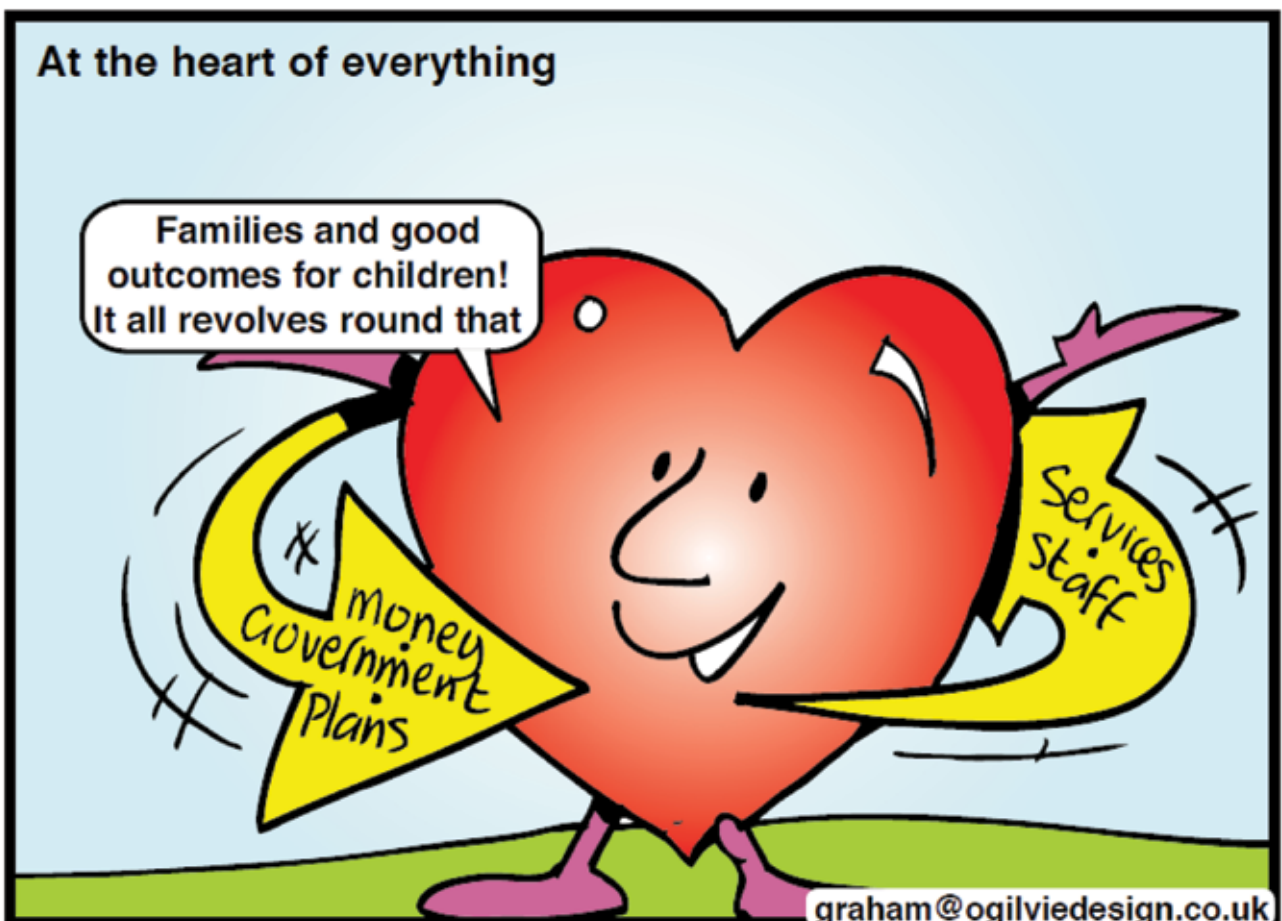


# TELL US WHAT YOU THINK

## Delivering the best outcomes for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities in Gateshead



Consultation: September 2012

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## **DIFFERENT FORMATS**

If you would like this information in large print, Braille, on cassette, CD/MP3 or in a different language please contact Michael Gallagher on 0191 433 3573 and we will arrange this for you.

*Images are courtesy of Parents in Power – the Parent Carer Forum for Gateshead*

# Foreword

I am pleased to introduce this consultation document, about delivering good outcomes for children with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) in Gateshead.

In it, we tell you what we do now, how we think services should develop in the future, and how you can help us with this by giving your views on what we propose.

It comes at a time of unprecedented change in how services to support children and young people with SEND are planned, delivered and funded. There are major changes nationally from the 2011 Support and Aspiration Green Paper, and from the School Funding reform proposals which have a major impact on how assessment, commissioning and delivery will be managed in the future.

We are fortunate in that tranSEND, our SEND pathfinder is one of twenty areas nationally looking at some of the changes in detail, and we have drawn on some of the emerging lessons from that work in this document. Will this mean anything to a parent?

The majority of children and young people in Gateshead get excellent support and quality services. But, we know from feedback from parents, carers, children and young people and schools, that the system can feel complicated and remote. We also know from schools that we need greater clarity around roles, as well as funding issues.

So, we are keen to hear your views about how we can develop and improve services together for the future. Taking part in this consultation is the first step to making this happen.

We've set out the consultation questions at the end of the document and would need your responses by 20th December 2012.

I look forward to hearing from you.

**Councillor Angela Douglas**

Cabinet Member for Children and Young People

# Introduction

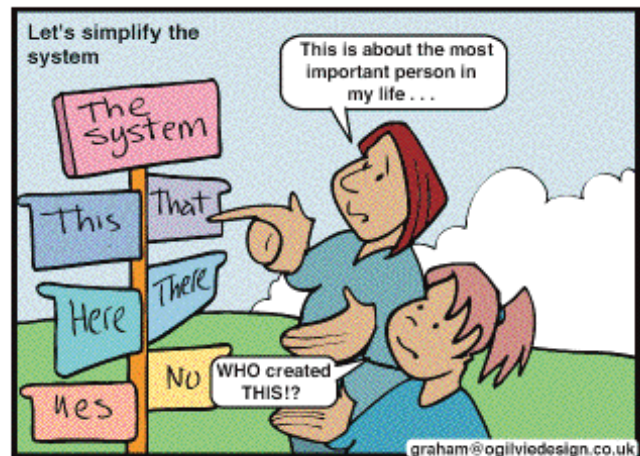
This document has been produced by Gateshead Council to stimulate debate on the future of support for children and young people with Special Educational Needs (SEND) and Disabilities in Gateshead.

We know things are changing rapidly nationally, and that we need to respond to these changes in a way which makes sense for children, parents, schools and other organisations in Gateshead.

We know that the way in which Special Educational Needs (SEN) has been delivered in Gateshead has also suffered from a lack of clarity on roles, and from a history of taking too long to review and implement new approaches.

This consultation document:

- sets out a new approach to supporting children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) in Gateshead.
- takes into account the national changes proposed by Government, initially set out in the Support and Aspiration Green Paper in 2011, and updated more recently in the Next Steps Paper in June 2012 as well as the changes to school funding as set out in the School Funding Reform consultation papers.
- summarises how we currently do things in Gateshead, and what the impact of the national changes are likely to be.
- draws on the work we have been doing locally with parents, organisations and schools as part of the tranSEND pathfinder – and in particular how we can:
  - simplify and streamline the assessment process;
  - develop a more integrated plan which addresses education, health and social care needs; and
  - offer choice around individual budgets and the development of a clearer Local Offer. (package of services you can get)
- sets out our thinking on what needs to be done, and also how our role is changing. It seeks views on a series of options, and proposes a new 'vision' for how we can continue to improve outcomes for children and young people with SEND in Gateshead.



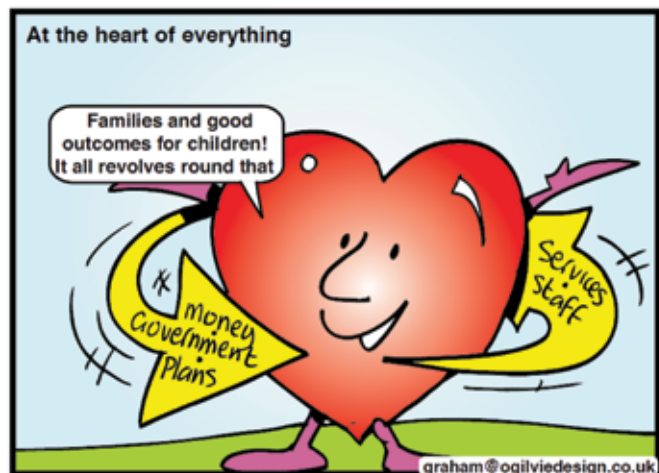
*The proposals set out in the SEN Green paper taken together with proposed changes in the way funding works provide the most significant changes to the way the SEN system works in years.*

# How things currently work

## Early Years

The Council Plan 2012-17 and the emerging Health and Wellbeing Strategy both confirm the commitment to 'Giving children the best start in life'.

All children and young people deserve the best opportunities to help them meet their aspirations and achieve their full potential. Some children and young people need additional help and support because they have a special educational need or because they are disabled.



Successful support requires partnership between children, parents and professionals. In the early years (from 0-5) early identification and diagnosis are crucially important, and the role of early years professionals in ensuring that support is in place is key, but it can be difficult to accurately diagnose, and the vast majority of activity occurs in the school years.

## Schools

Schools have primary responsibility for identifying and intervening to address the needs of pupils who need additional support. The Council provides support to schools in undertaking these roles. For the vast majority of children, provision in school will continue to be the best option, and the majority of our schools are very good at implementing the right support when children need it. This is known as School Action. For those pupils who need further intervention, and for whom additional resources and/or strategies are required, there will usually be a combined response between the school and the Council. This is known as School Action Plus.

## Statutory Assessment

Where these interventions are not sufficient, a statutory assessment might be needed. This is a very detailed look at a child's difficulties, strengths and needs to decide whether the child requires more or different educational help and, if so, what kind of help, how much and where this could be provided. This may lead to a Statement of Special Educational Needs. A statutory assessment can be requested by schools, parents and carers, or by referral from agencies such as the Primary Care Trust or Social Care.

The Council has the responsibility for producing a Statement of Special Educational Needs but this will be replaced by an integrated assessment and intervention planning process as a result of changes being proposed by the Government in the SEND Green Paper and the forthcoming Children and Families Bill.

## Specialist Intervention

For most children, mainstream school will always be the best place to have their needs met. Some pupils require greater levels of intervention including more specialist intervention. The model of Additionally Resourced Mainstream Schools (ARMS) was designed to provide additional opportunities to provide intervention in specialist areas, based on a model of inclusion and building on the strengths of schools in supporting pupils.

For some children the most appropriate place for their education will be in special schools, and in very rare circumstances, provision outside of Gateshead will be required.

## Disabled Children Team

The Disabled Children Team provides emotional and practical social care support to meet the needs of children aged 0-17 years who have substantial, long-term disabilities which have a profound impact on their lives.

Services include:

- short breaks – during the day or overnight;
- support to enable a disabled child to access community-based leisure activities;
- support in the home with the care of a disabled child; and
- support to access adaptations and special equipment.

## Services Post16

Things work differently post 16. The education and training needs for most young people, including for those who have additional needs, are able to be met through mainstream providers. A number of special schools in Gateshead now work with colleges and other organisations to develop more opportunities.

However, some young people who have a learning difficulty assessment may need to access more specialist provision which may be delivered through a mainstream provider or through an Independent Specialist Provider (ISP), sometimes with a residential placement.

Crucially also, social care support changes significantly at 18 as needs need to be assessed through the Fair Access to Care system.



# What's changing and why is it important?

Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) remains one of the most contentious and complex areas of education policy and delivery, and too often it is viewed separately from the way in which we support children with disabilities.

The reforms being introduced by Government provide a series of challenges which we need to take account of. These proposals include:

- A 0-25 approach, aiming to ensure a more joined up and continuous process which integrates education, health and social care assessments. A more integrated approach to education, health and social care support to children and young people through Education, Health and Social Care Plans.
- A choice of personal budgets for those that want them.
- Increasing choice to parents and children through a clear 'local offer' of provision.

Gateshead is a pathfinder testing out some of these issues. Draft legislation was published in September this year.

The recent schools funding reform proposals also suggest a radically different way of delivering support to children and young people with SEN, including further delegated resources to schools, a clearer split between commissioners and providers, and an increasing emphasis on a more transparent system to enable choice.

In particular the new funding system proposes a new way of funding for those pupils with the highest needs, through a High Needs Block, which funds Special Schools, ARMS units and any support required to meet the needs of pupils above a £10,000 base cost – any support costing more than that is defined as high needs.

A major review of SEN in Gateshead concluded in 2008. The review made a series of recommendations about how SEN should be delivered in future. Implementation has been patchy, and there is a need to take stock of some of the proposals and clarify if this remains the right approach.

The Council's role is also changing around SEN. This is not just about the wider changes in the education system and an increasing emphasis on greater delegation to schools.



*Increasing choice and control over budgets*

There have been changes in the Learning and Children Service including:

- the development of a new Commissioning Service;
- the formation of educationGateshead;
- and an increasing emphasis on clarity about who assesses; who commissions provision and who delivers provision.

This paper aims to identify the key challenges and to start the process of setting out a new approach. It is particularly important for the Council in that we need to:

- understand and set out our changed role, particularly at a time when the Council has lost significant capacity (staff and resources) around SEN;
- plan for the implementation of new school funding and increasing delegation to schools;
- take decisions about our role in delivery, particularly around the role of the Special Educational Needs Improvement Team (SENIT).
- develop our approach around the way we provide specialised interventions and support, through the new High Needs Block; and
- clarify the offer post 16, both in terms of education and training support and provision, but also in managing the transitions between social care and health systems and packages.



# The basis of our approach

This paper does not propose a further fundamental SEN review – this is not needed and would not have wide support amongst Headteachers or other stakeholders.

However there are a range of issues which need to be addressed in the short, medium and long term, where there is a lack of clarity in the approach we are collectively taking to support children with SEN, or where we are part way through implementation and need to pause and take stock of our approach.

At the heart of this is the Green Paper and its implications, and the opportunity we have in Gateshead to play a leading role in the design of a new system, through our status as an SEND pathfinder. We need to maximise this opportunity to develop a clear local approach.

The following pages set out what we think needs to change and why; some of our initial thinking on proposals for a new approach; and some detailed points for further consultation where there are options for how we might progress.

These form the basis of our consultation.



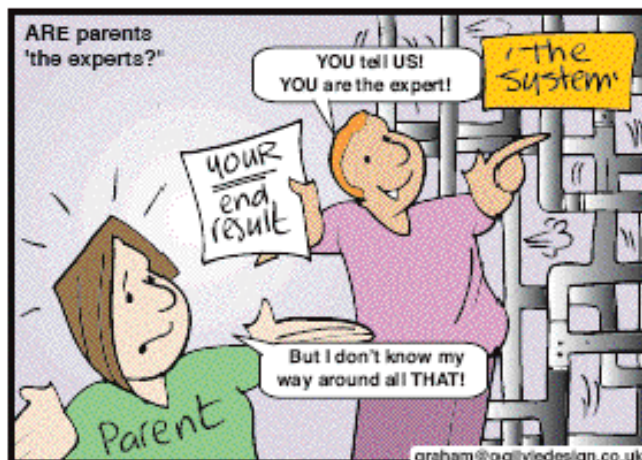
*Our status as pathfinder means we can test new approaches, and find out what is going to work best in Gateshead*

# What do we need to change?

We know that for the majority of children in Gateshead, the current system works reasonably well, but we also know there are things we need to address. Our work on the tranSEND pathfinder has identified a number of areas where we need to get better.

Key areas for improvement include:

- **Improving evaluation:** We have limited information currently for evaluating future need and we do not use this in a consistent way to plan our approach. This means we don't have consistent data on need to drive forward our commissioning decisions and therefore to influence delivery.
- **Clarity of roles:** Both in the Council and elsewhere.
  - Who now does what in the Council? Who assesses need? How do we know how many places we need to commission?
  - Are we clear about what the respective roles of schools, the Special Educational Needs Improvement Team (former SENSS) and Pupil and Parent Services, the ARMS and the Special Schools? Are there clear specifications and pathways between services?
  - We need to consider the capacity and role of our Special Schools on the basis of changing needs.
- **Reduce external placements:** We need to continue to minimise the number of external placements wherever possible to reduce costs.
- **ARMS Model:** We need to look again at the Additionally Resourced Mainstream Schools (ARMS) model, as there have been a number of problems about implementation.
- **Support and Intervention:** We need to look at the services the Council currently provide, around support and intervention, given the increasing delegation of funding to schools.
- **Statutory Assessments/Statements:** Are processes clear and do they work as well as they could? Do we have a strong enough focus on outcomes in statements, or do we focus too much on provision? How will this translate into the new Education, Health and Social Care Plans.
- **Personal Budgets:** How do we best implement personal budgets across health, social care and education?
- **Working with parents:** How do we engage with parents?
- **Post 16 work:** What happens post 16 and in transitions?



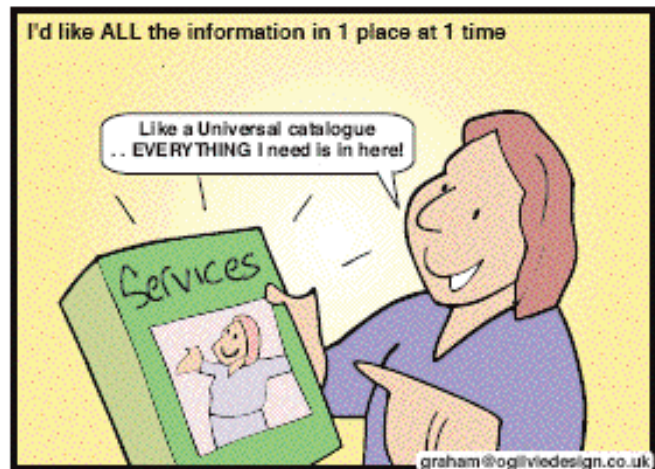
*Increasing choice will mean we need much better information on what is available and what parents can expect in the new system*

We need to develop a new approach that looks at what we do well and what we don't do well. We also need to have a better understanding of the national policy direction and funding reforms.

# Towards a new approach

## Overall

- **A much clearer separation of assessment and delivery:** we need to be clear who has the responsibility for assessment and how it works. Too often these roles are confused, especially within various teams in the Council.
- Going forward, schools will continue to take the lead on assessing educational attainment, and will be responsible for providing initial support to children with additional needs. The role of schools, including greater clarity on what they are expected to provide with their funding will be set out in the Local Offer.



*Information on local provision forms a key part of choice*

- The Council will emphasise the distinction between the assessment phase of the new Education, Health and Social Care Plan, which will be managed by the Children's Commissioning Service, and the delivery of support which will be delivered by educationGateshead.
- **A much reduced role for the Council in delivering interventions and support:** increasing delegation of funding to schools for the delivery of support for most high incidence, low cost SEN support. The Council will continue to provide support and intervention in some areas or low incidence and more specialist support where there is a rationale for continuing to do so, though these will be commissioned with a clear specification.
- **A bigger focus on choice for parents:** more information would be available about what is available, how it can be accessed and who the providers are.
- **An increasing emphasis on the availability of personal budgets for those families that want them:** these will cross education, health and social care and will support increasing choice for families. It is likely that in some areas, markets will take time to develop, and the choice of providers may be limited, but this will increase over time.

## Strategic planning and commissioning

- **Commissioning functions:** the Council will place a bigger emphasis on forward planning around provision and the services offered, and annual strategic needs assessment. For example, responding to increasing demand around autism, capacity of Special Schools and commissioning specialist provision. We need to develop our proposals for the use of High Needs Block funding, including the services we feel need to be commissioned to respond to identified need. To help us with this we need to develop and consult an audience base.
- **Integrated assessment approach:** in response to the Green paper, there will be a new approach to assessment that will see processes streamlined, and a bigger focus on early identification and intervention. In the early years, this will include a multi disciplinary approach to assessment. For those where an integrated Education, Health and Social Care

Plan is required, the Commissioning Service will manage the assessment process, working with schools, families and the young person.

- **Monitoring and review:** the Council's main role will be to increase the focus on quality and monitoring of provision as part of a commissioning approach, working with schools and other agencies
- **The role of the voluntary and community sector:** the opportunities for this sector to support families through changes, including the development and management of personal budgets will be examined further, potentially developing peer support opportunities and mediation services.



*Schools will be the main deliverers and providers. They need the right skills and challenge to be able to do this effectively*

## Delivery

- **The importance of the local offer:** an increasing role for the Council in collating; analysing and making available information on the range of provision available locally.
- **A reduced role for ARMS provision:** potentially the number of units and places would be reduced to better match demand. This would also reflect the changes in funding which would initially be set at £10,000 per planned place.
- **Increasing delivery by schools:** a bigger focus on schools providing support in school, from the delegated resources AND commissioned additional support. We have traditionally retained a significant amount of Dedicated School Grant (DSG) centrally to deliver a lot of support from central teams. This model has changed over the past 12 months, and will need to change more, as further funding is delegated to schools.
- **Review of capacity and roles of Special Schools:** particular challenges around emotional, behavioural difficulty – increasing issues about capacity in Furrowfield and the Pupil Referral Unit (PRU).
- **Rethinking the role of the Children with Disabilities Team:** how this team is affected by the implementation of a new Education, Health and Social Care Plan. This will include a clear separation of assessment and delivery functions.
- **Changing the way in which the current Special Educational Needs Improvement Team works:** as resources are delegated more to schools, this will increasingly focus on a reduction in the delivery role of the Council, and is likely to involve a separation of the high incidence/ low cost services delegated to schools, and a smaller range of high cost/ low incidence services which the Council will continue to provide through its delivery arm, commissioned to a clear specification through the High Needs Block.

We set out above the information you need to understand where we are now and where we want to be in the future. We now need to know what you think. The next section asks you a number of questions that will help inform our decisions about SEN services and how they are provided.



# Tell us what you think

## Delivering the best outcomes for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities in Gateshead

Consultation: September 2012

**Please complete and return to us by 20 December 2012.** You should send it to:

**Michael Gallagher, Pupil & Parent Services, Children's Commissioning, Civic Centre, Gateshead NE8 1HH**

You can also complete this questionnaire online if you prefer – please go to: [www.gateshead.gov.uk/transend](http://www.gateshead.gov.uk/transend) - then go to our Consultations page.

For more information on this consultation please contact Michael Gallagher tel: 0191 433 3573, email: [michaelgallagher@gateshead.gov.uk](mailto:michaelgallagher@gateshead.gov.uk)

THANK YOU for taking part in our consultation.

**Considering the information set out in this consultation paper, there are a number of specific issues we want to get your views on between now and 20th December.**

These are:

- Is this the right overall approach?
- What should be the basis of our approach to Individual Budgets?
- What are the issues around the capacity of Special Schools going forward?
- What are the views about ARMS provision?
- What types of specialist provision should be commissioned by the Council from the High Needs Block?
- What should be our approach to post 16 provision for Learners with Learning Difficulties or Disabilities?
- What is the role of the Council in delivery?

Each is explored in more detail on the following pages.

The approach we have set out is based on a number of key elements set out over pages 2-12 of the full proposals. We would welcome views on whether this provides a coherent approach, and makes sense as an overall framework.

## Question 1

**What are your views about the overall approach being proposed?**

*Please select one option only.*

- Agree with all of it
- Agree with most of it
- Agree with some parts, disagree with others
- Disagree with most of it
- Disagree with all of it
- Don't know or undecided

Comments

## Question 2

**Is the approach clear enough about roles and responsibilities?** *Please select one option only.*

Yes  No  Don't know

Comments

## Question 3

**Is the role of the Council clear?** *Please select one option only.*

Yes  No  Don't know

Comments

## Question 4

**Will this approach deliver the best outcomes for children and young people?**

*Please select one option only.* Yes  No  Don't know

Comments

## Question 5

We have practical experience of Personal Budgets in social care and are currently developing some options to test in education, and also talking to our health colleagues about personal health budgets.

**In which areas do you think a Personal Budget approach would work best?**

*Please tick up to 3 options.*

- Transport to school
- Education support such as teaching assistants
- Special Educational Needs assistants
- Specialist support such as sensory
- Social care short breaks
- Other social care support
- Specialist health support
- Don't know

**Do you have any other comments about introducing Personal Budgets?**

Comments



## Question 6

Special Schools have an important role to play in meeting the needs of children and young people with significant special educational needs

**Do we have enough capacity in special schools to meet these challenges?**

*Please select one option only.*

Yes  No  Don't know

**What are the key opportunities and threats for Special Schools?**

Comments

## Question 7

Additionally Resourced Mainstream Schools (ARMS) are a way of ensuring there is an alternative to mainstream and Special Schools for pupils with additional needs.

**How effective do you think the current approach to ARMS is?** *Please select one option only.*

Very effective

Partially effective

Not very effective

Not effective at all

Don't know

Comments

## Question 8

**Are there some conditions or diagnoses which are more suitable for ARMS?**

*Please select one option only.*

Yes  (please specify below)    No     Don't know

**Please specify which conditions or diagnoses are more suitable for this type of provision?**

## Question 9

The Council believes that some services need to be commissioned centrally, because they are specialist services where we need to ensure we have expertise to meet special needs.

**Do you agree that the Council should retain responsibility for provision of the following specialist support services?**

*Please select one option only in each row.*

	Yes	No	Don't know
Autism	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Visual Impairment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hearing Impairment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Comments**

## Question 10

We know that there are significant issues about the differences in support between children's and adults social care, and there remain issues about transition.

**How effective do you think our current approach to supporting learners aged 16 and above with learning difficulties or disabilities is i.e. transition from children to adults support services?**

*Please select one option only.*

Very effective

Partially effective

Not very effective

Not effective at all

Don't know

Comments

## Question 11

**What do you think our priorities should be in relation to post 16 transition support for learners with learning difficulties or disabilities?**

Comments

**THANK YOU for completing this consultation.**

## WHAT NEXT?

- Proposals will be discussed with parents at the tranSEND conference on 24 October 2012. Booking can be done via our website: **[www.gateshead.gov.uk/transend](http://www.gateshead.gov.uk/transend)** or you can contact **Michael Gallagher, 0191 433 3573, email: [michaelgallagher@gateshead.gov.uk](mailto:michaelgallagher@gateshead.gov.uk)**
- Consultation meetings will take place with schools and Council SEN staff.
- A consultation meeting with the voluntary and community sector will be held in November.
- A Children and Young People's Advisory group meeting will be held in November.
- This document is available on the Council's Consultation Portal at **[www.gateshead.gov.uk/transend](http://www.gateshead.gov.uk/transend)**

## Glossary of Terms

<b>ARMS</b>	Additionally Resourced Mainstream Schools
<b>DSG</b>	Dedicated School Grant
<b>PRU</b>	Pupil Referral Unit
<b>tranSEND</b>	the name given to the work Gateshead Council is doing in response to the SEND Green Paper from 2011
<b>SEN</b>	Special Educational Needs
<b>SEND</b>	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
<b>SENIT</b>	Special Educational Needs Improvement Team

