



Berkshire Sensory Consortium Service (SCS)

Annual Report 2016 - 2017

A consortium arrangement for the provision of specialist peripatetic teaching and advisory education staff for children/pupils with a sensory impairment.

Consortium Partner Authorities:

- Bracknell Forest Borough Council
- Reading Borough Council
- Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead
- Slough Borough Council
- West Berkshire Council
- Wokingham Borough Council

Host Authority: Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead

Service aim: To raise standards and achievement for all children, particularly those with sensory impairment.

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1. Foreword

The Annual Report concentrates on core work, projects, issues and development work undertaken by the Berkshire Sensory Consortium Service. We have focused on outcomes in reporting work undertaken in the last year but the details of how these have been measured are available on request from the Berkshire Sensory Consortium Service.

We have continued to be involved with local, regional and national activities with the focus always on improving the provision for our client groups within the Unitary Authorities. We have a significant number of indicators of good practice which can be used by any of our Local Authorities as part of their evidences during LA inspections. We have used both formal and informal relationships with other agencies and voluntary organisations over the past year to continue to enrich the opportunities we can provide for our children, schools and families.

We have a wide range of expertise in the Service and work in partnership with Local Authorities on projects where this expertise is relevant. Multi-agency work continues to be central and we organise and/or attend CHSWG (Children's Hearing Services Working Group), LVSG (Low Vision Service Group) and HAVMAW (Hearing and Vision Multi Agency Working) Group on a termly basis ensuring that Health, Social Care, Education and the Voluntary agencies work together to make provision for children and young people with sensory impairment. We continue to be the Education Representative on the LEHN (Local Eye Health Network). We have sent out our User evaluations to parents schools and pupils this year and have planned a change of evaluation procedure 2017-18 to fit better with the new programmes that will be delivered starting September.

We are now in our 19th year as a Sensory Consortium Service with discussions continuing with regard a change of host for April 2018 which will also be the 20th anniversary of the joint arrangement Service.

End August 2017 sees 4 staff leaving and in order to match the new pupil programmes starting September 17 and no new staff starting. Additionally we continue to see staff reducing their FTE to better enable a work-life balance. Recruitment will continue to be a challenge and enrolment on the requisite course for Teachers of Children with sensory impairment even more challenging with waiting lists already identified for September 18 courses. However staff trained within the Berkshire Sensory Consortium Service mentorship programme usually stay out their career with the Service evidencing good retention of skilled staff.

This report is produced annually for the attention of officer colleagues in our partner authorities and can be shared with colleagues in Health, Social Care and Voluntary organisations where relevant to planning and shared development. It is made available on our website for parents and schools to access. Feedback is very welcome.

I would like to thank Local Authorities for their continued support over the past year. The success of this cross-authority arrangement continues to be based

on the quality of the staff, the vision of the managers across the six authorities and good communication between all parties and agencies. I hope that this good support will continue to be forthcoming enabling a good host transition as well as the appointment of a new Head of Service following my retirement which will be at the end of December 2017.

Finally a special thank you to all who contribute directly or indirectly to the work of this consortium by supporting good inclusive practice for children and pupils with a sensory impairment. Once again the Service was subject to external scrutiny most specifically in the recent RBWM Ofsted July 201, "The quality of provision is reflected in the views of the children and young people who are visually or hearing impaired and their parents. The vast majority reported positively about their involvement in designing the provision, and how this helps to secure strong outcomes."

Comments or observations on this report will be very welcome from users of the Service or agencies that work with the Service. The current Head of Service has provided her notice to retire at end December 2017 and is currently working 0.6 with additional support from another member of staff 0.4.



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2. Service Delivery

2.1 Sensory Consortium Service Caseloads

The percentage of identified sensory impaired children supported by the Sensory Consortium Service is 93% (85% 2013-14). The VI Resourced Children are 3 Reading pupils. Braille users are all attending their local school supported by Berkshire SCS apart from one pupil at Highdown VI Resource.

LA	SCS Support				Resource School within Unitaries				Out of County Specialist School				Totals	
	13-14 VI	13-14 HI	16-17 VI	16-17 HI	13-14 VI	13-14 HI	16-17 VI	16-17 HI	13-14 VI	13-14 HI	16-17 VI	16-17 HI	13-14	16-17
Slough	60	104	60	117	2	17	0	10	3	3	5	6	189	198
RBWM	47	89	46	89	0	7	0	6	4	7	0	0	154	141
Bracknell	40	83	32	78	0	5	0	1	3	4	0	2	135	113
Wokingham	47	101	45	125	0	8	0	2	2	14	NA	NA	172	172
Reading	53	86	60	101	17	10	3	11	2	12	1	9	180	185
W Berks	36	129	34	120	4	11	0	11	2	15	1	13	197	170
TOTALS	283	592	277	630	23	58	3	41	16	55	7+	30+	1027	986

(Table 1)

LA and age bands	SCS Pre-school HI	SCS Prim HI	SCS Second HI	SCS FE HI	SCS Pre-school VI	SCS Prim VI	SCS Second VI	SCS FE VI
Slough	31	56	27	3	14	29	17	0
RBWM	19	42	25	1	6	17	22	1
Bracknell	13	41	24	1	8	14	10	0
Wokingham	28	57	40	0	11	19	15	1
Reading	22	52	23	3	22	24	14	1
West Berks	17	64	39	0	15	11	8	0
Totals	130	312	178	8	76	114	86	3

(Table 2)

All pupils on the Sensory Consortium caseload would be eligible by their level of vision or hearing loss to be registered as Partially Sighted or Partially Hearing. Approximately 22% of caseload numbers are Pre-school, 48% Primary and 30% Secondary school which shows a significant bulge in Primary schools provision.

LA and year	Visual Impairment				Hearing Impairment			
	<i>Profound</i>		<i>Severe</i>		<i>Profound</i>		<i>Severe</i>	
	13/14	16/17	13/14	16/17	13/14	16/17	13/14	16/17
Slough	7	5	19	17	4	9	5	3
RBWM	1	2	5	5	3	4	0	1
Bracknell	1	1	6	4	3	2	6	3
Wokingham	2	2	4	3	9	8	7	9
Reading	7	6	10	11	1	7	2	2
W Berks	3	4	3	6	4	8	7	6
TOTALS	21	20	47	46	24	38	27	24

(Table 3)

LA	HI NR - NFA		VI NR - NFA		HI NR – Caseload		VI NR – Caseload		Total Referrals		Total Referral to Caseload	
	13/14	16/17	13/14	16/17	13/14	16/17	13/14	16/17	13/14	16/17	13/14	16/17
Slough	1	0	2	0	17	17	11	7	31	24	28	24
RBWM	2	2	1	0	11	7	4	5	18	14	15	12
Bracknell	3	0	0	0	12	8	3	4	18	12	15	12
Wokingham	0	0	3	0	6	11	8	4	17	15	14	15
Reading	0	0	2	0	13	16	6	11	21	27	19	27
West Berks	2	0	0	0	23	12	3	7	28	19	26	19
TOTALS	8	2	8	0	81	71	37	38	134	111	117	109

NR-NFA (New Referral / Assessed and No Further Action)

(Table 4)

Slough continues to have highest numbers of pupils with additional needs and but Reading now has the highest number of Pre-school pupils with vision impairment and Braille learners. Slough, Wokingham and West Berkshire have significantly higher numbers of pupils with severe and profound Hearing impairment.

The numbers of children and young people with MSI has remained fairly consistent with but it is relevant to note that numbers of pre-school MSI pupils are proportionately high.

- 17 identified in mainstream schools
- 11 Pre-school
- 17 in Local Authority Special schools (11 using SCS support)

Wokingham has now progressed to the Authority with the most MSI pupils on Berkshire SCS caseloads (5). The HAVMAW meetings continue to be an important part of the provision across LAs with a sharing of good practice and additional training for the multi-agency team. This included a presentation MSI/Deafblindness – Legal Duties for Local Authorities by Kari Gerstheimer, Head of Legal Services for Sense held on June 10th 2016. Flyers were sent out for Intervenor training as well as the RCE MSI course last year to staff in Berkshire schools working with MSI pupils. Despite initial interest for the intervenor training the group was not large enough to commission our own course.

During 2016-17, 4 pupils on the caseload died, 0 pupils with sensory impairment was excluded for some part of the year and 7 pupils were in care provisions.. There has been a significant reduction in Safeguarding concerns reported: 2 Slough, 2 RBWM. It should be noted that one of these was a pupil whose safeguarding concerns were directly related to her self image as a blind young person. There were no cases reported in the other authorities which was good news.

2.2 Pre-School Groups

The programme delivered through the pre-school groups is themed and relates directly to developmental programmes identified in the Visual Impairment Developmental Journal and Hearing Impairment Monitoring Protocol. It remains a core part of the SCS deliveries to children and their families and is attended by Health professionals including Speech and Language Therapists, Voluntary agencies, and Audiologists and more recently Ophthalmologists so that it can also work as a one stop shop for families. Workshops for parents are also enabled through this group membership.

Venue	Focus	Frequency
Chatty Monkeys East Chalvey Grove, Children's Centre 12.45 - 14.45	Hearing	Fortnightly
Chatty Monkeys West : Spencers Wood Village Hall 9.30 – 11.30	Hearing	Fortnightly
Busy Bees West : Building for the Future, Charles Annexe, Toutley Road, Wokingham, RG41 1QN	Vision	Monthly
Chatty Monkeys East : Chalvey Grove Children's Centre, Chalvey Grove, Slough 12.45 – 14.45	Vision	Combines with the Hearing impairment group
Parents of West Berks SCS pre school VI children meet informally at Swings & Smiles, Newbury approx. every 3-4 weeks for messy play,	Vision	Monthly

(Table 5)

2.3 Support in Special Schools

The SCS programme structure is agreed with LA Special School Headteacher and identified school member of staff with ongoing responsibility for pupils with sensory impairment via a Service Level Agreement. However, part of the LA time will include updating the annual Sensory Impairment (SI) returns for the schools so that this information can be used to inform local authorities and provide Government requested statistical information on SI pupils. Programmes may vary greatly dependent upon the expertise in the school and pupils' sensory impairment and other needs. Five of the seven local authority special schools buy in additional provision from the Service whilst the remaining two rely solely on their own specialist provision on school staff. Most are using a combination. Some solely rely on Berkshire SCS for the sensory impairment expertise.

2.4 Resource Support

At least four visits a year are provided to each Hearing / Vision Impairment Resource to enable joint working and sharing of expertise as well as support placement processes and Audiological provision. We have additionally provided mentorship in Resources for Heads of the Resource when they are appointed without the mandatory QTVI or ToD qualification but this is an additional charged service. Berkshire SCS has identified future work with the joint management team to review and support Resource provision and changes in delivery models. Currently there are only 3 students in the Vision impairment Resource at Highdown, Reading and the specialist expertise is purchased from Berkshire SCS by the school after its Head of Resource left in April 17.

SCS continues to provide pupil equipment for children in the Resources from the core budget provided by LA's and also support the specialist staff by providing ongoing training opportunities. This uses a significant element of the HI equipment budget and expertise.

2.5 LA Support Role

Activities within this aspect of the core service comprise:

1. Resource School Support.
2. Casework (non-SCS caseload pupils) including phone calls exceeding 15 minutes with LA Officers about children not on your caseload.
3. Training Events.
4. LA Projects/Working Groups.
5. Local Office Organisation.
6. Ofsted/Audit/Best Value.
7. Specialist Equipment.
8. National/Regional/Cross Authority Developments/Projects.
9. Other.

A level of local authority time which has been agreed with the local authority is included in the core provision and annual reports on how this has been used are sent to the local authority with end year caseloads. As from September 17

this will not be recorded separately as it will be considered an intrinsic part of the management time allocated except where specific activities occur such as office moves.

The Sensory Consortium Service also works for non LA funded provision which includes pupils from non-consortium partners and LA Special Schools and this is additionally charged according to contracts agreed.

3. The Impact of Service Delivery

3.1 Individual Programmes Delivered by Individual SCS Teachers

92% of Service time is spent directly working with children on caseload or those being assessed for caseload. Staff absence amounted to 0.55% of total working time which was a good reduction on the previous year of 2.25%. No significant absences were sustained although we worked with a shortfall of staffing throughout the year because of two Maternity Leave occurrences. Despite this caseloads show very little shortfall and some exceeded levels of provision agreed. Existing staff took on additional work although no-one was willing to commit to additional FTE. Pupil progress continues to be good as shown in the NATSIP report (Section 3.2) and this was also reported in the RBWM Ofsted July 17.

Staff report that they are normally identified by families and other professionals as the lead professional and this impacts on both the time spent in communicating with other professionals and the paperwork which becomes more difficult with higher caseload numbers particularly evident in the Hearing impairment team. Changes in recording systems have been introduced September 17 to help manage the even higher caseloads that our specialist teachers will experience with the new programmes being introduced.

SCS agree all programmes with parents (Pre-school), schools and pupils. Objectives and outcomes are recorded on termly programme planners and collated annually as part of the Performance Management process.

SCS Staff Members 40 Date Completed July 2017

SCS 'A' Category Pupils and their SCS Programme Outcomes								
ECM Code	Curriculum		Teaching		Assessment		Pastoral Support	
Number of Targets Set:								
Autumn 2016	248		354		54		138	
Spring 2017	138		337		74		94	
Summer 2017	737		516		212		357	
TOTAL	1,123		1,207		340		589	
Achieved:	F	P	F	P	F	P	F	P
Autumn 2016	189	58	280	73	35	21	99	38
Spring 2017	110	22	255	74	67	4	81	13
Summer 2017	719	38	426	88	214	4	319	43
TOTAL	1018	118	961	235	316	29	499	94

Target/Delivery Codes*F = Fully Achieved P = Partially Achieved*

Curriculum – Access strategies advised and implemented; curriculum modification agreed and implemented; use of relevant technology for curriculum access.

Teaching – Implementation of specialist teaching showing improved outcomes for pupil.

Assessment – Use of assessment to inform learning programmes with improved outcomes for pupils.

Pastoral Support – Development of Mobility skills, Independence skills, increased inclusion in social opportunities, improved emotional wellbeing, increased take up of leisure opportunities with relevant support.

3.2

A commentary on Berkshire Sensory Consortium Service Outcomes (2015-6) against National Performance Indicators in the context of NatSIP and DfE data for all pupils.

Final: 31 October 2017

Background to results for academic year 2015-6.

In previous years, the Berkshire Sensory Consortium Service has submitted data for all young people on caseload for inclusion in the NatSIP (National Sensory Impairment Partnership) collection of data for young people with sensory impairment against the National Performance Indicators. However, this year with the change in the Performance Indicators and the way this data was collected, this was not possible for all Performance Indicators. There were also fewer opportunities to compare previous performance as several of the Performance Indicators have changed e.g. with the standards at Key stage 2 changing and with the introduction of the Progress 8 and Attainment 8 data at end of Key stage 4.

In terms of data submitted, as before, this did not include data for pupils resident in Berkshire but educated outside the 6 Local Authorities in specialist provision. However, teachers who managed Resources for young people with hearing impairment within Berkshire submitted data which was included in the Berkshire SCS return. It is anticipated that in future years some of these results will be incorporated into the CRIDE (Consortium for Research into Deaf Education) Benchmarking exercise.

The Interpretation Guidance of the NATSIP Outcomes Benchmarking Report (June 2016) gives the purpose of the project as follows:

- The main purpose of the NatSIP outcomes benchmarking project is to provide reliable data for use by local authority (LA) Sensory Support Services to evidence their impact and inform development needs. The project has been supported through grant funding from the DfE.

For Berkshire Sensory Consortium Service the main purposes have been as follows:

- a) To contribute to the national collection of data for young people with sensory impairment.
- b) To use the results of this collection to benchmark the performance of young people with sensory impairment in Berkshire against the NatSIP data for young people with sensory impairment.
- c) To review the results and use these to inform and refine Service delivery to deliver improved outcomes.

Benchmarking

NatSIP has also made the following observation with regard to individual Services looking at their data against other Services.

“As might be anticipated from the low incidence nature of sensory impairment, the numbers in a range of the cohorts supplied by individual Sensory Support Services were often very small. ***Particular caution is therefore required when comparing individual service data against the benchmarking data derived from several services.***”

HI Data

In terms of success the Performance Indicators relating to both progression and achievement for school age children remain consistently higher than those reported by other members of the National Sensory Impairment Partnership. This is particularly strong for the end of Key stage 2 (PI 6) which relates to end of Key Stage 2 results with children achieving a “high” standard across English reading, writing and Mathematics.

At the end of Key stage 4, the Attainment 8 score was slightly higher than that of the DfE percentage given for all children. (PI 9) This was also true of pupils gaining the threshold of a C grade in English and Mathematics. (PI 10) The percentage of children (from the same cohort, 13 in number) achieving 5 A* - C grades or more including English and Maths had fallen slightly when compared to earlier Berkshire figures but is likely to still be greater than that of other NatSIP members and comparable to that of children with no identified special need (DfE information not currently available). (PI 12).

Early Years NatSIP data (P1 and P2) shows a large gap between young people with any form of sensory impairment and all young people. This year the cohort of 16 children across Berkshire showed an improvement against NatSIP data at P1 but a slight dip in the Communication and Language area of learning in the EYFS profile where children were recorded at an “expected” or “exceeding” level.

In terms of progression data, the percentage of children with HI achieving the expected standard of phonic decoding (PI 3) had fallen again this year but was still slightly better than NatSIP recorded data. (23 children in cohort).

VI Data:

There are similar trends in the reported VI Data. The PIs relating to school attainment and progression show that young people in Berkshire with visual

impairment have better results than those for young people with visual impairment reported nationally.

The end of Key stage 2 data shows 50% of the cohort achieving the “expected” standard at English reading, writing and Mathematics. (PI 5) For PI 6 the “high” standard the percentage falls to 10% . However this still compares well with NatSIP data.

At the end of Key stage 4 the Attainment 8 score showed a more positive result than the DfE results for all children and the percentage of children achieving 5 A* - C s is up slightly from the cohort reported last year to 57.1% (Cohort of 7).

Early Years NatSIP data shows Berkshire data to be better than that of NatSIP data at both P1 and P2 with 66.6% achieving at an “expected” or “exceeding” level at EYFS in the Communication and Language area of learning. (Cohort of 9).

In terms of progression data the percentage of children with VI achieving the expected standard of phonic decoding (PI 3) had fallen this year to 60%, slightly less than the NatSIP data of 61.7%. (Cohort of 10).

MSI Data:

MSI data reports on a very small cohort in Berkshire. This year there were only two young people at the end of key stage 1 (PI 3) and end of key stage 2 (PI 5, PI 6). These children did not achieve the expected standards of the Performance Indicators.

Exclusion data

Pleasingly there were no children with sensory impairment excluded either on a temporary exclusion or permanently excluded (PI 14, PI 15) for HI (cohort number 78), VI (cohort number 34) or MSI (cohort number 2).

Outcomes

The data collected this year was not as robust as we would like. This was partly due to the way the data is collected. We were not able to submit results for some Performance Indicators e.g. the expected Reading standard at Key stage 2 because of the variation in data we received.

It has been suggested that if this data is to be submitted nationally next year it will need to be undertaken at Local Authority level using their data management systems.

We will however continue to record achievement and progress against individual children via on our own secure recording system.

3.3 SCS Staff Pupil Progress and Service Development Objectives and Outcomes

Staff choose one of the below each year as an area that they are going to work on and evidence in their appraisal. The outcomes for these are not collated centrally but explored with individual staff members as part of their appraisal process.

- SCS Programmes following SCS Assessment have contributed to accelerated progress for the pupil in target areas. (Enjoy and Achieve)
- Pre-school SCS programmes are linked to Early Support monitoring/developmental journals and have contributed to accelerated developmental progress for the children in target areas. (Enjoy and Achieve)
- Programmes supported by SCS have helped pupils develop the required management skills for the needs of their sensory impairment, improved attitude towards their sensory impairment and have helped them to develop positive self-image. (Healthy)
- SCS programmes have helped develop pupils' involvement in extra-curricular activities including opportunities for them to experience a wider range of positive role status. (Positive Contribution)
- SCS programmes have improved independent mobility and or independence skills significantly. (Safe)

Additionally all staff on UPS have a named area of responsibility. This role has increased to match the current Teachers Pay and Conditions and the Berkshire SCS Pay Policy introduced September 2013 so that they form part of an individual's job description and outcome reporting. In the Appendices there is a list of the title roles of each named member of staff on UPS. This will be developed further over time with changes in staffing. Staff members are not currently enabled to give up their UPS even when on a phased retirement and so roles have been developed to match current staff skills. However, when we recruit staff we no longer have to continue with any pre-awarded UPS. We have continued to refine UPS allocations with only staff already outstanding, with a specialist HI / VI or MSI qualification and matched to an identified area of work required being allocated new UPS awards. Recruitment difficulties have meant that some staff are on Recruitment and Retention allowances when they don't meet the Service criteria for UPS allowances although we avoid using these whenever possible as this can mean new staff getting paid more than existing staff despite not being a competent specialist teacher on appointment.

3.4 Social Activities for Children & Young People with SI: Out of Hours Activities

Sensory Consortium Service continues to organise occasional social activities to enable mainstream children to meet with other pupils with sensory impairment. These will typically have an educational focus such as Careers Days.



This year a Transition picnics again were full to capacity. 12 places taken but 2 were ill on the day so we had 10 pupils. The morning was spent improving team building skills and ability to communicate with new adults and peers. Activities were led by the RBWM Youth service team and included camp fire building, which was used to make hot chocolate

and toast marshmallows, shelter building from woodland materials and woodland art activities. Time was also spent discussing and sharing ideas for making a positive transition to secondary school.

We have worked with voluntary organisations such as Berkshire Vision and the National Deaf Children Society to support other Leisure opportunities for groups of children with sight or hearing impairment. There are 46 (0-18yrs) registered with Berkshire Vision voluntary agency and most attend leisure events on a regular basis (www.berkshirevision.org.uk.)

Pupils who attend, report that this is a vital opportunity for them to meet with other children with a sensory impairment. We advertise these activities through our website (hits on the SCS website home



page are now nearly 17,000 and increased from 10,228 to 16,915 between September 2015 and September 2016).

RBWM insurance is used to cover this work and members of staff are trained in Risk Assessment.



4. Equipment

Equipment costs are recorded within the annual equipment report. It is also recorded on named pupil database which is available on request but not sent regularly as it is a very large document.

Secondary schools are expected to fund equipment costing less than £150 and Primary schools less than £100 from their own delegated budget. In addition schools are expected to provide generic equipment to support pupils with sensory impairment. This includes Kindles, i-pads and laptops. It had been agreed by the JMG in 2011 that specialist VI/HI/MSI equipment costing more than £2,500 would be funded from any surplus budget remaining with SCS at

end year rather than approach LAs for additional budget and this was written into the previous contract. However there is a proposal that each LA shares out underspend and this additionally would include monies collected through the loan provision agreed with Colleges and Independent provisions. This will need to be explored further if there are not be further shortfalls in equipment provision where clientele are growing in numbers. The Review proposed raising the contribution but whilst new decisions regarding funding arrangements for the Service are agreed monies were transferred from the specialist training budget to the equipment budget 17-18 on the basis that no new staff were appointed.

The use of appropriate technology is critical for independent working and should in the long term reduce dependence on additional adult intervention and support. Recent technology developments suggest that some of the specialist technology for visually impaired print users will gradually become replaceable by accessibility features in the generic equipment although the number of Brailleists and the sophistication of newer radio aids will mean that the total financial demands on the current budget will remain similar although usage will change.

All HI Resourced Sensory Impairment Provisions in the Unitary Authorities use the SCS budget to provide equipment for named pupils. The Resources VI provision at Highdown can continue to loan up to £2,500 of equipment already on loan to the pupil at transfer but this will be replaced or returned to Service when no longer in use by the pupil for whatever reason.

We do not provide Sensory Impairment equipment to Special Schools or Colleges from this budget although there are some anomalies to this and further discussion with the LAs is relevant. We offer a hire Service for such pupils when we are involved in provided support for them.

We use a variety of providers for technology and our bulk buying enables us to make best use of discounts offered (30% this year with our update of HI Resources). Some technology is only available from one provider (because low incidence demand) and thus fostering a good relationship with the provider to enable quick, free maintenance, training and demonstration of equipment is seen as more relevant to our working relationship.

The joint arrangements for the equipment budget ensures that equipment is not left unused in schools and is circulated to maximise most appropriate students use i.e. a transition to Secondary pupil might warrant a newer more powerful piece of technology whilst his older equipment might be appropriate for another pupil learning. The Review advised an increase in the Equipment budget which we have implemented through internal transfer of training budget not required because on no recruitment to the Service. However the training budget will be required in full next year and without alternative arrangement the equipment budget will be short and the pressure is often to supply HI resources at the cost of equipment to pupils in mainstream schools who arguably need it more.

4.1 Audiological Equipment Report 2016-17

ANNUAL BUDGET for audiological equipment £41,410.00

Equipment spend:	£30,248
Accessories spend:	£13,083
Repairs spend:	£3,121

ACTUAL SPEND £46,632

We supply and maintain assistive listening equipment (radio aids) for approximately 180 hearing impaired Children and Young People across Berkshire. This is 20 more than 2 years ago.

These radio aids enable the hearing impaired school-aged wearer to enjoy equal opportunity of access to the curriculum as their normally hearing peers. It enables very young deaf children to have better access to their parent's voices and therefore supports their own speech and language development in a way that a degraded speech signal (when hearing aids alone are used) would not.

In addition to these CYP we supply and maintain equipment and support our colleagues and their hearing impaired pupils in the five Hearing Resource Bases across Berkshire.

All CYP use ear level devices (rather than the older body worn apparatus) and we have a rolling programme of upgrade to the latest digital technology.

Our Aims

- To continue to ensure that all school-aged children who have an identified hearing loss have access to the amplification they need to participate in the mainstream curriculum.
- To review our pre-school radio aid provision in light of the recent Ear Foundation/NDCS research which recommends that all infants and young children with an identified hearing loss are considered as candidates for radio aid equipment
- To continue to upgrade radio aids with newer and more reliable digital technology

In Berkshire, radio aid issue is entirely dictated by each child's individual requirement in accordance with the Radio Aid Policy. Digital technology facilitates using the equipment flexibly to meet the individual needs of each pupil.

In Conclusion

The numbers of children on SCS caseload who benefit from the advantages that radio aids systems give continues to increase. Many of these school aged pupils *could not access the school curriculum* without this *essential* equipment. The cost of this vital equipment continues to increase year on year. In the space of 18 months the cost of each component part of the radio aid system has increased by between 8% and 9% and the cost of repairing equipment that

develops a fault has increased by 50%! This continuous price rise and the increase in numbers of CYP needing access to the equipment has stretched the Audiology budget to near breaking point.

As this equipment facilitates independence and inclusion in mainstream schooling for deaf and hearing impaired CYP this has been and should continue to be recognised in the allocation of the SCS equipment budget.

Lisa Bull
Educational Audiologist

4.2 Visual Impairment Equipment Report

Initial funding available was £22,890

Items	Purpose	Total cost
Braille Note Takers/ Refreshable Braille displays	Two BrailleNote Touches were purchased this year for older students. Combining the benefits of KeySoft and braille literacy of a traditional note taker with the efficiency and power of a modern tablet, these devices allow complete interaction with mainstream Apps and document storage. A Brailiant Refreshable Braille display was also provided for a Year 10 pupil to facilitate progress in Computer Programming. This machine, when combined with a Screen Reader, enables the brailist to interact with a mainstream PC	£8,390.00
Low Vision Access technology	Prodigi Connect 12 with distance camera, these specialist tablets enable large print users to access textbooks, worksheets, internet information in an enlarged and visually simplified format. With an added keyboard the pupil can produce their own work in enlarged font and there is additional capacity to connect to or view the IWB. Additional distance cameras for Prodigis purchased last year to enable board access were also purchased. For younger pupils the SmartView 360 has provided magnification of both near and distance print, pictures and other information. It also allows the child to see the teacher's gestures and expressions.	£10667.75
Teaching and Access Software	Specialist Screen Reader and Magnification software to enable a pupil to use a mainstream computer, specialist touch typing and audio activity software. Tactile Imaging software and an update to Duxbury Braille translation software	£1749.03

Audio Devices: Victor Reader Stratus	Portable MP3 players which will play from CD, SD card or USB stick, for blind and low vision users. The specialised software enables speech to be compressed without losing clarity so that a blind user can develop the ability to listen to longer texts at high speed. This is a new machine for our service and proving very successful for the younger pupils.	£1282.50
Mobility: canes	Canes needed for an increasing number of pupils. Also replacement canes for students already receiving Mobility training.	£251.28
Repairs & servicing	Increased pupil use of technology is being reflected in an increase in repairs, especially repairs and services to Perkins Brailers.	£718.88
Technology Accessories	Additional and replacement lenses, cables, connectors.	£269.50
Training	Staff training to support the use of new technology	£325.00
Teaching Guides	Mainly for the increased braille reading and technology.	£20.00
Braille Reading Scheme	Take Off reading scheme. This covers much of the Grade 2 braille and is mainly used in KS 1 and 2	£55.00
	Total spend from VI Equipment budget:	£23,728.94

Future Budget Pressures

Provision of assistive technology throughout the school years is essential for our blind and partially sighted pupils. This is needed both to enable access to the National Curriculum and to deliver the Expanded Core Curriculum. With greater use of assistive technology there is an accompanying need for staff training on how to use it and also repairs when there are problems with it.

It is imperative for our service to remain flexible in our approach to supporting pupils within a rapidly changing mainstream technology environment while also ensuring they have the skills needed to become independent learners, and eventually able to contribute in the workplace.

Braille users in particular need access to a range of specialised equipment for reading and producing Braille and tactile materials. Total equipment costs for a blind pupil will rise to £12,000 plus by the time they reach Secondary school. Complex items such as the Braille Notetakers are frequently upgraded, necessitating continuous staff development for SCS teachers and ongoing training for TAs. It is expected that there will be an increased need for Brailnote machines during the next few years. Our previous standby, the BrailleNote Apex, is being discontinued and will soon no longer be supported. The general trend for the braille users will therefore be towards replacing the Apex with the BrailleNote Touch whenever possible.

Perkins Brailers continue to be a basic but core piece of technology for blind users. This year we have bought several Victor Reader Stratus machines for younger pupils before transitioning to the pocket sized Victor Reader Stream.

The number of pupils accessing mobility and independence training continues to grow, a trend which is reflected in the continued number of new and replacement canes needed.

5. SCS Professional Development

In order to professionally develop the staff, the expertise and outcomes a wide range of professional development avenues are considered in addition to the traditional route of courses and conferences. Participation in working groups, project development and provision of training workshops/mentorship are all pursued. Participation in parent support groups, regional specialist interest working groups, guest speakers at National Conferences and contributors to national documents and websites as well as tutors on University training courses are all examples of staff out of hours endeavours which continue to benefit the service.

5.1 Service Professional Development Opportunities

All SCS whole Service Professional Development opportunities are shared with other professionals and parents according to subject matter rather than Service membership. Some training is organised so that it is delivered jointly by Health, SCS and parents. Pupils have also been supported to contribute and deliver in-service to schools as well as parent workshops and evenings organised by SCS. Pupils and parents routinely form part of our interview panel.

All of these will be advertised on our website (see Appendices).and in September 17 we are trialing a closed Facebook page for parents using parents who attended the Change in Programme meetings in July 17.

TRAINING PROGRAMME PROVIDED BY SENSORY CONSORTIUM SERVICE : ACADEMIC YEAR 2016-17

Course Title	Target Group	Date	Venue / approx nos	Duration	Cost	Lead SCS teacher
BTEC Level 3 TA Course run by SCS in conjunction with Mary Hare	Teaching Assistants working with pupils with Hearing / Vision impairment	Start date October 2017	28 per day	5 days	£600	Jean.weiss@rbwm.gov.uk
Pupil courses VI : Think Right Feel Good.	(VI Parent and Pupil courses run alternate	VI : Parent Course – November 17	Berkshire Vision	10-20 hours	Free	Paula.scott@rbwm.gov.uk

Course Title	Target Group	Date	Venue / approx nos	Duration	Cost	Lead SCS teacher
	years)					
TA Network Visual impairment	Teaching Assistants working with SI	Termly across unitaries	15	3.30-5.00 p.m.	No cost	Liz.Butler@rbwm.gov.uk
Multi-Agency Day	All working with CYP with Sensory Impairment		100		Cost of venue etc shared between all attending typically £60 incl lunch	Jane.Peters@rbwm.gov.uk Paula.scott@rbwm.gov.uk
HI Technical Update	All Qualified or training HI teachers	11 October and 16 May 2017	Easthampstead Park 30	½ day	Cost of venue etc shared between	Lisa.Bull@rbwm.gov.uk /
VI Technical Update	All Qualified / training VI teachers	TBC	Easthampstead Park 25	All day	all attending £25 typically	Jane.lovering@rbwm.gov.uk
Cascade Training Day	SCS HI staff / all qualified QTVI and SCS staff	20 September 2017	Easthampstead Park 45	All day.	£25	Jane.Kilminster@rbwm.gov.uk Paula.scott@rbwm.gov.uk
Looking Forward / Careers Day VI	Parents and secondary age pupils	June 2018	Wokingham	Evening	Free	Carol.Newby@rbwm.gov.uk
Transition Picnics	Pupils	VI : June 18 HI June 18	HI – Braywick Park Nature Centre VI - TBC	All day	Free	Liz.Butler@rbwm.gov.uk Sarah.Cooper@rbwm.gov.uk

(Table 8)

2016-17 Evaluation of Training provided by SCS not including our own Service attendees

	Level 5	Level 4	Level 3	Level 2	Level 1
Course content was appropriate	124	48	10	3	2
Length of session was appropriate	128	47	10	2	0
Presenter knew their subject well	165	18	4	0	0
Presenter was able to answer questions fully	143	39	5	0	0
Found the course useful	122	54	7	3	1
Recommend the course to others	121	53	10	1	2
	803	259	46	9	5

(Table 9)

In 2016 - 17 we rewrote the Vision Impairment and Hearing impairment BTec course and are hoping to run this new course starting in October. The online courses remain available and individual training programmes part of all packages to schools.

5.2 Evaluation of Longer Term Effect of Training

98% of training events are found to have had a significant effect on practice after 6 months. This is a very positive outcome and reflects well on the strategies used for identifying training routes. In SCS all individual training activities are linked to Performance Management needs with whole Service training provided where there is a universal Service need. Cascade Training Days ensure that all staff can benefit from training made available for an individual member of staff. Teaching Assistants have equal access to training as relevant to needs.

5.3 Accredited Training for SCS Staff

We start 2017-18 with 1 Teacher for the Vision Impaired starting her specialist qualification having been appointed last year but when the course was already full. She took advantage of the time by completing her Braille qualification. We also have a member of staff beginning the Habilitation course having taken up the post of Habilitation assistant when Sue Stevenson retired this year. She had previously been working as a Specialist teaching assistant and her post was not replaced. Both courses last 2 years.

We had 5 staff finish similar courses this year and 1 staff member moved to another area and was duly charged for the cost of the course as per the agreement set up on appointment to our Service with specialist training allocation.

5.4 Good News

Good News Bulletins continue to be sent out each term to the JMG (Joint Management Group) with revised caseloads.

I would however like to draw your attention to some particular interesting exam results this year:

Our first blind pupil to go all through mainstream schools and University was awarded a 2:1 for his Creative writing degree at Warwick and is now going on to do a Masters in poetry - he wants to end up as a songwriter - is doing a lot with his band - singing and playing keyboards. Travelling independently and using a cane and living independently.

GCSE results of another brailist who has been in mainstream schools until this point : English Language: 8; English Lit: 8; Maths :5;

R.E : A; Business Studies: B ; Additional Science: B; Core Science: C; Drama: C; Cope: Level 2

Two students who came out of Mary Hare for sixth form supported by Berkshire SCS : A* Art, A, B and A*Art, A, C and they both got into Exeter University to do their chosen subjects - Classical Civilisation and History of Art respectively.

6. Management, Structure and Organisation

All non administration staff have caseloads when working full time. However a number of senior management are now on phased retirements and thus caseloads have been reduced alongside their FTE reductions. The Head of Service has given notice to retire at the end of December 2017.

Team Details: Staff office base locations and information about their individual skills are included in the Appendices.

A team of administrative and support staff are also provided by the Host Authority and this includes Accountancy, Payroll, Personnel staff. Costs funded by Host fee. Additionally the JMG approved 12hrs a week Administrative support for the Teaching teams to be run from RBWM for better access to RBWM systems and better enable staff to concentrate on their frontline work and a further 3 hrs a week from each Local Authority in each office base.

Consistency of staff for children, schools and families continues to be important. Budget restraints of LA's has meant that staff have sometimes had to change areas in order to respond to staff absences related to Maternity leave. Through careful planning we minimise the disruption that this might otherwise cause to agreed programmes. Recruitment and retention issues continue to mean that this is a constant juggling act to enable appropriately qualified staff working with those in training. This often means that staff work higher caseloads than supported within Service documentation. Staff consistently respond to the identified pupil needs with resulting staff shortages not fully reflected in shortfalls in provision. There continues to be delays in some of the High Additional Needs annual contracts which makes it difficult to plan staffing for September but the introduction of annual contracts for ongoing arrangements should make this less disruptive.

It should be noted that due to the changes in programmes September 2017 there will be significant changes of Berkshire SCS staff and schools and families allocated as they take on much higher caseloads.

Holiday cover is built into Service provision so that Health can expect a Service response to referrals within 24 hours and a visit from a specialist teacher within 5 working days. Holiday provision is available for newly diagnosed pre-school children. We have added this into job descriptions with HI staff providing 5 days' cover for 1 day's time in lieu. It remains a voluntary option for staff with some more able to undertake than others but we have moved to an agreed timetable with all staff taking a turn. In addition staff there is a lieu policy that ensures that the core term-time work is not disrupted. The Vision impairment

holiday referrals are managed by the Habilitation workers who work during school holidays to provide this Service where it can be used more flexibly without the restraints of fitting within school timetable demands.

We have continued to source some interpreter provision and sometimes in joint arrangements with Health. This does not have a budget allocation and remains an additional cost for the Service although as not much required it is not a significant cost.

7. Monitoring and Evaluation

7.1 The Service Development Plan

This continues to be reviewed annually but last year the need to consider the Review and possible changes of host Service made it difficult to progress more significant changes. A 3 year Business Plan has been developed to start September 2017 and agreed with the JMG and is available on the website. The Berkshire Sensory Consortium Service is still hoping that a new host authority will be agreed in time for April 18 when it will be celebrating 20 years hosted by RBWM.

Service performance guarantees are

- Provide a written report on all pupils at least annually.
- Complete all formal assessment reports within statutory time limits.
- Provide an initial response to all new school referrals within five working days, and 24 hours for Pre-school.
- Submit a written report within eight working weeks following receipt of a new referral.
- Evaluate our Service annually using staff and user surveys, pupil outcomes, and an analysis of our praise/complaints log. This has now moved to an electronic system enabling us to do all authorities annually.
- Support all A category pupils Teaching programmes with Service Level Agreements.

The service will use the following mechanisms to manage its performance against these objectives:

- Budget Management outcomes
- Performance Management of staff
- Service evaluation
- CYPSP outcomes and records maintained by Berkshire SCS

7.2 User Survey

Parents, pupils and other professionals continue to be able to offer information through the annual survey as well as through focus groups and workshops. All reports are subject to parental scrutiny before circulation. In September 2017 we are setting up a private Facebook page for parents.

A Complaints file is maintained. Although we rarely have more than one complaint once again there were no formal complaints and 3 reported

discussions at Team leader level and much positive praise reported through the Good News reports sent to LA's termly by SCS.

Complaints and level at which they were reported and resolved :

Level 1 (Case worker)	0
Level 2 (Team leader)	0
Level 3 (Head of Service)	0
Level 4 (Authority Officer)	0

(Table 10)

Record of involvement analysis

We once again conducted our Survey this year with schools and parents and pupils. This will need to be changed next year with the changes of programme and those pupils on short term inputs would be more suited to review with a time frame similar to that used in training programmes with only those on annual programmes being reviewed at end academic year.

School Review

School Review of Berkshire Sensory Consortium Service (SCS) Provision	Answer Options					
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	N/A	Unsure	Total
1. Berkshire SCS staff have helped your school staff to gain knowledge and understanding of the sensory impairments of your pupil(s).	21	15	0	0	0	36
2. Berkshire SCS staff have helped develop the confidence of school staff and pupil(s) to use specialist equipment provided because of the sensory impairment of the pupil(s).	15	14	1	6	0	36
3. Berkshire SCS staff have contributed to developing effective teaching and learning strategies for your pupil(s) with a sensory impairment, and to the confidence of school staff to meet the learning needs of the pupil(s).	14	21	1	0	0	36
4. Berkshire SCS staff have supported the school in developing strategies to positively affect the social inclusion of pupil(s) with a sensory impairment.	16	19	1	0	0	36
5. On the whole you are pleased with the service you receive from us.	23	11	1	0	0	35
6. I find your website interesting and informative.	4	14	0	0	18	36
I will be forwarding this link to all staff at the beginning of the new school year in September. It is very informative and can provide them with useful information to support our HI pupils.						
Jane Perry has been an exceptionally helpful addition to our support network and has guided staff to ensure good outcomes. She has been flexible and responded to queries in a timely manner. Her notes, observations and guidance reports are detailed and quickly available to us. A very big thank you!						
Just that our link worker - Margaret Hunter is always very clear and supportive of both school and the children. It seems a shame that the service is changing and there are less visits per year for our hearing impaired children.						

N/A - We could not have asked for more.						
Don't like the funding cuts						
I haven't used it.						
No						
As a school we would like clarity on the provision of SCS services in the next academic year. We have had a very vague letter outlining that changes will occur and heard from the SCS teachers that hours are reduced, but no specifics as to how the changes will impact the support for our visually and hearing impaired children within our school. As we are the ones facing questions from parents, and the ones needing to ensure the right provision is in place for September, it seems reasonable to have some clarity on the changes so this can be accurately fed back to parents.						
7. I find the Local Offer (accessed through your website - http://berkshirescs.btck.co.uk/LocaltoYou), interesting and useful.	3	12	3	0	17	35
I had not realised it was there until I looked for this survey. Although Bracknell appears not to offer a wide range of services these are all clearly linked on here.						
Local Offer is like looking for a needle in a haystack. Those that created it actually need to go back and try exploring it, or sit next to someone who is new to it and observe the frustration experienced when trying to find something.						
I haven't used it						
Not really looked at it.						
8. If I could change one thing about the service received from the Berkshire Sensory Consortium Service it would be:						
Nothing! We have had great support since Julia Battle started.						
The support we receive from our SCS Coordinator Jane Kilminster and teacher of the deaf Julia Battle is outstanding.						
We liaise with them during the transition stages from Primary school and then they present an inset to all staff who teach our HI students at the start of each academic year. This is followed up with observations in class and discussions with teachers and reports so that we are continually improving the support/service to our students. Being the HI coordinator for the school I act as a liaison between SCS and school staff and feel that I am able to call upon SCS at any time (we have daily/weekly contact). They are always enthusiastic to help and willing to provide advice for both the students and staff.						
We also have positive relationships with the parents of our HI students which is always aided by SCS and results in a very supportive team around all of our HI pupils.						
That visits etc. stay at the current level although I'm sure there are cuts as there have been to all support services.						
I think the service is amazing. The staff are so flexible and have such a brilliant understanding of the pupils and how to help them in a secondary setting whilst still understanding the difficulties that we have. Special than you to Liz Butler, Jane Perry and Sandy Piper						
The service has always been very supportive of our HI pupils - absolutely no complaints from us!						
The amount of contact time with family of affected children						
Be informed continue to support and link deaf children instead to end it when they go to school like when chatty monkeys finish due to the child going to school. My daughter never sees other deaf children						
Let the parents know more about what's happening. I only know because of my sons TA.						
To be able to make more use of your skills, twilight training, advice around IEP targets etc.						
I would like more numeracy support						

We have had good service, but are worried about changes next year and lack of info about how this will impact provision for our pupils requiring there service. This is a big concern.
To have more staff available to meet the needs of all the children! The team there work incredibly hard - thank you all.
That reports are able to be an electronically and within good time for maximum impact.
The service we receive from the Hearing Impairment team is fantastic, they are so helpful, informative and approachable. They have an understanding of how schools work and realistic expectations as to what can be done/carried out in school.
Unfortunately, this really is not the same with the visual impairment team. We find working with them exceptionally difficult and considering the amount of the SEN budget that is used on this service we feel incredibly sad about this. They often come across and very rude and abrupt. Their understanding of schools is unfortunately not the same as that of the hearing impaired team, and often their expectations are unrealistic as to what we can do in a mainstream setting. In meetings with parents, unfortunately, the way in which they speak about the school and the provisions available is not professional and therefore is does not feel like a partnership of working, but more of them checking and inspecting what the school is not doing. It would be really wonderful for this to change, and to have more support and partnership working in order to ensure our young people with visual impairments have holistic support they need with professionals working in harmony. This is absolutely the case for the hearing impaired team.

Parent Review

Parent Review of Berkshire Sensory Consortium Service (SCS) Provision	Answer Options				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Unsure	Response Count
1. Your SCS teacher has helped you in gaining knowledge and understanding of your child's sensory impairment.	17	12	3	0	32
2. You feel confident about asking your SCS teacher questions about your child's sensory impairment and progress.	23	7	2	0	32
3. Your SCS teacher has helped develop both your child's and your confidence to use specialist equipment provided because of your child's sensory impairment.	11	10	2	0	23
4. Your SCS teacher has supported your child's learning through teaching and supporting your opportunities to support play/learning programmes provided.	15	13	3	0	31
5. On the whole you are pleased with the service you receive from us.	21	9	2	0	32
6. I find your website interesting and informative.	4	9	0	19	32
All SCS teachers involved with my son have given invaluable support are friendly, caring, pro-active and very responsive when changes occur. Thank you for all you, it is MUCH appreciated.					
Susie Cornish has always gone above and beyond her duties to help my son and myself where his hearing impairment is concerned! We are extremely grateful for all her support and highly appreciate the fact that the Sensory Consortium exists.					

I would like to add that the support my daughter gets from her teacher is fantastic. My daughter now having the knowledge and understanding that there is someone she can go to in school for help and support to answer her questions and also ensure that she is receiving the best adaptations for her disability that she can have. Has built up my daughter's confidence after a very difficult period of self-doubt and questions about her ability's.									
It is also very reassuring that she is getting the support educationally for us as parents, that she is not being disadvantaged due to her disability.									
My son currently receives weekly support including any required SENCO meetings, I am disappointed this will be dropping with the current changes being put into place.									
I didn't know there was a website to use!									
Not looked at it before... will now									
I've only looked at it once and couldn't find the info I needed.									
7. I find the Local Offer (accessed through your website - http://berkshirescs.btck.co.uk/LocaltoYou), interesting and useful.					5	8	0	19	32
My son has an EHC now which helps support him with his learning needs etc.									
Don't remember seeing this. Is it connected to the Local Offer done by local councils?									
8. If I could change one thing about the service received from the Berkshire Sensory Consortium Service it would be:									
Please do not change or take support away - you are a life line / thank you									
More flexibility for teachers to monitor students in lessons they are not comfortable or struggle in									
Put the support back to what it was. e.g.: weekly visits for my son not restricting to 30 visits per term plus meetings.									
To be included and to know what is being suggested. No reports and the allocation of visits hasn't even been completed									
More time for the individual children. We are extremely lucky that our son is now at a stage where he doesn't need as much support but there was a time when he could have benefited from more sessions.									
To have more support for my child .									
That the consortium gives the parent a call to have a brief chat on how the child is managing in school									
We have been very disappointed with the Teacher of the Deaf allocated to us. We have consistently had late reports, containing multiple errors and very poor communication overall. If we could change one thing we would like to be offered the choice of a different Teacher of the Deaf.									
Although I have been pleased in the past with the input and help from our SCS, I haven't heard from her for a while now and she wasn't included in the recent EHCP meeting with the school. Do I take it that she no longer visits my son, even though he has hearing and balance problems due to having no semi circular canals, as I haven't been informed of this?									
I got this incomprehensible letter about changes to services a while ago. I had no idea what it meant for my child and couldn't find the information referred to in your website. It was very confusing. Not sure what is going on and what has changed. Do you consult with parent carer forums about this sort of thing? We can help liaise with parents and advise on communications. I am a trustee of Reading families forum and there are PCFs in Wokingham (REACH) , Slough etc.									
I know you do parent engagement events but as my child's sensory impairment is not one of her major issues I am afraid I have not prioritised this. I hope you get other parents going along tho.									

Pupil Review

Pupil Review of Berkshire Sensory Consortium Service (SCS) Provision	Answer Options				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Unsure	Response Count
1. You feel able to talk to your SCS teacher about your sensory impairment and learning needs.	1	0	0	0	1
2. Your SCS teacher has helped to get your support right in school.	1	0	0	0	1
3. Your SCS teacher has helped you feel confident and able to use the specialist equipment on loan to you. (If you don't have specialist equipment, please don't complete this section.)	0	1	0	0	1
4. You have opportunities outside the classroom to do things with your friends and if you don't, you would talk to your SCS teacher about this.	0	1	0	0	1
5. On the whole you are pleased with the service you receive from us.	0	1	0	0	1
6. I find your website interesting and informative.	0	1	0	0	1
7. I find the Local Offer (accessed through your website - http://berkshirescs.btck.co.uk/LocaltoYou), interesting and useful.	0	1	0	0	1
8. If I could change one thing about the service received from the Berkshire Sensory Consortium Service it would be:					
Sarah Cooper really helps me in school.					

7.3 External Assessment

There is a twice yearly meeting of the Joint Management Group (second tier officers). Caseload datasheets are forwarded to SEN officers termly. Twice yearly PPAC (Parents, Professionals around the Child) meetings are held to discuss the pre-school children on caseload with particularly complex needs or for whom a multi-professional assessment may be necessary when this is not otherwise being organized through Local Authority systems. SCS staff organise Family Planning meetings for other pre-school children for whom they have been identified as the lead worker. Some LA officers meet with SCS Management on a termly basis to discuss individual children, their programmes and progress as well as overall caseload and LA policies. This is very useful in view of the fact that each LA has quite distinct needs as well as much in common.

The Service was considered and commented upon in the RBWM Ofsted and quoted in the opening section of this report. Staffing 1.2 ToD and 1.2 QTVI and 0.2 MSI in RBWM including all management support although the Consortium arrangement means that higher number of staff are involved in providing the expertise and input whilst maintaining the FTE funded.

7.4 Financial Review

Accountability of the Service is ensured through regular reporting to bi-annual joint management meetings with the six education officers from the unitaries and through submission of service accounts to the joint Finance Officers Group. Internal auditing procedures are administered by the Host Authority who also provide monitoring and support with legal, personnel and training issues.

Some budget surplus 16-17 was used to fund shortfall in equipment budget. This year it was decided that Berkshire SCS would not be able to carry forward beyond September 17 despite a predicted shortfall in budget 17-18 due to changes in programmes and staff changes that mostly would not occur until September 17. There was a refund to the LAs for core Service costs 2016-17 which once again were understaffed.

Enough budget was carried over to enable the funding shortfall up to September 17 but the remaining budget surplus was taken by RBWM. Surplus budget typically remains because of staff shortages and the fact that temporary recruitment of appropriately skilled staff has not typically proved successful, and additionally the time factor in managing staff without the expertise exceeds staff already employed doing the extra work and therefore staff already employed have accepted extra caseload to manage their colleagues' absence. There was a 1% inflationary increase in staff wages as advised by the Government September 16 and this was absorbed 1 will now be added in to costs 16-17 in accordance with Contract arrangements (see Appendix 5) and similarly 17-18.

The diverse range of need represented by the caseload is not well represented by the average cost as the range incorporates for example a monitoring programme at £192 through to a teaching programme combined with training for the school of a blind pupil costing £37,568 per annum. It should be noted that these costs include ongoing equipment costs for all pupils in HI or VI Resourced provisions and Educational Audiology provided for Resources which is presumably not costed within their placements but is in effect added on to the pupil costs in mainstream placements via SCS budget.

There is a significant change to programmes that start September 17.

The actual child cost is listed in detail on the caseload database which is provided termly for SEN Managers. As agreed by the JMG core caseloads continue to be reported on the academic year and top-up on financial year. We are moving to top-up being reported on academic year with a move to academic year contracts where the support is known to be ongoing. Delivered visits will be recorded on the end year caseloads sent to SEN Officers in September following each academic year.

8. Summary of Key Findings

- Numbers of VI/HI/MSI pupils have remained relatively stable with NFA's matching New Referral to Caseloads. The number of pupils on caseload in Primary schools almost equals the total of Pre-school added to Secondary pupils except in two authorities where it slightly exceeds.
- Continued high numbers of blind pupils (particularly Reading and Slough) MSI pupils (particularly Wokingham) and Hearing impaired (Slough, Reading, Wokingham and West Berkshire).
- Termly target outcomes set by SCS for pupils remain mostly in the areas of teaching and curriculum and thus underpin the NATSIP outcomes. Changes to Performance Indicators reported by NATSIP have made individual collection more difficult.
- Staff levels have been successfully reduced through normal changes to match the new programmes September 17. However further staff retiring December 17 will result in some understaffing January 18 where reductions in the new programmes risk compromising meeting needs. Adverts have been placed for new staff.
- Shortfalls in equipment budget particularly in the Hearing impairment provision which is used by the HI Resources as well. This has been raised as a pressure to be explored further for next year's budget.
- A wide range of training opportunities continues to be provided for professionals, families and pupils.
- The results of the Berkshire SCS Annual Survey remains overwhelmingly positive although it continues to be difficult to gain enough responses from children to make any significant judgements from the results. Berkshire SCS has set up a Facebook page for parents where they can engage in regular and direct contact with the Service.

9. Conclusion

The Sensory Consortium Service has entered its 19th year continuing from its 5th Service Level Agreement with Authorities which ended in April 16 with a Service Level Agreement until April 2017. Additional JMG meetings have addressed changes in programmes putting more emphasis on schools meeting needs of Hearing and Vision impaired pupils as recommended by the Review. However there is no definite decisions as to who will host Berkshire SCS from April 18 when RBWM hopes to end the current hosting arrangement.

The JMG meetings continue to be an essential element of the Service to be attended by the JMG representative from each Authority. It remains important that Educational and Commissioning representation is included in the JMG in line with its Terms of Reference. This is a joint arrangement with joint management of the Service and access to host services made by the Head of Service and staff.

We have continued to be able to respond to the increased demand and complexity of local provision and increase the range of viable placements available locally for pupils with sensory needs. There has been a significant increase in pupils with severe and profound hearing impairment leaving specialist provision or Resource provision for their community school with SCS support. Additionally particularly in Hearing impairment we have some pupils with severe and profound hearing impairment without an EHC plan. SCS staff have a range of additional qualifications enabling us to meet the diversity that might exist in a pupil with sensory impairment.

Staffing is based on identified needs and budgets are matched on the real costs of these provisions. The size of the organisation and planning by Co-ordinators has meant that we have largely been able to meet most of the additional requests made upon the SCS. It should be noted that the courses that nearly all our staff have to undertake on appointment which run for 2 years from September were full by end May so early recruitment and appointment is critical to enable appointment and provide expertise. It still remains difficult to have placement changes agreed on high needs pupils in time to plan staffing as accurately as would be liked.

Our Service reviews, assessments and audits both internal and external continue to be positive. We have been asked to work on a number of working groups at both regional and national level and this means that we are working to support the development of national frameworks for deliveries but also that we are confident of our ability to work within them.

We continue to focus upon the contribution we can make to the community as a whole through our work with and for named pupils. The needs of the child and young person are assessed within the family and school framework and both planning and deliveries are both trans-professional as well as delivered with parent and pupil support and agreement as identified in the RBWM Ofsted July 17. We continue to remain keen to promote and increase our ability to work with the LA management teams and structures.