

The recruitment and retention of Teachers of the Deaf

A position paper for BATOD

This document was first published for BATOD members only, in September 2009 to provide a source of information. It is intended to be a useful document from which colleagues can take sections of text, to use as they need in the discussion of understanding of the role of ToDs in the development of services to deaf children and their families.

It will be reviewed annually but members with knowledge of more up-to-date information are requested immediately to draw it to the attention of the BATOD Secretary, Paul Simpson. He may be contacted via email secretary@BATOD.org.uk

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Throughout this document the term 'deaf' is used to cover the whole range of hearing loss.

BATOD recognises that some ToDs use the term 'hearing-impaired' synonymously with deaf.

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1. Context and purpose:

BATOD represents Teachers of the Deaf across the UK. Constituent members include Teachers of the Deaf (ToDs) employed across all types of educational provision in England (Department of Schools, Children and Families), Scotland (Scottish Government), Wales (Welsh Assembly), and Northern Ireland (Northern Ireland Assembly, with the Five Education Boards becoming The Education and Skills Authority in January 2010). Additionally some members may be employed under health trusts and voluntary bodies.

As an organisation representing professionals BATOD is not a typical campaigning organisation, but it plays an important part in safeguarding the rights of deaf children and their families and assuring their entitlement to high quality educational opportunities. The complexity of representing specialist teachers in changing environments across legislation in four countries cannot be underestimated.

This paper is intended to be a useful document from which colleagues can take sections of text, to use as they need in the discussion of understanding of the role of ToDs in the development of services to deaf children and their families.

2. Background

ToDs are a workforce of dedicated professionals. Developments and progress in the education systems have changed the profile of educational provision across the United Kingdom. The greatest single impact has been that of the policy of inclusion of children with special educational needs in the mainstream classroom and the reduction in the number of deaf children and young people placed in specialist provision. The emphasis of the role of ToD has changed, specialism is no longer sufficient, ToDs need to work together across all agencies for the benefit of deaf children and young people in included settings and their community.

During this time of educational shift there have been significant changes in the training of teachers and whilst the requirement for a mandatory qualification (MQ) for Teachers of the Deaf (and blind and multi sensory impaired) children has been retained, the need for trainee ToDs to have Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) and classroom experience before undertaking

a specialist training course has had considerable impact upon the number of younger people training. These pressures have different impacts in the four countries.

3. The vision

The vision for children who are deaf is for them to be identified, assessed and to receive appropriate intervention as early as possible. They and their families need to receive early support from high quality, efficient and integrated services across agencies, which respond well to their changing needs. The ultimate goal is for young deaf people to have successful educational outcomes and to be enabled to take a full and meaningful part in the community. Services will be delivered by a wide range of professionals working collaboratively in a multi disciplinary team and in a network arrangement at different stages. This will involve a number of different providers from health, education, social care and voluntary (third sector) agencies, supporting parents and young people through providing unbiased information and peer support. The ToD traditionally, and actually, plays a key role in the process at all times.

4. The role of the Teacher of the Deaf

- ❖ ToDs, with a mandatory, specialist qualification, are recognised in all four countries of the UK as having expert knowledge and training in audiology and language development. This will include expertise in the latest specialist equipment and hearing aids.
- ❖ They will support children and their families from diagnosis to further and higher education and employment and so have an understanding of the impact of deafness on language acquisition, development and communication (both oral and sign) and all aspects of educational attainment and social inclusion.
- ❖ The Newborn Hearing Screening Programme (NHSP) ensures all parents, since 2005, are offered hearing screening for their new child within the first few weeks of life. It is a core service within the Health Services of the UK and ToDs usually provide that early support and contact with the family, with between 1 and 3 per 1000 live births (approximately 15 children per week) being affected by severe or profound hearing loss. The welcome involvement in such early diagnosis has implications for services needing to be available to respond to diagnosis at any time.
- ❖ The Early Support programme (in England, with an equivalent in Wales as part of Children in Wales, and as part of Sure Start in Northern Ireland), engages a team

of professionals, coordinated by a lead professional or keyworker, who provide a valuable service to families with children under five years. The Monitoring Protocol for Deaf Children was developed in consultation with ToDs, Early Years practitioners and parents.

- ❖ The majority of deaf children are taught in mainstream classes, in some additionally resourced schools and a minority in special schools of all types. The ToD will support, as a member of a team, in all these settings. They may work with a class of children or individual deaf children, collaborating with mainstream class teachers and Teaching Assistants (TAs) and Communication Support Workers (CSWs). In whichever provision, the ToDs contributes to the aims of the setting and the educational outcomes for the child.
- ❖ They will work within a wide range of settings. ToDs will be employed directly by schools or Academies, Local Authorities Children’s Services (as specialist teachers in support services), Primary Care Trusts and voluntary bodies. They may work as members of a team of professionals across all of these settings.
- ❖ Some ToDs specialise in working with deaf children from diagnosis and during the Early Years and some in Further and Higher Education.

➤ **5 Significant factors:**

- ✓ Numbers of ToDs are decreasing as the current workforce reaches retirement age (see tables below). *From information provided in October 2008, to the Training and Development Agency in England, “it was clear that there is a need/demand for additional MQ teachers in the majority of local authorities. It is also apparent from these responses that retirement in the next five years will have an impact on the number of MQ teachers available to work in schools”.*

Numbers of Teachers of the Deaf (in England) in different age groups

25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59	60-65	Total
11	48	108	189	273	522	535	(519)	1686 (2205)

Teachers of the deaf in N Ireland

BOARD	30-40yrs	40-50yrs	50-60yrs
NEELB	2	4	3
SEELB	2	2	6
SELB	3	2	1
BELB	2	3	4
WELB	1	1	3
School for the Deaf	-	-	4

BATOD survey 2008 in Scotland

<i>Type</i>	Full Time	Part Time	Permanent	Temporary	Qualified	Unqualified
<i>Total</i>	157	55	194	18	155	64
<i>Percentage</i>	71	25	89	8	71	29
<i>Type</i>	In-Training	<40 years of age	41-45	46-50	51-55	>56
<i>Total</i>	23	44	23	41	56	52
<i>Percentage</i>	10	20	11	19	26	24

- ✓ There is difficulty with recruitment and retention in all four UK countries. BATOD carried out an examination of posts advertised on the BATOD website in 2008: of 43 which were investigated, 5 received no applications at all, 5 received only 1 and 7 received fewer than 2 applications. At least 10 vacancies were not filled.
- ✓ There is not an obvious career structure for ToDs working outside special schools and, as yet, no access to an equivalent training requirement as in schools (NPQH).
- ✓ ToDs in small services may find that they work in professional isolation.
- ✓ In Wales 107 practising ToDs work across the 22 LEAs. In England between 1686 and 2205 ToDs across the 150 LAs in England. In Northern Ireland, 43

across the 5 Boards (see table above) and in Scotland 212 across the 18 authorities. (See tables above)

- ✓ ToDs employed other than by schools may not be on teachers pay and conditions. They may be contracted on Soulbury or have local arrangements, and may be working as part of a 52 week service. Research (SERSEN 2006) amongst 21 services showed very varied employment practice in relation to approaches to 52 week cover. There is evidence of a lack of consistency/ parity around employment pay and conditions for teachers in support services.
- ✓ An increasing number of children are being diagnosed as deaf with additional difficulties, which has an influence on staff training and allocation of resources
- ✓ A high number of older deaf C&YP are moving, with their families, into the UK from a range of countries and for a variety of reasons. Some of these young people have very delayed language and communication skills and need very high levels of support from ToDs, in the mainstream environment where they are often placed.

5. The qualification of Teacher of the Deaf

Two-year part-time (and increasingly rarely, one-year full-time) courses are offered for qualified teachers who want to train as ToDs. The mandatory qualification (MQ) is recognised in all four UK countries.

Part time courses are available at the Universities of Birmingham, Edinburgh, Hertfordshire, Leeds, Manchester, Oxford Brookes with Mary Hare School and University of Wales College; Newport. They are delivered in a variety of ways, including modular, distance learning and residential components.

Full time courses (one year) are offered by the Universities of Manchester and Hertfordshire.

University of Birmingham:

http://www.education.bham.ac.uk/programmes/cpd/courses/hearing_impairment.shtml

University of Edinburgh:

<http://www.ssc.education.ed.ac.uk/courses/deaflist.html>

University of Hertfordshire:

<http://www.herts.ac.uk/courses/Education-of-Deaf-Children.cfm>

University of Leeds:

<http://www.education.leeds.ac.uk/prospective/programme.php?programme=8>

University of Manchester:

<http://www.psych-sci.manchester.ac.uk/postgraduate/taught/deafeducation/>

University of Oxford Brookes:

<http://www.brookes.ac.uk/studying/courses/postgraduate/2009/edhearing>

University of Wales, Newport:

http://www3.newport.ac.uk/courses/displayCourse.aspx?course_id=196

Recent changes in Scotland (February 2007) give local authorities permission to allow ToD candidates to undertake locally delivered training courses instead of the university courses. Candidates have five years to prove that they satisfy a set of competencies, set by the Scottish Government as minimum training requirements to teach deaf children. There is no requirement to undertake an observed teaching practice with deaf children and this is a cause of considerable concern.

BATOD considers that the minimum standards for training ToDs for the mandatory qualification are encapsulated in the TDA specification used in England and Wales and bought into by Northern Ireland. This includes the range of competences and, critically, two periods of University assessed teaching practice in all but one instance where there is one period.

Significant factors

- ✓ Such a variety of approaches in the delivery of training makes it difficult to assure the consistency of the qualification as a ToD
- ✓ During the 1990s there was a 35% reduction in recruitment to courses to train as a ToD
- ✓ The difficulty in recruitment of ToDs is mirrored by the current problems recruiting staff to the University courses for the MQ. (In 1990 there were 20 lecturers training ToDs, there are now about 9 FTE).
- ✓ Funding for training
 - ✓ Trainee ToDs from independent or non-maintained special schools are usually funded on the MQ courses by their schools.

- ✓ Other ToDs in training will usually be funded by their employing Local Authorities and may compete for funding against teachers seeking other qualifications and courses, and a number (less than 10%) fund themselves.
- ✓ The Training and Development Agency (TDA) for schools in England has just announced funding, to 95% of Local Authorities, for 40 additional teachers to train for a mandatory qualification for teaching deaf children with sensory impairments during 2009 and 22 in 2010 (2 cohorts of students). 142 LAs (95% of total) responded to the MQ survey, and 8 special schools (through NASS).
- ✓ The reasons for the additional places are; to build capacity, to meet new demands from increasing number of children with complex needs and to improve the quality of provision.
- ✓ This is a welcome expansion, but a similar initiative in Wales (funded by the Welsh assembly) proved a short term success as an increased number of teachers undertook training, but they were insufficient to match the number who retired, and there is again a shortage of qualified specialist teachers.
- ✓ The TDA (2009) has identified as longer term issues:
 - number of suitable teachers to fill vacancies
 - incentive for teachers to become MQ (including pay)
 - routes for career progression
 - recognition of importance of specialist teachers
 - recruitment and deployment arrangements.
- ✓ Deaf people who have the relevant qualification are encouraged to train as ToDs. However their preparation for placement may take longer if they are to be successful and they are a minority (fewer than 3%).
- ✓ Limited number of courses for those in rural areas, Scotland (outside Edinburgh unless using the local development) and Northern Ireland.
- ✓ Additional difficulties arise in Northern Ireland with no access to local training. Expenses are incurred and there are time issues with having to travel to England to take part in distance learning courses. There are also implications about the limited opportunities to visit a range of settings to observe a variety of approaches during training.
- ✓ 111 teachers were training as ToDs in 2007.

- ✓ The average age of training ToDs in 2007 was 39 years.
- ✓ 204 teachers have completed the ToD course over the past five years.
- ✓ 2009 data will show an increase in the number of teachers training for the MQ as the course providers accommodate the 44 additional funded trainees.
- ✓ 2008 data suggests that the average age has reduced to 37 years.
- ✓ There are patchy and inconsistent arrangements in place for support and mentoring of those training and newly qualified ToDs.

6. Continuing Specialist Professional Development for Teachers of the Deaf

Whilst many of the Universities offering the Mandatory Qualification can propose further opportunities for specialist deaf related studies, (see web links in the above section) there is no standard or accredited route for CPD for ToDs within their career development.

In Scotland the Scottish Sensory Centre provides CPD and training for ToDs, teachers of visually impaired children and other associated interested people, eg support staff, health or social services staff, parents.

It is funded by the Scottish Government and is located in the Educational Studies Department, at Moray House School of Education, University of Edinburgh.

<http://www.ssc.education.ed.ac.uk/home.html>

Significant factors

- ✓ Whilst there are advantages for teachers of deaf children engaging in generic professional development opportunities there would be further advantages within a career structure for the profession (outside the special school experience) if qualifications associated with a clear career path were available.
- ✓ Communication approaches: There is a need for continued and sustained training for ToDs to gain the required level of communication skills. Skills and experience across the range of auditory/oral approaches, British Sign Language (BSL), Cued Speech, Sign Supporting English (SSE), Signed English (SE) are required by ToDs. Services have reported that this is one of the hardest areas to maintain skills as the need and level for signing fluency varies according to the needs of pupils. Most ToDs are trained to BSL level 1 or 2. Some teachers use their signing skills regularly with pupils and parents, whereas others may never need them in their daily work. However some managers are seeking levels which may be unrealistic and difficult to achieve.

- ✓ CPD is a particular problem in Northern Ireland as most courses are only available in England and are considered expensive.

7. Service delivery in support services for deaf children

An increasing variety of models for delivery and funding of support services exists across the UK. These reflect the developments of delegated funding in Local Authorities Children's Services. In some authorities services for deaf children are centrally funded (often within Sensory Impaired Services) and in others they are part of generic SEN and disability teaching teams, managed in areas or clusters. These arrangements reflect the increase in local responsibility for services but there can be a logistical difficulty when a specialist teacher (with a mandatory qualification) is required for a low incidence special educational need, as the number of ToDs in any service will be few.

With commissioned and traded services becoming more common, support and outreach services are expected to demonstrate value for money through part, or full, cost recovery. Services have reported being only able to react (rather than work with schools in a proactive way to promote good practice) to requests for intervention when the level of need is extreme. This is likely to have a negative impact on the high quality of services to deaf children and young people.

Significant factors

- ✓ With commercial pressure on generic and traded services there may be issues about quality delivery of services.
- ✓ BATOD is keen to seek evidence that the practice of traded services does not impact adversely upon the high quality of service to vulnerable deaf children and young people.
- ✓ Services to schools may be compromised if there are insufficient ToDs to deliver a proactive service, with an effect on the quality of learning for all pupils.
- ✓ The scarcity of specialist ToDs may impact upon service structure and specialist delivery and, ultimately, the outcomes for deaf children and young people.

8. Related legislation and practice

Quality Standards

There are several documents with a focus on Quality Standards which are relevant to ToDs. Whilst some of these may refer to specific initiatives in one of the four countries there is benefit in examining them to see how they can be made applicable more generally.

- Quality Standards for Sensory Services (Scotland 1999)
- Quality Standards in Educational Services for Children and Young People with Sensory Impairment (National Assembly for Wales Circular 34/2005) December 2005
<http://wales.gov.uk/publications/circular/circulars05/1560282/?lang=en>
- Quality Standards for support and outreach services (DCSF September 2008)
http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/localauthorities/_documents/content/3006080003_7761-DCSF-Quality%20Standards%20for%20SEN-WEB.pdf
- Quality Standards for HI Services (to be published by NDCS/RNID September 2009)
- Quality Standards for the use of personal FM systems (UK FM children's working group (2009)
<http://www.isvr.southampton.ac.uk/soecic/FM/Quality%20Standards%202008.pdf>
- Newborn Hearing Screening Programme, Quality Standards (Revised July 2008)
<http://hearing.screening.nhs.uk/>

England

- Aiming High for Disabled Children (AHDC) - Every Child Matters (ECM)
<http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/>
- Ofsted (Inclusion – does it matter where children are taught?)
<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/Publications-and-research/Browse-all-by/Care/Every-Child-Matters/Inclusion-does-it-matter-where-pupils-are-taught>
- Ofsted inspects (new inspection framework September 2009)
<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/Forms-and-guidance/Browse-all-by/Other/General/Ofsted-inspects>
- The Lamb Enquiry, regarding confidence of the SEN system
<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/lambinquiry/>
- The Children's Plan - one year on
<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/oneyearon/ae/uploads/documents/flagship.pdf>

- Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal (SENDIST)
<http://www.sendist.gov.uk/>

Wales

- **SEN code of Practice** (The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act of 2001)
http://wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/policy_strategy_and_planning/schools/sencodeofpractice/
- **(SEN Tribunal Wales) SENTW**, <http://wales.gov.uk/sentwsub/home>
- **Every Disabled Child Matters (EDCM) Wales (2007)**
http://www.edcm.org.uk/Page.asp?originx_1367yv_33588399802589u28e_2007820409r

An audit in Wales in 2004 identified a total of 2,792 children and young people aged 0-19 as requiring specialist support due to their hearing impairment.

There are no specialist schools in Wales catering specifically for deaf children. Wherever possible, children who are deaf either attend mainstream schools with appropriate support or designated hearing impairment resource bases, depending on the nature and severity of their needs. The Welsh Assembly Government does not collect specific data relating to the number of resource bases, the BATOD Directory (2009) suggests that there are about 24 such bases, most of which are within mainstream schools across Wales.

There are 44 special schools in Wales which cater for children and young people with more severe special educational needs. Most will have multiple needs which may include hearing impairment.

The Welsh Assembly Government does not collect specific data on deaf children; however, the number of pupils with a hearing impairment is collected as part of the annual school census at January each year. In January 2008, the total number of pupils identified as having a hearing impairment as a primary special educational need was 1,373. Of these, 357 had statements of special educational need as defined by the SEN Code of Practice for Wales 2002.

Scotland (Scottish Parliament/Government);

- Children's Services Scotland Bill - to create a Scotland where every child matters
http://www.edcm.org.uk/Page.asp?originx_1367yv_33588399802589u28e_2007820409r (Getting it Right for Every Child – a pathfinder project in the Highlands Region)

- Education (Additional Support for Learning) Scotland Act 2004
http://www.legislation.gov.uk/legislation/scotland/acts2004/asp_20040004_en_1
- Aiming High for Disabled Children: Better Support for Families (Scotland), to consider amending the 2004 Act
- Inclusion Scotland (2005) <http://www.inclusionscotland.org/manifesto.asp>
- How Good is Our School? (version 3) (a self evaluation framework for inspection)

There was no mention of deaf children in the Scottish Government's *Early Years Strategy*, published December 2008

Northern Ireland

In Northern Ireland, the five Education and Library Boards are moving towards an amalgamation to form a new Education and Skills Authority, which will be launched on 1 January 2010.

Existing legislation

- The Special Educational Needs and Disability (Northern Ireland) Order 2005 (SENDO) came into operation on 1 September 2005
- A ten year Strategy for Children and Young People in Northern Ireland (2006 – 2016)

9. Associated data

The number of deaf children

In the absence of National registers of deaf children for the UK the estimates of the number of deaf children tend to be based on assumptions about prevalence rates of deafness and application of these rates to estimates of the total number of children.

Data therefore needs to be received with a health warning and the small numbers of deaf children involved in much research makes it even more difficult to accurately report and infer conclusions.

Department of Health research estimates for the number of deaf children, generalised for the UK, would suggest that there are about 19,200 -24,000 children aged 18 or under who have bilateral moderate, severe or profound hearing impairment, a high proportion of whom routinely use hearing aids, cochlear implants and other implantable devices to hear sounds.

84% of deaf children, in the UK, live in England.

Recent NDCS estimates on the number of deaf children, including children with permanent unilateral, mild, moderate, severe and profound hearing loss suggests that the estimated number of children aged 0-19 years is 50,500 – 58,500 (48,500 – 55,500 0-18 years).

In Scotland the NDCS (Survey of deaf children in Scotland 2008) concludes that there are more deaf children (they estimate 1,800) in Scotland than recorded on the pupil census (905). They call their report 'pick a number' and that does reflect the difficulty in collecting accurate and comparable data across all the United Kingdom.

Educational outcomes for deaf children and young people

There is little robust data available about the recent progress and educational achievements for deaf young people in the UK. Government data on deaf children's attainment suggests that they are still underachieving, which supports the drive for more accurate and comprehensive data collection. The government in England will begin publishing more data on SEN from autumn 2009 and has stated it will consider publishing data by type of disability from 2011. BATOD continues to work for improved data collection through, for example, CRIDE and the outcomes work of SESIP/NATSIP (www.natsip.org.uk).

Deaf children cannot be regarded as a homogenous group. Therefore there is still a need for improved data collection which recognises both attainment and achievements of individuals and cohorts of deaf children over time.

10. In summary

- 1) This paper is intended to be a useful document from which colleagues can take sections of text, to use as they need in the discussion of understanding of the role of ToDs in the development of services to deaf children and their families. The picture in the four countries of the UK is very different and reflects national legislation and policy.
- 2) The ultimate goal is for young deaf people to have successful educational outcomes and to be enabled to take a full and meaningful part in the community. Services will be delivered by a wide range of professionals working collaboratively in a multi-disciplinary team and in a network arrangement at different stages.
- 3) There is difficulty with recruitment and retention in all four UK countries. BATOD carried out an examination of posts advertised on the BATOD website in 2008: of 43 which were investigated, five received no applications at all, five received only one and seven received less than two applications. At least ten vacancies were not filled.

- 4) An increasing number of children are being diagnosed as deaf with additional difficulties, which has an influence on staff training and allocation of resources.
- 5) BATOD considers that the minimum standards for training ToDs for the mandatory qualification are encapsulated in the TDA specification used in England and Wales and bought into by Northern Ireland. This includes the range of competences and, critically, two periods of University assessed teaching practice.
- 6) Whilst there are advantages for ToDs engaging in generic professional development opportunities there would be further advantages within a career structure for the profession (outside the special school experience) if qualifications associated with a clear career path were available.
- 7) Any scarcity of specialist ToDs may impact upon service structure and specialist delivery, and ultimately the outcomes for deaf children and young people.
- 8) In the absence of National registers of deaf children for the UK the estimates of the number of deaf children tend to be based on assumptions about prevalence rates of deafness, and application of these rates to estimates of the total number of children. Data therefore needs to be received with a health warning and the small numbers of deaf children involved in much research makes it even more difficult to accurately report and infer conclusions
- 9) Government data on deaf children's attainment suggests that they are still underachieving, which supports the drive for more accurate and comprehensive data collection
- 10) On-going longer term issues for the profession and funding bodies are
 - number of suitable teachers to fill vacancies
 - incentive for teachers to become MQ (including pay)
 - routes for career progression
 - recognition of importance of specialist teachers
 - recruitment and deployment arrangements.