



Consortium for Research in Deaf Education

CRIDE report on 2015/16 survey on educational provision for deaf children in Northern Ireland

Introduction

In 2016, the Consortium for Research into Deaf Education (CRIDE) carried out its sixth annual survey on educational staffing and service provision for deaf children¹. It covers the 2015/16 academic year². This report sets out the results of the survey for Northern Ireland and is intended for heads of services, policy makers in local and central government and anyone with an interest in deaf education.

Responses were received from all five services in Northern Ireland. This means that this CRIDE survey achieved a response rate of 100% across the five education authority regions. CRIDE would like to take the opportunity to thank all services for taking the time in responding, despite the considerable time constraints to which many services are subject to.

Using the report

The CRIDE report can be used in the following ways:

- Heads of schools and services for deaf children can draw on comparable demographic findings when preparing for internal and external audits of local provision. Having access to annual data can assist in ensuring that deaf children are identified and provided for effectively.
- For managers, the data set can reliably inform strategic planning relating to staffing and staff training matters - trends can be identified that inform these discussions.
- Researchers into deaf education who contribute to evidence-based practice will have access to relevant, useful information about the population being studied.
- Parents of deaf children and deaf young people will find the report useful and informative in establishing an overview of national provision for deaf children.

Interpreting the results

Services were asked to give figures for the position as of 31st January 2016.

Although CRIDE believes that the quality of the data has improved, many services still report difficulties in extracting data about deaf children in their area and there remain inconsistencies in

¹ For the purpose of this survey, 'deaf children' were defined as all children and young people up to the age of 19 with sensorineural and/or permanent conductive deafness, using the descriptors provided by the British Society of Audiology and BATOD. We used the word 'deaf' to include all levels of deafness, from mild to profound.

² Reports from 2012 can be found on the BATOD website at <http://www.batod.org.uk/index.php?id=/resources/survey> or on the NDCS website at www.ndcs.org.uk/cride.

how different questions are completed throughout the survey. **Therefore, the results should continue to be used with caution.** Any notable differences between the findings from this survey and those from previous years have been highlighted in the report. In 2016, after five years of conducting the survey and carrying out a substantial review, CRIDE made a number of significant changes to the questions. Caution is also needed due to differences in response rates to individual questions and potential mistakes in data provision between surveys.

Please note that percentages have been rounded up or down to the nearest whole number.

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PART 1: Deaf children in Northern Ireland

Services were asked to give details of deaf children living in the geographical area covered by the service³.

How many deaf children are there?

Based on responses from five regions, the total number of deaf children in Northern Ireland is 1,497 suggesting an increase of 11% from 1,332 in 2014/15.

The smallest service reported 197 deaf children living in the geographical area covered by the service. The largest reported 390 deaf children. The average number of deaf children belonging in each service was 299.

The following table compares the total of deaf children in Northern Ireland with figures from previous years. As set out in the introduction, comparisons with the previous CRIDE reports should be made with caution due to differences in the response rates between the surveys. CRIDE also believe that services have taken a different understanding of what data CRIDE has requested in different years.

Table 1: Number of deaf children reported, over successive years

	Number of children reported
CRIDE 2016	1,497
CRIDE 2015	1,332
CRIDE 2014	1,574
CRIDE 2013	1,481
CRIDE 2012	1,249
CRIDE 2011	1,238

How do CRIDE's 2016 figures compare to figures from other sources?

The School Census

School Census figures for 2015/16 identify 1,061 deaf children within the education system. Of these, 774 had a mild or moderate hearing loss and 287 had a severe or profound hearing loss. This represents an increase from 2014/15 when the corresponding figure was 1,029 deaf children.

Number of deaf children on services' caseloads

Earlier, this report looked at the number of deaf children who were known to live in the geographical area covered by the services. CRIDE also asked about deaf children with permanent or temporary deafness on services' caseloads⁴.

³ The definition for this question was given as: "For the purpose of this survey we use the term 'children' to include children and young people up to the age of 19 years, 11 months. All children who have sensori-neural and permanent conductive deafness, at all levels from mild to profound, using BSA/BATOD descriptors. Children with temporary deafness should not be included in your response to this question. All deaf children, regardless of whether they receive support from the service. Children who attend education provision outside of your area but who normally live in your area." The question in the 2016 survey asked services how many deaf children live in the geographical area covered by their service. This was a change in wording which attempted to make the question clearer, but asked about the same group of children as the questions on children 'belonging' to services in previous surveys.

⁴ The definition given for this question was "By children on caseload, we mean children who receive some form of support at least once a year. Examples of support include direct teaching, visits to the family or school, liaison with the family, school, teachers, providing hearing aid checks, etc. This included children supported by the service but who do not live in the geographical area for that service."

The wording for this question regarding children supported by the service was changed in the 2016 survey. In previous years, it included only children with a permanent deafness, whereas this year, in response to feedback from services, the question on caseloads included children with temporary deafness too.

Based on responses from all five services, there are at least 1,625 children with permanent or temporary deafness were on services' caseloads. The smallest number of children on a caseload was 202 and the largest was 475. The average was 325 children.

CRIDE asked services how many of the children on their caseloads had a temporary conductive hearing loss. Of the five services, one service said they did not have children with temporary conductive hearing loss on their caseload, one service said they did not record this data, and three services responded to this question, giving a total of 202 children (12% of those on caseloads).

PART 2: Teachers of the Deaf and other specialist staff

The survey asked how many Teachers of the Deaf are working in different settings, including those in a peripatetic role and working in resource provisions. Figures are expressed as full time equivalent (fte) posts; a 0.5 Teacher of the Deaf fte post could, for example, indicate that a person spent half of the standard 'working week' as a Teacher of the Deaf.

For this first time, CRIDE also specifically and separately asked about Teachers of the Deaf who worked flexibly between the service and a resource provision (in previous years, respondents had been asked to allocate an 'average' fte allocation to those who worked flexibly). Whilst the phrasing and structure of the questions in the CRIDE survey has changed, CRIDE believes that the figures should still be comparable from previous years.

In total, there are at least 32.6 (fte) fully qualified Teachers of the Deaf in employment in Northern Ireland.

There are at least 33.4 (fte) teachers working as Teachers of the Deaf in employment. 98% of these posts are occupied by a fully qualified Teacher of the Deaf. The remaining teachers are in training (2%). At the time the survey was completed, there were no reported vacancies.

Table 2: Number of Teachers of the Deaf overall

	Number of Teacher of the Deaf posts (fte)	Percentage of Total
Teachers of the Deaf with the mandatory qualification	32.6	98%
Teachers in training for the mandatory qualification within 3 years	0.8	2%
Qualified teachers without the mandatory qualification and not in training	0	0%
Total	33.4	

Comparing with figures from the CRIDE 2015 survey, there appears to have been an increase in the number of qualified Teachers of the Deaf, from 30.6 in 2015 to 32.6 in 2016. However, there also seems to have been a slight decrease in the number of Teacher of the Deaf posts overall from last year from 34.4 to 33.4 fte.

Table 3: Changes in numbers of Teachers of the Deaf from year to year

	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Teachers of the Deaf with the mandatory qualification in employment	34.9	29.6	30	28.6	30.6	32.6
Number of teachers working as Teachers of the Deaf in employment	37.3	34.2	35	32.6	34.4	33.4
Number of Teacher of the Deaf posts (including vacancies)	38.6	34.2	35	32.6	34.4	33.4

CRIDE examined how many services had seen a change in the number of Teachers of the Deaf in the past year. It was found that three services had seen no change whilst two services had seen a decrease.

The sections below look in more detail at the numbers of Teachers of the Deaf employed in a peripatetic role or in resource provisions.

Teachers of the Deaf in a peripatetic role

The survey asked how many Teachers of the Deaf were working in the specialist peripatetic service as of January 2016. In other words, how many 'visiting' Teachers of the Deaf were working in each service. Visiting Teachers of the Deaf normally visit deaf children in 'non-specialist' provision – i.e. pre-school deaf children, deaf children in mainstream schools (where there is no resource provision) or in a special school not specifically for deaf children.

Table 4: Number of visiting Teachers of the Deaf in employment

	Number of Teacher of the Deaf posts (fte)	Number of services with staff in relevant category
Teachers of the Deaf with the mandatory qualification	28.6	5
Teachers in training for the mandatory qualification within 3 years	0.8	1
Qualified teachers without the mandatory qualification and not in training	0	0
Total	29.4	

CRIDE asked how many Teachers of the Deaf working in peripatetic services held an additional specialist qualification in early years support. Two services did not have Teachers of the Deaf with additional specialist qualifications in early years, three services did, giving an overall total of 6.8 fte Teachers of the Deaf.

CRIDE also asked if services had experienced any difficulty recruiting Teachers of the Deaf over the past 12 months. Just one service reported a difficulty, in recruiting supply cover. This was said to be due to a lack of qualified applicants.

Teachers of the Deaf in resource provisions

The survey asked how many Teachers of the Deaf were employed in resource provisions for deaf children whether employed centrally by the local authority or directly by the school. Respondents were asked to exclude time spent on other school duties (such as time as the school's SEN Co-ordinator, for example).

Table 5: Number of Teachers of the Deaf in resource provisions

	Number of teachers (fte) in resource provision	Number of services with staff in relevant category
Teachers of the Deaf with the mandatory qualification	4	3
Teachers in training for the mandatory qualification within 3 years	0	0
Qualified teachers without the mandatory qualification and not in training	0	0
Total	4	

CRIDE asked about Teachers of the Deaf working in resource provisions with additional specialist qualifications in early years support. There were no Teachers of the Deaf working in resource provisions reported to hold an additional specialist qualification in early years support.

There were no Teachers of the Deaf reported to be working flexibly between the service and a resource provision.

Other specialist staff

The survey responses suggest that there are 7.6 (fte) specialist support staff other than Teachers of the Deaf, supporting deaf children in Northern Ireland, 26% of whom were working in the peripatetic service, and 74% of whom were working in resource provisions. Five (66%) of the specialist support staff were Teaching Assistants/Classroom Assistants. Other staff employed were a Clinical Audiologist (1fte) and an education audiologist (1 fte).

PART 3: Support provided

Location of the service

Services were asked where the peripatetic service was based, i.e. whether it was based in the education authority region, a school with a resource provision, a special school or sub-contracted to another body or organisation. All five services stated that they were based in the education authority region.

Resource provisions

Services were asked how many resource provisions (in mainstream or special schools) there were in their area. Two services had a resource provision for primary aged children in their area, and one service had a resource provision for secondary aged children, giving a total of three resource provisions in three different services overall.

Eligibility criteria/frameworks

Services were asked if there had been any changes to their support allocation between 2014/15 and 2015/16. All five services reported that there had been no changes.

With the introduction of the Education Authority, CRIDE asked services if they continue to use their own criteria of support or is there now one uniformed criterion across the province. All five services reported that they use their own criteria. Services were then asked how the level of support for deaf children was determined. Four services (80%) stated that criteria were developed locally, and one service (20%) stated that they use the NatSIP Eligibility Framework for Scoring Support Levels (2015) and specifically used the allocation framework suggested in example 2 of that resource.

Quality standards

Services were asked to report which quality standards they used to review service development. Services were able to tick more than one option.

Table 6: Use of quality standards to reflect on the service provided or to look at service development

	Number of services
BATOD, NDCS and RNID (now Action on Hearing Loss): Quality Standards: Specialist teaching and support services for deaf children and young people (2009)	4
Department for Children, Schools and Families (now Department for Education): Quality Standards for Special Educational Needs (SEN) Support and Outreach Services (2008)	3
Newborn Hearing Screening Programme Quality Standards	4
NatSIP Quality Improvement Support Pack (2014)	3
Deafblind People: Guidance for local authorities, Department of Health (2014)	0

One service stated that they also used *Best Practices in Family-Centered Early Intervention for Children who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing* (2013) by Moeller et al.

Funding arrangements

All services reported that funding for the peripatetic specialist support service for deaf children aged 5 to 16 was held centrally by the education authority region.

Services were asked if there had been any changes to their management structure between 2014/15 and 2015/16. Four services said there had not been any changes, and one service said that the head of the peripatetic service had retired and not yet been replaced. CRIDE then asked if services had undergone a service review or redesign between 2013/14 and 2016/17, or if there were any plans to carry one out. All five services answered yes.

Budget changes

The survey asked about budgeted changes between 2014/15 and 2015/16 such as training or equipment. No decreases in budgets were highlighted though a few services were unable to say for certain.

Table 7: Budget changes

	Increase in budget	Decrease in budget	No change in budget	Don't know/can't separate budget for HI team
Staffing	1 (20%)	0	2 (40%)	2 (40%)
Training	0	0	2 (40%)	3 (60%)
Equipment	0	0	2 (40%)	3 (60%)
Other	0	0	0	1(100%)

PART 4: Background and methodology

CRIDE is a consortium bringing together a range of organisations and individuals with a common interest in improving the educational outcomes achieved by deaf children through research. At the time the survey was sent out, representatives included: the [British Association of Teachers of the Deaf](#) (BATOD), [City, University of London](#), the [Ear Foundation](#), the [Ewing Foundation](#), the [National Deaf Children's Society](#), the [National Sensory Impairment Partnership](#) (NatSIP), [Frank Barnes School for Deaf Children](#), [Mary Hare School](#), the specialist education services for deaf children in Kent, Norfolk and the Highlands, [University of Edinburgh](#), [University of Leeds](#) and [UCL](#).

The survey was designed and created by members of CRIDE. In 2016, after five years of carrying out the survey, CRIDE made a number of significant changes to the survey questions following a substantial review.

The CRIDE survey alternates between a full and shorter survey from year to year. In 2016, a short survey was issued.

The Northern Ireland survey was disseminated to services in Northern Ireland in February 2016 by National Deaf Children's Society staff on behalf of CRIDE. Services were asked to respond by 25 April 2016. Where there was no response by this time, members of CRIDE contacted services by email and telephone. Following this, as a last resort, Freedom of Information requests were sent out in June 2016 to the remaining services who had not responded by then. The below table sets out the response rate at each stage.

Table 8: Response rate by services to the CRIDE survey

	Number of responses	Cumulative total
First deadline	3	3
Returned late following a Freedom of Information request	2	5

Services were able to respond by completing an online survey or a Word document version.

Analysis of the results using Excel and drafting of this report was largely completed by the National Deaf Children's Society with guidance and clearance from members of CRIDE.

CRIDE would like to thank all services for taking the time to complete this survey and for their valuable comments and feedback, which will be used to inform the design of future surveys. The results will be used for research purposes, to influence government policy and to campaign to protect funding and services for deaf children.

If you have any feedback or questions on the results, please contact professionals@ndcs.org.uk.

Annex: Information by Education authority region

This table sets out some individual data from services. Education authority regions were asked to provide figures for the number of children (up to the age of 19 years 11 months) and Teachers of the Deaf as of 31 January 2016.

Please note that '-' indicates that no response to the relevant question was received whereas 'n/a' indicates that a response was not applicable (in most cases in the below table this is because the service does not have resource provisions).

References to Teachers of the Deaf should be taken to include those who hold the mandatory qualification or who are in training. The table below excludes other staff working in the role of Teacher of the Deaf but who do not hold the qualification or who are not in training.

Table 9: Data by Education authority region

Service	Number of permanently deaf children living in the geographical area covered by your service	Number of children with permanent or temporary deafness on the caseload for your service	Number of children with temporary deafness on the caseload for your service	Number of full time equivalent (fte) Teachers of the Deaf in the specialist peripatetic service	Number of full time equivalent (fte) Teachers of the Deaf in resource provisions	Number of full time equivalent (fte) Teachers of the Deaf working flexibly
Belfast Office	231	272	0	5.2	1	-
North Eastern Office	336	475	139	9.6	1	0
South Eastern Office	390	376	40	6.8	2	0
Southern Office	343	300	23	5	n/a	n/a
Western Office	197*	202	-	2.8	n/a	n/a

* This figure was obtained subsequently to the CRIDE survey response by the Western Trust rather than the Western Office for the education authority region. The National Deaf Children's Society contacted the Western Trust to ask them to provide this data for the purposes of the CRIDE survey.