Easy Read: A Guide for Children and Young People

The Sensory Service

Supporting children and young people who have difficulty hearing, seeing or using their senses.

Contents

In this Easy Read document, difficult words are in **bold**.
We explain what these words mean in the sentence after they have been used.

Some words are blue and underlined. These are links that will go to a website or page which has more information.

Introduction

This document is about the Education Authority's Sensory Service.

The Sensory Service helps children and young people who have a sensory impairment. This means either they

- are deaf/hard of hearing, or
- have a **vision impairment, or**
- have a **multi-sensory impairment.**

People with a vision impairment have difficulty with their sight. People with a multi-sensory impairment have difficulty with both hearing and sight.

Some of these children and young people will need specialist support to access learning and information.

What does the Sensory Service do?

The Sensory Service gives support to children and young people:

- At home.
- At pre-school or nursery school.
- At school.

We support you by:

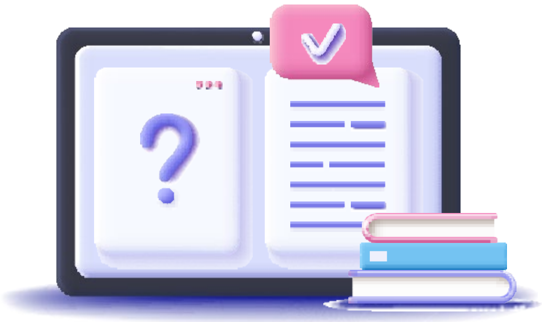
- Giving your families confidence to support your needs.
- Developing new skills that may arise from your sensory impairment.
- Providing equipment to make it easier for you to learn.
- Speaking to school staff and parents about helpful strategies.

We can give parents, carers and school staff:

- Information.

- Advice.

- Training



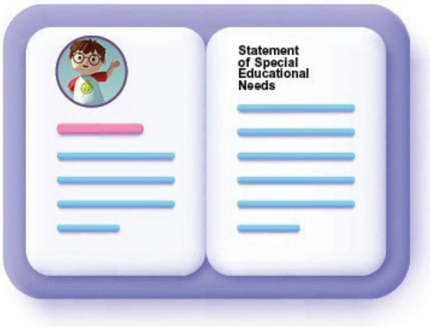
- Guidance.

How to get support

When you are given a medical diagnosis by a **health professional**, such as an Audiologist or an ENT doctor, they will ask your parents if they would like support.

It is important that we know about the level of vision impairment and/or level of hearing loss so we can support you as well.

We can help children and young people with or without a **Statement of Special Educational Needs**.



A **Statement of Special Educational Needs** is a document that describes a child's needs and the special help they should receive.

Babies and pre-school children with hearing loss

When a baby is born, parents can choose to have their hearing checked in the hospital.

If there is a hearing loss, an **Audiologist** will let us know. An Audiologist is someone who checks your hearing.

Older pre-school children can have their hearing tested by a health professional.

They will tell us if there is a hearing loss and whether parents would like support.

When the health professionals tell us about a child, we will try to make contact with the family within two working days.

School aged children with hearing loss

A health professional will tell us about school aged children who have a hearing loss and may need support.

When they tell us about you, we will try to get in touch with your family and school within 5 working days.

Sometimes schools can let us know about children or young people if they have a concern about your hearing or have medical information to share.

When this happens, we can visit the school to provide some support but will always advise that a child visits their GP.

Pre-school and school aged children with vision impairment

A health professional will give you a medical diagnosis of vision impairment.

They will also let us know that you may need support from us if your parents agree to this.

When the health professionals tell us about you, we will try to contact your family and school within five working days.

What happens next?

When we hear about you, we will assign a sensory service teacher for support.

They will:

- Talk to your parents about you.
- Talk to school staff who know you.

- Arrange a visit to meet you at home or school. They will speak to you, if they can, about your sensory impairment.

How much support will you get?

The support we give will be tailored to your needs and based on the **NatSIP framework.**

This document tells us what we should think about when supporting children and young people with sensory impairment.

To make sure we give the right support, we will listen to opinions of:

- You

- School staff and healthcare staff

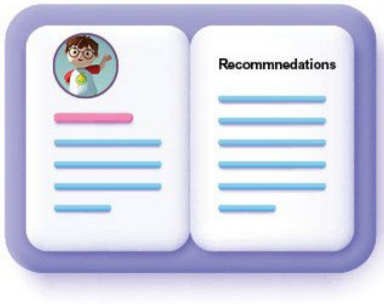
- Parents or carers

How much support will you get?

Once we have all the information, we will provide **recommendations** on how to support you.

Recommendations are ideas on how to help you.

This may be in the form of:



- Information and advice about how your parents can help you at home or how school staff can help you.

- Guides, videos and training.

- School staff and healthcare staff

What if you do not have a medical diagnosis?

If parents think a child has a sensory impairment, they should talk to a GP first.

Sometimes parents and other agencies working with you can speak with us to share medical information.

We will always advise that a child visits their GP.

For more information

You can look at our website:

[Sensory Service]

If you or your parents need more information, please contact us by:

Phone:

- 028 2566 1258

OR

Email:

sensoryservice@eani.org.uk