

7 December 2023

## Redesign of Specialist Inclusion Services

### *(Physical & Sensory Support Service)*

#### Parent Carer & Stakeholder

#### Briefing Note

### Introduction

The council, together with its partners, parents and carers, is looking to redesign its Specialist Inclusion Services (SIS) to collectively shape a more inclusive, efficient, and effective system that better serves the needs of children and young people (CYP) with SEND whilst operating within our current resources.

We know some parents and schools feel that they are not able to access services without an EHCP to support their child and that caseloads have been increasing in some of our specialist services.

The 2020 Specialist Inclusion Service (SIS) review highlighted a need for change in how Dudley supports children with SEND. Despite the dedication and expertise of SIS staff, the review highlighted that there is a lack of meaningful measurement of the impact of these services.

The absence of a clear service planning and performance improvement framework, coupled with relatively high spending, calls for essential changes. A more efficient and integrated approach to service delivery, better engagement with mainstream schools and parents and young people, clear performance management frameworks, and a culture of continuous improvement are key areas that need attention.

We know that there is a huge amount of expertise and knowledge within our current teams, and we want to listen to and work with them as well as parent carers, children and young people and partners to help shape any future service, taking on board their comments and feedback that we have received through the review and the soon-to-be published, independent parent carer forum survey results.

This work will focus on utilising our existing services, and re-designing and re-organising our current specialist services and staff to maximise the impact we can have across Children and Young People in Dudley and to ensure they have the right support to meet their needs.



Alongside the reorganisation of our specialist services, we will coproduce a framework of advice, guidance, and evaluation to support schools and providers. This will give a clear knowledge base for all stakeholders including parents and carers to ensure consistency and accountability.

We are at the start of this journey, and we want to co-produce a service with parents and carers, partners, schools, and staff that ensures our services are sustainable and fit for the future.

To this end we have engaged not for profit organisation, Genuine Partnerships to deliver their '[4 Cornerstones Training](#)'; which is an exciting training programme focusing on how to deliver real co-production and develop practice across the system.

We have received additional funding of £1 million as part of the Department for Education's Delivering Better Value programme to support us with this redesign activity and other linked SEND improvement work. We aim to have the new service in place by Autumn Term 2024.

## What are our Specialist Inclusion Services?

In Dudley we have been redesigning the whole of Children's Services Directorate and for the purposes of this SIS redesign we have 5 services that will come together starting from this month and will become an integrated service. We have given this service a working title of the Physical and Sensory Support Service (PSSS) but the final name will be determined by the redesign.

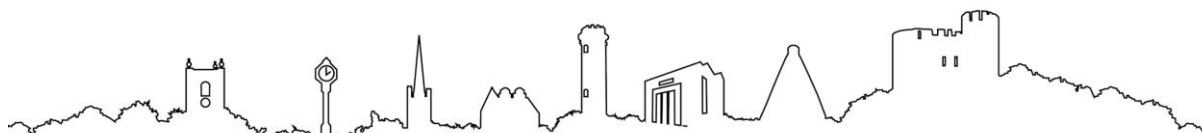
The services are:

- Visual Impairment Service (VIS)
- The Physical Impairment / Medical Inclusion Service (PIMIS)
- Hearing Impairment Service (HIS)
- Autism Outreach Service (AOS)
- Speech and Language Centre and ECHO (Education and communication help through outreach)

## Why are we doing it now?

The Department for Education acknowledges the current challenges which local systems are experiencing in delivering special educational needs and disability services (SEND).

An external review carried out on behalf of the Department for Education's 'Delivering Better Value Programme' between October 2022-March 2023, and which took on board stakeholder



comments, identified that Dudley, like many other local authorities across the UK, are struggling to meet the needs of CYP with SEND within its government-allocated funding and locally our spending is increasing year on year.

The review identified that the drivers for the increase in spend was that there was a lack of mainstream support or a lack of confidence in mainstream support – leading to expensive high-needs support.

This work confirmed the findings of the 2020 review and clearly our current way of doing things is unsustainable and we need to do things differently.

We want to learn from other areas, listen to our staff parents, carers and young people and stakeholders to understand how we can change for the better.

## Next steps

We are currently a developing a formal governance structure to oversee the programme that will include members from Dudley Parent Carer Forum, staff and partners.

We are also in the process of drafting a communications and engagement plan that will provide opportunities for all stakeholders to get involved and we will communicate regular updates to the project.

### Contacts & for more information:

In the meantime, if you have any queries about this redesign, please can you

- email us at [sis.redeseign@dudley.gov.uk](mailto:sis.redeseign@dudley.gov.uk)
- or contact Dudley Parent Carer Forum at [info@dudleyparentcarerforum.co.uk](mailto:info@dudleyparentcarerforum.co.uk)

### Regards

- **Sal Thirlway, Service Director of Education, SEND & Family Solutions**
- **Dudley Parent Carer Forum**

