

Helping a young child with a Hearing Impairment in your setting

A child with a hearing impairment has “the same potential to attain and achieve as any other child given the right levels of support and access to the curriculum.”
(*Supporting the achievement of deaf children in early years settings–NDCS*)

In most cases, hearing loss is identified soon after birth through Newborn Hearing Screening and the hearing impaired baby will be fitted with hearing aids within the first few months of their lives.



To ensure a successful placement, an early years setting must:

- understand the needs of deaf children
- ensure that the environment and activities are accessible for deaf children
- provide an environment rich in meaningful language for a deaf child to learn from
- Know where to go for further information and advice

Create a good listening environment

- Use lots of soft furnishings such as cushions, rugs, play mats
- Fitting blinds/curtains & carpets help to reduce background noise
- Soften the hard surfaces e.g. using table cloths/fabric on side tables/cupboard tops.
- Wall displays on notice boards – display drapes
- Cover bases and insides of pencil holders/storage boxes with fabric
- Use baskets for storage
- Avoid background music
- Help other children understand the impact of loud noises on a deaf child’s listening – promote quiet areas for specific activities



Supporting learning

**Inclusive Education Service – Sensory, Physical, Medical Team
Advisory Support Teacher for Hearing:-**

Try and use visual support to illustrate new language and vocabulary. Visual aids help to explain and reinforce what is happening as well as helping the deaf child to make sense of what is going on around them and to begin to make choices.



Visual support:

- Signs, real objects, symbols, photographs, pictures
- Story sacks and puppets - think about making your own!
- Nursery rhyme bags
- Song bags with an object of reference to depict a song e.g star - Twinkle
- Visual timetable
- Visual element to routine instructions e.g. tidy up time, nappy time

Supporting language development

- Ensure hearing aids are worn and working at all times
- Ensure that the child is sitting at the front during story time etc.
- Make sure the room is well lit
- Don't sit/stand with your back to the window
- Get down to the child's level
- Be face to face with the child
- Speak clearly at your usual pace
- Use language that is short, simple and relates to what the child is doing.
- Leave pauses in what you are saying to give the child time to respond
- Always respond to child's attempts to communicate
- Expand what the child has said
- Use the child's name to get their attention before communicating with them

Useful Websites & books

www.ndcs.org.uk The National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS) supports families of deaf children – useful booklets available to download or order:-

'Supporting the Achievement of deaf children in Early Years Settings'

'Teaching Phonics to Deaf Children – guidance for teachers'

Books with a deaf character:

1. Freddie and the Fairy by Julia Donaldson and Karen George
2. What the Jackdaw Saw by Julia Donaldson and Nick Sharratt
3. Daisy and Ted's Awesome Adventures by Alex Naidoo – if not available on Amazon try NDCS
4. Jake and Jasmine to the Rescue by Karen Harlow – if not available on Amazon try NDCS
5. Dachy's deaf by Jack Hughes