



Specification for a Contract for the Provision of:

Digital Wireless Radio Aids for Pupils with a Hearing Impairment

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1 INTRODUCTION

The Cheshire East Sensory Inclusion Service requires the purchase of digital wireless radio aid systems. This is assistive listening equipment for children with a medically diagnosed hearing loss and is replacing previous FM radio aids.

The digital wireless radio aid systems are to be used in conjunction with personal hearing aids in school to alleviate the problems caused by background noise in classrooms and around school and afford optimum learning opportunities for pupils with a hearing impairment who are educated in mainstream school environments.

2 SCOPE

Included in the procurement is the supply of:-

- 30 digital wireless radio aid systems (30 x 1 transmitter and 30 x 2 receivers)

3 BACKGROUND TO THE REQUIREMENT

Radio aids are used in schools and educational settings to:-

- help deaf children hear their teachers and other students
- To help pupils in situations when it is difficult to listen

Hearing aids and cochlear implants allow most wearers to hear quiet speech in ideal listening situations. However, most speech is heard in less than ideal listening situations and there are times when children may find it difficult to hear and listen, such as when:

- there is unwanted background noise
- sounds are echoing around the room (reverberation)
- there is a distance between the person who is speaking and the deaf child – often the situation in a classroom

Historically Cheshire East has provided this equipment. The technology for this equipment continues to develop and it requires specialist knowledge and training to fit and monitor its use.

Deafness is a small incidence disability and Cheshire East would like to purchase and supply equipment that can be used and reused across the authority as required. The systems currently in use are FM rather than digital.

4 THE REQUIREMENTS

The Sensory Inclusion Service requires digital wireless radio aid systems, which are suitable for use in a classroom environment by pupils with a medically diagnosed hearing loss. In the first instance we require 30 sets.

The current requirement is for 30 sets. However we may wish to buy additional sets and additional free training, during the life of the contract- and wish for these to be the most up to date models.

There is no guarantee of volume beyond the initial requirement of 30 sets.

5 FUNCTIONAL REQUIREMENTS

The digital wireless radio aid systems should:-

- Be discrete – they should not overtly draw attention to the HI pupil within a mainstream classroom
- Be wireless and ear level
- Be compatible with the use of the majority of hearing aids and cochlear implants
- Be easy to set up by qualified teachers of the deaf
- Provide a more efficient method of programming the receivers by qualified teachers of the deaf than the current equipment
- Provide a optimal listening experience for the pupil
- Transmitters to have easily accessible mute switch
- The Transmitter to have the ability to transmit to both FM receivers and digital receivers, simultaneously.

6 PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS

The digital wireless radio aid systems should:-

- Be cost effective to repair (all repairs to be carried out by the supplier)
- Standard repair cost for receivers and transmitters
- Be easy to monitor on a daily basis – for example - listening checks
- Be robust enough to be used within a busy classroom environment
- Afford sufficient amplification to enhance the pupils classroom experience

The digital wireless radio aid systems should enable the SIS team to:-

- Replace systems that currently rely on loop setting on hearing aids
- Provide an alternative digital wireless system where there are currently problems with interference on FM systems
- Move towards having only two types of systems in use in resources bases and some schools where there are a large number of HI pupils
- Replace some of the older radio aid systems as part of an ongoing rolling programme of replacement
- To have a supply of spare equipment for newly diagnosed, new to area pupils and whilst repairs are taking place
- Move all equipment from FM to wireless digital technology

7 OTHER REQUIREMENTS

- The suppliers to offer free training and set-up sessions to the teachers of the deaf
- This training is then to be cascaded to schools by the teachers of the deaf to ensure that the equipment is being used to its optimum capacity
- A warranty period of two years from purchase date
- Deliveries to be made Monday to Friday 9am – 5pm.

8 TIMESCALES AND MILESTONES

The summer term 2016 is the optimal time for introducing new equipment before the start of the new academic year therefore delivery the first week of May 2016 would be required.

9 CONTRACT / SERVICE MANAGEMENT REQUIREMENTS

- The goods will be delivered as a package to Delamere House in Crewe
- There is an existing system of receiving goods, recording invoices and delivery notes
- When making deliveries please provide a signed delivery note available to Cheshire East
- The SIS Team will deliver the goods to the pupils concerned and will set up the systems for each individual pupil