

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

**TERMS OF
REFERENCE**

1 Purpose

1.1 The Children's Hearing Services Working Group (CHSWG) is a multi-disciplinary and multi-agency group with representatives from services who share a vision and goals of achieving the best outcomes for deaf children, young people and the families who use their services. The CHSWG has a key role in coordinating and integrating the planning, commissioning, delivery, and assuring the quality of children's hearing services.

1.2 The CHSWG operates with the cooperation and authorisation of service providers, which recognises the group's aims and provides support in terms of resources and promotion of services.

1.3 The Group's Terms of Reference are underpinned by:

- The Action Plan on Hearing Loss, NHS England and Department of Health, 2015, which emphasises a whole system approach to the delivery of integrated public services, working collaboratively, and focusing upon the individual needs of the person with hearing loss.
- The NHS England (2019), The Long-Term Plan, which emphasises the need to give children the best start in life, address health inequalities and deliver integrated care.
- What Works: Children's Hearing Services Working Groups (first published by the National Deaf Children's Society in partnership with NHS England and NHS Improvement in 2019). This document is a guide for commissioners, and health and local authority providers who support children and young people with hearing loss, and updates earlier guidance produced by the NHS Newborn Hearing Screening Programme in England (2010)
- Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years; Statutory guidance for organisations which work with and support children and young people who have special educational needs or disabilities, DfE and DH (January 2015)
- 'Every Child Matters' (2003) set out a vision of the outcomes to be achieved, as part of a commitment to support for all children to:
 - Be healthy
 - Stay safe
 - Enjoy and achieve
 - Make a positive contribution
 - Achieve economic well-being

and these principles are still felt to be valid

- The common assessment framework (CAF), which is a process used to identify children's unmet needs and support them. The CAF aims to

streamline the process of helping at-risk children by allowing multiple agencies to communicate and work together as a team. This helps support the child and their family in all aspects of life and is used to safeguard children and young people who are facing difficulties that stop them from developing healthily and happily.

- The Equality Act (2010) applies to all CHSWG beliefs and actions
- Recommendations from the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) and comparable bodies
- British Academy of Audiology (BAA) Quality Standards for Paediatric Audiology

2 Vision and Aims

Vision

2.1 The delivery of good quality services that are integrated, work collaboratively, and focus upon the individual needs of the child or young person with hearing loss and their families.

Aims

2.2 The CHSWG aims are to:

- provide a forum for information sharing between all members
- provide an opportunity for issues of local and national importance in relation to services for children in a wider context to be considered by parents and professionals.
- provide a forum through which parents can have a voice in the planning and review of services
- make recommendations which inform and influence operational decisions
- provide advice, guidance and recommendations to commissioners and other decision makers with responsibility for planning and resourcing services at a strategic level
- develop strategic partnerships across services
- communicate the achievements and unresolved issues of services to strategic planners and key stakeholders for resolution
- ensure that good quality information about the work of the CHSWG is readily available to service providers and users

3 Policy and Guidance

3.1 The CHSWG will consider the local and national context, including relevant drivers and targets, and:

- support the development of new policies to meet the needs of children with hearing difficulties and their families
- discuss and agree the content of all local policies and guidance for services
- review existing policies on a regular basis to ensure they remain relevant and up to date

4 Training Review

4.1 The CHSWG will review any relevant training needs across agencies and make recommendations where gaps or areas for improvements are identified. In particular this might focus on cross-agency themes such as deaf awareness, young people's participation in appointments or service development initiatives etc., where learning may come from other members of the CHSWG or where joint training might be appropriate.

5 Quality Assurance

5.1 The CHSWG will:

- agree a framework for quality standards and targets for performance management of services, including measurable outcomes
- oversee the implementation of any national and/or locally agreed quality standards and good practice
- monitor and review the performance of local services
- report any issues concerning the quality of local children's hearing services and support provided
- review the management of, and learning from, critical incidents and agree recommendations for improvement

6 Service User Satisfaction

The CHSWG will ensure that the views of children, young people and their families who use hearing services are regularly and effectively captured and acted on.

7 Minutes and Annual Report

7.1 The CHSWG will produce minutes of meetings. These will be agreed by the Chair and distributed to group members within one month. The minutes will also be available publicly via the Dorset Deaf Children's Society website <https://www.dorsetdcs.co.uk/chswg>

7.2 The CHSWG will review the achievements and effectiveness of the group annually to ensure it is meeting the vision and aims.

7.3 The CHSWG will produce an annual report and information on local services' performance and outcomes so that service users, the wider public, senior management and local strategic bodies can all review the effectiveness of both the CHSWG and local provision.

8 Meetings

8.1 The CHSWG will meet at twice each year; members unable to attend should be represented whenever possible. The Chair will be responsible for collating the agenda which will be circulated at least one week in advance of the meeting. Any

departmental updates, apologies for absence and details of nominated representatives should be forwarded to the Chair prior to the meeting.

8.2 Members inviting new colleagues to the meeting should notify the Chair in advance.

8.3 Dates will be set 6 months in advance (i.e., at each meeting, the date for the next meeting will be agreed).

8.4 Agenda items will reflect agreed group priorities and concerns; subgroups may be formed to take forward specific areas of work.

8.5 Guests may be invited to meetings when their specialist knowledge is required or for information sharing or training purposes.

9 Confidentiality

9.1 All persons present at CHSWG meetings must be aware of and respect that there may be a need for confidentiality in relation to some of the issues discussed. If a matter requiring confidentiality is raised, a note to that effect only will be recorded in the minutes.

9.2 It will be clear which issues discussed at the meetings are for 'within the meeting' and which can be shared outside it.

10 Committee Roles and responsibilities

10.1 The Chair of the CHSWG can be any member of the Group and will be elected by group members.

10.2 The Chair will be responsible for arranging meetings, collating the agenda, and organising for minutes to be taken. This role may be shared amongst the group.

10.3 A term of office needs to be agreed for the Chair. There needs to be a 2–3-year rotation from different sectors.

11 Representation

11.1 It is important to be clear about the role of all members of the CHSWG and who they are representing:

- Members may be participating in the CHSWG representing themselves or basing opinions on their own experience. Other members may be representing their service or a group.
- If parents are representing the experience of families in the area it needs to be clear how they are canvassing opinion from and feeding back to other families.

12 Quorum for the meeting

12.1 The group will be quorate with 6 members present, but this needs to include at least one lead paediatric audiologist, at least one representative from the Hearing Support Service and at least one paediatrician.

13 Meetings are set up to allow all participants equal access

13.1 Consideration will be made to parents participating as equal partners. This may include the provision of childcare and transport (or costs) and the holding of meetings at suitable times.

13.2 Ground rules will be in place to allow all members to feel that their opinion is respected by other members, and that they get an equal chance to have input to meetings, the work of the CHSWG and decisions taken.

13.3 All members will have the skills to effectively take part in meetings. This may require training for some members or dedicated slots for all members to have their input.

13.4 Parent representatives must not feel that, by being a member of the CHSWG, the service they receive is in any way different from other families.

14 Membership

14.1 Membership will be invited from all organisations providing services for deaf children and young people and their families across education, health and social care, including the voluntary sector and representation from service users including parents and carers:

- Education
 - Dorset Hearing Support Service

- Health
 - East and West Dorset Paediatric Audiology Services
 - Dorset Newborn Hearing Screening Programme
 - Paediatrics, University Hospitals Dorset NHS Foundation Trust
 - Paediatrics, Dorset County Hospital Foundation Trust
 - Ear Nose and Throat, University Hospitals Dorset NHS Foundation Trust
 - Ear, Nose and Throat, Dorset County Hospital Foundation Trust
 - Paediatric Speech and Language Therapy Service, Dorset Healthcare University NHS Foundation Trust
 - University of Southampton Auditory Implant Service
 - Health Visiting Team, Dorset HealthCare University NHS Foundation Trust
 - School Nursing Team, Dorset HealthCare University NHS Foundation Trust

- Social Care

- Commissioning
 - NHS Dorset

- Family/Carers/Voluntary/Third Sector
 - Parent representatives
 - Dorset Deaf Children's Society
 - National Deaf Children's Society
 - Dorset Parent Carer Council

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