

Enquiry Number – FS52817959

Request and Response:

Q1: A description of the current structure and governance of the social service(s) in place for children and young people (up to the age of 25) with disabilities, and how this/these service(s) work(s) with other services or organisations such as SEN (Special Education Needs) or Health.

For example, a local authority may have a team looking after children aged 0-11 (with all staff from one department) and then another one covering children and young people aged over 11 until 25 (with staff from two departments). The way these teams work with other services and organisations (i.e. integrated or not) should also be explained, in particular if there is a form of integration or formal board or partnership or group in place.

A1: Sandwell Children's Services has the Children with Disabilities Team (CWDT) 0-18, and the Transitions Team 18+ is part of Adult Social Care: these are co-located within the same building and work closely with each other. The CWDT team is made up of a Team Manager, Social Workers and a Community Support Worker. The Transitions Team consist of a Team Manager and Social Workers.

The CWDT are not integrated but work with a range of health services including the Community Nurses teams; School Nurses and the Continuing Health Care Co-ordinator; and education, including Sandwell's special schools, the SEN Team, inclusion support services and Early Years Team.

CWDT work with a range of third sector agencies including the two independent SENDIAST services and a number of charities including a rights-based service; parent and carers forums; children's therapy services; occupational therapy service; housing departments; independent reviewing officers for children who are looked after or on child protection plans; and work alongside commissioners in the procurement of services or placements.

There is a SEND (special educational needs and disabilities) partnership board established within Sandwell which is a multi-agency board and is chaired by the Head of Inclusion Support.

Please see attached structure.

Q2: A description of any significant change(s), made during the last 10 years, to the structure and governance of the social service(s) in place for children and young people (up to the age of 25) with disabilities, as well as any recorded lessons learned from these/this change(s).

A2: Prior to 2011 Sandwell operated an integrated model way of working for children and young people aged 0–18. A number of teams were co-located in the same room with an overall Service Manager and a number of different service leads. Although the age for the integrated team was up to 18, there was a Community Learning Disability Team aged 18 + working in the same location. The integrated service operated a Joint Referral Panel and used the Team Around the Child model with a key worker being appointed. The service was tri-funded.

Learning from this model of working is not held.

The reasons why this system was changed is not held.

If you wish to receive further information in regards to this request or wish to submit a Freedom of Information Request please forward your request to info_management@sandwell.gov.uk or Information Management Unit, Sandwell Council House, Freeth Street, Oldbury, West Midlands B69 3DE.

