## Challenging council cuts to services

## Jargon buster

**October 2017**

When campaigning to protect services for children and young people, it can feel that you are being bamboozled at every corner, with jargon and terminology.

If you find yourself in a meeting trying to decipher a consultation document or perplexed by what is said to you, RNIB has pulled together a list of key jargon words and phrases, and what they actually mean.

It is really important to remember that if you are a child or young person with vision impairment, or a parent or carer, that **you are the expert**. It is your voice and your experiences which are important, and that need to be heard. So try not to worry too much about the jargon and phrases being used, and explain:

* What your experiences are
* What impact it has had on you
* What you would like to see improved.

We have also produced a handy guide to how to work with your local council to protect or improve vision impairment support for children and young people.

**Children and Families Act 2015:** is a piece of legislation that brought changes to the law to give greater protection to vulnerable children, including a new system to help children with special educational needs and disabilities, and help for parents to balance work and family life. It came into force in early 2014.

**Councillor:** is a locally elected official, who is responsible for issues local to your area. This includes holding schools, and children and family teams, to account. You can usually find out who your local councillor is by visiting your local authority website or calling the council.

**Councillor with portfolio:** each council will have a cabinet, made up of a number of councillors in the party that leads the council. There will be a councillor with responsibility for children and young people. They may also have a remit for adult care, or wider community issues. This is a very important person to influence as they will often make final decisions regarding budgets, and will sign off any plans on how to deliver the service.

**Department for Education (DfE):** is the government department that is responsible for children’s services and education, including higher and further education policy, apprenticeships and wider skills in England. The department works to provide children’s services and education that ensure opportunity is equal for all, no matter what their background or family circumstances.

**Director of Children Services:** this is the person who is employed by your council and that has overall responsibility for commissioning, managing and shaping all support services for children. Sometimes this person may also have responsibility for adult care support as well.

**Education and Health Care Plans (EHCP):** An education, health and care plan (EHCP) is for children and young people aged up to 25 who need more support than is available through special educational needs support.

The plans identify educational, health and social needs and set out the additional support to meet those needs.

<https://www.gov.uk/children-with-special-educational-needs/extra-SEN-help>

**Local offer:** local councils are required to publish and maintain a local offer, which sets out the education, health and social care provision that the local authority expects to be available for disabled children and young people, and those with SEN. This specifically includes provision that will help them prepare for adulthood.

The local offer should be developed by local authorities and their health partners, together with children, their parents and young people.

It should be used as a tool to measure how well services are meeting local need and achieving the outcomes set out in the joint commissioning arrangements. Local councils have a duty to publish comments from children, their parents and young people on the local offer, and any actions they intend to take in response. These views and comments should be used to inform future commissioning decisions.

**The National Sensory Impairment Partnership (NatSIP)** is a partnership of organisations working together to improve outcomes for children and young people with sensory impairment.

**Qualified Teacher of Children and Young People with Vision Impairment (QTVI):** is a qualified teacher who, in addition, holds a Mandatary Qualification (MQ) in vision impairment. Their responsibility is to provide and coordinate support for children and young people with vision impairment from birth to 25 years. They have a key role in the assessment process and the development of education, health and care plans.

**Registered Qualified Habilitation Specialists (RQHS) -** teach children and young people how to move around more independently and do practical everyday tasks for themselves. Habilitation training aims to maximise the personal independence of children and young people with vision impairment, including those with additional needs, so they are ready for life as young adults.

All children and young people with vision impairment should receive an initial assessment of their mobility and independence needs carried out by an RQHS. Habilitation specialists can support a child or young person with vision impairment in the age range 0-19 and up to 25.

**Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)** if a child requires provision different from or additional to that normally available to pupils of the same age. There are four main areas which are taken into consideration, including if a child has a sensory impairment, and/or physical disability.

The education setting is usually the first point of contact to start the process of identifying a child with SEND and from that point, an education health and care plan can be requested. Not all children with SEND will require one.

**Transitions/ Transitional** -is usually used to describe when a child moves from children services into adult care. Children services should support a child as they move into adulthood, 18-25. The aim is that the person continues to receive the support that they need.

It can also be used to explain any period of movement between school settings, for example, primary to secondary, secondary to higher and further education.

### Further information

Have we missed something? Please let us know if there is a word or phrase that you have come across that you think RNIB should add to the jargon buster.

Please let us know

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