

Annex B2: Terms of reference for the Review of Disabled Children

Key Questions

What progress has already been made in addressing the needs of disabled children and their families?

The creation of a multi-agency strategy group the 'Service Development Partnership' chaired by the Director of Children Social Services with the remit of developing strategy and ensuring operational delivery by key agencies. This includes:

- Team around the child approach for Early Years and for Transition
- Development of a web site for professionals, young people and parents to provide information and interaction
- The implementation of direct payments scheme
- The development of three innovative parent led health and social care resource centers with overnight stays and one stop provision for parents. There are plans for each of the centers to be managed by parents' consortium. (possibly a Community Interest Company).
- Review of safeguarding procedures for disabled and deaf children.

A Strategic Review of Kent special school provision to improve accessibility for local children which has resulted in,

- Kent Accessibility Strategy 2003 – 6
- £2 million increase in revenue for profound disability and complex needs
- A £120 million special schools 'fit for purpose' capital building programme
- A review of units and designations

Underpinned by a wide range of projects such as the Communication Aids County Project (supported by Health) identifying the best communication aids to improve accessibility

What are the barriers currently restricting access to services and therefore effective intervention?

Eligibility criteria for social services is high due to financial constraints. This makes it difficult to invest in preventative services especially for autistic children who do not have a dual disability.

The cost of independent sector placements impairs the provision of more effective packages of care in the community

The implementation of direct payments presents challenges. Current funding is tied up in delivering services e.g. residential respite. The lack of extra funding has made this transition extremely difficult and potentially could destabilise existing provision

Budgets need to be pooled. We anticipate the developing children's trust arrangements will resolve this issue.

Are services sufficiently co-ordinated at local level to allow families to access sufficient support to meet their needs?

Each district multi-agency consortium and school clusters commission local preventative services. There are a number of local projects running to promote the team around the child approach for pre-school children with the aim of preparing for the implementation of CAF, ISI and the Lead Professional.

What family support services i.e. key workers, short breaks, sibling support, behavioural management are currently available and how do these relate to other services?

There are a number of commissioned services delivered locally and through the schools to provide support to carers. Some examples are:

Early Support Programme
Respite Fostering
Residential respite
Teenage weekend clubs
Play Schemes – working with district councils
Pre-school nurseries
Children Centres [Health]
Portage
Advisory services
Direct payments
Link Scheme [befriending service for parents and children]
Social work
Specialists Teachers
Deaf Services Children and Families Team
Speech Therapy
Parent Training programmes

There is a lack of CAMHS support for children with serious learning difficulties

What are the most cost-effective interventions in delivering outcomes?

Services that enable children and young people to live at home and in their community are most cost effective. For example

Home support
Respite Fostering
Link Scheme
Local school provision

Avoiding the need for children to be placed in residential care is a critical factor in adults achieving independence. Transition plans also play a vital role.

What are the interventions which, if made earlier, could reduce more costly interventions later? How can we identify the need to intervene earlier?

See above