

Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel

19 November 2009

Integrated Services – Children with Disabilities

Disabled Children in Plymouth

The definition and thresholds for disabled children are complex due to the many different views on this matter at a national level. However, it is accepted (according to the Office for National Statistics 2004) that 7% of the child population will meet the Disability Discrimination Act definition of disability. Therefore, in Plymouth we would expect there to be 3468 children who meet the DDA definition of disability as follows:

“...a person has a disability for the purposes of this Act if he has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.”

We have established that in 2008/09 1528 children were identified as children with significant disability living in Plymouth. 270 of these children have complex health needs. This equates to 3% of the child population. It is accepted that this is the core group of children and families requiring the support of the Children's Integrated Disability Service and short break provision.

A draft eligibility criteria has been written for the Children's Integrated Disability Service (see Appendix 1).

Support for disabled children, young people and their families

National context:

Aiming High for Disabled Children 2007 (policy review) has required a new focus on how services are provided to support disabled children, young people and their families. It draws together the expectations that are set out in the NHS Operating Framework and in the Children's Plan. Aiming High for Disabled Children (AHDC) is the transformation programme for disabled children's services.

The programme has been supported by substantial new grant funding and measures designed to make the system work better; the AHDC programme aims to deliver:

- Access and empowerment for disabled children and families
- Responsive services and timely support
- Improved service quality and capacity

The national funding from DCSF breaks down into the following streams:

- Short breaks £370 million
- Childcare £35 million
- Transition Support Programme (TSP) £19 million
- Parent Forums £5 million

Local Implementation

In order to coordinate the service improvement work in Plymouth, the Aiming High for Disabled Children Strategic Oversight group has been set up and is chaired by Maggie Carter, Assistant Director for Learner and Family Support. The group reports to the Children and Young People's Trust. The Primary Care Trust and Plymouth Hospital NHS Trust are key partners in the group, as are other council departments, voluntary and community sector and parent/carer representatives whose work can influence the lives of disabled children and their families. The remit of this group is to develop a strategic framework for disabled children.

a) Integrated working:

The Children's Integrated Disability Service (reporting to the Children and Young People's Trust) brings together the work of the following range of teams in order to deliver integrated processes and joined up working for disabled children, young people and their families:

- Children's Disability Social Care – PCC
- Communication Interaction Team – PCC
- Early Years Inclusion Service - PCC
- Sensory Advisory Team - PCC
- Special Persons' Information Network (SPIN) Database – PCC
- Special Services (Special Educational Needs) - PCC
- Occupational Therapy – PCC and Plymouth Hospitals NHS Trust (PHNT)
- Child Development Centre (Health) - PHNT
- Children's Community Nursing Team – PHNT
- Physiotherapy - PHNT
- Learning Disability Psychology – Primary Care Trust

The Joint Management Team is developing integrated processes to provide:

- Single point of contact to access the range of teams
- Better information for families
- Joined up assessment and care pathways
- Key worker and lead professional role
- Coordinated reviews
- Improved transitions (in childhood and into adulthood)

The Integrated Disability Service PCC budget for staffing and support for families is £2.6M in addition to specific grant funding from the DCSF.

b) Provision of Short Breaks (previously referred to as respite services):

Aiming High for Disabled Children has promoted a broader range of services that may be expected to provide families with a break. Previously 'respite' was the term used for a service which cared for the disabled child away from their home (transitionally in a specialist unit) in order that their family members could have a break from the caring responsibilities. The emphasis for 'Short Breaks' is that disabled children and young

people are able to access a wide range of appropriate positive activities with a benefit to parent/carers that they are able to have a break from care for that period of time.

A short break might include day, evening, overnight or weekend activities and could take place at home, at an approved carer's home or in a community or residential setting. It might also mean supporting parents in their caring role so that the whole family can enjoy activities together.

The Children and Young Persons Act 2008 will make short break provision for disabled children and their families a statutory service. The wording of the new duty is also important. The new legal provision makes clear that breaks should not just be provided to those carers struggling to maintain their caring role, but also to those for whom a break would improve the quality of the care they can offer. Short breaks should therefore not just be used as a crisis intervention, but should also be used in a preventative fashion to enhance the lives of families with disabled children and help them lead an ordinary and valued life.

Within the city we are providing an increasingly wide range of short break opportunities for families:

Residential Short Breaks:

- Woodlands Residence
- Downham House

Family-based Short Breaks:

- Trained foster carers provided short periods of regular care to children.

Home-based carers, sitting and enabling services:

- Carers supporting with the disabled child in the family home or in the community.

Specialist play and leisure provision:

- Clubs and activities provided specifically for disabled children

Inclusion work into mainstream play, leisure and youth activities:

- 1:1 support work or training to existing staff groups to enable disabled children and young people to be included in the range of activities already available within the City.

c) Improving Access to Short Break support:

The Aiming High for Disabled Children Short Break Grant has enabled improved access to short break support for families. The additional grant funding provided is:

2009/10:	Revenue £229,500	Capital £115,700
2010/11:	Revenue £740,300	Capital £270,000

In 2008/09, 414 disabled children were accessing short break support.

The Aiming High for Disabled Children grant money has increased the availability of short breaks this year to date (April-September 2009).

714 disabled children have accessed short break provision. The projection for 2010/11 is that 1500 disabled children will be able to access short break support.

The Short Breaks Project Board is seeking to make access to short breaks easier for families. The key change will be that many short break options will be accessed by families without the need for a Social Care Assessment.

In addition, the Children's Integrated Disability Service has established a joint equipment store which hosts equipment that is available to providers on a short loan scheme to enable disabled children to access holiday activities. Equipment is also available for parents to borrow.

The Short Breaks Newsletter is providing families within the city with regular information about the range of short break opportunities that are available.

d) Aids and Adaptations:

The Occupational Therapy (OT) Team lead on the provision of aids and adaptations to disabled children and young people. There is joint working with a range of services to coordinate this provision.

OT and Housing Adaptations Team work together to provide adaptations and alterations to family homes in both the public and private sector. The OT Manager is a member of the Housing Adaptation Strategic Forum where policy, procedure and the information strategy for families is developed.

OT and Health-based physiotherapy staff provide joint assessment for children and young people to coordinate postural, mobility and equipment issues.

OT staff work with schools in the city to provide environmental adaptations and therapeutic programmes for pupils. In addition, toileting and manual handling programmes are provided.

Support is available to voluntary and community sector service providers for disabled children with regard to manual handling and environmental alterations.

Overview of education provision for disabled children

Within Plymouth the educational needs of disabled children are being met through the full range of school provision. It would be expected that most disabled children would have a Statement of Special Educational Needs (although the population of children with Statements of SEN is wider than 'disability').

It is identified from the schools census that there are 4511 children with Special Educational Needs in Plymouth. Of this number, 1274 have a Statement of SEN and 80 are currently being assessed. The remainder are at School Action and School Action Plus on the Code of Practice and provision is made for them within school.

The number of Plymouth children with statement of SEN attending Special Schools in the city is as follows:

Courtlands School	74
Downham School	64
Brook Green School	83
Longcause School	95
Mill Ford School	74
Mount Tamar School (inc. Hamoaze House provision)	84
Plymouth Hospital School*	7
Woodlands School	48
Plymouth Tuition Service (inc. Not School)	8

*Most pupils attend the Hospital School on a short term basis and are registered on the roll of their substantive school.

Please note that the majority of our special schools also have pupils from Devon and Cornwall.

628 children with Statements of SEN are attending mainstream schools.

128 children with Statements of SEN are attending Support Centres attached to mainstream schools.

55 children with Statements of SEN are placed in out of city schools. The needs of these children are as follows:

Emotional Behaviour Difficulties/ADHD	26
Autistic Spectrum Condition/ Social Communication Disorder	9
Hearing Impairment	5
Visual Impairment	2
Physical Difficulties	2
Moderate Learning Difficulties	3
Severe Learning Difficulties	3
Specific Learning Difficulties	1
Profound and Multiple Difficulties	1
Specific Speech and Language Needs	3

Specialist support teams from the Integrated Disability Service and other services such as Educational Psychology, SEN Adviser and Consultants provide training advice and consultation to schools and early years settings to help them meet the needs of children and young people with SEN and disability.

Appendix 1

DRAFT Eligibility Criteria for the Children's Integrated Disability Service

The eligibility criteria for the new service are based on the DDA definition and are as follows:

- Child or young person aged between birth and 18th birthday
- Child or young person resident within Plymouth city. Some children will be eligible if they are the responsibility of PCC and/or PCT but are placed outside the area.
- Child or young person who needs to be provided with significantly more care and supervision than children of similar age or circumstance as a result of impaired development.

and/or

Child or young person will have enduring or permanent disabilities that have a marked effect on family life

and/or

In accordance with 'Together From The Start', a child under 3 years of age shall be considered disabled if he/she:

- i) is experiencing significant developmental impairment or delays, in one or more of the areas of cognitive development, sensory or physical development, communication development, social, behavioural or emotional development; or
- ii) has a condition which has a high probability of resulting in developmental delay.

Additional notes

The range of teams within an Integrated Disability Service will have different criteria for accessing service provision. This will be on the basis of identified need and the agreed use of limited resources within the organisations. In addition, many of the teams will work with children who are not defined as 'disabled' but who have some degree of developmental difficulty. These issues will be taken into account when developing the service policy and procedures in order that children and young people who are not 'disabled', and their families, are not disadvantaged

Some children who live in Devon and Cornwall will access a range of health provision in accordance with existing commissioning arrangements. These children will not be able to access the support of teams who are commissioned to work with Plymouth city children. However, the principles of Early Support and Integrated Working will underpin the approach for all children as appropriate.

"Existing legal definitions of disability vary. It is not easy to apply existing legal definitions of disability to children aged birth to third birthday:

- i) many people find the language of some existing definitions insensitive, and in particular they may be off-putting to families with very young children;
- ii) existing definitions tend to rely upon the existence of a long-term and substantial disadvantage. In very young children, it is often not possible to determine clearly whether any impairment will be long-term, but the need for early intervention remains."

(from Together From The Start 2003 p6-7)