all settings are sensory impairment-aware • Better support at key stage transfer from primary to secondary education • Environmental audits and advice that schools follow up on • More support for teenagers and young adults • Better focus on outcomes and tangible educational and social achievement • Appropriate caseloads for specialist teachers

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More access to radio-aids • Better use of technology by Sensory Support staff to reduce time spent travelling between appointments • More opportunities for peer to peer support, more groups and a whole-family approach
<p>Education, Health and Social Care professionals</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued regular visits to education settings • Individual assessment and personalised support • Ongoing liaison with parent carers and families • Improved availability of specialist teachers • Training to schools and education settings • Improved eligibility thresholds and pathways for accessing support • Consistency of support through a key-working approach • More support for low-incidence or rare conditions • Better joined up working with education, health and social care • Consistent, high quality, specified and quantified EHC Needs Assessment advice • Improved advice in reports – not too many strategies and • Improved resources for Braille teaching • Improved awareness of technological advancements • Improved awareness of medical and clinical advancements • Equitable support offer across the four areas • Sign-posting to out of school support from Third Sector groups