

Supporting a hearing impaired child with a conductive/fluctuating hearing loss

Conductive hearing loss is common in young children and may be caused by otitis media also known as 'glue ear'. It can have medium to long term effects on developing speech and literacy.

A child with this type of hearing loss may:

- find it difficult to listen and understand speech particularly in background noise, eg. following instructions, class discussions.
- not hear clearly in paired/group work
- have unclear speech
- have delayed language
- have a reduced vocabulary due to a lack of incidental learning
- have difficulty acquiring phonics
- leave out unstressed sounds in their writing
- appear to hear better on some days than others
- be easily distracted and lose concentration
- pick up cues from their peers

To support the child with a conductive/fluctuating hearing loss:

- ensure consistent use of hearing aids and/or radio aid, if prescribed
- face the child as they need to see your lips and facial expressions
- ensure you have the child's attention before you begin to speak to the class
- cue the child in to changes of topic . eg, use visual support.
- speak clearly and naturally at a normal pace
- repeat others' contributions
- speak one at a time
- keep background noise to a minimum
- use visual references
- check the child understands instructions/tasks with open ended questions