

Proposed Changes to Enhanced Resource Provision Units Supporting Children with Hearing Impairments

Have your say!

Closing date for responses: **Wednesday 29th November 2017**

The detailed information that follows provides an outline of current services, what we have learned so far from the current service review, and how this has led us to create a number of options to consult on about how this provision could be delivered in the future. We recommend that this information is read and considered before the consultation response is completed. We apologise for the lengthiness of this information, but feel it important to provide sufficient detail to support informed choice.

This consultation sets out a number of options on how the current provision of support to children could be configured across Lincolnshire to meet the needs of children with significant Hearing Impairments

Background

Children's Services are committed to ensuring that children with a Hearing Impairment are provided with the highest quality support in school when they need it as near to their home as possible, so they can achieve their potential in learning. In June 2017 a review of the Enhanced Resource Provision (ERP) units was undertaken to ensure that the provision continued to meet the needs of children with a hearing impairment and their families. This review found that the units were underutilised with a clear majority of families wanting their child to attend their nearest school so that their child could benefit from education in their local community.

As well as Enhanced Resource Provision units, the Council employs the Sensory Education Support Team (SEST) which provides support to learning to 545 children with a Sensory Impairment from birth to school leaving age:

- 313 children who have a Hearing Impairment
- 184 children who have a Visual Impairment
- 48 children who have Multiple Sensory Impairment

Over 98% of children with sensory impairments are supported within their local mainstream school with outreach support being provided to schools through the SEST service. For a number of children their sensory impairment is significant or complex enough to require

intensive support with high levels of input from specialist teaching and support staff. At present they may be supported in one of four ERP Units based across the county. These units are located within mainstream primary and secondary settings. Typically, the children supported within these units have a main need of hearing impairment, but some have other additional learning needs.

Historically, some schools have employed their own specialist Teachers of the Deaf/Hearing Impaired. However, over recent years, with diminishing numbers of children being supported in these units, the teaching provision has been moved over to be solely provided through the Lincolnshire SEST service.

For those children educated in Schools with an ERP the majority of their time is spent being supported in mainstream classes with their peer group. Depending on the level of support required they will spend part of their time in the ERP unit receiving targeted teaching and being supported by Teaching/Learning Assistant(s) who will have received training in the appropriate communication method relevant to the child they support. Specialist teaching staff work closely with mainstream teaching and support staff to enable each child to progress in their communication and listening skills.

This approach is outlined in the SEST Local Offer which can be found at: https://lincolnshire.fsd.org.uk/kb5/lincs/fsd/service.page?id=v10_-8sl45U&familychannel=0

Some of the ERP schools use a dedicated classroom as the ERP Unit. The environment of the classrooms should be adapted to ensure the acoustics are at an adequate level so speech communication is sufficiently audible and intelligible to the learner. At present the ERP schools have differing levels of classroom adaptation and if ERPs were to be retained they would all need to be upgraded to the same standard; Building Regulations DFES (2004) Building Bulletin 93: Acoustic Design in Schools.

http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130402164558/https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/BB93-Acoustic_Design.pdf

Lincolnshire County Council has a historic arrangement with four schools to provide an ERP unit for Hearing Impairment (there is no ERP provision for children with VI or MSI). These schools are:

- Saint Thomas' Church of England School, Boston (Primary – Maintained)
- Pembroke – A Priory Academy, Cherry Willingham (Secondary – Academy)
- Thomas Cowley High School, Donnington (Secondary - Academy)
- Chestnut Street Church of England Primary, Ruskington (Primary - Academy)

Over recent years the number of children being supported within ERP unit settings has reduced significantly. This is due a number of reasons including: parents and carers wishing for their child to go to a school in their local area,; increased technology to support children who are deaf/hearing impaired in mainstream settings, schools being more inclusive and

promoting their ability to support children with Sensory Impairment needs, and the offer of a strong teaching and support service (SEST) which provides:

- Proactive and targeted support based on individual need
- Early intervention post diagnosis via the new-born hearing screening programme
- Improvements in hearing aid and radio aid technology
- Providing (where assessed as required) additional funding or resources through Education Health and Care Plans.

On conclusion of the review in September 2017 Children’s Services identified that nine children with significant hearing impairments were being taught and supported in two of the above schools. One is a primary school and the other a secondary school.

Mainstream School with an ERP Unit	Pupils	Current provision of Teachers of the Deaf/HI
Saint Thomas' School, Boston	0	Provided through SEST outreach support
Pembroke – A Priory Academy, Cherry Willingham	0	Provided through SEST outreach support
Thomas Cowley High School, Donnington	3	Provided through SEST outreach support
Ruskington Chestnut Street Primary	6	SEST Teacher of the Deaf/HI allocated to school ERP

Placement of children into an ERP is undertaken through SEST in collaboration with Additional Needs at the time of the child's Education Health and Care Plan being completed. Depending upon their level of needs, children with sensory impairments will be assessed for an Education Health and Care Plan which will identify their support needs and the most appropriate placement/provision. This placement may be in a mainstream school, within an ERP or in an Independent provision.

Due to the strong community for deaf/hearing impaired children and the provision of Specialist Teachers of the Deaf within the ERP, SEST have experienced requests from a small number of parents or carers to place their children in a school providing an ERP unit irrespective of whether provision could be provided within a local mainstream setting. In the last two years there have only been two children with hearing impairments placed in an ERP where they were previously placed in an out of county ERP unit.

Purpose of Consultation

This review has led us to understand that many parents or carers prefer to have their children attend local schools rather than having their child travel excessive distances to a dedicated ERP Unit and assurance that a significant majority of parents have confidence in their local school to meet their child's needs. As a result of the feedback received to date alternative models for service provision have emerged and we now want to consult with children, parents, carers and all stakeholders to understand in more detail their aspirations and preferences for how services for children with hearing impairments are delivered.

These proposals are not about reducing the level of provision of support from SEST but are intended to enhance it by providing targeted support where and when it is needed. We think that this would, enable the Local Authority to provide a consistent service across the whole county. This consultation is solely based on the question of whether ERP units should remain, be reconfigured or be decommissioned with this provision being removed from the local offer, and replaced with enhanced support through SEST.

Consultation Option 1 – Retain existing four units across Lincolnshire (No change)

This option recommends the retention of the ERP units at the current four localities and to promote this as a specialist provision for Hearing Impaired children to meet high level needs. SEST would continue to resource the units within the schools with Specialist Teachers of the Deaf to ensure consistency of provision and achievement of outcomes.

Potential Positives	Potential Risks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 ERP units spread across county to enable children to access provision • Children with hearing impairments are educated and able to socialise with other children who have similar hearing impairment needs • Dedicated and adapted classrooms set aside for supporting children with hearing impairments • Targeted teaching and support continues to be provided through SEST • Children still have the option to attend a local school if this was their (and their parents) preference 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numbers in units remains low as parents prefer their child to attend a local school • Resourcing of the units could have a detrimental impact on teaching resource available to support children in other mainstream schools • May result in significant travelling distances and time for children before and after school • Fails to integrate children within their community at a local school • May cause transition problems when moving from primary to secondary if children do not move with their peers • No additional funding provided to ERP schools other than through the current Special Needs block funding or through Education Health and Care Plans

Option 2 – Reduce Number of ERP units from four to two across Lincolnshire

This option looks at a planned reduction from four to two units. With the number of children obtaining specialist educational support within an ERP unit gradually reducing over recent years the ability to provide the current number of dedicated unit has become unfeasible. As two of the current schools have no pupils allocated in the units, these could both be decommissioned and focus placed on the remaining two units with their numbers being strengthened.

Potential Positives	Potential Risks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two dedicated ERP units remain which could be strengthened by promoting provision from each • Dedicated units; one focusing on primary provision and one on secondary provision • Children with HI are educated and able to socialise with other children who have similar hearing impairment needs • Dedicated and adapted classrooms set aside for supporting children with hearing impairments • Targeted teaching and support continues to be provided through SEST • Children still have the option to attend a local school if this was their (and their parents) preference 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distance of the two units may be an issue – whilst Ruskington (primary) is central, Thomas Cowley is located in the south-east of the county • Reducing provision to only two units could result in significant increase in travel time for some children • Children would be educated away from family or peer group friends who attend a local school • Fails to integrate children within their community at a local school • May cause transition problems when moving from primary to secondary if children do not progress with their peers • No additional funding provided to ERP schools other than through the current Special Needs block funding or through Education Health and Care Plans

Option 3 – No further placement of children into the ERPs – all new placements into local mainstream schools

All ERP units are currently resourced through SEST. Ruskington has a Teacher of the Deaf specifically allocated to the school whilst the remaining ERP schools are supported through the SEST outreach model. This option would be to retain the current provision but gradually wind down the units with no further new placements being made after Easter 2018. SEST will continue to ensure sufficient teaching time is allocated to each remaining child in the ERP to ensure their educational and support needs are met. However, as the number of children in the unit reduces, the allocated Teacher of the Deaf time would be reduced to enable teaching resource to be used to support other children in mainstream settings. Only when the units have no children remaining due to them moving on to a new school or leaving education would the units then be de-commissioned and removed from the Local Offer.

Potential Positives	Potential Risks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides continuity of provision for children with significant hearing impairments • Makes the transition process to decommission the units easier – as children move through or out of school the numbers will naturally reduce • Targeted teaching and support continues to be provided through SEST • Children still have the option to attend a local school if this was their (and their parents) preference • Although pupil numbers in units will reduce the provision of teaching support will continue in line with the assessed needs of each child • Teacher of the Deaf time is used to support other children in mainstream settings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over time children with hearing impairments have less opportunities to socialise with peer group of children with similar hearing impairments • As numbers reduce the units become less viable to remain which may cause operational issues for the schools who provide them with less opportunities to socialise with peer group of children with similar hearing impairments • Results in an inconsistent provision for hearing impairment support across Lincolnshire • Fails to support children being educated near to home in a local mainstream school • There could be a challenge to placements as the provision of an ERP unit remains as part of the Local Offer

Option 4 – Decommission the ERP Units and support children in a mainstream school setting

This option promotes the provision that all pupils with hearing impairments are educated and supported within their local mainstream primary or secondary school and that the Local Authority no longer provides support through a dedicated ERP Unit.

Those children currently educated within an ERP unit would be provided with the option to remain on roll at their current school and continue to receive targeted support from SEST through outreach support so avoiding any disruption to their child's day to day schooling. If parents/carers choose to move their child to an alternative school which was closer to their home, and one which could meet their child's needs, the Local Authority would work with the child and their parents/carers to support effective transition to an alternative provision.

Under this option the Teacher of the Deaf resource would be provided on an outreach basis in line with the provision to all other mainstream schools. The allocated SEST teaching time spent with individual children will continue to be provided in line with their assessed needs.

Potential Positives	Potential Risks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides an understandable and consistent model of provision across the county and schools • Targeted teaching and support continues to be provided through SEST via outreach • Those children currently supported 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision is limited to being educated either within mainstream (with support) or within a special school • Some mainstream schools may not have the requisite skills and experience of

<p>within an ERP only spend a small amount of their school time in the unit. If they decided to stay on roll at the same school the impact would be minimal for the child</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotes inclusion and educating of pupils with sensory impairment needs within their own community setting • Enables children with hearing impairments to remain with family or peer group friends being educated in the same school • Supports the transition of children from primary to secondary as they will move with friends • Significantly reduces travelling time to and from school for children • Teacher of the Deaf time is used to support other children in mainstream settings 	<p>supporting a child with significant hearing impairment needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classrooms would have to be assessed to ensure they comply with required regulations and funding provided as necessary to meet required regulations • Mainstream schools would remain responsible for providing support through their notional funding plus any additional funding assessed as required through an Education Health and Care Plan
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Children's Services would like to invite any comments or suggestions you may have on the above options which would help us to improve outcomes for children with hearing impairments across Lincolnshire. Your feedback can be provided under Question 2 in the attached feedback response or online as detailed below.

Preferred Model

Based on feedback received to date, Option 4 would be the Local Authority's preferred option for the future provision of support to children with significant hearing impairments. We believe that this option best addresses concerns raised regarding local provision of support, promoting inclusion of all children in the local community, reducing travel time to and from school and provides a consistent service from SEST Specialist Teachers of the Deaf who are fully accountable for pupil outcomes in progressing sensory impairment development.

How to provide your feedback?

We welcome and value your feedback on this consultation, which will help the Local Authority reach a considered decision. Feedback on your preferred option can be provided by:

Completing our online Consultation Feedback Response at:

<http://snapsurveys.lincolnshire.gov.uk/snapwebhost/s.asp?k=150771610786>

- Completing the attached Consultation Feedback Response and send to the address provided below:
ERP Consultation Feedback
Room 2.11
Lincolnshire County Council
Orchard House
Orchard Street
Lincoln
LN1 1BA
- Emailing your Consultation Feedback Response form to ERPFeedback@lincolnshire.gov.uk

Consultation Meetings

In addition to the consultation feedback, the Local Authority is offering the opportunity for those parents, carers and children with hearing impairments who are currently supported in the ERP units a personalised meeting with SEST to discuss the consultation proposals in more detail.

Please email ERPFeedback@lincolnshire.gov.uk with your name, address, and contact phone numbers and we will make the necessary arrangements for a suitable date and time for a meeting to take place during the Consultation period.

What happens next?

The consultation period for these proposals is from Wednesday 18th October 2017 to Wednesday 29th November 2017 inclusive.

Responses will be collated, summarised and then duly considered by the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Group on 19th January 2018 which is open for members of the general public to attend if they wish. A decision will then be made by the Executive Councillor; Adult Care, Health and Children's Services on 2nd February 2018.

You will be able to see the result of this decision making at:

<https://lincolnshire.fsd.org.uk/kb5/lincs/fsd/advice.page?id=J8Ju7P0T6pU>. Parents and carers of those children within the ERP Units will also be contacted to inform them of the decision.

Proposed Changes to Enhanced Resource Provision Units Supporting Children with Hearing Impairments

Consultation Feedback Response

Thank you for taking the time to read this Consultation document and for providing us with your feedback.

Please detail below your preferred option (* Please select one) from those detailed in the Consultation. It would also help us to know why you have chosen this option so we can make an informed recommendation on the most appropriate model to support children with significant Hearing Impairments who are currently receiving support at one of the four Enhanced Resource Provision Units in Lincolnshire.

Alternatively you can provide us with feedback online at:

<http://snapsurveys.lincolnshire.gov.uk/snapwebhost/s.asp?k=150771610786>

Which one of the options do you think will best meet your child's needs? (*please select only one)		Why do you think this is the best option?
Option 1 - Retain existing four units across Lincolnshire	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Option 2 - Reduce Number of ERP units from four to two across Lincolnshire	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Option 3 - No further placement of children into the ERPs – all new placements into local mainstream schools	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Option 4 - Decommission the ERP Units and support children in a mainstream school setting	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Q1. If services or the way they are provided need to change, when do you think this should happen to minimise the impact on your child?	
Q2. What else should we consider within the proposed options to help improve the outcomes of children with Hearing Impairments?	
Q3. (For schools only) What additional resources would you need to support children with significant hearing impairment if they joined your school?	

About you

This section is about you, our customer. It is your choice to answer the following questions. If you do choose to answer them, this will help us to make informed decisions. Your responses will be kept completely confidential and in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. Our aim is to not be intrusive and we will not ask irrelevant or unnecessary questions.

Are you:

Please select the option that best describes you

A teacher/head teacher/principal	<input type="checkbox"/>
A parent/carer of a pupil(s)/student(s) with a Hearing Impairment attending an Enhanced Resource Provision Unit	<input type="checkbox"/>
A parent/carer of a pupil(s)/student(s) with a Hearing Impairment attending a mainstream Lincolnshire school or college	<input type="checkbox"/>
A parent/carer of a pupil(s)/student(s) with a Hearing Impairment attending an out of county school or college	<input type="checkbox"/>
A pupil(s)/student(s) with a Hearing Impairment attending an Enhanced Resource Provision Unit	<input type="checkbox"/>
A pupil(s)/student(s) with a Hearing Impairment attending a mainstream Lincolnshire school or college	<input type="checkbox"/>
A pupil(s)/student(s) with a Hearing Impairment attending an out of county school or college	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prefer not to say	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other, please specify:	<input type="checkbox"/>

Do you consider yourself to have a disability?

Yes No Prefer not to say

Please return your completed response to ensure it received by **Wednesday 29th November 2017**, to:

**ERP Consultation Feedback
Room 2.11
Lincolnshire County Council
Orchard House
Orchard Street
Lincoln
LN1 1BA**

Or, email to ERPFeedback@lincolnshire.gov.uk

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