

Children with sensory needs

Children's Services

Procedures

Working with children with sensory needs



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Feedback:

We welcome feedback about our policies and procedures so if you have any comments about this guidance please email to socialcare@westsussex.gov.uk

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1. Budget Responsibility

- 1.1 Budget responsibility rests with the child's Area unless the child would otherwise meet the definition for the Child Disability Teams (CDT). Deafness alone does not constitute severe disability within these terms. Sensory Services do not have a budget for children's support services, but can provide equipment via the community equipment service following assessment. Requests for family support services or accommodation will need to be directed to the appropriate Duty and Assessment Team in the relevant area or CDT if criteria for this team are met.

2. Case Responsibility

- 2.1 Case responsibility will vary according to the nature of the child's needs:

2.1.1 If the child's needs are primarily around their deafness, communication and how the child and family are managing the personal and social consequences of the deafness, then the specialist worker for Deaf children in Sensory Services will be the main case worker, working alongside other partner agencies i.e. children's' learning and health.

2.1.2 If the child's and family's needs are not primarily around issues of deafness, but concern safeguarding health or development then case responsibility rests with the child's local area team, unless the child meets the definition of the child disability team. In these cases, the specialist worker in the Sensory Services Team can offer specialist advice, consultation and joint working where appropriate with regard to any deaf issues.

3. Contacts and Initial Assessments

- 3.1 Sensory Services are responsible for taking contacts for D/deaf children, who meet the eligibility criteria. If the contact is clearly around primary needs linked to the child's deafness then the specialist worker in Sensory Services will be the main case worker. If the issues are around safeguarding or issues not linked to the child's deafness then the duty worker will redirect the enquiry to the relevant area team or CDT if the child meets the CDT definition. All Safeguarding issues should be initially referred to the Duty and Assessment Team.

4. Visually Impaired Children

- 4.1 Sensory Services continue to have responsibility for the registration of visually impaired children as sight impaired or severely sight impaired. The Rehabilitation Officers for the Visually Impaired

(ROVI's) will offer the child and family an assessment and in addition to registration will offer advice and information and as appropriate, specialist equipment.

- 4.2 Habilitation and rehabilitation training for visually impaired children will mainly be carried out by the Rehabilitation and Mobility Officers (RMO's) in the Sensory Support Team – Children's Learning Service. A separate protocol exists between Sensory Services – Social Care and Sensory Support – Children's learning, concerning visually impaired children - see protocol for details.
- 4.3 Sensory Services do not hold case management responsibility for visually impaired children where ongoing social care needs are identified. Therefore social work case and budget responsibility rests either with the area team or the CDT (if their definition is met). Contacts and initial assessments should therefore be carried out by the Area or CDT as appropriate. If needs are identified for rehabilitation involvement i.e. mobility or independence training, then contact should be made with Sensory Services Duty or Sensory Support team for advice/referral.

5. Deaf-Blind Children

- 5.1 Deafblind children are those whose combined sight and hearing impairment causes difficulties with communication, mobility and access to information. The Social Care Guidance for Deafblind Adults and Children places particular duties on Local Authorities to identify and meet the needs of Deafblind children, including assessment by a specifically trained person/team and provision of appropriate services (this may mean specifically trained, one to one support workers).
- 5.2 The Sensory Services Team has staff who have received specific training to assess the needs of deafblind people including children. Referrals should be directed to Sensory Services Team.