

Sensory Support Service SI Strategy

Executive Summary

Introduction:

This document sets out how the sensory support service and the 4 local authorities (Bristol, South Gloucester, Bath and North East Somerset and North Somerset) that commission the service will achieve their vision for children and young people (CYP) with sensory impairment and their families, in collaboration with a range of other services and agencies. This strategy was developed in on-going discussions with Professor Harry Daniels - University of Bath.

Following current legislation (Equality Act, 2010) it is important to understand disability as the way in which CYP experience an impairment. It is the role of the Sensory Support Service to try to minimise the disabling impact of sensory impairment and to ensure positive outcomes for CYP with sensory impairment and for society.

1. Background

1.1 - Definition of sensory impairment / Low incidence need

In this context sensory impairment refers to loss of the hearing and/or vision sense that has an impact on access to visual and/or auditory information.

Sensory Impairment is a low incidence special educational need and disability which is described as:

- A need which has the potential to have an adverse impact on learning and development unless additional measures are taken to support the child / young person.
- The prevalence rate is so low that a mainstream setting is unlikely to have sufficient knowledge and experience to meet these requirements. Settings will need to obtain specialist support and advice on how to ensure equitable access and progression (against national standards).
- The prevalence rate is so low that any formula for allocating resources for additional needs, which is based on proxy indicators of need, will not reflect the true distribution of children and young people identified as having low incidence SEND (NatSIP, 2012).

1.2 - SEN and / or Disability

CYP with sensory impairment can be considered as having a special educational needs or as being disabled or both. For some children their condition means that adaptations or extra support is required to ensure they can access the curriculum – they are considered to have a special educational need but they may not see themselves as disabled because as long as these adaptations are in place it may not have an impact on their normal day to day activities. Other CYP may have needs that have a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities.

This is the case for many CYP with sensory impairment affecting their ability to communicate, move safely, access information and learn. The service has an important role in minimising the disabling effects of an impairment and ensuring CYP live ordinary fulfilling lives with opportunities to achieve positive outcomes.

1.3 - Planning to meet the needs of CYP with Sensory Impairment

LAs have a role in:

- commissioning and planning strategically for services to ensure they secure a range of high quality provision for CYP with SEN or who are disabled
- enabling families to make informed choices and exercise greater control over services.
- meeting their legal duty to give equal opportunities to disabled CYP or those with SEN in having the very best opportunity to succeed in life.

Sensory Impairment is a low incidence need. Planning appropriate provision for CYP with sensory impairment poses a number of challenges as they are not spread evenly across geographical areas and a wide range of specialist skills is required to support CYP with sensory impairment effectively.

The low incidence aspect of sensory impairment means that knowledge about how CYP's condition impacts on their development and learning is not widely available in educational settings or in clusters of educational settings.

1.4 Vision

Our vision is that:

- All CYP with sensory impairment are able to learn and achieve, are independent, have high aspirations, participate and contribute to society, are happy and live fulfilling lives.
- CYP's families show good levels of adaptation to their child's conditions, feel confident in promoting their children's development, are able to communicate effectively with their children and celebrate their successes.
- Educational settings are inclusive and develop effective ways of meeting each CYP's individual needs as much as possible from within

their own resources but that they also work collaboratively with the Sensory Support Service and other organisations to achieve this.

- Collaborative working with families and a range of agencies / organisations is embedded in our practice.

1.5 Values

Our values are:

- CYP and their families are at the centre of what we do
- Commitment to equality of opportunity and social justice
- Valuing diversity, respecting individual needs and aiming for personalisation
- Promoting high aspirations, inclusion and achievement
- Working collaboratively with others

1.6 Our goals:

We aim to provide the highest standard of education and a good quality and integrated service that enables CYP with sensory impairment to achieve the highest standards of achievement and positive outcomes in their lives.

In order to achieve positive outcomes in the lives of CYP with SI, we need to consider the wider range of their needs including promoting social emotional being, advocacy and independence. We are aware of the specific challenges a SI poses in these areas and their impact on the outcomes for CYP.

1.8 Guiding Principles

Our guiding principles are that the service will:

- Support families and CYP from diagnosis and promote understanding of SI among families and CYP
 - o Contribute to the early diagnosis and provide early intervention to ensure best outcomes for CYP and their families.
 - o Carry out effective and timely assessments of sensory need that contribute to the improvement of the quality of outcomes. These assessments will be regular and take a multi agency approach as appropriate.
 - o Recognise diversity and work with families to ensure a good understanding and acceptance of their CYP's condition.
 - o Work sensitively with parents and intervene as early as possible to promote development and readiness to school, e.g. promoting concept development
 - o Take a flexible approach to service provision to meet the family's needs, e.g. where and when home visits are carried out, how information is provided, etc.
- Promote informed choice through information and professional practice
 - o Provide information to allow families and CYP to make informed choices, e.g. means of communication, types of provision available, technology and equipment available, etc.
 - o Ensure families and CYP are involved in the process of deciding what support / service is required and are offered unbiased information.
- Promote CYP and families participation in SI interventions

- Empowering CYP and families to navigate the system,
 - Building CYP's social capacity to actively engage in decisions about their future / support,
 - Developing their independence and avoid learned helplessness
 - Provide opportunities for CYP with SI and families to contribute to the development of services supporting them.
- **Deliver interventions that promote best physical, emotional, social and economic outcomes for CYP with SI**
- Carry out effective and timely assessments of sensory need that contribute to the improvement of the quality of outcomes. These assessments will be regular and take a multi agency approach as appropriate.
 - Carry out effective assessments of a range of areas relevant to the development of CYP with SI that contribute to the improvement of the quality of outcomes - covering a range of areas, e.g. child development of SI CYP, visual functioning, language, response to sound, ICT, use of Braille, BSL, etc.
 - Ensure educational provision and advice is of good quality and effective strategies are used to meet the specific needs of CYP
 - Development of provision to meet fluctuating needs – flexibility
 - Provide opportunities for SI CYP to meet other SI CYP
- **Collaborate with other partners in SI services for CYP**
- Promote information sharing and collaborative working approaches across services, agencies and voluntary organisations
 - Ensure there are effective protocols between different agencies which promote an integrated service provision to CYP and their families.
 - Consider the wider range of needs of families/CYP by liaising with other agencies, providing opportunities for parents to come together, etc.
- **Advise EY settings, schools and colleges through training and individual case work**
- Ensure educational settings are effectively supported and challenged in developing their ability to meet CYP's needs including the provision of a good quality learning environment
 - Ensure accessibility by working with settings to improve the educational environment.
 - Ensure smooth transition between settings and/or phases of education.
 - Raise expectations of what CYP with SI can achieve, e.g. promoting positive role models, provide training, etc.
- **Deliver best practice with trained staff practising evidence based interventions**
- Ensure settings, families and CYP are supported by staff who are appropriately trained and have the most updated knowledge in the field.
 - This involves having access to continuous professional development and creating a learning culture to enable staff (within the service and across agencies) to provide a good quality service which is based on the most recent evidence / research / knowledge.
 - Staff have an understanding of other diversity and equalities issues that can affect all C&YP, such as ethnicity, and how they might particularly affect the lives of CYP with SI
 - Review, evaluate and continuously improve the quality of provision for SI CYP.
- **Provide added value and value for money**
- Ensure that CYP, their families and settings receive a good quality service whilst best value is achieved.

Part 2 - Strategic priorities

Aims	Where we want to get to	Actions	Who	When
<p>Raising achievement of CYP with SI</p>	<p>All CYP achieve good levels of attainment and/or show good levels of progress, fulfil their potential and achieve positive wider outcomes.</p>	<p>Further develop systems to monitor CYP's progress</p>	<p>Nathan Meager</p>	<p>July 13 On-going</p>
	<p>Provide effective interventions that are informed by a range of specialist assessments carried out by a professional with the required qualifications in the field of sensory impairment.</p>	<p>Continuous professional development to ensure that service staff have evidence based understanding of CYP's needs and are able to provide effective advice about the range of teaching and inclusion strategies to meet them.</p>	<p>SLT</p>	<p>July 13 On-going</p>
	<p>There is good quality and accessible information available to parents which provide unbiased information and enable them to make informed choices</p>	<p>Support families to enable them to promote their child's development.</p>	<p>SLT</p>	<p>On-going</p>
	<p>Families understand their child's needs and feel confident in promoting their development</p>	<p>Support educational settings develop personalised packages of support to meet the specific needs of their pupils, develop individual programmes of work in specialist areas.</p>	<p>SLT</p>	<p>On-going</p>
	<p>Educational settings have the capacity to meet the needs of CYP with sensory impairment as much as possible</p>	<p>Update and continuously improve family information packs for early years' children and introduce family information pack for older pupils</p>	<p>EY - Jane Shearer SA – VST</p>	<p>July 13 On-going</p>
	<p>CYP have access to a range of appropriate equipment that enables them to access information.</p>	<p>Further development of website</p>	<p>SLT</p>	<p>Dec 13</p>
	<p>Decisions about best possible equipment are based on recent evidence, relevant assessment processes and a multi agency approach including the views of the CYP and their families</p>	<p>Support educational settings to evaluate their own practice in respect to meeting the needs of pupils with sensory impairment</p>	<p>SLT</p>	<p>On-going</p>
		<p>Advise and contribute to the recruitment of TAs employed by settings and to their on-going professional development.</p>	<p>VS Teacher</p>	<p>April 13</p>
		<p>Provide information about training available to families / schools and others – develop effective training opportunities</p>	<p>Sara Trower</p>	<p>Nov 12</p>
		<p>Continuous professional development and information sharing activities to ensure that service staff are kept up to date with technical developments and knowledge of best practice in providing access through effective use of IT</p>	<p>HoS</p>	<p>On-going</p>
	<p>Technical support is available from the service specialists and a qualified Educational Audiologist.</p>	<p>HoS</p>		

Cont.	Provide effective multi agency working practices	Explore central funding of equipment for CYP with sensory impairment ensuring best value and recycling opportunities across the service.	HoS / LAs representatives	Apr 14
	Service staff are knowledgeable about implications of conditions and about how to use effective teaching and learning activities to promote achievement of CYP with sensory impairment	Develop further multi agency approach and explore provision of some of these areas from within the service, e.g. allocated EP time to the service, allocated time from some therapists, e.g. specialist speech and language therapist for deaf children, social care input.	HoS	Apr 14
Ensure effective early intervention	Appropriate and timely referrals to the service	Ensuring pathways are clear and shared across agencies	SLT	Jul 13
	Service responds timely and effectively to new referrals, carries out initial assessment of need and supports and builds parents' confidence in navigating the system.	Ensuring response times to new referrals achieve its national targets	TLs	On-going
	Early identification and intervention enable CYP effective interventions that support optimal physical, cognitive and social development.	Continuous improvement of initial assessment of need and contribution to education, health and care assessments	SLT	As required
	In the early years, effective intervention enables child developing early language and communication and understanding of the world around them promoting readiness for school.	Develop further Early Support approach across the age range by continuing developing best practice in: > effective multi-agency support so that families get a co-ordinated service; > involvement of parents in planning and delivery of services; > developing the role of key workers to support parents and families, and > improving professionals' skills and knowledge.	Katy Mitchell Katie Pester	Jan 14
		Continuous development of specialist knowledge / skills of service staff including: working with parents, supporting parenting skills, promoting early language and communication and early development and development in the field.	SLT	On-going

Aims	Where we want to get to	Actions	Who	When
<p>Effective engagement with stakeholders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - commissioners - service users: CYP, their families, educational settings and other organisations/agencies to provide a flexible approach to improve outcomes for CYP 	<p>Engage with commissioners to ensure good quality provision for all service users in the new political and educational context</p>	<p>Explore and decide on model of provision: LA service, virtual school, mutual/social enterprise, company</p>	<p>HoS / LA rep</p>	<p>Jul 12</p>
	<p>All stakeholders are informed about how and what they can access from the service</p>	<p>Develop agreed model of provision – consult and implement new model</p>	<p>SLT / LA rep</p>	<p>Jan 14</p>
	<p>Service users are confident in working with the service to support them navigate the system and agree service provision that will meet their needs</p>	<p>Increase engagement of CYP in developing services they receive, e.g. through school council. Develop joint commissioning with health – explore and contribute to developments to enable joint commissioning</p>	<p>Michelle Beirne-Shallice</p>	<p>Jul 13 On-going</p>
	<p>CYP with sensory impairment and their families access integrated and coordinated services that enable an informed and smooth journey through the system</p>	<p>Contribute to the production of robust service level agreements and contracts with all stakeholders and develop the ability of the service to co design and personalise service provision to better meet the needs</p>	<p>HoS</p>	<p>Dec 12 On-going</p>
	<p>There is evidence based information about the quality of provision available from the service and other specialist provision</p>	<p>Develop communication strategy and produce a number of materials to ensure information is available to parents, educational settings, CYP themselves and others about available provision (with clarity about what is standard and what is enhanced provision)</p>	<p>SLT Nathan Meager</p>	<p>Jan 13 On-going</p>
		<p>Develop further effective multi agency practices such as providing joint assessments and recommendations</p>	<p>Marion Donaldson</p>	<p>On-going</p>
		<p>Provide opportunities for LAs to commission service to contribute / support quality assurance processes of other LA specialist provisions or evaluate provision for individual CYP in specialist provision</p>	<p>HoS</p>	<p>Jan 13</p>
		<p>Develop further partnerships with other providers (inc with the voluntary sector) to increase choice and co design and personalisation of support to CYP and their families</p>	<p>HoS</p>	<p>On-going</p>

Aims	Where we want to get to	Actions	Who	When
<p>Demonstrating quality and effectiveness</p>	<p>Sustainable learning organisation that promotes its own development, that of its partners and builds capacity of other organisations</p> <p>Effective ways of linking the learning on the ground with strategic decision makers so that decisions can be made with the best understanding of good practice and what works best.</p> <p>There is robust evidence available of how the service is performing (by itself and with partners) – securing accountability and value for money</p>	<p>Develop leadership skills within the organisation and look at leadership requirements of new model of provision</p> <p>Establish sustainable opportunities for reflection, joint planning, problem solving and sharing of information with stakeholders – involve or include service users' views in this process</p> <p>Promote shared understanding across agencies through joint training</p> <p>Develop further a cycle of robust service evaluation including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - evaluation of service provision with our partners across agencies - value for money 	<p>HoS</p> <p>SLT</p> <p>Marion Donaldson</p> <p>SLT</p>	<p>Mar 13 On-going</p> <p>On-going</p> <p>On-going</p> <p>Jan 13 On-going</p>
<p>Promoting inclusion</p>	<p>Service provision promotes active participation and inclusion in educational settings, family, community activities and access to other services.</p> <p>Schools are aware of their legal responsibilities in meeting the equality duty.</p> <p>Improving accessibility by ensuring that physical environments used by CYP with sensory impairment are accessible and promote inclusion and participation</p>	<p>Continuous professional development to ensure staff are knowledgeable about effective strategies to include CYP with sensory impairment</p> <p>Training provided to educational settings and other organisations includes equality duty issues</p> <p>Explore the development of the Bristol Inclusion Standard or equivalent to include a specific section on sensory impairment issues</p> <p>Provide environmental audits and advise on adaptations / alterations to increase accessibility to physical environment</p> <p>Ensure service staff have the required skills to carry out environmental audits</p>	<p>SLT</p> <p>Sue Horne</p> <p>Sue Horne Ann Manuel</p> <p>Ann Rayter Gary Learmonth</p> <p>SLT</p>	<p>On-going</p> <p>Mar 13</p> <p>Jul 13</p> <p>Apr 13</p> <p>July 13 On-going</p>

Aims	Where we want to get to	Actions	Who	When
Develop support for post 16	Local providers are supported and able to provide increased choice for post 16 in the region Effective transition into FE and into adult services	Offer packages of support to FE and HE	Marion Donaldson Ann Manuel	Jan 13
		Provide opportunities for training and improved collaboration between providers	Deborah Rutherford	Jan 13 On-going
		Establish transition protocols to ensure smooth transition into FE and HE	Deborah Rutherford	Jan 13
		Develop service staff skills in working with YP in post 16 including development of study skills, advocacy, independence and IT skills.	SLT	May 13
Reduce travel time and promote independence	CYP access educational settings, including specialist provision within reasonable travel distances CYP travel as independently as possible	Work with LAs to develop effective planning of location of specialist provision taking into consideration travel times	HoS / LA rep	On-going
		Contribute to the provision of intervention programmes to promote independent travel for CYP with SI	Gary Learmonth	Apr 13 On-going