

## **Exeter, East and Mid Devon**

### **Children's Hearing Services Working Group (CHSWG)**

#### **Annual Report 2018**

The Children's Hearing Services Working Group comprises a multi-agency group made up of parents and professionals working to improve provision for children and young people with hearing loss in this area. The group works to agreed terms of reference. This group, along with other groups in Devon and Cornwall, also feeds in to a more strategic Children's Hearing Services Forum for the southwest peninsular. The group has met three times over the past year, with representatives from health, education, social care, voluntary sector and parents attending when possible.

At the end of 2017 objectives were discussed and agreed by the CHSWG meeting. During the year 2018 we have met regularly as a group to make progress in these areas. In addition members of the team have worked to improve specific areas of practice.

#### **To increase the level of parental involvement in the CHSWG and value the parent voice in shaping the future of hearing services.**

- The CHSWG flier/ poster has been reviewed and is now available on noticeboards and websites and as a handout for parents. It is now within packs handed out by audiology at the time of first hearing aid fitting
- All professionals are aware they can offer to report the parents' concerns back in their stead for consideration at the CHSWG

#### **To improve multiagency working**

- Key documents used by different services have been presented and discussed eg graduated response tool used by TOD's; annual paediatric hearing services audit by audiology
- A presentation was given to the CHSWG on Devon SEND provision and how to access support.
- Links between TOD's and NDCAMHS (National Deaf Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services) have improved following training
- The work to improve audiology clinics at Mill Water School has now been duplicated at Ellen Tinkham School and is in the process of roll out at Vranck House
- The group completed the NDCS quality standards audit tool for children aged 0- 5 years

## **To look at accessibility of information for deaf children, young people and their families**

- A meeting has taken place between audiology and TOD's to look at the transition information provided by the hearing therapist. Leaflets are in process of review
- Happy Hands groups have been extended effectively with groups now meeting in North Devon and Torbay areas

## **In 2019 we are planning to:**

- Continue to promote the opportunity for transition support as children leave school and move on to further/ higher education or employment
- Seek to improve provision of ALD's for younger children and keep track of changes to this process
- Work towards closer links with the Public Health Nursing Team with more referrals for support from their service
- Monitor the impact of any changes to the NICE Cochlear Implant referral criteria
- Monitor the provision for highest needs deaf children due to changes in specialist educational provision
- Seek input and involvement from other services to the group eg ENT/ ERADE/ social care
- Review of the Graduated Response Tool and how this is working out in practice
- Monitoring potential changes to the way newborn hearing screening is implemented in this area

The group values input from all members and is particularly keen to try and increase parental involvement in the CHSWG meetings. We acknowledge that meetings may not be accessible for some parents but are seeking alternative ways to gain ideas and feedback from parents about service provision and areas for development. We are looking for opportunities to publicise more widely the aims and achievements of the CHSWG within the Exeter, Mid and East Devon area.