

BATOD

British Association of
Teachers of the Deaf

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Assessment



NSPCC update
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is connection



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Building on the past to secure the future

Steph Halder reflects on the year that has passed. As her extended period as BATOD President draws to a close, she summarises the recent work of the Association and its members and highlights the projects that will develop in 2021.

I write these words in December 2020; you will be reading them in January 2021. Happy New Year! The end of a calendar year is a time for reflection, and for us all, 2020 brought in almost every sense some of the most challenging times - worldwide tragedy and for me great personal loss with the passing of my mum in September. This time last year I wrote what I thought would be my final 800 word opening for the BATOD magazine. Lesley Gallagher made the difficult decision not to take up her BATOD Presidency and so with the agreement of Steering Group I stayed on for another year with President Elect, Martine Monksfield, agreeing to take up the presidential role a year early. In December 2019 I can safely say I had no idea what lay ahead and another year in office was the least of the challenges. My initial thoughts about another year were, 'Oh good, I'll have a little more time to achieve what I had aimed for.' However, March 2020 brought a change of priority the world over.

The year has brought significant challenge for deaf children and young people and the deaf population as a whole. The requirement to wear a face covering brought such challenges for those who rely on visual information to aid their communication and this led to BATOD raising awareness and working closely with the National Deaf Children's Society and their #keepitclear campaign.

Members have looked to BATOD for support and the BATOD cogs continue to turn. The 'can do' approach of the QToD profession was never more evident than in March 2020 when the professional generosity of our field was evident with many members sharing their online teaching and learning resources. QToDs around the UK shared ideas, knowledge, skills and resources to work towards ensuring accessibility for deaf learners when education settings closed and groups were required to self-isolate and for ToDs in training to work with course providers of the mandatory qualification to ensure training and teaching placements could be continued and completed.

Generosity, flexibility, commitment, innovation. These were some of the key words that BATOD members used to describe the profession in the survey carried out by BATOD in May 2020. The profession responded when we asked for your views and feedback. Thank you for taking the time to respond. Your input has resulted in direct action carried out by Steering Group members,

the NEC and the committees of the regions and nations. Now, more than ever, it is the time to support each other and to be connected. The regional and national committees have been working together to provide a seamless programme of CPD – please look out in 2021 for events which BATOD will be providing to support members and other interested parties to engage in continued learning. In the virtual world we are able to overcome geographical barriers and support each other. Each BATOD event is for all members of BATOD no matter where you reside.

My presidential strapline – 'building on the past to secure the future' – and my aim for a national mentoring programme will be a key area of focus in my last few months as President and thereafter as past president. Alongside this, on-going development in specialist areas through Special Interest Groups will also be also a feature of work over the coming months.

The January 2020 edition included a quote from T S Eliot, "To make an end is to make a beginning". Each day brings a new beginning and March 2021 will bring a new beginning for Martine Monksfield as her Presidential term begins. I wish her every success. It has been a privilege to hold this role. I listened to what BATOD members were saying as well as drawing on those around me in the form of Steering Group, NEC and the wider profession. I've been fortunate enough to have so many positive influences in my career in the field of deaf education and I made sure I held close the wise words of those who came before and also those whom I work alongside. It's easy to think about what could be done and what could have been achieved. I am appreciative of the supportive words and positive feedback from previous line managers of mine and also from members. I end my three-year BATOD presidential term richer for the friendships formed and connections made. The thanks expressed in the January 2020 edition are echoed and reiterated here. One can only make a difference in response to the generosity of time and collaboration with others.

The words seem small but the sentiment is immeasurable – thank you. As always, I end with the words of another, John F Kennedy. "We must find time to stop and thank the people who make a difference in our lives."



Happy new year to everyone.

This first edition of 2021 is another packed edition. The 'Assessment' themed edition features articles from the Seashell Trust,

the Burwood centre and other professionals associated with deaf education. This edition also includes updates from NSPCC, an overview of UCL Summer School and much more.

In this edition BATOD has welcomed the opportunity to share stories that capture and reflect the local impact of deaf education occurring at grassroots levels in different countries across our planet. #inittogether

The BATOD magazine is often a much used source of CPD for many professionals. Details of other CPD opportunities throughout 2021 can be found on the BATOD Events Map, page 87, and the BATOD website.

As we embrace a new year, I extend my thanks to the volunteer team behind the magazine. Their tireless efforts are greatly appreciated, especially those of the proofreading team who spent some of their well deserved school holiday proofreading articles for the March edition.

T Quail

Editor's error

Due to editing errors in the 'Developing Decision Making' article in the last edition, the corrected version has been rerun in this edition.

Future issues will focus on:

March	Family Support
May	Conference
September	Shaping sensory support for the future
November	Reflective practice in deaf education
January 2022	Technology

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Assessing deafblind learners

Veena Ramrakhiani gives a brief description of the assessment pathway at Seashell Trust that creates a profile for a learner who is deafblind and develops a quality individualised educational and learning journey

The interaction of vision and hearing loss creates effects beyond those with a vision or a hearing problem alone. Developing a learning profile through assessments provides appropriate support and strategies for combined hearing-vision loss, which can only be met through understanding of what deafblindness is, its impact on the learner's access to learning, and its implications for education.

Learners with deafblindness or multi-sensory impairment *(MSI) experience their world within their immediate reach. The dual loss of vision and hearing greatly reduces their access and interactions with events, people and objects. The information received from the remaining sensory channels will be distorted and fragmented. Distortion of information received creates significant problems for deafblind learners, as they have not had an opportunity to experience their environment with total sensory capacity. This reduces incidental learning and the development of meaningful concepts about their world. It is important for the school team to assess deafblind learners differently from other students to be able to address their unique learning needs.

The overall goal of assessment of deafblind learners at Seashell Trust is to understand their educational abilities and their complex needs that include vision, hearing, communication, health, physical, sensory needs, likes and dislikes and the learner's aspirations. This requires a comprehensive multidisciplinary team (MDT) approach from a range of specialists in order to provide a holistic educational programme that matches the student's learning style and their current attainment levels.

Standardised assessment tools for the population of children and young people CYP with learning difficulties are overly reliant on vision and hearing to succeed; our deafblind population of learners is naturally unable to achieve success within these parameters and they require alternatives. The assessment of a deafblind learner is therefore challenging, as there are no standardised assessments for this population. Why is this? The reason is that there is no typical deafblind learner, each learner has unique degrees of sensory losses plus additional cognitive, physical and emotional challenges. This requires us to take into consideration the degree of losses and the combined impact of them. A positive approach is needed to assess what they can achieve and what support and strategies need to be in place for them to achieve their potential.

A holistic assessment of the learner should gather the information about communication, vision and hearing, cognitive and motor abilities and family priorities. Gathering this initial baseline of the learner will give us a

better understanding of the learner's abilities, challenges and the priorities for learning. Through their journey at Seashell Trust, the assessments are ongoing using a holistic approach via the MDT and the family.

David is a young boy with CHARGE syndrome who has a cheeky and 'I can do' personality. He is profoundly deaf in both ears and has no vision in his left eye and limited vision in his right eye. He has complex health issues as a result of his syndrome and difficulties with his balance. He requires support from an Intervenor to support and guide his interactions with his world.

When David's local authority put in an application for Seashell Trust as his educational placement, the assessment pathway was put in place using a multi-method approach:

- *Information gathering: Background information from parents is essential in the initial part of assessment. As a deafblind specialist, I have often used "HomeTalk – A Family Assessment of Children who are Deafblind," <https://documents.nationaldb.org/HomeTalk.pdf> This is a valuable tool in collecting information about the learner's history as a starting point.*
- *Observation: A visit to David's school, which was a familiar environment for him and to observe him and gather information from current provision.*
- *A holistic assessment by a multi-disciplinary team. An onsite assessment visit by the family and David followed after the above. A collaborative, multi-disciplinary team approach to assessment was planned: Teacher of MSI, Qualified Teacher of the Deaf (QToD), Teacher of the Vision Impaired, Speech and Language Therapist, Occupational Therapist, Information Technology specialist, physiotherapist, behaviour specialist, audiologist. This process was individualised to gather information through structured observations and discussions with the family of what he could do, his potential abilities and recommendations of what is needed to support his learning.*

A multi-method pathway to assessment is the starting point for a deafblind/MSI learner's education at Seashell Trust. The holistic approach is a process of discovery. This approach takes time and planning but is essential for the learner's learning success.

David's first term was a baselining period where observations and input from the MDT focused on assessment of him across the school setting in familiar, everyday activities where different skills could be assessed. Advice and suggestions were put in place to incorporate in the daily activities. At the end of this term there followed a MDT meeting to plan the individualised educational programme and create a report in which the MDT



Baseline Assessment : Progression from Entry / Start of Key Stage 3 Baseline to End of Key Stage

Aspirations (important TO)		Barriers	Outcomes (Destination Led Goals)	
David will live in Supported Living accommodation. He will become more independent in the management of his complex medical needs including taking ownership of his equipment. He will have regular access to the community to complete activities such as shopping and sports such as climbing.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Challenging behaviourManaging own sensory needsIncreasing tolerance for waiting/concentrationComplex health needs	By the end of key stage <small>10-11</small>	
Destination statement / Progress statement	David will spontaneously use his AAC device to request, comment and answer questions accurately. He will have a good understanding of BSL and use some signs expressively. He will remain focused on tasks for over 30 minutes and complete some familiar activities entirely independently. His tolerance for waiting will have improved and he will understand the importance of organising his own belongings, particularly in terms of his complex medical needs, before transitioning anywhere.			
Provision / resources	ToMSI, ToD, ToVI, OT, Physiotherapy, medical support, – 1:1 Intervenor with BSL skills, SaLT, Behaviour specialist , IT specialist			
Assessment tools used	MSI Curriculum, Communication Matrix, P-Levels, Callier Azuza (G) , Life Skills Ladder Assessment, SI assessment, Functional Vision Assessment			
Statement / EHCP Outcomes	Summary of Current Assessment	Areas for development.	Long Term Goals	Outcomes Met? Yes/No
<p>* David will make consistent progression from baseline assessments in key skills (e.g. literacy, numeracy).</p> <p>* David will improve his motivation and capacity to engage with learning tasks with a level of functional independence.</p> <p>* David will be able to apply his knowledge of key skills across other areas of the curriculum so he is able to make positive progress in other subject areas.</p>	<p>Cognition and Learning:</p> <p>Literacy David enjoys reading books and visiting the library in school. He will copy signs and find relevant symbols on his AAC device, sometimes spontaneously. He is mostly accurate when finding symbols – particularly familiar and frequently used ones. He learns quickly which category to find them in, and he will ask for help to find the correct one if he cannot find it.</p> <p>Numeracy David can order numerals 1-5 with no prompts from staff. He can find numbers on his AAC device independently. David is able to count items using one to one correspondence using his AAC device up to 5 accurately but with some pointing prompts from staff. Once he has counted them he can match quantities to numerals. David will follow visual worklists involving numbers, such as doing the laundry but he requires high levels of staff support – including physical, pointing and gestural prompts.</p> <p>ICT David is now able to use MyZone completely independently. He can scroll through Youtube to find the video he wants to watch and can control most touch screen devices independently. He can type his name following a visual worklist but this can be sometimes inaccurate and he can request help from staff.</p> <p>KUW David is able to follow visual worklists, but he will try to speed through them quickly. He can become less methodical and less accurate because he tries to complete them so quickly. By completing functional tasks with a clear structure and most importantly, a clear end, David is more likely to complete the activity entirely and is less reliant on prompts from staff.</p>	<p>David will speed through books as quickly as he can and whilst he enjoys looking at the pictures, he does not focus for long. He relies on staff asking 'what?' questions and pointing to pictures to comment.</p> <p>David does not yet have the dexterity to sign numbers accurately – he is reliant on his AAC device</p> <p>David is not consistently accurate when counting items up to 5</p> <p>David is not yet able to apply his knowledge of numerals/quantities to functional activities independently. He requires staff signed/gestural support.</p> <p>David needs to improve his typing ability so that he is able to search for his own Youtube videos. This may test his patience and extend the length of time he remains focussed on a task.</p> <p>Although David is able to follow a worklist, he still relies heavily on staff prompting and encouraging alongside the task unless it is very familiar to him and easy/quick to complete.</p>	<p>To turn the pages of a book and comment on pictures spontaneously without any prompts from staff</p> <p>To understand quantities up to 5 and independently apply this knowledge to functional activities such as laundry and deliveries by following visual worklists involving numbers.</p> <p>To copy a written word from a choice book to type on the computer with no prompts from staff.</p> <p>To choose a photograph to send home, type a message by copying from his AAC, and then complete the posting process including going to the post box by following a visual worklist but with no additional prompts from staff.</p>	
	<p>Communication and Interaction</p> <p>David uses Grid 3 to communicate his needs and comment</p>		<p>David will independently say a 4 part phrase to describe a picture or comment using his device on 10 occasions</p> <p>David will recognise and copy 30 different signs when given a visual prompt.</p>	
David's barriers to learning that arise because of his physical/sensory needs will be reduced/ diminished so he is able to access learning.	<p>Sensory and Physical</p> <p>David currently requires prompts to use both hands together in a task as he can struggle to do this spontaneously. He is currently working on his handwriting skills however uses an immature grip and weak pencil control – he would benefit from support to develop in these areas.</p>	<p>David would benefit from support to develop his bilateral hand function and finer motor skills to support his engagement in more advanced elements of his independence skills. He should be encouraged to participate in activities which challenge his finer motor skills.</p>	<p>David to have developed his finer motor skills so he can engage with tasks requiring this skill eg handwriting, manipulating clothing fastenings such as buttons, zips and poppers</p>	
<p>* David will develop appropriate social skills that enable him to interact positively with others</p> <p>* David will be able to engage in a range of play opportunities alone and with his peers.</p>	<p>Social, Emotional and Well-Being</p> <p>David has recently made good progress in his concentration span/ability to focus on tasks, although this is very mood dependent. He is able to use a sand timer to maintain focus on an activity. Staff can direct him to the timer to show him how long is left and this works well, although David can show signs of frustration. He has been using a 1, 2, 3, choose worklist and this has helped David visualise when the activity will end so he can choose, increasing the length of time he spends working without as much staff support. The worklist is easily adaptable to make activities longer or shorter depending on David's mood.</p> <p>Self-Help and Independence:</p> <p>Preparing for the Future David has been working on transitioning to the toilet without any prompts from staff and then pull down his trousers, sit on the toilet and pull up his trousers without any reminders from staff (only support to wipe) daily. David is able to independently pull his trousers up and down, currently including over his pad, when working with familiar staff.</p> <p>David has been working on putting his shoes and socks on independently and is now able to do this following lots of repetitive practice and encouragement from staff. He is completely independent with putting his shoes and socks on bar signed support to pull his sock over his heel and initial signed prompt to pick up his shoes.</p> <p>David has improved his independence in organising himself. He will now pack his trolley at the start and the end of the day – he used a visual worklist to do this but now he will do it independently.</p>	<p>David finds concentrating on tasks for extended periods of time difficult. He currently tries to speed through activities as quickly as he can without putting thought into them.</p> <p>He is not yet able to use the 1, 2, 3, choose worklist independently – he currently requires a lot of staff encouragement and redirecting to the task.</p> <p>David should be encouraged to engage in all aspects of his personal care routine include developing his ability to wipe himself following a bowel movement. He would need supporting to remain calm during personal care as he can get giddy and act in a silly manner during personal care.</p> <p>David would benefit from being encouraged to dress completely independently and spontaneously following an initial signed prompt of "David, get dressed".</p> <p>David needs to learn how to organise his own resources for sessions that are familiar to him – this would also keep his focus for longer in sessions/before sessions as part of the prep for learning.</p>	<p>To complete three tasks in a row for at least 15 minutes in total without any prompts or encouragement from staff, using a visual worklist</p> <p>David to be completely independent with his personal care routine, including identifying when he needs the toilet and initiating the transition there</p> <p>To gather resources for familiar sessions and transition to the session following a visual worklist but with no additional prompts from staff.</p>	

Baseline Assessment				
Progression from Entry / Start of Key Stage Baseline to End of Key Stage				
Aspirations (important TO)		Barriers	Outcomes (Destination Led Goals)	
<p>In an ideal world when the student leaves education what would their set up be? Consider what is important to the young person.</p> <p>Paid employment in a quiet environment with shared staff support? Living independently near a beach? DREAM BIG!!!</p>		<p>What is stopping the young person achieving this dream?</p> <p>Autism and an inability to accept change. Communication limited to those he knows very well.</p>	<p>How will we have prepared them for their big dream by the time they leave school?</p> <p>They will be able to communicate with people they are unfamiliar with, access public transport with minimal support, give consent for personal care and have some control over their environment using technology.</p>	

Destination statement / Progress statement				
Provision / resources	This comes from their statement / EHCP and lists the support needed – 1:1 support, SaLT etc.			
Assessment tools used	This should list the assessment documents used to inform this baseline assessment.			
EHCP Outcomes	Summary of Current Assessment	Areas for development.	Long Term Goals	Outcomes Met? Yes/No
These need to be transferred directly from student's statement or EHCP.	This is the summary of their achievements / what they can do now, that are written after the assessments completed in the term leading up to the baseline.	What do they need to improve at to develop skills in this area?	New long term goals agreed and confirmed in the baseline meeting.	
	Cognition and Learning: Literacy Numeracy ICT KUW			
	Communication and Interaction			
	Sensory and Physical			
	Social, Emotional and Well-Being			
	Self-Help and Independence: Preparing for the Future			

contributed to one comprehensive final document, based on areas assessed. The report included ideas for planning and educational programming-focused IEP goals and short-term objectives on behavioural skills to be developed or expanded. (see recent baseline assessment report for Key stage 3)

A range of assessments were selected:

- Victoria MSI Curriculum Profiles:
<https://www.natsip.org.uk/doc-library-login/curriculum/victoria-school-msi-curriculum>
- Global assessment scales with MSI (Callier Azusa (G)):
<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED102796.pdf>
- Communication Matrix:
<https://communicationmatrix.org/>
- P-Scale Assessments

- Functional sensory assessments of vision and hearing (for example Vision for Doing, Informal assessment for hearing)
- Daily observation and recording against session plan objectives.
- PEDI-CAT: a functional ability assessment to find out how a learner participates in daily activities.
- Dunn's Short Sensory Profile

The assessments aimed to get a further understanding of David's abilities, interests, preferences and how the environment impacts his learning. A range of information was gathered about how he communicates, social and motor skills, his vision and hearing loss, his likes and dislikes, temperament and cognitive development.

All areas need to be assessed because they are interrelated in their influence on David's ability to make sense of the world. Accurate functional data on vision and hearing are particularly critical since it is the combined effect of the dual sensory impairment that requires specific modifications and approaches differing from either vision or hearing strategies.

The information gathered needs to be summarised to create David's learning profile to support the team when planning and understanding his complexities (see David's MSI summary report).

It is important the learner is assessed in settings that are familiar with a trusted adult, routines, and resources. This will capture a true indication of their developmental/cognitive levels and where skills are emerging. The more accurate and holistic the assessments are, the easier it will be to provide an effective learning programme and plan for the next steps meaningfully in all learning environments school, home and the community.

Once the information is gathered, it will inform us about

the learner's unique learning style and the support needed when planning the individualised learning programme that fits a child's strengths and identifies skills to develop. It will give us the strategies to support learning and this will allow us to track the progress over time by annual assessments and updates. Assessments are an ongoing process at Seashell Trust through the learner's educational journey. The Victoria MSI Curriculum profiles are at the heart of the assessment process and complemented by other assessments, which are appropriate for that individual deafblind learner. Their individualised learning programme matches their skills and does not underestimate their potential and aspirations.



Veena Ramrakhiani is MSI lead Practitioner at Royal School Manchester, Seashell Trust and Seashell Trust Outreach Services.

Additional Resources:

- Toolkit for use with the Victoria School MSI Curriculum: <https://www.natsip.org.uk/doc-library-login/curriculum/victoria-school-msi-curriculum/1423-victoria-msi-curriculum-toolkit>
- Every Child has Potential: Child-guided Strategies for Assessing Children using the van Dijk Framework: <https://cvi.aphtech.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Every-Child-has-Potential-Child-guided-Strategies-for-Assessing-Children-using-the-van-Dijk-Framework.pdf>
- What Does "Follow the Child" Mean?: <http://files.cadbs.org/200002255-952a79623e/reSources%20Brown%202014.pdf>

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No matter how you access it, the BATOD website provides members with a wealth of information, advice and materials to support professionals working in deaf education



news ♦ events ♦ resources ♦ jobs

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www.batod.org.uk

ADHEAR

Stick. Click. Hear.

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- ✓ All day comfort
- ✓ Effortless hearing
- ✓ For all ages

hearLIFE

Learn more

Independent Multidisciplinary Assessments

Lorna Gravenstede and **Julie Heald** explain the processes within the Burwood Centre for assessing children and young people who are deaf



The Burwood Centre was set up in 2001 to provide in-depth, independent, multidisciplinary assessments for children and young people who are deaf. In this article, we will tell you a bit more about what we do at Burwood and how independent assessments can work for children who are deaf. During lockdown, we carried out a questionnaire with families who had visited us in 2018–19 and so we can provide some insights into how families viewed the assessment process.

Currently, the Burwood Centre can provide specialist Qualified Teacher of the Deaf, Educational Psychology, and Speech and Language Therapy assessments. Many families who visit us choose to access all three assessments, which provides them with a very full overview of their child's skills. Others choose just to see one or two of the three disciplines on offer depending upon their individual needs. We have no one communication philosophy at Burwood and we will assess each child however they are most comfortable. The Burwood Centre is located on the site of Mary Hare School, but we are independent from the school and we assess children of all ages from all over the UK.

Why do families seek independent assessments?

There are a wide variety of reasons that cause families to seek an independent assessment of their child's skills. Sometimes the family themselves decide that they need some additional information and guidance, and sometimes either a local professional or a support group, such as the National Deaf Children's Society, suggest to a family that an independent assessment may be helpful. We ask families why they are seeking assessment on our referral questionnaire and reasons given commonly include:

- to gain a better understanding of their child in terms of his/her strengths, weaknesses and special educational needs
- to find out if their child has difficulties that are greater than those that would be predicted as a result of his/her deafness
- to find out how well their child can hear in background noise
- to find out if the current level of support being provided is sufficient
- to find out about the support their child is likely to need following a forthcoming transition.

We see children and young people of any age at Burwood, but many referrals are for children who are at points where they are about to transfer from one phase of education to another, ie from preschool to primary school, primary school to secondary school or secondary school to

college. This reflects the families' wishes to find out about or gain evidence with regards to the type of support that professionals feel their child would need in their next educational placement. We do often find that families wish to discuss different placement options and how well these meet their child's needs. The Burwood Centre does not, however, ever recommend a specific placement. We always let parents know that what we can do is specify what we have found in terms of the child's profile, and what this means in terms of what they therefore need to meet those special educational needs, but not actually where this should take place.

In our recent quality questionnaire, 42% of respondents reported that they used their Burwood report as part of their evidence for a Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal (SENDIST) tribunal. So, in just less than half of cases in 2018–19, the families seeking assessment were in the process of appealing against their child's Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or against a decision not to assess.

How do we go about assessing at the Burwood Centre?

Before the assessment

When a family makes contact with the Burwood Centre, we send out a questionnaire for them to fill in and ask them to return it to us along with copies of recent reports from their child's school/nursery, audiologist, cochlear implant team, educational psychologist, speech and language therapist, Qualified Teacher of the Deaf (QToD); their child's EHCP and any other documents that they think might be useful and relevant. We can use this information to check that we think that we are able to meet the family's needs, and we can plan to have appropriate assessment material for the actual day. Occasionally, we might suggest to a family that their needs would be better met by other professionals if we do not think that we have the expertise that is needed. For example, if a query is about whether a child has central auditory processing disorder, then we typically recommend that the family seeks a referral to the specialists in this condition at Great Ormond Street Hospital. Being able to read other reports on the child also means that we can make sure we do not repeat any time sensitive assessments and that we do not over assess. There are occasions when we decide that one or more of the assessments we offer is not appropriate because the child already has a very detailed and full recent report from a local professional that is completely accepted by the family. Before the assessment happens, the Burwood Centre professionals involved will all have read the referral

questionnaire and supporting documents. We also sometimes contact local professionals (with the family's consent) in order to ask questions or double-check that our assessment plan will not be repeating any assessment tasks being routinely used by the local service.

On the day

Our assessment days usually begin with a discussion between the parents, the child and the professionals who will be working with the child during the morning session. The child then takes part in a range of assessment activities over the course of the day in our purpose built, sound proofed assessment suite. We use a mixture of formal, standardised assessment tasks as well as informal tasks and observations. We provide the family with feedback during the day and are on hand to answer questions. Sometimes parents sit in and watch all of their child's assessments and sometimes parents feel that their child responds better when they are not present in the room. We work in the best way for the individual child and family. The exact assessment tasks chosen entirely depend upon the age and stage of the child; what information is already known about the child and what the questions are that we are needing to address.

Assessment tasks are varied and may include:

- listening activities, some of which may be in noise
- observation of the child's play
- assessments of understanding and using language (this includes sign language where this is relevant)
- assessment of speech clarity
- discussion about how things are in school and more generally
- assessments of thinking skills, some of which do not involve any language
- assessments of reading, spelling and mathematics
- having the child draw a picture and/or produce some writing
- observing the child's interactions and play skills.

We have a wide range of formal/standardised assessments available to us at the Burwood Centre. We aim to use assessments that have not been carried out with the child elsewhere.

Whenever possible we explain to the child or young



person why they are having the assessment and we always reassure them that they only need to do their best – that there is no 'passing' or 'failing' or 'grades' to worry about.

After the assessment

A few weeks after the assessment the family will receive a detailed written report. Many families share this with their local professionals. Some families use their report to help strengthen their case for gaining more support or a change of placement for the child. This might include submitting the report as part of their evidence for a SENDIST.

What do families get out of their assessment?

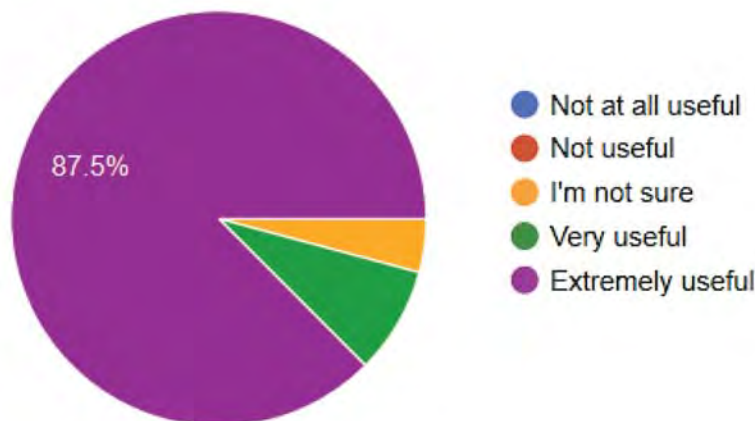
Ninety-six percent of families who responded to our recent survey told us that their assessment and report had led to change. When asked to write how the assessment and report had led to change, reasons included:

- increased support
- support better specified EHCPs
- assessment for EHCP agreed and initiated
- alternative educational placement secured
- increased awareness of the child/young person's difficulties and strengths
- referral to other services and professionals including deaf Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), local Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) team and local educational psychology

Many families wrote very positive accounts in response to our questionnaire about how the service we provide at the Burwood Centre helped them. Here are just three such comments to give you an insight into how families have found independent assessment to be helpful:

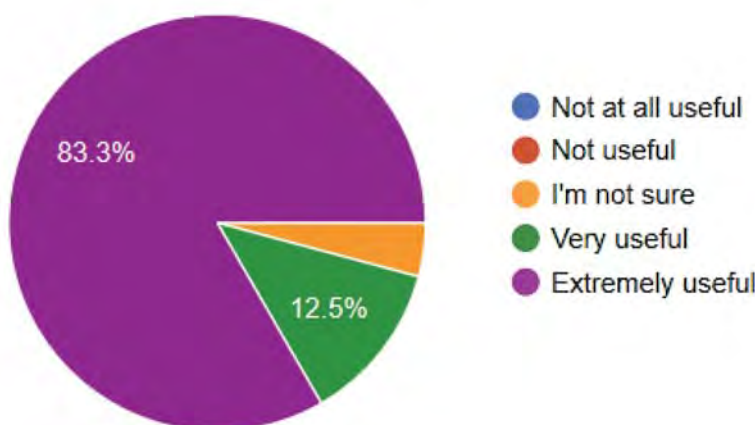
How useful would you rate your Burwood Centre written report?

24 responses



How useful would you rate your visit to the Burwood Centre?

24 responses



"Thank you for giving us a deeper insight into our daughter's needs. The report has allowed us to ensure that she will be supported in the correct ways. It also helped us, as parents, to understand her better and celebrate her strengths."

"The Burwood Centre assessment was the best thing we did for our child. She is currently doing her GCSEs and I feel that any successes will be down to her continued hard work and help that we received due to this report. Thank you."

"We needed a specialist assessment to be able to amend her EHCP and name an appropriate secondary setting. I'd have travelled to the moon to get the same result!"

We received extremely positive responses when we asked families to rate the utility of their assessment day and report, as can be seen on these summary pie charts – shown above.

What about the cost of assessment?

The Burwood Centre is a charity and all the work we

do is already significantly subsidised by charitable funds. The amount of time spent on each child/young person does, however, lead to a very expensive model in terms of costs, and we do have to ask families to pay a significant fee. This is a difficult aspect of independent work. Fortunately, many families who need to, do secure other charities and trust funds who help them with the fee.

Conclusion

We really enjoy meeting and working with children and young people from all over the UK, and as a team we know that we are so fortunate to be able to work closely with one another, problem-solving together. We frequently receive thank you letters and positive feedback from families that let us know how our

assessments have helped them. The 2018–19 quality questionnaire showed what a positive and important experience a multidisciplinary assessment is for many children, young people and families. In addition to access to specialists in deafness, who are able to discuss the case in detail with one another and provide a high level of expertise in their individual fields, we think that the process gives families precious time out to really focus on the issues that are concerning them and think in detail about their child and his or her needs. We do also receive positive feedback from other professionals when our assessments and reports have helped to solve puzzles and give ideas for strategies and input.



Lorna Gravenstede is a highly specialist Speech and Language Therapist and Head of Burwood Centre.

Julie Heald is a Qualified Advisory Teacher of the Deaf.

The role of assessment in deaf education

Ruth Crosby-Stewart briefly defines domains A and B of the Quality Standards, which govern sensory support services with reference to the role of assessment in the support of deaf babies, children and young people

Domain A: Effective identification of need

QS A2: Information provided by identification and assessments carried out by the service ensures an understanding of the child or young person's needs, identifies targets for his/her progress and supports the planning and review of the effective teaching and the help and support that they require.

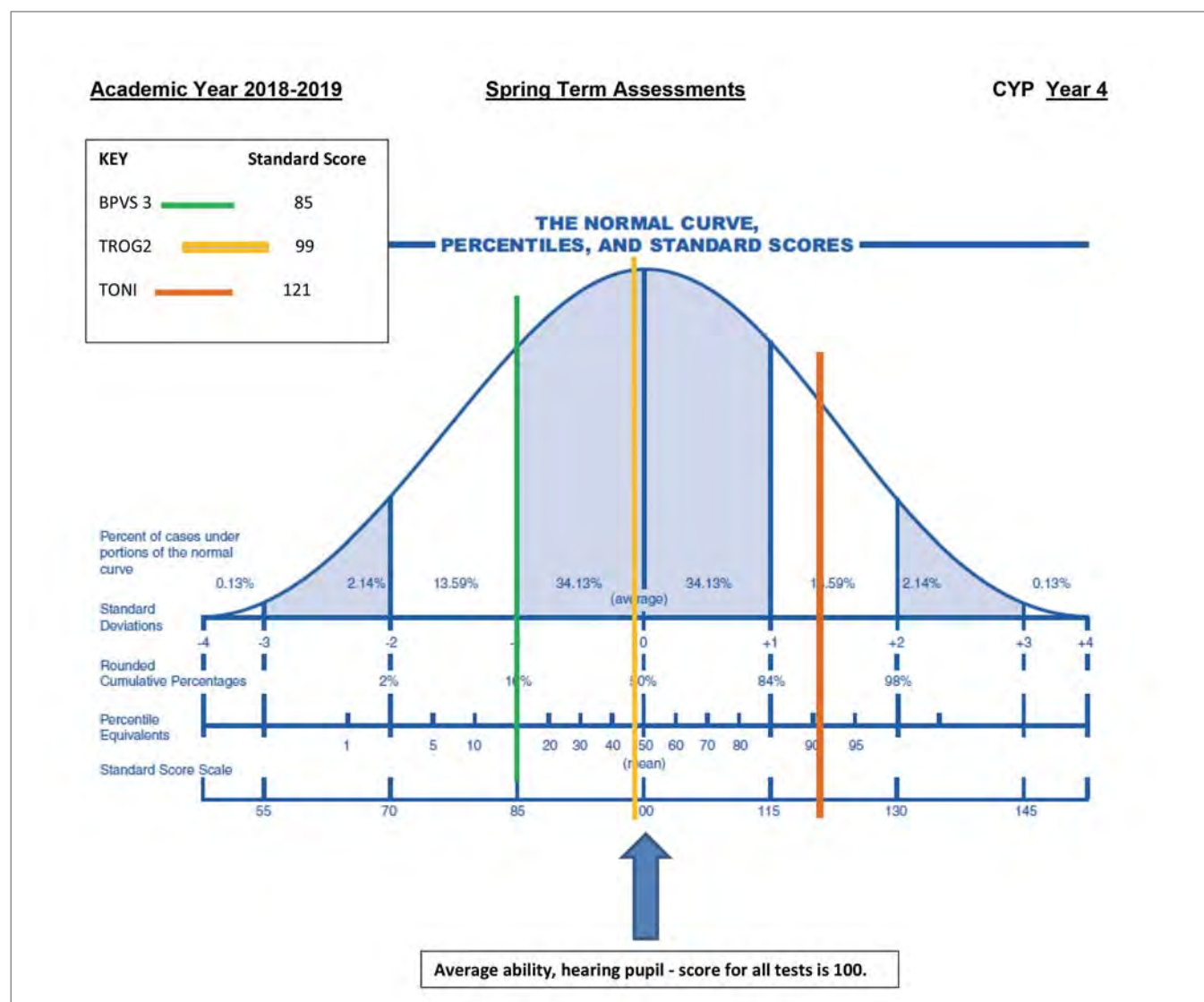
Domain B: The effectiveness of service in assessing and meeting the needs of CYP with a sensory impairment

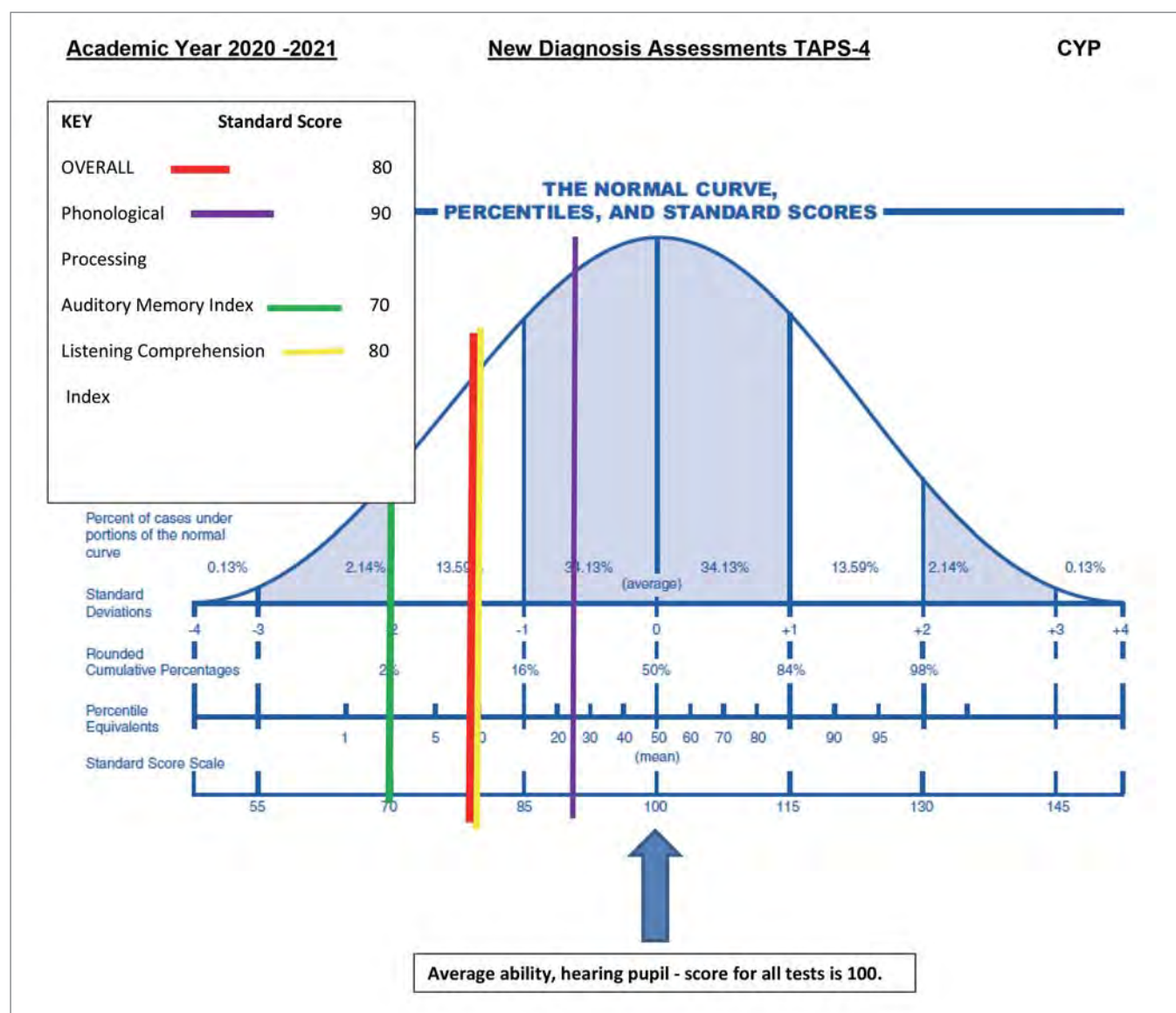
QS B2: The service ensures that the CYP and his/her parents are fully involved in their assessment, ongoing monitoring and review.

QS B3: The service works well with the CYP's early years setting, mainstream school, special school or college and other professionals during their assessments.

(National Sensory Impairment Partnership (NatSIP), 2016)

With regards to domain A, an abundance of assessment tools and guidance exists to aid Qualified Teachers of the Deaf with their endeavours at identifying the needs of deaf babies, children and young people. Subsequent reports detailing the results of which can be in excess of five or six A4 pages and often contain vast arrays of presentation methods in both text and tabular formats. These detailed reports are perhaps best understood by fellow professionals acquainted with standardised testing.





With regards to domain B, in order to achieve full involvement in the assessment process an understanding of the assessment results and implications thereof is essential. This raises the question – just how meaningful are these often lengthy, wordy documents to the ‘uninitiated’, such as colleagues within wider multidisciplinary roles, parents and carers and the children and young people themselves?

Personal experience of attempts to explain standard scores of 75 and 82 to be a cause for concern, only to be met with parents and carers espousing their delight at similar scores, instigated creative ways in which to present the information, the most successful being the, *Summary of Assessments*, an additional visual aid the service uses to present standardised scores.

The basis of the *Summary of Assessments* is a normative curve or ‘bell curve’ – the most common type of distribution for a variable with the additional benefit of illustrating standard score, standard deviations, percentile equivalents and crucially, the deaf child’s attainment in relation to hearing peers. A simple key explains the desired content.

The aid allows standardised scores from different assessments to be presented on a single page. Areas of strength and weakness are clearly demonstrated:

Illustrating the different aspects within a single assessment is equally illuminating and allows for more precise target setting.



Ruth Crosby-Stewart is Lead Qualified Teacher of the Deaf with STARS (Sensory Teaching, Advisory and Resource Service) at Middlesbrough Council and has recently qualified as an Educational Audiologist with Mary Mare and the University of Hertfordshire.

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The NatSIP, Quality Support Standards for Sensory Support Services in England – June 2016, available at: <https://www.natsip.org.uk/index.php/doc-library-login/quality-improvement-for-services/quality-standards-for-sensory-support-services/1044-quality-standards-for-sensory-support-services>

In my time

Ted Moore looks back through the last century and reflects on the changes to attitude and purpose of assessment

I hope the following concoction will make you think of how the education and assessment of deaf children has changed over the years. It sets out to look at how deaf children were tested and also how Teachers of the Deaf (ToDs) had to suffer. Most of the quotes and articles are taken from the magazines and journals at the time.

Of course, children first:

The Teacher of the Deaf

A Journal of Current Thought on the Education of the Deaf

Feb 1942 pg 13 Ernest Lund (PhD) Manchester University

A Study of Language Ability in Children with Defective Hearing

Two groups of tests were devised for deaf children aged 11-12 with three subtests in each:

Group 1: Comprehension, Comprehension & Expression, and Composition

Group 2 Vocabulary, Knowledge of Class Names, and Knowledge of Specific Language Usages

Summary (6 points made – 2 selected)

- 1 The construction of highly valid and highly reliable tests capable of indicating the relative success with which a school for the deaf is fulfilling its language aims, is fully practicable.
- 2 Whilst there is no evidence that, by itself, hearing for speech will guarantee language development superior to that which can occur in its absence, there is considerable evidence that language in the individual bears a demonstrable relationship to his ability to hear speech; the fullest exploitation of remaining hearing for speech by the use of hearing aids and by all possible means, is closely indicated.

The Teacher of the Deaf

A Journal of Current Thought on the Education of the Deaf

February 1948 pgs 16–18.

Intelligence tests for the Deaf, E. Donovan

Before a group test can be classified as good, it must observe five major principles:

- 1 As it demands the child's concentration, it must be interesting
- 2 It must be well standardised

- 3 It must contain a large number of items:
 - a) To eliminate chance;
 - b) To have careful grading from easy to difficult within the test;
 - c) To grade children who are very similar;
 - d) To test all types from the very bright to the dull and backward in the same test
- 4 It must be easy to administer
- 5 It must be easy to mark.

In addition, for deaf children, it must be entirely non-verbal.

From 'A Beginner's Introduction to Deaf History'

pgs 104–106

Raymond Lee, Editor, 2004

In 1934 a committee was appointed by the Chief Medical Officer "to inquire into and report upon the medical, educational and social aspects of the problems attending children suffering from defects of hearing not amounting to total deafness".

The Committee's Report suggested that children suffering from deafness should be classified into 3 grades – of which Grade 3 consisted of children for whom education in a school for the deaf was essential.

The classification was:

Grade I – pupils in ordinary schools no help

Grade IIA – pupils in ordinary schools with special help

Grade IIB – partially deaf in special classes or schools

Grade III – deaf in special schools

Subsequently, questions were asked in the University of Manchester's Examination for the Certificate for Teachers of the Deaf such as:

Plan a History lesson for a senior class of deaf boys or girls (Grade III). Justify your aims and choice of lesson subject. Indicate clearly what part in it you would expect your pupils to take.

The Teacher of the Deaf

A Journal of Current Thought on the Education of the Deaf

April 1951 pgs 43–47

Reading for Deaf Children

An investigation into stages in pre-reading for, and assessment of, Reading readiness in young deaf children by Jean Walter

The sample: The 11 children tested were between the ages 3 yrs 5 months and 6 yrs 6 months and had been pupils at a nursery-infant school for deaf children for periods ranging from 1 month to 2 yrs 5 months. The children were selected as follows:

- 1 child who was already reading simple stories
- 1 late school beginner who had not yet begun reading
- 1 poor reader
- 8 nursery children who had not yet begun reading.

Outline of Tests (procedures not included):

- Test A Matching objects to picture
- Test B Matching pictures of single objects
- Test BB Matching detailed coloured pictures
- Test C Detecting small differences in pictures
- Test CC Detecting differences in shapes
- Test D Detecting differences in letters
- Test E Word-matching and discriminating
- Test EE Visual memory of words
- Test F Sentence-matching and discriminating
- Test FF Visual memory of sentences
- Test G Arrangement of pictures in sequence
- Test H Interest in and handling of a book.

Conclusions: (brief)

It would seem that a thorough examination similar to this small investigation into pre-reading stages for deaf children would be valuable.

The Teacher of the Deaf

A Journal of Current Thought on the Education of the Deaf

February 1955 pg1

For Our Readers

The recently published report by the Chief Medical Officer of the Ministry of Education deals with two subjects which have claimed attention for some time past – the detection of hearing defects in school children, and auditory training. In relation to the former it is becoming clear that sweep-frequency testing with a pure-tone instrument is displacing gramophone eudiometry as a means of ascertainment. There seems also to be evidence that more authorities are undertaking this work than had been supposed, although there is still need to press for a more widespread application so that all children, quite early in their school careers, have their hearing systematically and accurately examined, in order that those with defects may be screened out for further investigation.

The reports of some of the School Medical Officers, which are quoted in the Report, show that these tests do not bring to light a great number of new cases requiring full-time special educational treatment (although they might bring forward more if they were given early enough), but they do ensure that light defects are detected and treated as early as possible so that further deterioration is often prevented and in some cases normal hearing is restored. The position is perhaps best summed up by Dr. M. C. Taylor of Sheffield, who sees it as a 'useful implement of preventative medicine.'

And now for adults:

The Teacher of the Deaf

A Journal of Current Thought on the Education of the Deaf

August 1942 University of Manchester

NCTD Diploma

Exam Question: Section B

A totally deaf child fails to produce by direct imitation the following sounds NG, S, L

Describe the way in which you would help the child to say those sounds correctly.

The Teacher of the Deaf

A Journal of Current Thought on the Education of the Deaf

1955 pgs 133-136

There were four or more questions under each heading but it does not state how many questions had to be answered!

The Headings were

HYGIENE, ANATOMY & PHYSIOLOGY

THEORY OF SPEECH TEACHING

PRINCIPLES OF EDUCATION

& LANGUAGE

+ HISTORY OF THE EDUCATION OF THE DEAF

Write an essay on: "The establishment of Schools for the Deaf, their growth, expansion and scope."

I HAVE SELECTED TWO:

Under 'HYGIENE, ANATOMY & PHYSIOLOGY'.

Enumerate the cartilages of the larynx and explain how each is connected with the others.

Under 'PRINCIPLES OF EDUCATION'

"The appreciation of the purchasing value of money is influenced by opportunity and teaching"

Discuss this statement and indicate methods you would use to ensure that a congenitally, totally deaf child appreciates money values.

The Teacher of the Deaf

A Journal of Current Thought on the Education of the Deaf

December 1956 pg 207

University of Manchester Certificate for Teachers of the Deaf

(Under the heading **Psychology of Deafness** (3 questions were to be chosen, I've selected one)

Q2 What are the psychological problems which may be

encountered by a partially deaf child of eleven, who is transferred from a special school to a school for ordinary children?

University of Manchester Examination for the Certificate for Teachers of the Deaf

Teacher of the Deaf August 1958 pg 118

Under the heading **Curriculum & Method**

Section A: "A child is often held up in his ability to reason, not by his general intelligence but by his lack of experience" (Sconell) Consider this statement with relation to the teaching of (a) English subjects or (b) arithmetic to pupils in special schools or classes for deaf children.

The Teacher of the Deaf

A Journal of Current Thought on the Education of the Deaf

October 1950 pgs 165–166

University of Manchester Certificate for Teachers of the Deaf

Exam Question: Section Educational Hygiene

Q3 How far are school records useful to teachers when planning activities for deaf children both in and out of school?

University of London Institute of Education:

Diploma in the Education of the Deaf and Partially Hearing

1973 (from author's personal archives)

Paper 1 Language

Discuss the use of conversation methods in language development.

Addendum: This last question was one that I answered when I undertook the Diploma in 1973.

Fortunately, I passed.



Ted Moore is a former President of BATOD and former Head of Oxfordshire Sensory Support Service.

Searching for a QToD?

Job vacancies can be advertised on the BATOD website at a cost of £280.00
(with reduction for early payment)

If you have to re-advertise the same post, the cost is reduced to £170.00

Teaching Section – Situations Vacant

www.batod.org.uk/jobs

one of our most popular pages – especially on a Monday with hundreds of 'hits'!!!

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Your email address can be an active link so potential applicants can contact you directly

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Early Parent Interaction in Deafness

Martina Curtin provides an insight into the development of a new evidence-based assessment tool

Introduction

From November 2018 to November 2019, I had one day a week from my normal role as a Speech and Language Therapist to work on a proposal to submit to the National Institute of Health Research. The proposal was part of a Clinical Doctorate Research Fellowship application – a huge 70-page form and, if I was shortlisted, a big panel interview in Leeds! In January 2020, I found out my application was approved, and I began my fellowship amidst the pandemic in May 2020.

Aim

The aim of my fellowship is to create an evidence-based, observational assessment tool that will help parents, Qualified Teachers of the Deaf and Speech and Language Therapists appraise and monitor parent-child interaction in deafness for infants age 0–3.

A key feature of a good assessment is that it leads to areas of identified strength, areas of identified need and appropriately set targets. It should be sensitive to changes in skill and allow you to monitor skills over time. This play-based assessment tool will guide professionals with understanding and evaluating interaction, in a measured, evidence-based way. It will be family-friendly and accessible, therefore encouraging conversations with parents about good-quality interaction.



Tina Wakefield



Martine Monksfield



Yasmena Waris



Julie Hare



Prof Gary Morgan



Prof Ros Herman



Evelyne Mercure



Lisa Smith



Dr Madeline Cruice



Karin Schamroth



Sabina Iqbal



Julie Hughes

Why parent-child interaction?

Rich parent-child interaction is positively associated with language learning in hearing (Roberts and Kasier, 2011) and deaf children (Pressman et al., 1999). Multiple studies have found that the quantity and quality of parental involvement and interaction is the greatest predictor of deaf children's developmental outcomes (Ambrose et al., 2003; DesJarden, 2003; Yoshinaga-Itano, 2003). Parents who are inexperienced or not yet skilled in communicating with deaf children are likely to provide less good language input which in turn affects how a child develops their own understanding and use of language (Levine et al, 2016).

Professionals therefore need to build a good level of understanding and skill in appraising and understanding what is rich parent-child interaction, in order to go on to empower parents and give them the confidence and competence they need to succeed in communicating with their deaf child.

To date, there is no formal assessment tool that evaluates a parent's interaction skills when they are communicating with their deaf child. Measures such as the Ski-Hi Language Development Scale (Watkins, 2004) track the deaf baby's expressive and receptive language development but do not measure the quality or quantity of parent input.

The plan

The first step is a systematic review, where I will be consulting the research literature to ask how do researchers assess parent-child interaction in deafness? And which skills are being assessed? Excitingly, this phase is being carried out in collaboration with senior researcher Dr Evelien Dirks from The Dutch Foundation for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing in The Netherlands. Some of you may

have heard Evelien present her keynote speech at the most recent NDCS conference in November 2020.

Our systematic review will be published in free access format once the study is complete – so all those interested can read the findings. At the moment, we're still reading through and processing the many interesting papers, but feel free to read some recent updates on my blog (details below).

Once we know how parent/deaf child interaction is assessed in research, the next step will be to find out how it is assessed in practice. So please look out for an online survey around March/April 2021, when I'll be asking you about your practice in assessing interaction. We'll be running some focus groups on this too. We will then combine the evidence and expert practice to form the main content of the tool.

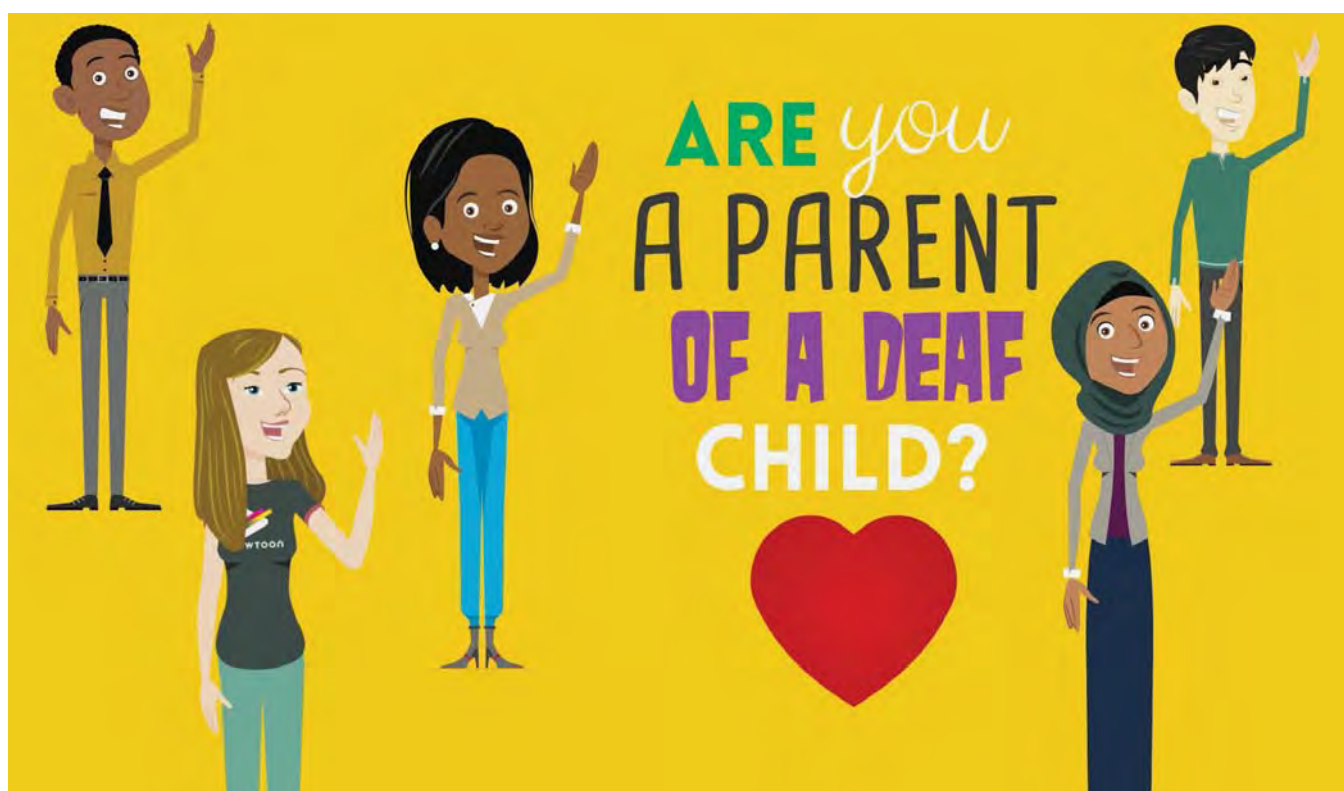
Meet the Team

My academic and clinical supervisors are wonderfully skilled and experienced and have already provided me with fantastic support and inspiration. They are Professor Gary Morgan, Professor Ros Herman and Doctor Madeline Cruice. My clinical supervisor is Karin Schamroth.

In addition, I have a strong advisory board that includes a mix of hearing and deaf professionals. They are Qualified Teachers of the Deaf Tina Wakefield, Martine Monksfield and Yasmena Waris, Consultant Speech and Language Therapist Julie Hare, Neuroscientist Evelyne Mercure, Deaf Instructor and parent of a deaf child Lisa Smith, Sensory Services manager and parent of a deaf child Sabina Iqbal and the CEO of The Elizabeth Foundation Julie Hughes.

As well as professionals and deaf parents, I will also be

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Communication is connection

Steve Rose reflects on the role speech and language therapists have in collaborative communication assessment for deafblind children

Deafblind children and communication

Achieving symbolic communication is recognised as one of the primary hurdles experienced by congenitally deafblind/multi-sensory impaired children (alongside accessing information about the world and moving around independently). It is estimated that approximately 60% achieve symbolic communication, sharing a way of communicating recognised by others in either the auditory, visual or tactile mode (Dammeyer & Ask Larsen, 2016). Deafblind children are more likely to access concrete symbolic systems involving objects, tactile symbols or tactile sign language and make use of more than one way of communicating.

Deafblind children often experience unsuccessful communication attempts, where their expressive cues are missed by caregivers, creating a barrier to making the transition from pre-symbolic to symbolic communication. They are likely to need early and therapeutic interventions to achieve this transition and then continue on to develop language.

Speech and language therapists and deafblindness

Speech and language therapists (SLT) are well placed to lead and support communicative interventions. However, not all SLTs feel confident in working with this low incidence group, and many may not come across a deafblind person on their caseload throughout their career.

► Continued from bottom of previous page

involving a group of hearing parents of deaf children. You can see the recruitment video here:

<https://youtu.be/pmDUOknjyqk>

All three of these groups will be involved in working together to build an assessment tool that is evidence-based, robust, acceptable, and useful for all. I'm really excited about this journey and can't wait to share more updates with you as each study phase unfolds.

Contact details

Keep in touch! I'm on Twitter as @martina_SLT and you can follow updates here <https://blogs.city.ac.uk/epid/>. If you'd like to read a little more about the systematic review, you can find my protocol here:

<https://tinyurl.com/y2jhz565>



Martina Curtin is a Highly Specialist Speech and Language Therapist and NIHR funded Clinical Doctorate Research Fellow.



It is worth remembering that speech and language therapy is a diverse field. The Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (RCSLT) currently provides clinical guidance for 36 distinct areas of specialism (aphasia, deafness, motor disorders, etc) and 16 distinct settings (schools, hospitals, criminal justice system and so on) (RCSLT, 2020). Due to the variety of specialisms and settings that an individual therapist has experience of, there is potential that therapists or the profession may be unfairly judged when working with this client group. It could be equivalent to judging an immigration lawyer's ability to support an employment tribunal. Fortunately, collaborative practice and professional networking provide opportunities to support therapists who see few deafblind children.

Deafblindness/multi-sensory impairment remains in its infancy as a specialist field in speech and language therapy. RCSLT recognised the need for clinical guidance for this specialism, publishing the first online clinical guideline in 2015 (RCSLT, 2020). RCSLT is ahead of international counterparts, which show limited outward recognition of deafblindness as a distinct specialism.

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Currently, the RCSLT clinical guidelines are under revision and due to be significantly expanded and updated in 2021.

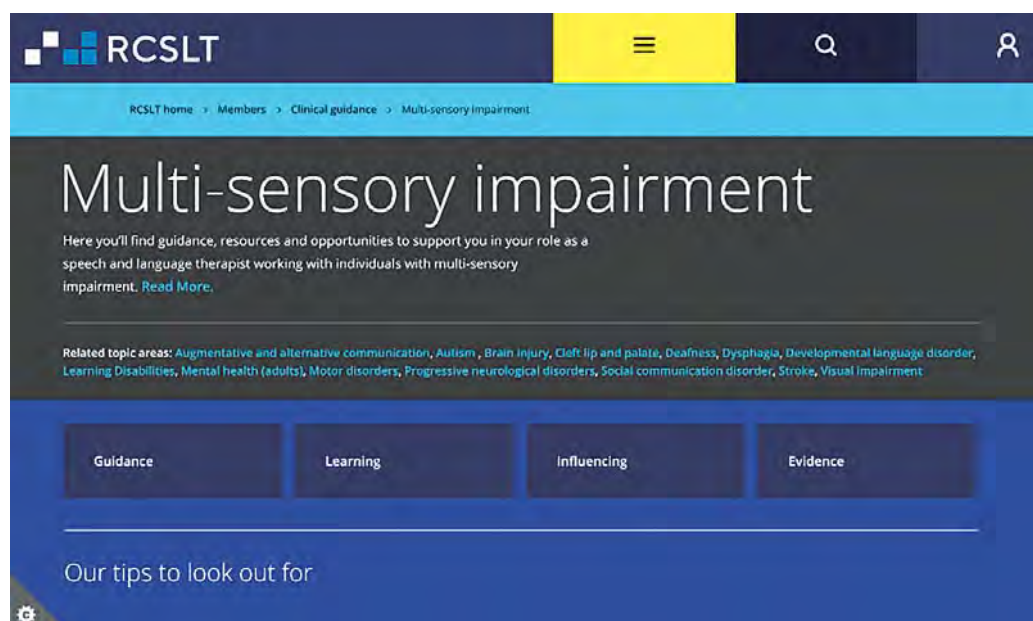
In recent years some therapists have completed postgraduate training (such as higher courses offered by the University of Birmingham or Deafblind Studies Consortium); however, numbers of specialists with advanced qualifications are still few. There is an emerging clinical excellence network (MSI/VI CEN) that is open to multi-disciplinary colleagues, whilst maintaining a focus on speech and language therapist professional development.

The role of SLT in assessment

Bearing in mind that therapists are working in the context of an emerging field, whether a specialist or not, they can play a significant role within a multi-disciplinary team. All therapists are equipped with the foundations of communication development, analysing social and pragmatic functions of language, adept at strategies to support interactions and increasing community participation.

SLTs look beyond the 'how' and 'what' of communication and in communication assessment can address

- previous history and development
- impact of sensory perceptual and integration abilities
- impact of physical and exploratory abilities

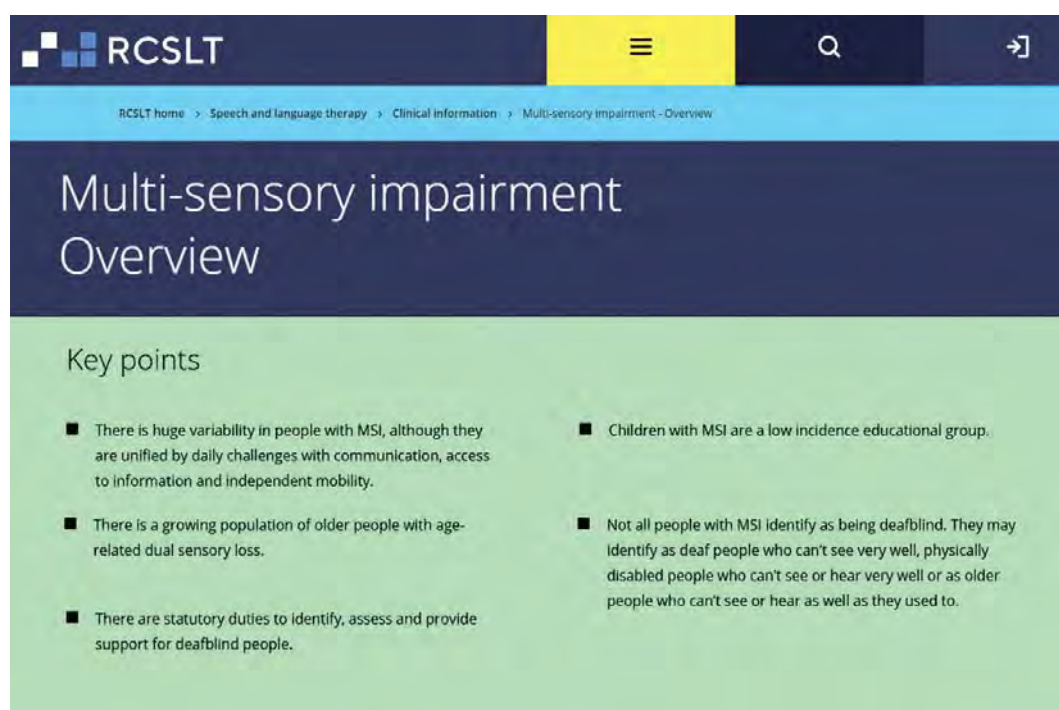


- mode and function of communication
- analysis of pragmatic, narrative, syntactic, semantic, morphological and phonological levels as appropriate
- communication partner competency
- communication environment analysis
- individual goal and outcome setting

Specialist therapists are able to offer in-depth knowledge of specific areas of development, including bodily-tactile communication development, object and tactile symbol systems, tactile sign language, as well as adaptations to assistive technology and augmentative and alternative communication systems (such as voice output communication aids). Specialist therapists are also able to support with complex decision-making, such as communication mode selection, and support teams make differential diagnosis of underlying or multiple diagnoses,

including language disorder, social communication or learning needs.

Without effective and trusting partnerships in multi-disciplinary–multi-agency teams, therapists are unable to fulfil their role and provide the best possible opportunities for deafblind children. There are overlaps between the roles of the MSI teacher and SLT, in the same way there are overlaps between QToD and SLT. We should be promoting synergistic relationships between parents, qualified



advisory teachers, and speech and language therapists. In the true meaning of synergy, the combined power of working together is greater than the power achieved by working separately.

SLTs need teachers to inform their work, share ideas and collaboratively problem solve individual issues and vice versa. Teams can't inform decisions about mode selection without an understanding of how sensory channels are functioning, individual motivations, parental preferences and the broader developmental context. The child has to remain at the centre of our mind when working collaboratively to ensure that we avoid professional silos becoming a barrier to progress or access to services.

A story of collaboration

I first met Tutti* when she was about 18 months old. She has a profound sensorineural hearing loss and is registered severely sight-impaired. At that time, she was resistant to reaching out and exploring hands. Working in a multi-disciplinary assessment centre, we worked with her through a parent-child interaction therapy programme, focusing on early interactions. Subsequently, I have been involved with assessments, advice and therapy programmes over the last ten years or so. Today, Tutti uses visual images (symbols and photos), sign language and, at times, tactile sign language to communicate. Her therapy and education goals and outcomes are jointly planned and integrated into a highly differentiated curriculum.

All of her achievements involved teamwork between her parents, MSI teacher, SLT, and when relevant intervenors and the wider support team. Key points where SLTs have enhanced her communication journey include:

- mediating exploration and understanding of agency
- associating 'meaning with hands', gestures and signs
- experiencing successful interactions and exchanging messages
- recognising individual and cultural sign expressions
- accessing a signing environment, mediated with intervenor support
- establishing understanding of concepts, time and sequence
- increasing combinations of signs to extend messages
- establishing opportunities to express different communicative functions

At each of these key points there was significant value in team collaboration which drew on the role of SLT in assessment or programme design.

Perspectives on SLT's contributions

A parent's perspective

"Being introduced to a Speech and Language Therapist at an early age was vital for my child who is Deafblind. An SLT was key to introducing the type of communication that my child needed to begin to reach her full potential in the life that lies ahead of her. If she was not given access to the expertise at an early age, the consequences of an incorrect method of communication being used, or indeed no method of communication at all, might have had a

long-term and damaging impact on our child's development and understanding of the world around her. An SLT, working collaboratively with an MSI teacher and Intervenor, enables our child the opportunity to explore the journey of communication."

An MSI teacher's perspective

"Every MSI teacher knows one of the key challenges faced is communicating with others. Working collaboratively with the SLT draws on their additional knowledge and expertise and provides a greater depth of understanding and knowledge of the child's expressive and receptive communication. This in turn supports the development of learning targets and identification of strategies for effective interventions."

A fellow SLT's perspective

"Whilst the MSI teacher has a sound understanding of the impact of MSI on communication skills, they also have a broader view of the child within the assessment. The role of the SLT brings with it a communication-specific knowledge base, which focuses on the whole range of communication skills and takes account of a developmental perspective, an understanding of language structure and a wider view of communication styles and systems."

Speech and language therapists have demonstrated that forming strong and effective partnerships with specialist teachers, families and deafblind children collectively improves communication, creates opportunities and optimizes the environment. Assessment is one aspect of programme design, yet it is integral to establishing the starting point from where we can begin to explore the journey of communication.

With thanks to Tutti's* family and team for allowing their story to be shared and contributing comments from their perspective.

**Names have been changed. Tutti is Italian and means 'all together'.*

For more information about the MSI/VI Clinical Excellence Network contact: msvi.cen@gmail.com



Steve Rose is a Speech and Language Therapist and deafblindness consultant. He works part time at Great Ormond Street Hospital and in Independent Practice. He is a national clinical advisor to RCSLT (deafblindness) and has a particular interest in bodily-tactile communication and tactile sign language.

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Looking through the archives

Paul Simpson takes us back through the archives to a range of articles on Assessment

It is not surprising to find that the topic of this edition of the magazine – assessment – provides rich pickings in the archives. Assessment is such a key element of the work of a Qualified Teacher of the Deaf (QToD) providing as it does the foundation of much of the work undertaken and covering so many different areas. Over the years there have been articles covering many aspects of assessment – linguistic, curricular, audiological, social and emotional and, of course, the whole area of formal ‘national’ assessment, public examinations. As always, it is fascinating to see those aspects of assessment that have stayed the same and those that have changed over the years in keeping with the rate of change in the subject area – especially audiology and language. Other relevant areas are the development of various internal and external standards which are used to assess the provision of services to deaf children as a basis of the evaluation of the effectiveness of support to deaf children and young people (for example, the whole of the March 2010 edition was devoted to quality standards).

It is for this reason that several of the last 20 years of magazines have been concerned with aspects of

assessment. From the website archives the first magazine that covers this topic was in November 1999, which has an article written by my namesake, Paul Simpson (no relation), on the NDCS’s development of a set of standards concerned with early years, working with parents and inclusion.

June 2002 saw the first magazine with a focus on assessment within the archive and the aspects covered were wide-ranging and included an overview of all aspects of assessment from Elizabeth Andrews, a key contributor to our magazines over the years and then working at Royal National Institute for Deaf People (RNID). This was followed by an analysis of the RNID’s educational guidelines where assessment was being considered. This

was certainly a walk down memory lane for me as I was then employed part time by RNID to oversee and write those guidelines (with others). Other areas were writing, phonology and Speech and Language Therapy (SaLT)

assessment, video analysis of children’s communication, a look at the Burwood assessment centre and advice to ToDs about their role in statutory assessment.

In May 2006 the keynote article was one of many over the years from Wendy McCracken, professor of deaf education at Manchester University, looking in particular at the assessment of deaf children with

additional needs in an edition called ‘adapting the curriculum to meet differing needs’. Wendy has played a huge part over the years in raising awareness of the role of Qualified Teachers of the Deaf in supporting and assessing these children who are in danger of not getting the specific QToD support they need as time and effort are devoted to their other needs. Wendy wrote another leading article on this topic in September 2015.

In January 2010 the entire magazine was devoted to assessment issues and covered both practical and theoretical aspects. One article looked at the whole area of assessment of deaf pupils including how and whether to standardise assessments for deaf pupils or use those for the whole population. The edition included consideration of assessment of sign language, cochlear implant use, speech tests of hearing, neonatal screening – the very first assessment deaf children have – literacy development, deaf students in further education (FE), and access to public examinations. It is well worth a look at this comprehensive edition.

Seven years later another edition was devoted to assessment. It is always very informative to compare editions several years apart to be able to evaluate how things have changed and continue to change over time. The January 2017 edition had some very interesting theoretical discussions in the opening articles – the ethics of assessment, the use of dynamic

assessment and a historical review of assessment going back to the late nineteenth century. Other articles looked at audiological and speech perception assessment, and aspects of social and emotional development assessment and that of memory, writing, BSL and students in FE. From a different assessment angle looking at services from the outside, there was an interesting article about Ofsted’s local area inspections.

Please make some time to look at some of these archived magazines – it is amazing what insights they can provide! They can all be accessed from here:

<https://www.batod.org.uk/information-category/publications/magazine/> or through the search engine on the website.



Paul Simpson is one of BATOD’s National Executive Officers and was Editor of BATOD Magazine from 2007 to May 2019.

Virtual assessments with deaf children

Tina Wakefield outlines some considerations when assessing learners remotely

Recent events have meant that it is difficult to carry out face to face assessment. If it is not possible to carry out an assessment because of restrictions caused by the pandemic, one option may be to carry out a virtual assessment instead.

This has many challenges but can be useful, especially when the information is required urgently – such as when a child has just moved into the area, for functional assessment of newly-acquired hearing technology or for arrangement of vital support.

Many publishers of assessments have agreed to the use of their assessments over virtual delivery, and often produce a 'letter of no objection' for using their tests digitally, for example, the publisher Pearson's letter can be found at the webpage below

www.pearsonassessments.com/content/dam/school/global/clinical/us/assets/telepractice/Letter-of-no-objection.pdf

Any decision to use a virtual assessment instead should be carried out on a case-by-case basis, and all decisions should consider the individual needs of that particular deaf child. You should view any results with the caveat of how effective the session was – they can be used as an indication of need, rather than strong data. If an assessment is to be delivered virtually, the following points might be helpful.

- Look at different services/packages that provide a picture-in-picture display and online tools that enable you to share your screen, use annotation tools to see how the child or young person can complete the assessment.
- Be aware of any confidentiality concerns. Check with the school or parents if using home computers.
- You may wish to carry out a risk analysis, making sure only authorised adults are present, and make sure any data saving complies with GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation).

Before conducting your first assessments:

- practise administering each assessment you use before you test your first child or young person
- prepare the facilitator/parent who will be with the child or young person at the remote site
- troubleshoot basic connection or technical issues
- establish a quiet setting free from distractions
- check your ability to record the child or young person's responses
- think about the child or young person's testing needs
- give the child or young person breaks to play a game or have a discussion
- minimise distractions such as phones, other children, loud noises, etc
- Ensure that the child or young person's information isn't visible on a computer screen or in unlocked files during or after the assessment
- Arrange how the results will be reported.

The NDCS resource 'Assessments of Deaf Children and Young People' at www.ndcs.org.uk/assessments sets out the range of different assessments that can be used with deaf children. At the time of writing, this resource is currently being updated and will be republished in the next few months.



Tina Wakefield is an Education Consultant at NDCS and a Qualified Teacher of the Deaf (QToD).

Did you know?

The similarities and differences across the nations*

ToD university provider

England	4 providers: Universities of Birmingham, Leeds, Manchester, Hertfordshire/Mary Hare
Northern Ireland	No
Cymru	No
Scotland	University of Edinburgh

* Please let us know if this information is incorrect or recently updated.

Exams in the age of coronavirus

Paul Simpson and **Caireen Sutherland** discuss access arrangements during this current pandemic

For many years BATOD and RNIB (Royal National Institute of Blind People)/VIEW (Vision Impairment Education Workforce) have been involved with Ofqual, contributing to their discussions in relation to access arrangements for deaf and VI candidates.

The relationship goes back to before the establishment of Ofqual in 2010 when the relevant government body was the QCA (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority) and before that in the late 1990s the SCAA (School Curriculum and Assessment Authority).

Each year BATOD and RNIB/VIEW have been invited as professional bodies to a range of meetings including regular membership of the Access Consultation Forum at which both BATOD and VIEW have given presentations – sometimes along with colleagues from NDCS – on aspects of access arrangements relevant to deaf and VI candidates.

In addition to this, for many years we have been involved in the annual scrutiny of and comment on the regulations produced by JCQ (Joint Council for Qualifications). We have certainly found JCQ very receptive to issues we have raised and a number of changes have been secured following requests from the profession that have been fed through BATOD and RNIB/VIEW.

Everything related to examinations was thrown into the air this year by the coronavirus as in all aspects of education –

and, indeed, life.

It soon became clear that exams would not be able to proceed in a normal way when schools were closed to most children. We are pleased to note that Ofqual consulted the Access Consultation Forum regularly about its proposals.

You will have seen the huge furore which took place, first in Scotland, and then in the rest of the UK about the use of an algorithm to determine grades. The algorithm was indeed included in the consultation documentation and discussions, but we did not offer our thoughts on this as it was not our specialism. However, we supported the idea of centres deciding on the grade a candidate would have achieved had the exams taken place. As this was clearly going to happen, it was important to ensure that deaf and VI candidates were not disadvantaged. We argued strongly then that centres should be obliged to consult the specialist teachers who had been involved in supporting the candidate during their lessons. Ofqual stopped short of compelling centres to consult such teachers, but they revised their guidance to centres highlighting the crucial importance of including them in decision-making when determining the grades. We did not, of course, realise at that time that the centre-assessed grades would be so significantly changed by the algorithm, but we certainly wanted the deaf/VI candidates to have a level playing field.



Because centres were not obliged to consult, we used our contact networks to encourage QToDs, QTVIs and Heads of Service to ensure that they put themselves forward to be involved in these discussions.

Once the decision had been made to use the centre-assessed grades and not the grades determined by the algorithm, we decided to ask our members how many appeals there had been. In fact (and for deaf students this is borne out by the NDCS as well) no candidate raised objections about the grade allocated and there seemed to be no appeals – none that we know about at least.

We were aware of one case where the centre refused the request of the specialist teacher to be involved on the grounds that they knew their student well enough. This was disappointing and even with attention being drawn to the Ofqual guidance this was resisted. However, we have not come across any other examples like this but would be interested to hear about any other experiences colleagues might like to share and which would be helpful for future discussion and decisions.

We were equally involved in discussions about vocational qualifications but have had no feedback from candidates about this. Again we would welcome any thoughts.

Further discussions with Ofqual have also involved consideration of plans to change the format of future examinations – adapting them to more digital presentation. As always, we stressed the importance of involving specialist teachers in any such discussions to ensure that any screen-based assessments are properly accessible to deaf and VI students. Once again, the key is specialist input, and this is even more crucial when normal deadlines are removed and everything is done at speed.

Other discussions that have aroused some controversy include reducing

the content of the syllabus to reflect the reduced amount of teaching time. As far as our candidates are concerned this is acceptable, provided that their access arrangements are fully in place when the exams take place. Decisions about what should be removed from the examination content is primarily a matter for the subject specialists.

The spotlight has now turned towards next year's exams, some of which, in Scotland and Wales, have already been scrapped. In England, however, there is still determination that they take place albeit with three weeks delay (at the time of writing). However, it is not certain what the state of the virus will be next Summer or indeed in the run up to the exam season. To this end JCQ have produced Covid-related specific advice which can be found

<https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Supplementary-AA-guidance-2021.pdf>. The key point being that the amount of evidence needed to indicate normal way of working may be more limited.

It is ironic that there has been a lot of talk about using more and more course work evaluation to determine the final grade – something which the current Government has turned away from in recent years despite strong disability impact assessments highlighting the positive aspects of this kind of assessment for candidates with disabilities.

Time will tell what happens next year. If you have any thoughts about any of these issues, please do not hesitate to let us know.



Paul Simpson is one of BATOD's National Executive Officers and a member of Ofqual's Access Consultation Forum.

Caireen Sutherland is Principal Education Officer at the RNIB and member of Ofqual's Access Consultation Forum.

Please don't share your BATOD membership...

We are aware that some personal memberships are being used as school memberships

I am sure most members know that we do not have school memberships – just personal memberships.

If you choose to make your magazines, journals and other information from BATOD available school-wide, you are affecting the work that the Association is able to do on behalf of its membership.

It is only by keeping our membership numbers high that we can continue to support our members in all aspects of their work, run good and successful conferences and contribute to policy development throughout the UK.

Encourage your colleagues, SENCO and classroom assistants to join BATOD to enjoy the benefits of membership



Top tips for communication in a world with masks

Download a **FREE** copy
for use in your school
www.connevans.info/posters



DO



Wear a mask or face covering with a clear panel where possible

Always make sure you face the person and have their attention before speaking

Take your time and be patient. Repeat or rephrase what you have said if you need to as some words might be tricky to understand. If you're stuck, try writing it down!

Start by making the topic of the conversation as clear as possible



Try to make eye contact where possible, speak clearly and naturally and use facial expressions

If you're at a safe distance and you feel comfortable doing so, you are allowed to remove your mask so someone with hearing loss can understand you better*

* Please visit www.gov.uk for the latest guidance on mask exemptions



DON'T

Never make assumptions about communication preferences. Some people use sign language, some use lipreading – most people use a combination of approaches

Make sure there isn't lots of noise in the background and don't try to talk to someone from across the room



Don't judge someone accompanying a deaf or hard of hearing person for not wearing a mask

Avoid standing with your back to a window – this can turn your face into shadow and make you harder to understand



Try not to speak too slowly, mumble or shout

Don't give up, get frustrated or say "Forget it"!



 **Connevans Limited**

Bridge House, 1 Nutfield Road, Merstham, Surrey RH1 3EB
Tel: 01737 247571 Minicom: 01737 644016 Fax: 01737 223475

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Equipment for deaf and hard of hearing people
in education, employment, the home & leisure

Sheila McKechnie Award

Lucy Carradine and **Rianna Sime** share the success story behind their 'Let's Get Active' project

We won! Woo! But before all the award excitement, we need to go back to Spring 2019, when the National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS) approached the children from the Hearing Impaired Resource Base at Howes Primary School in Coventry with a fantastic opportunity to engage with their local community via their 'Make a Change' fund, "bringing to life their ideas, and allowing them to make a positive change for them and other deaf young people". When discussing this incredible proposition with the children, they drew on their existing interest in the school sports projects and came up with an idea about visiting different sports facilities in the city. When staff helped them explore this idea, they decided they would like to help spread Deaf awareness in their community, by experiencing what the sports facilities had to offer and helping them improve their Deaf awareness where necessary. The children came up with ideas of sports they would like to try, and with adult support, they researched different venues in the local area that could provide these opportunities – then the fun started!

After contacting several providers, we had three invitations to different sporting facilities in the local community: Go Ape, Newbold Comyn Leisure Centre, and AT7 Centre. At each facility, the children planned to record interviews, film and photograph their participation in the activities and spread Deaf awareness and the needs of deaf and disabled children to the people in charge. Each provider offered a different sport for the children to evaluate and the NDCS 'Make a Change' fund supported costs related to these opportunities, allowing us to fund transport and resources, while the providers generously allowed the children to enter without charge.

It was then that the behind the scenes preparations began, with children creating interview questions, practising their interviewing techniques and becoming familiar with the video recording and editing software – the adults had many hours of CPD fun learning how to edit videos and add music and subtitles! The children were encouraged to ensure their speech and sign were as



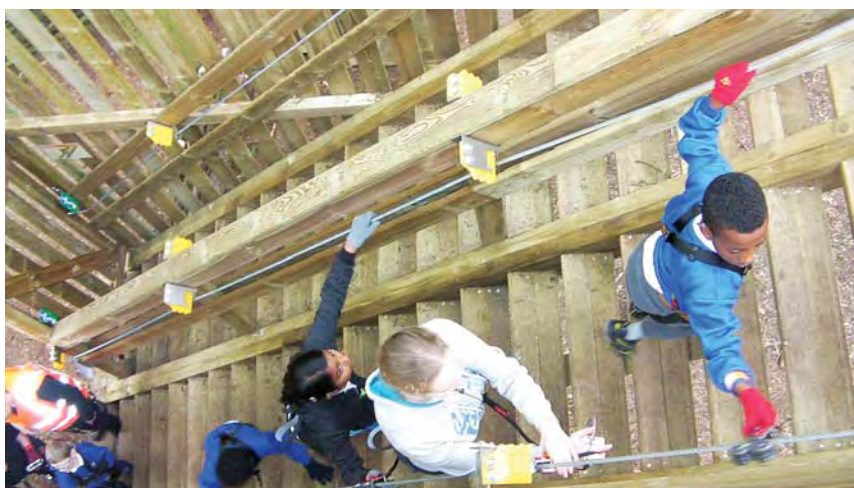
clear as possible, to ensure the videos were accessible to a wide audience. Throughout the project, the NDCS staff supported the children with suggestions on video editing and their style of recording, helping them to evaluate what worked well in their first video and improving some elements in the second and third videos.

Our first adventure was to Newbold Comyn Leisure Centre in Warwickshire, where the children had great fun swimming and scaling the climbing walls (sadly, the adults remained on the ground for this one!) The visit began with the children filming interviews with the manager and other staff about their access for Deaf and disabled children and young people. Staff gave the children a tour of the facilities, allowing them to see what the centre already provided and what could be improved. The children were impressed by the flashing lights for fire alarms, but suggested a visual cue, such as a flag, to go alongside the lifeguard's whistle signals. After these discussions, the manager saw the potential in the work the pupils were producing, resulting in immediate talks about changes to their entrance, swimming pools, climbing centre and sports halls to make them a more welcoming environment for Deaf young people. The



children loved the opportunity to use the centre's facilities, a first for many of them, and talked about the swimming and climbing continuously for days afterwards! There was now a real buzz about the project and the children were keen to approach more facilities and assess their provisions.

Our second (and most loved) adventure was to 'Go Ape, Coventry', this time the adults left the safety of the forest floor to venture into the tree-tops with the children! Again, the children had the chance to interview staff, film their participation and share ideas to improve



the accessibility of the amenities. They loved our host, Nikki, who helped the children ride the adapted bikes, a first for many of them, and staff got their daily exercise trying to avoid any run-over toes! This opportunity led to one of the families purchasing a trike for their Deaf child, after they had loved riding it so much on the day and had previously found balancing on a standard bike challenging. Following this opportunity, the children were excited to share the adapted bikes with their school friends when the centre staff brought them in for others to try at the family sports festival at school. After their cycling fun, the children went on to explore the outdoor facilities, where they were able to try one of the many activities on offer. There was great excitement when someone got a bullseye! The children acted as great champions of Deaf

Deaf awareness. They were particularly impressed with the provision of BSL safety instructions and the hands-on demonstrations of safety procedures, and their recommendations for the venue included giving site staff training in Deaf awareness to help them cater for visitors like them. To this day, the children still love to tell people about their trip to 'Go Ape' and what a fantastic time they had there!

Our final adventure was to AT7 Centre in Coventry, where the children rode specially adapted bikes, as well as trying archery in the woods. As before, the children conducted interviews with staff, tried the facilities and discussed





awareness and spread the message of their needs.

The Howes children and staff alike fully engaged with this amazing opportunity to try new sports and learn what was available in our local area for children and young people who are Deaf or disabled. The children were great ambassadors for the school, as well as taking on the responsibility of spreading Deaf awareness, to allow other children and young people the same access to local activities that they enjoyed. The children were thrilled to share their videos with the Mayor of Coventry and their love of sport as part of the '2019 European City of Sport title' in Coventry.

Unbeknown to the children and staff at Howes, the NDCS nominated the children's 'Let's Get Active' project for the Sheila McKechnie Foundation's National Campaigner Awards, which we

were shortlisted for, promptly triggering a miraculous celebration in the bleak times of Covid-19! The current and past pupils involved in the project gathered together at a socially-distanced pizza party, complete with ice-cream and balloons, to watch the award ceremony live online. Excitingly, it was revealed that we were joint winners in our category of Young Campaigner! Our acceptance speech was the highlight of the night and the school Twitter feed was buzzing with re-tweets and comments from others watching along online. We encourage you to watch for yourself from 1:07 at:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PypDGi_ILPM&t=4056s

Both the children and staff at Howes would like to encourage other Deaf children and young people to get involved in their own project through the NDCS 'Make a Change' fund via: www.ndcs.org.uk/our-services/services-for-families/apply-for-a-grant/make-a-change-fund/make-a-change-case-study



Lucy Carradine is a Qualified Teacher of the Deaf in Charge of the HIRB and Rianna Sime is a Qualified Teacher of the Deaf.

Howes Hearing-Impaired Resource Base is a specialist primary school provision for deaf children in Coventry based at Howes Primary School. We are a small HIRB, with between 8 and 12 children attending the setting, following a Total Communication approach to education, adapting the curriculum to meet the needs of all learners.

Updates from the NSPCC

Shirley Wilson, a senior consultant for the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, provides a summary of updates since the pandemic started

We are indeed living in unprecedented times because of Coronavirus and the impact of this is likely to be upon us for some considerable time. Within the NSPCC, we are aware that the virus has had a major impact on deaf children and their families, and although children have now returned to school with new restrictions, this continues to present many challenges.

There has been some positive impact of Covid-19 for deaf children, such as families spending more time together as a family unit, increased one-to-one support, and some families learning to use technology to be able to communicate with their deaf child or beginning to learn sign language. But this has not always been the case for several children and young people.

Through the NSPCC's briefings on various topics, via CASPAR (current awareness service for practice, policy and research) and NSPCC learning, we have been able to provide information to a range of professionals on the impact of abuse or updated safeguarding briefings, eg for schools and early years providers. We continue to keep abreast of government guidance and any new research or information during the pandemic.

One of our briefings published in September 2020

(<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/2020/coronavirus-insight-briefing-physical-abuse>) used insight from the NSPCC helpline contacts and Childline counselling sessions to highlight the impact of physical abuse on children and young people during the coronavirus pandemic.

The key findings include a 22% increase in the number of counselling sessions provided by Childline about physical abuse and a 53% increase in contacts to the NSPCC helpline from people with concerns about children experiencing physical abuse during the pandemic.

Whilst this insight may not identify deaf children specifically, the NSPCC continues to work on improving access and inclusion.


Most people are aware of Childline, where children can get in touch in different ways to discuss concerns they may have. These can range from worries about home or school, or self-esteem to abuse. We recognise that deaf children have many more challenges when contacting Childline, and in doing so, we consider it crucial that deaf children are provided with the same access, particularly during the pandemic and beyond, since they have worries and anxieties like other children. However, there are additional

Childline Deaf Zone Review

First Name: Age:

Thank you for helping us make the Childline website better for deaf young people. Please be honest as that will really help us.

Please can you visit the [Childline Website](#), then visit the Deaf Zone under the Info and Advice menu



Please let us know what you like about it.

How can we improve it and make it easier for you to understand?

Under 12's review - 1

Childline Deaf Zone Review

Please can you watch the BSL videos at the top of the page and in the Watch BSL videos section:

WATCH BSL VIDEOS

Welcome BSL Video | Getting Help BSL Video | Confidentiality BSL Video



Deaf Zone BSL Video



How useful are these videos for you? (Score out of 10)

Can you explain why you gave this mark?

Under 12's review - 2

Childline Deaf Zone Review

Were there any part of the videos that you didn't understand?

How can we improve these videos?

Are there any other websites that have helped you? How have they helped?

Under 12's review - 3

barriers, such as limited language and communication, and reduced levels of support, to keep themselves safe or just to be able to discuss their worries about coronavirus.

That is why we have a specific DeafZone page within Childline that has information of interest and support for deaf children. In 2017 the NSPCC facilitated access to Childline via the SignVideo interpreting services so that deaf children could communicate using British Sign Language. Since then the NSPCC has continued to look for improvements and amendments to the DeafZone webpages for all deaf children, irrespective of their preferred method of communication. It is an evolving process and the first stage was to focus on the content and visuals on the DeafZone webpages, but also to consider the information within these pages for different age ranges in responding to different levels of knowledge and understanding.

I worked alongside the Childline online team to revamp the web pages and commissioned a young deaf person from a Deaf organisation to work with the NSPCC on developing the new BSL videos, which was an exciting part of reviewing the content on the webpages.

The content on the Childline webpages and DeafZone has now been developed to target two different age groups: under 12s and those over 12.

I think it has been quite pivotal that this review started before the pandemic and we planned to review the content of these pages in May 2020 by inviting deaf children and young people to provide comments and

Childline Deaf Zone Review

First Name: Age:

Thank you for helping us to make the Childline website better for deaf young people. Please be as honest as possible as that will really help us.

Please can you visit the [Childline Deaf Zone](#):

Please let us know what you like about it:

Please let us know how you would like us to improve it:

Over 12's review - 1

Childline Deaf Zone Review

Please can you watch the BSL videos on these pages: [Childline Homepage](#) (In the Support and Advice for You section), [Deaf Zone](#), [Confidentiality Promise](#), [Getting Help](#)

How useful are these videos for you? (Score out of 10)

Can you explain the reasons for your mark?

Was there anything in the videos that didn't make sense? What would make this easier to understand?

Over 12's review - 1

Childline Deaf Zone Review

How can we improve these videos?

Have any other websites been helpful? How have they helped?

Over 12's review - 3

suggestions. We have only received a limited number of responses because of the impact of the lockdown.

Since schools have returned, with the majority of deaf children back in full time education, we are now revisiting this, and we hope through feedback from them that it will enable other amendments and improvements to be made to the DeafZone pages in the future. The NSPCC believes that by providing better access and inclusion to information and contact to Childline, we can contribute to improving deaf children and young people's resilience and confidence to make informed choices and improved safeguarding.

The readers of the BATOD magazine may find it useful to share this information with the deaf children they are working with:

Under 12's DeafZone:

<https://www.childline.org.uk/kids/>

The details of the review are featured here:

Over 12's DeafZone:

<https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/deafzone/>

The details of the review for over 12's are featured here:

Two courses of interest for Qualified Teachers of the Deaf (QToDs) are:

1. The new e-learning 'Safeguarding children with SEND' aimed at professionals, teachers, carers and anyone who is working with children and young people with SEND.

I worked closely with the NSPCC learning team to develop and write the content for this new course.

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/training/safeguarding-children-with-send>

2. I lead and deliver training on, 'Safeguarding d/Deaf and disabled children'. This one-day face-to-face course is aimed at anyone who is considering or is already working with deaf or disabled children. We held our first course earlier this year and it was extremely successful. At the time of writing NSPCC are offering the following dates via Zoom or later in the year face to face all being well at their training centre in Leicester.

- 20th April 2021 (Zoom)
- 14th September 2021 (NTC)

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/training/safeguarding-deaf-disabled-children>

If you wish to find out more about the work of the NSPCC in working with deaf children and safeguarding, please contact:

shirley.wilson@nspcc.org.uk

You may find our webpage on safeguarding children with special educational needs and disability (SEND) useful:

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection-schools/safeguarding-children-with-special-educational-needs-and-disabilities-send>



Shirley Wilson is a senior consultant working for the NSPCC with a specific remit for deaf and disabled children and young people. She had many years working in safeguarding within statutory local authority settings before joining the NSPCC in 2011.

BATOD bottle – where has yours been?

Let us know where your BATOD bottle, cup or latest BATOD Magazine has been round the world.

We can't promise to publish them all in the magazine but send them in and they might also turn up on our Facebook or Twitter pages.



Stuart Whyte took his bottle to Edinburgh

Monaural deafness

David Hartley shares his very personal view of single sided deafness

Having read with interest, personal perspectives of living with deafness in recent magazines, I thought it might be worth highlighting some of the issues of living with a monaural hearing loss.

In the early 1960s at the age of approximately 13, my mum decided that she needed to investigate why I was constantly asking for repetition of information or failing to follow instructions correctly. Local investigations led to a referral for specialist advice from the John Radcliffe Hospital in Oxford. There it was confirmed that I had perfectly normal hearing in my right ear and a completely 'dead' left ear, tested to pain thresholds. Nothing in my history, other than usual childhood illnesses of the time: mumps, measles, whooping cough, etc, could be offered as causes or shed light on when the deafness had occurred, or indeed, if I had been born with it. I was discharged to get on with my life.

I will never be able to unpick the various influences on my development and progress through education. I was a physically big boy, one of the oldest in the school year and presumably reasonably bright, so it was decided that I should miss out the middle year (Y1) of my infant schooling and move straight from reception into Y2, then move into the junior school with this new cohort. At the age of ten, it was decided that I would stand a better chance of passing the 11-plus if I repeated my Y6 year! The upheaval of seeing my friendship group move on and marking time going over work already completed, meant that I never really recovered my confidence with peer relationships.

Teaching at the grammar school was in high-ceilinged classrooms with little or no soft furnishings. Individual desks all faced the front and girls were on one side of the room and boys on the other. Bad fortune meant that I ended up with my good ear to the wall and everyone else on my 'deaf' side. After diagnosis it was recommended that I sit at the front of the class. Now everyone except the teacher was behind me, and turning round to see who was answering questions or to get some idea of what was being said was frowned on. Outside the classroom, following conversation in group situations meant that it was very difficult to join in without being teased for mishearing and making inappropriate responses. It wasn't until the sixth form, when teaching groups were smaller and I had established stronger friendships, that I was able to gain some confidence.

With hindsight, it's probable that teaching wasn't the best choice of career. College was OK but teaching practices were difficult. While I could ask questions, it was difficult to understand children's answers. Teaching woodwork in a noisy workshop made things worse. By now, working in a secondary school, I was learning to make sure that the speaker was on my good side and that in meetings I sat

where I could see people, or they were at least on the 'right' side. Quite quickly I moved to work in a special school for children with moderate learning difficulties. The smaller groups and the more relaxed curriculum made life easier.

Always living with a hearing loss, I decided to find out more about it and got the opportunity to be seconded to the local peripatetic hearing service. At that time most deaf children were taught in schools for the deaf or, increasingly, units attached to mainstream schools. Although not trained, I found working one to one in controlled, withdrawal situations with aural deaf children easier to manage and very rewarding. Support from colleagues, encouragement from children's parents and funding from the LEA meant I was able to complete my Teacher of the Deaf (ToD) training at Birmingham University.

Through my time as an advisory teacher with the Hearing Impaired Service in Staffordshire and then with the Paediatric Cochlear Implant Programme in Nottingham, I came to value my hearing loss as a way of having some understanding and empathy with the children and parents I worked with.

I've tried crossaids, initially as a wired system and more recently as a radio system, and found them to be more annoying than helpful. I am now, however, very grateful for my programmable aid for my additional and increasing age-related loss!

Deafness is often referred to as the 'hidden handicap'. I would suggest that monaural deafness more than merits this description.

Only in adulthood have I had the confidence to properly understand and manage my deafness. Noisy social situations are still difficult and I often 'switch off'. Friends now ask where I want to sit in the restaurant and my wife will often fill in missed information. I still can't easily locate sounds and I prefer to chair meetings so I know what's going on.

As Teachers of the Deaf I would urge you not to underestimate the psychological and practical impact and implications of monaural deafness. Young children, and even possibly especially teenagers, are unlikely to be able to maximise their potential without some help, guidance and understanding from those around them.



David Hartley is a Past BATOD President (2004-2006)

Enhancing resilience among deaf youth in South Africa

Alexandra Tomkins explains the impact made by the Deaf Camera South Africa project

How do deaf children, linguistically and educationally marginalised from society, learn about safety? How can we draw on deaf children's existing strengths to develop safeguarding learning resources with, and for, deaf young people? Deaf Camera South Africa is a multidisciplinary international research project led by the University of Witwatersrand (South Africa) and the University of Manchester (UK), supported by the UK's Arts Humanities Research Council, the Medical Research Council and the Global Challenges Research Fund. Bringing visual anthropology, social research and deaf studies together, the project uses community-based film methods to explore issues of vulnerability and resilience among deaf youth in South Africa. Deaf Cam's key aim is to positively shift social attitudes towards deaf people, while also building life-skills among the deaf youth involved (including film and photography techniques, social skills, and critical thinking):

Deaf Cam South Africa is a project that seeks to empower deaf young people with camera skills so that they can record their everyday lives, their families, their communities, and share them with the world.

(Nenio Mbazima, Filmmaker, University of Witwatersrand)

Worldwide, deaf young people face discrimination and exclusion from society, which vastly decreases their life chances and makes them particularly vulnerable. While a global issue, this is particularly prevalent in low and middle income countries (including South Africa). Most significantly, deaf children often lack adequate opportunities to acquire language, build meaningful relationships, receive specialised health care and receive equal education. Yet, at the same time, these challenges also mean that deaf young people are already extremely resilient. In recognition of this, the project aimed to enhance deaf young people's existing resilience by starting from a key strength of deaf people – the visual:

Resilience is about bouncing back in the face of adversity. Deaf young people face very particular challenges in achieving their potential and becoming full citizens. As visual people, they also have unique resources on which to draw. Through the use of community-based film methods, this project tunes in to those latent strengths as visual learners with the capacity to develop new resiliences given the right opportunities. The work is pioneering.

(Professors Alys Young and Andrew Irving, University of Manchester)

Through a series of workshops using film and photography, we worked with deaf young people in Johannesburg and Durban to develop media resources

to enhance resilience and promote awareness about vulnerability and safeguarding. In total, the project worked with six deaf schools between 2017–2018, two in Gauteng and four in KwaZulu-Natal over two-month and one-month periods. A total of 72 children and young people participated, ranging in age from 8 to 22 years old.

In 2018, I joined Phase 2 of the project which looked specifically at 'Keeping Safe'. A key element of this related to emotional literacy: since 95% of deaf children grow up in hearing households, many deaf young people experience difficulties understanding and interpreting emotions. Since most hearing parents do not know sign language, the language barrier means many deaf children cannot clearly articulate how they are feeling, or what has happened, to their parents and other hearing people. Correspondingly, hearing people often cannot understand or communicate effectively with their deaf children. This can be confusing and upsetting for deaf children, as well as making them extremely vulnerable to abuse. In response to this issue, one workshop asked the children to photograph a series of emotions, thereby materially representing the children's understanding of 'scared', 'happy' and 'frustrated', for example. Through a peer review process, the children then presented and interpreted the meaning of their own and each other's photos, and gave feedback to each other on lighting, composition and framing. Building from this exercise, the children were then invited to film a short narrative sequence which portrayed an emotion developing and changing over time. Through this process, the children further developed Theory of Mind and social skills as they developed their understandings of emotions, while also building technical skills in visual media. You can see some of the young people's visual media at:

www.deafcamsa.net These photos and films were later exhibited at the Children's Museum of the Arts (New York) and Kwazulu Natal Society of the Arts (Durban), which the children attended and filmed.¹

Following this project, EyeBuzz was launched at the University of Witwatersrand. Generated through partnership with South African schools and developed through Deaf Camera South Africa: EyeBuzz aims to "provide a forum for understanding issues of immediate and wider relevance, and a platform for discussing, understanding and engaging with your wider community" (Eyebuzz Website 2020). Continuing to engage deaf young people in the filmmaking process, the Eyebuzz team has been working hard throughout 2020

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Sign Language interpretation on TV learning program

Omar Kayigi, a BATOD Special online member, tells us about his opportunity to contribute his sign language interpreter expertise to the TV-based learning provision during the pandemic in Rwanda

I have worked in special education at Umutara Deaf School for eight years: this is a residential school for the Deaf. I started working in this special education program in 2013. This is my chosen career because I find it to be my calling and I do it willingly.

I have learnt sign language and now I am able to interpret for deaf people.

When the Covid epidemic erupted in March 2020, all students had to return home, but later the government of Rwanda came up with a plan that students could continue to study at home through radio and television.

I was asked to interpret on television so that Deaf students would also be able to follow the lessons as well as their peers. It made me happy when the leaders at REB (Rwanda Education Board) gave me the opportunity to make my contribution to interpret on TV courses in the TV learning program which aims to help students to learn at home.

I am one of three interpreters who cover the programs.

Initially, they started with a program for secondary education, but then the program expanded.

Among the challenges we faced were the fact that students were able to provide feedback via text on the internet, perhaps asking questions about what they did not understand or commenting on the lesson delivered. However, because the Deaf students were more fluent in sign language than texting, I suspect there were many who were not able to participate in this feedback system.

Another difficulty was that some students may not have access to TV in their family. However, some students have told us that they approached their neighbours, and the students were able to learn together as another way to use it to follow the lessons, like others, so that they would not be left behind.

One of the things that helped me improve my delivery on the TV interpretation program was that I could get some feedback from students or other Deaf people who used social media, because a large percentage of the country's Deaf students use social media a lot. There were some things that they wanted to improve, so they would send their suggestions to me and I would share them with my colleagues, when the comments related to the teachers of different courses or about improving the translation or technical issues. Also, my colleagues would bring some feedback from their audiences and share these with me.

It has been an amazing and unexpected experience. I have learnt a lot and am very proud that REB wanted to include deaf pupils in their TV education program and that I was able to be there to meet that need. ■



Omar Kayigi is a Headteacher of a school for the Deaf, Umutara, in Rwanda.

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to develop Covid-19 information videos for the South African deaf community.² Since public information about Covid-19 in sign language is scarce, these videos are particularly important for the health and wellbeing of deaf people throughout South Africa. To find out more about this, you can check out the EyeBuzz website <https://www.wits.ac.za/centre-for-deaf-studies/eyebuzz/> or Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/EyeBuzzSA/>

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For more information about EyeBuzz, please contact: Robyn.swannack@wits.ac.za ■

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- 2 Coronavirus information for kids in SASL, by EyeBuzz: <https://youtu.be/jaV39waZj9E>



Alexandra Tomkins is a PhD Candidate in Social Anthropology with Visual Media at the Granada Centre for Visual Anthropology, University of Manchester. She participated in Deaf Camera South Africa as a research assistant and workshop facilitator in 2018. Her current research combines visual media and play to investigate how deaf children in Uganda come to know and understand the world (2019–2023).

Umutara Special member annual update

Dominique Ndagijimana, co-founder of Umutara School, Rwanda, shares an overview of how his non-government organisation met his school's needs during the Covid-19 pandemic

Umutara School caters for 123 residential deaf pupils ranging in age from 5 to 21, with pre-school, primary and vocational departments. It is situated in the north-east of Rwanda, in a poor rural area.

Government reaction to the Covid pandemic

Our schools were closed suddenly on 14th March when our government issued a decree, closing all schools and imposing a severe lockdown on many activities and travel.

At first it was not possible to do anything but we became very concerned for many in the locality, whose work had stopped and who were struggling to buy even basic food for themselves and their families. We were able, with the support of one of our donors, to buy food parcels for many of the poorest in our community and also the families with deaf children or adults.

However, by July, some of the lockdown was eased and we could start being more proactive in supporting our children and their families in other ways.

Covid requirements

The government was not able to tell us when the schools would be allowed to open again, but they did tell us what adaptations would be required in order for us to be allowed to open. This enabled us to prepare for the new term.

One requirement was handwashing stations, with four taps at a distance from each other. We were told that we needed two of these stations, so we were able to source funds and employ local builders to build them.

Another requirement was that each child should have their own desk. This was a challenge as we had double desks throughout the school, and in the younger children's classes sometimes they sat three to a desk. We had 30 desks like this. We have 123 children,

so we needed a lot more desks! The desks the government suggested were very expensive, but we managed to find a company that would make them for us for £40 per desk. Thanks to a donation from DeafReach (www.deafreach.org) we have been able to order 70 more desks, so now we have enough for 100 children. We hope to be able to raise the money for the rest of the desks before the beginning of term. We think this may now be in November.

We were also required to enlarge the dining room and kitchen area, so that the children could space out more during meal times, and to tile the kitchen area to improve cleanliness. The Canadian charity 'A Better World' (<http://www.abwcanada.ca/>) helped to fund this work.

Opportunities

Apart from trying to meet the government requirements for re-opening, we were also thinking about ways that we could support our pupils while they are at home. Our government has put many lessons on the radio and TV for pupils to access. However, most of the families of our pupils are very poor. They do not have a TV and many don't have access to the radio either. And being deaf, neither the radio nor the TV is of much use. We have been very concerned about the welfare of many of our pupils,



and their safety, as we were not able to explain much about Covid protection before they left school, and their ability to communicate with their families is generally very limited, as most of the families do not use sign language.

So we discussed this with our donor, and the money that they would have donated towards food at the school for the two terms, we have been able to use for teacher outreach visits (once the travel restrictions were lifted). So the teachers have been able to visit the children at home. This has actually been quite a blessing in many ways!

- We were able to take masks and soap to the families.
- We were able to help the children communicate with their parents and families as we could act as interpreters for them.
- Many of the parents/siblings have become more interested in learning sign language.
- Some were also shocked by how well their children could understand the school curriculum – as there is still a belief that if you are deaf then you must be stupid as well.
- The children felt encouraged by our visits, as it showed them how much we value them.
- People in the community also could see that the deaf pupils are valued, as we brought gifts to the children and families and also gave our time to visit them.
- The teachers have discovered 14 more deaf pupils in the villages that they have visited, who have not been attending any school! Why? Because the parents believed they were not capable of learning!

Vocational opportunity

One of our vocational departments is tailoring, so we



thought that maybe we could make our own facemasks. This was so successful that a local charity, Streets Ahead Children's Centre Association (SACCA), which supports street children and some adults who are homeless, has commissioned us to make 1000 masks for them to distribute. We have just finished this order and they have said that they will order 2000 more from us (we are waiting for the official order to come through).

This has been a great opportunity for us. Seven of our young people, six girls and one boy, have been employed during this difficult time. We have been able to make 50% profit on each mask, so they have been earning some money as well as contributing to the welfare of vulnerable people on our streets. Also, others can see that the deaf youth are capable and hard working. A great example to all.

Conclusion

So this Covid-19 time has brought challenges and opportunities for us. We have endeavoured to do what we can to support our pupils and their families while they are at home and to prepare for their return to school. We thank our donors, too, for their willingness to adapt their giving to support our unexpected needs.

We will not forget 2020. But that is true for the whole world, from the remotest Rwandan village, to the most highly populated cities of every land.



Dominique Ndagijimana is the co-founder of Umutara School.

Isobel Blakeley is DeafReach trustee lead for Rwanda.

Provision of distance learning for deaf children in Pakistan

Paul Lynch and **Emmanouela Terlektsi** summarise their work commissioned through EDTECH by the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (Pakistan) to explore the provision of distance learning to deaf children in Pakistan and to develop guidelines and guidance

The Covid-19 pandemic has forced school closures and created an urgent need to provide distance learning to children based at home. However, the provision of alternative learning approaches has been more difficult in low and middle-income countries because of variable levels of access to technology and the Internet. Thus, children with special educational needs including deaf children have been particularly placed at a disadvantage as a result of the pandemic. Given the urgency of the situation and the paucity of evidenced based practice and guidance on distance learning for deaf children, we were commissioned by the EDTECH Hub to produce guidance and recommendations on how to support distance learning for deaf children in Pakistan for the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, Pakistan. The topic brief was aimed at identifying learning and teaching strategies as well as ways to support the wellbeing of those children by drawing on research evidence from other countries and teacher professional experiences.

Evidence was gathered in three distinct ways:

- A desk-based review of evidence incorporating 37

peer-reviewed research studies meeting the inclusion and exclusion criteria out of a total of 1,708 resources (between 1999–2020)

- Questionnaires completed by: the British Association of Teachers of the Deaf, qualified teachers of the deaf from four peripatetic services, four hearing resource bases and one School for the Deaf in England.
- A consultation with key partner organisations (NGOs and Disabled Persons Organisations): USAID, British Association of Teachers of the Deaf, and Family Educational Services Foundation in Pakistan

Deaf children in Pakistan

Approximately 1.2 out of every 1,000 Pakistani children have moderate to profound, congenital, bilateral hearing loss (Mactaggart et al., 2013). However, these figures are not officially confirmed. In Pakistan, deaf children communicate using Indo-Pakistani Sign Language (IPSL) and Pakistan Sign Language (PSL). Similar to spoken languages, both IPSL and PSL have a variety of dialects in different regions of the country. While many common

BATOD membership: developing professional world partners in deaf education

BATOD is a professional body which offers a 'community' of dialogue and information. If a UK-based BATOD member has an established involvement with a developing world project, they can make a recommendation for the head teacher of the school for the deaf or teacher in a deaf resource base associated with their project to be registered with BATOD as an online 'overseas special member' at no charge to either member.

- BATOD has an expectation for the overseas special member to submit an annual magazine article or information for a blog post. BATOD encourages the overseas special member to be the author/co-author of the article submitted.
- The BATOD overseas special member must have internet access in order to access the online resources which may be of interest.
- Online members can access the five magazine editions/year in the electronic version.

The BATOD magazine frequently features articles about deaf education from across the world. Thus, our special overseas members can share with and learn from UK and other worldwide professional peers in deaf and deaf related education.

BATOD

words are shared, some will be region-specific.

There is lack of evidence on the educational provisions for deaf children in Pakistan. Deaf children in Pakistan are educated using: hearing aids, audio-system voice therapy, speech-therapy training, sign language, finger-spelling, lip-reading and total communication. Deaf children are mainly educated in state segregated educational schools, although a small proportion are educated in private schools for the deaf. Steps are being taken into the inclusion of deaf children into mainstream classes in Pakistan.

Based on a survey by the Family Educational Services Foundation (FESF) in Pakistan, only 20 per cent of deaf families have access to the internet, therefore resulting in 80 per cent not being able to access digital online resources. In an attempt to respond to the growing need for online learning for deaf children in Pakistan, FESF has negotiated a number of measures. For instance, they have set up a lending agreement for the loaning of laptops between families and schools.

Hardware and equipment for distance learning

Despite the fact that our desk-based review did not identify any sources for types of hardware and equipment needed for distance learning of deaf children, evidence from the questionnaires and from the consultation with the FESF revealed that access to technology (eg, laptops, phones, web-cameras, and headphones to TVs) is appropriate for the effective delivery of distance education to deaf children. Having appropriate equipment to access the spoken language of recorded materials and synchronous teaching is crucial.

In cases where families do not have access to laptops, phones and other devices, the schools can loan equipment to the families. THE FESF in Pakistan has been providing hardware, such as laptops, to families: "Less than 20 per cent have access to the Internet, poor families. FESF provides low cost devices — low cost (\$200) refurbished laptop or tablet." (Director of FESF)

Platforms for distance learning

As explored via the questionnaires, educators in the UK said they commonly use Google classroom to provide online classrooms. Google classroom is a free web service that allows teachers and students to share materials and make announcements. Most importantly it also allows students to interact with the materials and each other. They have the ability to comment on assignments and announcements, as well as to email each other using the classroom interface.

Other popular free access platforms are Purple Mash and Seesaw. Purple Mash 10 provides free learning content for multiple subjects delivered in a fun and engaging way. It also provides a platform for remote learning. Some teachers also use other tools for synchronous teaching which allow students to interact with their peers. This includes Zoom, WhatsApp and Facebook classrooms. However, issues of safeguarding in relation to the use of the above platforms were raised.

Accessibility of distance learning by deaf children

Given the heterogeneity of the deaf population we need

to take into consideration that the designed materials need to meet the needs of individual children. The National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS) guidelines make clear that online provision needs to be differentiated using a learner-centred approach.

In order for the online materials to be accessible sign language interpretations should be provided where needed. In addition, the use of subtitles and captions is absolutely crucial. The accuracy of the captions provided is also really crucial to ensure effective communication for deaf children. Whilst it is recognised that manual captioning is a time consuming process, educators have to balance the timely delivery of the materials and the accuracy of the captions, judging this on an individual basis.

Apart from ensuring that all visuals are captioned and signed, the use of language in the online materials is really important. Given that deaf children may face difficulties in literacy skills, it is really important to design online materials and deliver distance teaching that is of the appropriate language level of the children. Written language, therefore, has to be intelligible — the message has to be clear, relevant, coherent, cohesive and usable, in that it is effective and appropriate for conveying the message (McKeown & McKeown, 2019).

Evaluation of outcomes for deaf children

The evaluation and monitoring of students' learning is high on the agenda of all educators. However, our review of the evidence did not identify any studies on the effectiveness of distance learning on learning outcomes of deaf children. However, the professionals' replies to the questionnaires highlighted parental support and collaboration as one of the key factors contributing to the evaluation of the effectiveness of online learning. On the one hand, teachers need to ensure that parents feel supported when distance learning is delivered and on the other hand parents need to ensure that they provide feedback to teachers on children's progress and engagement with the materials.

Monitoring and evaluation of distance learning for deaf children has to be developed in order to explore:

- the appropriateness of the materials;
- the extent to which the materials meet the objectives
- how the resources are used and
- the difference that the materials are making to students' progress and learning

Recommendations and guidelines on the delivery of distance education to deaf children in Pakistan

Based on the findings (as presented above) of the desk-based review, the completed questions and the consultation with the various organisations, a number of recommendations for students with limited or no access to hardware, software, internet, two sets of recommendations were produced. These were based on the time line that the recommendations can be delivered: i) immediate (one to 3 months to short term (one to six months and ii) medium (six months to one year) to long (one to two years).

Immediate to short term

Recommendations for delivering distance education to families with no or limited access to hardware, software and the internet in the immediate to short term.

Thematic area	Recommendations	Examples of how to implement the recommendations	Timeline
1. Content development	Content developers should ensure that the background of the videos are clear and that the speaker is facing the camera	Keep clear backgrounds, avoid extraneous noise. For easier access to lip patterns, teacher has to be at the front of the class, facing the camera, standing still (ie not moving around the classroom), with good lighting, and displaying their hands clearly.	Immediate
2. Cognitive load	Content designers should ensure online modules / activities are short to avoid cognitive overload and fatigue. Teachers should ensure students are allocated an appropriate amount of material to engage with while away from school — not too much to overload or not enough.	Ensure that work is sent steadily so that students don't feel overwhelmed. The slots should be short — 30–40 minutes maximum. Set a timer on the device to remind children of when to stop.	Immediate
3. Material provision	Schools provide hard copies of tasks / activities / sign-language booklets including visual images and are easy to follow. Schools should provide hard copies of how to care and maintain equipment (eg maintenance of assisted listening devices etc.) to students and families.	Teachers of the deaf sign video short lessons (20 mins), transfer to external hard-drive or USBs and prepare activity worksheets for 2-3 weeks home-schooling. Schools transport packs of work to the home in print or on a USB (or external hard drive) to be uploaded to a child's laptop or device. Completed tasks (eg worksheets) are sent back to the teachers for marking and feedback either via phone or by sending back the activities with comments the following month.	Immediate
4. Language, captioning	Teachers should use plain, intelligible and usable language to address the literacy difficulties of deaf children.	Language used in distance teaching of deaf students should be simplified to the understanding of deaf students. Use of mental imagery to support vocabulary acquisition of deaf children can be effective. eg cartoons, images and subtitles.	Immediate
	Content designers should incorporate captioning in combination with embedded videos of sign language interpreters to enhance accessibility to materials.	Provide all audio in a visual way using text, subtitles, pictures, and sign language videos.	Short term
5. Testing different digital solutions	The Government should encourage schools to test out different digital learning solutions to help them understand how technology can be used to foster deeper student learning.	School heads provide checklists for teachers to complete when visiting children's homes. Note what works well and what doesn't work well in relation to new learning, accessibility or if students struggling to use the technology need quick sign-language demonstrations.	Short to medium term
6. Evaluating distance learning	The Government should evaluate distance learning implementation	Continuous provision of help and support in e-mail from 8:30 to 3 pm daily. Adding parents to google classroom. Continuously update and copy parents into emails of support (language modification, visuals, key words). https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforeevelopmentassistance.htm	Short term

Medium to long term

Recommendations for delivering distance education to families with no or limited access to hardware, software and the internet in the medium to long term.

Thematic area	Recommendations	Examples of how to implement the recommendations	Timeline
1. Partnerships	The Government should partner with alternative education providers who have already developed educational platforms. This might include NGOs, CSOs, and private companies.	Ensure adequate online content for deaf children on TV, free online learning repositories or through more mainstream learning platforms (Facebook, Google Classrooms). Consider accessibility issues, cultural appropriateness and gender stereotyping when reviewing suitable materials. Request content providers if learning materials can be modified to contain captions and signing in PSL. Some organisations of the deaf have already made their resources and services freely available to some schools to expand countries.	Medium to long term
2. Hardware and equipment	Schools ensure hardware and equipment lent to families are appropriate for the audiological characteristics and communication needs of the child.	Teachers test and provide at least one hardware device (smart phone, tablet) for children to access signed learning materials from their schools or agreed content provider. Based on a child's individual needs – provide microphones for access to sound or streaming from Mini Mic and Roger pen which goes into the headphone socket.	Medium-long term
3. Device provision	The federal Ministry of Education should work with relevant actors within both federal and provincial governments to create agreements with hardware suppliers to procure cheap laptops or tablets to children with disabilities with an agreement to return them when schools reopen	Set up new agreements with existing school suppliers to provide low-cost devices (eg one laptop-one child scheme), with at least 2 USB ports for additional plug-in devices (headsets, speakers, etc). Set up a toll free hot-line for families to call if experiencing technical problems.	Short-medium term
4. Accessibility	Content designers should ensure materials follow accessibility guidelines (ie WCAG W3C Guidelines).	The developed materials should be child friendly, age appropriate, non-gender biased	Short-medium term

To conclude, this summary article presents the key aspects of the topic brief on how to deliver distance education for deaf children in Pakistan. It is important to re-iterate that not all alternative arrangements and distance learning materials are suitable for all deaf learners. Literacy levels and personal learning needs should be taken into consideration when planning to introduce distance learning. Most importantly, distance learning of deaf children should be monitored and evaluated both by educators and parents to ensure that the learning outcomes are achieved and that the best possible learning support is provided.

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UCL's Summer School 2020

Natasha Wilcock and Manjula Patrick summarise this year's residential event for Years 11 and 12 students

Background

Deaf students are hugely under-represented in higher education (HE). 'Discover UCL Summer School for D/deaf and hard of hearing (years 11 and 12) students' is a residential event unique to UCL that aims to redress the balance by equipping deaf students for university life.

The programme supports deaf students by developing confidence and skills to flourish in HE. The event offers 15 places annually, and every aspect is designed to benefit deaf students.

Programme

The programme includes practical information (writing UCAS personal statements), object-based learning sessions using UCL's museum collections, and PhD student 'taster' talks, tailored to the interests of the cohort. Deaf role models and current/former UCL deaf student talks convey career choices and barriers through personal stories to help students plan for university and careers. Disability services support sessions offer practical guidance and reassure students that UCL (and other universities) can support access requirements, and are legally obliged to do so. To instil and develop self-advocacy skills, students who suggest adjustments to communication support are rewarded with prizes.

Sharing experiences of deafness

For many students, Discover is the first opportunity to

STUDENT QUOTES

"I had a wonderful time, in particular, having the opportunity to meet other deaf people my age, and being able to discuss issues we face as deaf teenagers/students. The advice given on disability support at university was particularly helpful. Overall, the whole experience was great. I'm so glad that I applied."

"The Discover UCL summer school was one of the most influential and beneficial times of my life. I developed myself academically, met friends for life and most importantly learnt that even though I am deaf, university is a very real goal."

(2020): "I found that the staff were very knowledgeable at the live sessions and answered my questions very well. Also, there was very good focus on deaf people's experiences at university."

meet another deaf person, so some activities facilitate peer-bonding through shared experiences despite different interests, perspectives and communication preferences. The residential aspect of Discover and social activities (visits to London attractions, bowling, etc) allow further opportunities for building peer networks.

The central role deaf people play in delivering Discover is key to its success. Deaf professionals from the private, public and third sectors, (areas like academia [outside UCL], financial and arts sectors, healthcare and charities) deliver sessions that make up 50% of the programme.

Accessibility

The entire event is accessible, from physical space to communication support. All staff and presenters complete deaf awareness training and over 50% (deaf and hearing) are fluent in British Sign Language (BSL). The varied skills and diversity reflected within the Discover team aids engagement and building trust with the students over their short stay at UCL.

Communication support professionals are an integral part of our team, and adjustments are flexible throughout – for example, if a student appears more comfortable with Sign Supported English (SSE), interpreters will use SSE when interacting with that student.

Student perspective: Natasha's experience

Attending a large mainstream secondary school as one of the few deaf students, all I wanted was to blend into the background and for no one to notice I was deaf. As a teenager, I was embarrassed to be seen as different, but despite all my efforts – wearing my hair down to cover my hearing aids, turning up early to drop my radio aid off on the teacher's desk – there was no escaping!

My Teacher of the Deaf was my linchpin: she listened to me, advocated for positive change to my education, was responsive to problems and was passionate about supporting me as an individual to achieve. Her ceaseless encouragement and support enabled me, as I approached the end of secondary school, to self-advocate and feel confident. The first day I wore my hair up and allowed my peers to see my hearing aids was an immense milestone and I have not looked back since.

My teacher also encouraged me to apply to Discover, in its pilot year at the time. It was a formative three days; I gained many new friends, experiences and perspectives. For the first time in 16 years, I had true deaf peers and began to understand the concept of deaf culture. I had found a part of me I never knew was missing; other students could relate to me in a way I had never known I could even hope for.

D/deaf people are chronically under-represented in higher education, and as I began to apply to study medicine, the reasons behind this came into sharp relief. I faced many setbacks, from lack of accessibility in interviews to most prominently, attitudinal barriers.

Discover taught me to be proud to be a deaf person; I reflected for the first time on what being deaf gave me. The clearest example of how my deafness has brought advantages is my communication skills, a cornerstone of medicine. I have developed adaptive, diverse and inclusive communication

strategies in ways my hearing peers cannot. Crucially, as a medical student and future doctor, these skills allow me to provide the best quality care to my patients.

Each year the similarity between the students' experiences and my own is striking. Although from different parts of the country, with different educational backgrounds and d/Deaf identities, the students are bound by a common thread, so uniquely positioned to understand and support each other through the challenges of being a deaf young person. They feel relaxed around each other immediately, are able to talk openly and learn from each other's culture and experience.

Discover provides a wealth of new and practical information and encourages students to engage with their Teachers of the Deaf, empowering them to hone their support in their time at college before moving to work or higher education.

Some of the most powerful sessions of Discover are the deaf role model talks; most remarkable is that in every story, each student can find a piece of themselves, a reflection of their own experiences or ambitions. For many students, these sessions are where they first start to believe that university could be for them, because "someone like them" has done it too.

In a world where many believe deaf people cannot achieve, the most incredible opportunity Discover provides is to form enduring and supportive deaf peer networks, powerful sources of motivation and inspiration. The Discover team's specialist knowledge and aspirational attitudes in supporting deaf students' university entry, heightens the experience. For those students who come to UCL, the Discover team provides continued support informally. Six years later, in times of need I still call upon the network and community I found through Discover.

Considering where I am today, I owe a great deal to my Teacher of the Deaf and Discover; I would not have had the latter without the former! Her support opened up a



world of support through Discover; it enabled me to gain my dream place at the UCL medical school but also to truly thrive here.

Discover 2020: Remote delivery

Like everyone else on the planet, we were not ready for Covid-19. When the UK went into lockdown, we had a decision to make: cancel Discover 2020 or remote delivery. We opted for remote delivery, a pre-session self-directed online 'short course' combined with live sessions.

The programme was rationalised to fit in with resources and limitations of technology; balancing the amount of online material (hosted on UCL's existing virtual learning infrastructure) that could be self-directed, with the logistics of running numerous live person-to-person interactive elements using MS Teams.

The programme had two overriding considerations: accessibility and safeguarding. Good practice working with

STAFF QUOTES

"Every year we have cohorts of bright young deaf people attending Discover. It is a privilege to work on this programme and in some small way equip these young people with skills and confidence to blossom in HE."

"This year (2020) was very different; disappointing that we were unable to have the usual level of interaction with the students... and them with each other. It was a steep learning curve for us but the feedback was overwhelmingly positive – perhaps a blended learning format is the future."

young people expects that the anonymity of the participants be preserved in online spaces. Reconciling these two requirements exposed the limitations of some processes and platforms. After a complex process of improvisation, access and safeguarding needs were met. However, compromises meant there could be no interaction between students; live sessions were restricted to one student meeting with Discover contributors, so a key aim of enabling peer networking was not possible to facilitate.

Pre-session material largely included practical elements. All the content was created by individuals working at home, before editing, translation into BSL/English and captioned. The final stage was creating an online course design that was engaging and meaningful with intuitive navigation. Despite the lack of in-person interaction, pre-session self-directed sessions were very positive for all students and enabled them to participate in lively discussion during the live sessions.

In live sessions, students had individual slots to engage with the team. Questioning and engagement was generally high and focused on the practical elements of university applications and student life. Interactions between students and the deaf contributors, who shared their experiences of study at higher education, provided invaluable insights into the student experience.

Despite all the challenges, we successfully delivered Discover UCL 2020 remotely in August.

Overall impact

- Twenty-seven per cent of students (2014-2018) went on to university; three to UCL. Note: Students are year 11/12 when they attend so there is a 1~2 year lag with data.
- Two of the team's student collaborators came to UCL via Discover. They now help deliver the programme annually, sharing experiences of deafness and, as former attendees and current UCL students.
- An unintended impact has been on the service providers during the event; photographers and videographers, staff from UCL museums, security and student residences acquire deaf awareness through their contact with the team and event.
- The team share their expertise of widening participation, provision of access and inclusive education with other HEIs, and via conferences.
- It enhances UCL's reputation in the deaf sector for both academic excellence and inclusion by actively welcoming deaf students.

The Discover team drive cultural change and take progressive approaches towards equity, diversity and inclusion by championing deaf people's inclusion in HE.

Acknowledgement

With thanks to James Bryan, Lauren Summersell and Jennifer Whitney from UCL Access and Widening Participation for their support and contribution.

We provide unique opportunities for the students attending Discover and develop the UCL community. ■

To find out more about 'Discover UCL Summer School for deaf and hard of hearing students' 2020 and to register interest see www.ucl.ac.uk/widening-participation/learners/secondary/discover-ucl-summer-school-ddeaf-and-hard-hearing-students

NEW – a free online deaf awareness toolkit for teachers and education professionals will be launched before the end of the year. For updates on the launch date and further information contact dcalcourses@ucl.ac.uk



Natasha Wilcock is a Final year medical student at UCL, a Discover UCL Summer School participant (2014) and student ambassador (2016–Current).



Manjula Patrick is the UCL Faculty of Brain Sciences Disability Equity Lead, Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Lead, UCL Deafness, Cognition and Language (DCAL) Research Centre and 'Discover UCL Summer School Lead (2015-current)

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VSO – Supporting deaf learners in Nigeria and Nepal



Purna Shrestha and **Adewunmi Christabel Omolade** describe their VSO (Volunteer Services Overseas) work in Nepal and Nigeria

Inclusion of children with disabilities – Policy Contexts

Both the governments of Nepal and Nigeria have endorsed the UNESCO definition of inclusive education, considering it as “the process of addressing all barriers and providing access to quality education to meet the diverse needs of all learners in the same learning environment”.

In 2018 Nigeria adopted a Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities (Prohibition) Act, domesticating the international commitments under the UN CRPD (United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities) into national law. Concerning education, the law reaffirms the unfettered right to education for persons with disabilities without discrimination or segregation (Part V, art.17.1) and their entitlement to free education to secondary school level (Part V, art.17.2). Moreover, all public schools are required to be inclusive and accessible, to have trained personnel and adequate facilities (Part V, art.18.1).

Similarly, the constitution of Nepal (2015) dedicates specific provisions to the right of education for persons with disabilities. The latter are entitled to free higher education (art. 31.3) and to access free education through Braille and sign language in the case of visually impaired and hearing-impaired learners, respectively (art. 31.4). In spite of the government’s commitment to the inclusion of children with disabilities, the implementation of national policies on the ground is poor resulting in far fewer children with disabilities attending schools, and those who attend the schools do not have access to inclusive learning resources. Teachers do not have the knowledge and skills to support learners with disabilities and teaching and learning materials are not accessible for learners with disabilities.

The Covid-19 pandemic has had a disproportionate impact on learners with disabilities who were already experiencing social and educational disadvantage. They face a lack of accessible public health information, significant barriers to implement basic hygiene measures and inaccessible health facilities.



Maimuna Aliyu a student in a special education school in Bunkure, Dan Hassan Kura LGA of Kano state, using a sign language visual card to demonstrate to other students



Ummi Muhd (red scarf) Usaman Suleiman (in white cap), Fatima Aliyu (Blue Scarf) Students in a primary school in Kano learning sign language (above).



VSO national volunteer Uzoamaka Diyoke teaching children sign

While the governments in Nepal and Nigeria have



Prakirti, Sign language volunteer, signs the story the Day dreamer

introduced distance-learning solutions to keep children learning while they are at home, learners with disabilities are least likely to benefit from these interventions because they are not often accessible to them. In this article, we present how VSO has been empowering learners with disabilities (particularly learners with hearing impairment) before and during the Covid-19 crisis.

Nigeria

VSO conducted a Social Inclusion and Gender (SIG) analysis in 12 states of Nigeria in 2019, which found that most of the children with disabilities who were studying in special schools (learners with hearing impairment in particular) were afraid of going back to their communities because they could not communicate effectively with members of their families.

Language in Enugu

There are several challenges to delivering classes in sign language in Nigeria. Firstly, there is no national sign language. The official sign language in Nigeria is American Sign Language. During VSO support to special schools in Enugu and Kano states, we discovered that teachers were using sign language inconsistently and at times, inventing their own signs. The schools did

not have adequate sign language materials. We observed that the children were taught the wrong sign language.

Secondly, there is a lack of national curriculum in sign language. The teachers follow the regular curriculum, and this means sign language is only used to interpret the regular spoken language. Students could not follow the contents of the curriculum. Finally, the poor, or lack of, awareness on learning disabilities among parents and teachers that teach in regular schools has made it very difficult for children with special needs to learn in regular schools and attend schools where they can interact and integrate with members of their communities.

VSO's solutions

Informed by the contextual analysis, VSO developed a sign language scheme of work to guide VSO volunteers in training teachers and learners on using American sign language correctly. VSO developed sign language resources to ensure coordinated teaching and learning for children with auditory learning disabilities and to support teachers in the teaching of sign language in regular classrooms for children with and without disabilities. VSO developed over 300 words in sign language that help learners to learn coordinated basic sign language for beginners.

VSO volunteers have trained 100 primary teachers who teach primary classes 1–4 in the use of Sign Language. Over 14,000 children are now exposed to learning sign language and most of them can use sign language for basic communication. This has made it easier for children with disabilities to attend classes in regular schools within their communities and integrate into their own communities as they can now communicate with their teachers and other children without feeling frustrated and left out of the learning environment.

VSO has recruited three Nigerian professional volunteers to train public primary school teachers twice a week and



VSO national volunteer Prakirti in community awareness video on child marriage and child protection.

support national graduate and community service volunteers in teaching learners with hearing impairments and those with multiple disabilities in Inclusive Neighbourhood Space. Before the Covid-19 pandemic, VSO volunteers regularly visited the schools and coached the teachers. As a result, children with hearing impairments are learning in the same classrooms in 15 schools; VSO is supporting them in Enugu and Kano States. During the Covid-19 pandemic, VSO produced community awareness videos in sign language and broadcast them on national television. VSO has produced sign language learning videos, which are available on VSO School android applications. We plan to train thousands of teachers, children and parents through the VSO School App.

Nepal

In Nepal, VSO is implementing the 'Empowering a New Generation of Adolescent Girls with Education' (ENGAGE) project in Nepal funded by FCDO (Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office, formally known as DFID), which aims to help improve learning opportunities and outcomes for thousands of highly marginalised out-of-school girls in the Sarlahi, Parsa districts of Province No.2. ENGAGE used the Washington Group (WG) questions as a disability screening tool and subsequently provided referrals for girls with disabilities to access services for the first time. The screening process found that one in four students had a functional limitation that required further check-up, treatment and provision of assistive devices, theory, or teaching learning adaptation. To support learners with hearing impairment, VSO recruited two national volunteers as sign language trainers who have been training VSO staff, teachers, and parents in sign languages. Volunteers have produced several learning videos on sign languages.



Pooja Regmi, Sign Language Trainer and VSO National volunteer, communicating with a young woman with a hearing impairment in the community.

National volunteers have produced videos on how to stay safe and stop the spread of Covid-19 in Nepali sign language, videos on child protection and safeguarding, and psychosocial wellbeing. These videos were shared through popular social media such as Facebook and WhatsApp, as well as broadcast on local television. In addition to sign language, the video was voice-overed in various local languages to ensure that the messages on Covid-19 prevention, health and hygiene, child protection and safeguarding, and early marriage reached marginalised groups.

<https://en-gb.facebook.com/VsoNepal/videos/429557638029491/>

My big sister showed me **videos developed in sign language** and taught me the process of hand washing and **how we can be safe during the Covid-19 situation**. My big sister also visited my house when lockdown is not very strict.

Little sister with a hearing impairment

These videos are also available on the VSO School application.

UNESCO. 2020. Inclusion: Nepal

<https://education-profiles.org/central-and-southern-asia/nepal/~inclusion>

Photo credits

For Pooja national volunteers – Krishna Mallik
©VSO/Krishna Mallik

VSO National volunteer Prakriti in community awareness
– Priyanka Budhathoki ©VSO/Priyanka Budhathoki

The credit for all the other photos from Nigeria –
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Purna Kumar Shrestha is the Lead Education Advisor for VSO.

Adewunmi Christabel Omolade is the VSO Programme Manager Education in Nigeria.



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Ofsted 2019

How hearing technology helped Benji during Covid-19

Nadine McCreadie (Audiologist), **Camilo Troncoso** (Paediatric Audiologist) and **Benji's family** explain their shared Covid-19 experience

Benji is five years old and was fitted with ReSound LiNX Quattro hearing aids in February 2020 by his Audiologist, Camilo Troncoso, at his local NHS Audiology department (St Mary's Hospital) in Paddington. Benji was initially fitted as his father was keen to evaluate the benefits of the hearing aid technology and accessories he currently uses himself for his son, with the additional prospect of having the hearing aids adjusted remotely.

Due to Covid-19 and the sudden nature of "lockdown", these aids were fitted at an opportune moment, as Benji had the ability to directly stream sound from his iPad and if needed, have his hearing aids adjusted by his father through the ReSound Smart 3D app. This enabled Benji to successfully attend and participate in virtual classroom meetups using Google Meet without the worry that he was missing out on information. Benji also enjoyed using his direct streaming outside of academia to listen to music, watch videos and play games, without the need for headphones.

As was the case for many families during 'lockdown', video calling extended family members became essential for Benji and his father. Benji was able to use FaceTime to independently call his friends and family on his iPad. This



helped Benji have engaged conversations, creating that sense of visiting loved ones without seeing them in person. He could take his iPad all over the house, to show them his latest imaginative creations.

The ReSound Multi Mic allowed both Benji and his father to easily stream conversation from a laptop using a single wireless accessory. This was invaluable during family video calls, speech therapy appointments and when Benji video called his classmates. Allowing Benji to easily converse with a variety of people online was vital for his well-being during the 'lockdown' period.

The ReSound Multi Mic was also invaluable during the family's daily exercise. Benji's father would wear the Multi Mic during their walks, meaning that Benji could still clearly hear him, as well as his surroundings, despite sometimes running up to 10m ahead of him!

Benji's family have reported that the move to ReSound LiNX Quattro technology has encouraged him to become more independent in the care and maintenance of his hearing aids. For example, as ReSound LiNX Quattro is rechargeable, Benji no longer





evolving with technology, audiologists have felt a bit behind. Even just five years ago it would have been impossible to believe that hearing aids that could be adjusted remotely would be available to either the NHS or commercial sector. However, this technology is now starting to be adopted more routinely by NHS audiology departments as a way of modernising patient pathways, providing service continuity during the Covid-19 pandemic and providing patients with the option to be seen either face to face or remotely depending on their needs and digital capacity, allowing audiologists to also have that sense of feeling more connected to

needs assistance in changing batteries. His father noted that Benji has learnt to easily put them in the charging box at bath time and bedtime.

Of course, they also reported challenges, such as having to replace broken receivers as well as Benji's ears continuously growing. However, a smooth replacement process was put in place as his 'pre-lockdown' impressions had been scanned, allowing for replacement moulds to be ordered without the need for further impressions. Benji was also issued with two pairs of replacement receivers so that he would never be without a pair, whilst a new pair was being manufactured.

One of the additional features Benji's father was keen to explore was the ability to have Benji's hearing aids adjusted remotely if required. Being able to access ReSound Assist meant that if Benji needed his hearing aid settings adjusted, for example, his overall volume needed increasing, that this could be requested through the ReSound Smart 3D app by his father. Benji's Audiologist could then easily make these adjustments based on the information provided and send them back through the ReSound Smart 3D app to be downloaded to his hearing aids at home. The family could then feedback to their Audiologist as to how Benji was managing with his new settings via the ReSound Smart 3D app. This service proved to be invaluable during 'lockdown' when face to face visits to audiology were not an option.

In a world where everything seems to be

their patients and their needs. I, for one, am excited to see how the NHS embraces telehealth and technology that allows for app self-management, and who knows what will come over the next five years.



Nadine McCreddie is an Audiologist at GN Hearing UK.

Camilo Troncoso is a Paediatric Audiologist from Imperial College Healthcare Trust.

My life journey with Usher Syndrome

Russ Palmer shares his personal insight to living with Usher syndrome, with points for reflection when working with a young individual with Usher

Growing up with Usher syndrome has been quite a challenge. Nevertheless, there are some aspects children and adults might like to consider in learning to deal with this condition. Probably the most important area is learning to accept the eye condition. I mean, over a period of time, the vision starts to narrow down and this can affect people in different ways. In this article, I hope to highlight some of my own challenges and how I dealt with these, from leaving school, changing careers, and taking early retirement, to learning to take on another career.

I was diagnosed with RP (retinitis pigmentosa), and afterwards with Usher syndrome, in my early 20s. I was in my first job as a computer programmer and at that time drove a car. The journey to and from work took one hour, leaving early morning, coming back late in the evening. At that time I lived in West Sussex, so I used to drive on the busy A27 route. When the doctors said I'd have to give up driving, it was devastating news and very hard to come to terms with because it was taking away my independence. At the time I was living with my parents. I was in the process of thinking of my future in the long term. This involved getting on with my career, studying, getting married and maybe starting a family later. All the usual things people aim for in life.

Strangely enough, it was only last year that I gave up my driving licence, even though I was registered blind in 1992. It felt like giving up something one doesn't want to, but gradually one realises: okay, perhaps now it's time to do this. Also, the driving licence was still a valid ID for many areas of society, but I gradually realised that my passport was just as good to use. I'm now 60+ and coming up to the dreaded retirement age and I could have been asked to retake my driving test, which would've been quite impossible now as I am registered deafblind and using two cochlear implants and a long white cane for mobility and safety.

What makes up one's identity?

I was born severely deaf but didn't receive my first hearing aid until the age of four. I went to Woodford School for the Deaf, near Leytonstone, and I attended there until the age of seven. We were taught

with the oral method and were not allowed to use sign language, which was fine for me as I grew up with hearing rather than deaf kids in Shenfield, Essex. This was during the 60s. From the age of seven I attended a hearing school where I encountered bullying and teasing because of my body-aid, which looked like a bra. That was part of life and you just had to deal with it. I was the only deaf kid in the school but I still had many hearing friends and did sports, like football and swimming. Later, I focused more on swimming, as hearing aids picked up background noise when playing football, and I completed my personal survival courses up to gold level. In addition, I did the bronze, silver and gold levels of the Duke of Edinburgh Award – it took me 10 years to complete due to moving around the UK, ending up in Aberdeen in Scotland. But in the end I went to Buckingham Palace to



collect my Gold Award from the Duke of Edinburgh himself. That made my mother's day! This was in 1981 when the doors to the palace were not open to the public. The best part of working towards the Award was the expedition up to the mountains of Snowdonia, Dartmoor and the Highlands of Scotland. This was challenging, fun and exciting. It all gave me the confidence to do these things. Moving around the country disrupted my education but also built up my confidence.

In my teens, I noticed I had problems seeing in the dark. Well, I just thought everybody had the same problem. I used to do a paper round, riding my bike and trying to deliver the papers to the right houses and that was difficult. I only did it for a couple of weeks until I realised that wasn't an option. It also assisted me to see there are other people with disabilities more profound than my own. I found I had compassion and understanding for others, and empathy. These qualities to my mind are the most important in today's society. We can all identify our own skills and ways of learning to deal with our own limitations. This is very important to keep in mind, also in a school setting. Confidence-building and acceptance of limitations are the most important factors in learning to deal with Usher. We might have certain goals in life, but they might have to be adjusted, according to one's limitations and reality.

It is important for the children, after diagnosis, to understand the changes in their vision, as sometimes this can lead to anger, guilt and frustration. Some children blame their parents for the changes in their vision. I know my parents felt guilty about my vision changing and tried to support when possible, sometimes the way they did it varied according to the situation.

A very important turning point during my crisis years, including a change of career, was an effective and simple gestalt therapy exercise that my social worker suggested I should do. It involved many newspapers and the chairs in the room – and let me just say, it ended up with shredded newspaper bits and overturned chairs all over the room. Open communication, love, support, believing in yourself and building up your confidence are important in learning to accept what's happening to one's hearing and sight. The changes to the two most important senses can feel frustrating and frightening. A feeling of time running out. But in reality I'm still here.

Present day

Okay, I cannot read text, books nor see pictures, colours or faces of loved ones, and sometimes it does feel the world is collapsing around me. I started to lose my vision at the age of 55, but I have to say, thank God for technology, the support of family, very good friends, and

people in general. Being open about one's limitations and accepting support, like being guided or using a cane or a guide dog, are important for getting around. I have come to realise that one can access information in new and exciting ways (Russ Palmer, 2020. How to feel the Universe. Spaceflight 62, December 2020, 323-7).

Today, I am a qualified music therapist, I write academic articles (russpalmer.com) with colleagues, I compose and play music and even give performances in various ensembles. This has all been fulfilling and enjoyable to do. Even if you cannot read music, through cooperating you can still do music (see my previous article in BATOD, May 2020). In addition, in the course of 20 years I have been fortunate to give lectures, both in the UK and abroad, and now find myself being involved in EU research projects, which I would not have thought possible when I look back.

Another thing I explored during the lockdown was to rekindle my interest in model-making. I took that up with my friend Andrew, who took up my challenge of making Apollo spacecrafts and airplane models. We do model-making via Zoom or FaceTime, with paints, colours, and glueing bits together. This knowledge is in my memory, having grown up during the Space Race – and being a Fellow of the British Interplanetary Society. There I promote awareness for museums and venues and places of interest, and as a Battlefield Trust member, I've been frustrated by the fact that I cannot access the military history books in audio format – again promoting accessibility for the blind via tactile materials.

I could not have done this without the love and support of my wife, Riitta Lahtinen, and close friends and colleagues. Currently, I also need the support of communicator-guides and personal assistance (PA) services. This allows me to be more independent without having to rely too much on my immediate family. This is all to say not to give up. It is possible to explore new areas and approaches with advances in technological assistive devices. On reflection, Usher syndrome, in some ways, can feel challenging at times, as one has to learn to do things in a new way. But as long as one can be independent, while at the same time not being afraid to ask for assistance, then one's life can be fulfilling. ■



Russ Palmer (SRAT(M), FBIS) is a music therapist.



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Since July, BATOD has met with a range of unions including Voice. BATOD shared a range of BATOD badged materials including the summary of responses to a survey of BATOD members, conducted in May 2020, which highlighted a few key areas for focus.

As we continue to work with our union colleagues we will invite them to highlight their organisation via an article in a BATOD magazine, with the reciprocal arrangement that they will feature a BATOD article in one of their publications. Voice was the first organisation to take up the offer. They featured our article. Below is their submission to our magazine.

Voice

Martin Hodge, Senior Professional Officer (Policy) outlines the membership with the Voice Section of Community Union



"No man is an island entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main," wrote John Donne back in 1624. Helen Keller noted that "alone we can do so little; together we can do so much". They were right. People work best when they recognise the strength of being a community.

Why do I need a union?

Trade Unions have a long history, in the UK, of working to improve health and safety, working conditions, and pay. But not all unions are the same – just like the learning styles of children, there are several different unions to support those working in education, some for leaders, some for teachers, some for support staff.

Over the past few years, there has been an increase in the number of teachers not remaining in the profession beyond five years. Additionally, teachers have been leaving the profession early and taking early retirement because of drivers such as the frequent changes to education policy, increasing workload, and Ofsted and the intensive accountability regime. Together this has led to a decrease in union membership.

However, in the current climate, because of the pressures of workload, because of the risk of redundancy and because of health and safety concerns, it is more important than ever to be in a union. We have anecdotal evidence of new teachers, who already have the burden of student loans to pay off, being told by mortgage advisers and lenders that union membership is a 'non-essential cost'. We would say that they need support from a union, because if they face losing their job for whatever reason, then their home is at risk.

Why does it matter?

For some, the union is a place of learning, training and sharing – a family. Members volunteer and train to support their colleagues, they contribute through discussion groups to shape the views and the opinions of the union, and they influence the responses made on their behalf.

For others, union membership is rather like an insurance policy – something they hope to never need but essential when things go wrong.

Unions provide support and advice over the phone, through websites and directly via casework, and we recommend everybody who works in the education

sector join a trade union for those occasions when you need one, such as:

- allegations in the workplace
- workload issues
- target setting and appraisals
- bullying and harassment
- sickness and absence
- pay and contractual issues
- parental leave
- redundancy
- assault.

If you experience difficulties, it is reassuring to know that help is only a phone call or email away. And if your issue requires more support, our team will step in and handle all the agitating, the arguing and the negotiating for you, leaving you with the confidence and security of knowing that we are there to support you.

Community union

Formed in 1970 as the Professional Association of Teachers (PAT), we merged with the Professional Association of Nursery Nurses, Professionals Allied to Teaching, and the National Association of Administrative Staff in Schools and Colleges before rebranding as Voice in 2008. As such, we are the only dedicated union to cover the whole education workforce. Now as a sector of Community Union, we can be even more.

The Voice section of Community is a specialist section for those working in education and we support members in early years, schools and colleges, central services, Portage, SEND, and hospital education, so we have a good understanding of the sector and the issues they experience. We currently chair the Department for Education Special Educational Needs and Disability (DfE SEND) joint Union group and sit on other policy groups to discuss issues such as teacher pay and conditions.

Our members are as dedicated to supporting the development of the children and young people they teach and care for as they are passionate about pursuing a fair and rewarding workplace. That's why our members don't take industrial action that could be injurious to education. We prefer the force of argument rather than the argument of force supporting our sector through protest and

► Continued at bottom of next page

BATOD National webinar

BATOD National Conference committee provide an overview of the first national webinar

The Covid-19 pandemic fast forwarded organisations, including BATOD, into the virtual world. As a not-for-profit organisation, BATOD has benefited from a range of positive developments stemming from this change. The first is that we have now found a way which enables any BATOD member, regardless of their geographical location, to access any BATOD-led regional and national event as a benefit of membership.

The introduction of a virtual platform also allows our special Overseas members from developing countries to access our events – that is if their budget for internet allowance within their setting can cover all that BATOD has to offer.

Our duty of care to our members and associated professionals resulted in the decision to postpone the face-to-face national conference which was scheduled for 13th March 2020 at Frank Barnes School for the Deaf. Looking back, this was one of the best decisions we made in 2020, even if it had to be made at the 11th hour! Since March 2020 representatives of BATOD, at various levels, have responded to current need. It was proposed by the Steering Group, and agreed by the NEC, that a webinar would be planned for the Autumn. This

would be a free event for members, as a thank you for their patience when the decision to postpone the 2020 Conference was made. On this occasion an exception was made to BATOD's principles that all BATOD events should be cost-neutral. Other examples of BATOD's adaptation to the new circumstances included:

- BATOD South was one of the first committees to set up ►

► Continued from bottom of previous page

negotiation, working with employers, local and national government throughout the UK.

Working together

There will be as many reasons why people become teachers as there are teachers, and I suspect the same is true for teachers of the deaf. But there are a few things that bind us together.

1. We want to make a difference to the children and young people we work with.
2. We want the children to succeed.
3. We want to be the best we can.

We are keen to work closely with BATOD and its members to make a difference, support our members, put children and young people first and be the best we can. ■



Martin Hodge is a Senior Professional Officer (Policy) with the Voice Section of Community Union.

BATOD event planning guidance template

Event title:
Event date and time:

Registration form

Delegate's name:
Are you a BATOD member?
Region/Nation - with which region/nation are you associated?
Access needs (eg BSL, STTR):
Access to Work (ATW) Yes/No

Cost neutral events

- What are the costs to be considered?
 - Accessibility (in-vision signing and captioning)
 - Software to edit recording, modify captions
 - Speakers (often speakers are free)

Payment method

Location/platform

Ever mindful of the responsibility to members regarding their monies, and operating BATOD as a sustainable organisation, Steering Group and NEC in October agreed to purchase a platform package, Zoom, which all groups within BATOD (national committee, regions, nations, special interest groups) could use for committee meetings and event activities.

Webinar format (example):

- Opening welcome and housekeeping from Chair
- 30 - 45 minutes pre-recorded presentation maximum. Overall webinar event should be around 90 minutes to accommodate screen fatigue
- Q & A sessions - live but recorded during the event. Must inform audience as early as possible what will be recorded ie speakers and interpreter

Recording format - MP4
Storage - Teams storage with link on BATOD website
Host platform - closed YouTube BATOD channel for set time period e.g. one month, longer term access for BATOD members via members' area of BATOD website

Longer term post-event access for BATOD members:

Storage (BATOD Teams folder)
Access (BATOD YouTube channel and link to BATOD website)

Moderator (Live Q&A)

Each webinar will require at least one moderator behind the scenes to troubleshoot and monitor whether cameras and microphones are on or off, manage screen sharing, monitor comments and questions in the chat function, undertake time-keeping etc

Interpreters must be prepared to voiceover BSL questions posed via camera.

Accessibility

See communication policy - <https://www.batod.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/BATOD-Communication-Support-policy-June-2020.pdf>

Provider option - BATOD National has explored a range of suppliers and selected Red Bee, who will provide captions and interpreters. They have offered a discount price if BATOD organises 5-10 webinar events per year.

Communication (BATOD events should be accessible to all BATOD members)

Region/Nation cascade details to their area's membership.
Wider BATOD membership - share details with NECs to cascade to all members (Facebook, Twitter, newsletter, events page, BATOD map page). See Social Media policy (<https://www.batod.org.uk/information/batods-social-media-policy/>)

Details should include:

- Event title
- Date
- Presenters
- Cost tier option - BATOD/Non-BATOD members, Early Bird/Standard rates
- Link to registration form

Communication with non-members - BATOD region/nation Facebook accounts are closed. Platforms such as Twitter are open to all.

Event Feedback

Evaluation forms should be completed at each event. BATOD has a Survey Monkey account that can be used for evaluations.

Certificate of attendance

Accessed upon completion of feedback link.

Post-event communication

Magazine articles are to be submitted after each event.

a virtual space for members to meet and discuss their concerns, reflections and worries.

- Alice Brennan's article (see page 54) captures how BATOD North reacted to the new situation.
- The BATOD NEC continued to meet virtually via MS Teams.
- Discussions with the regions and nations and Deaf ToDs, identified Zoom as the preferred platform for virtual events. Consequently, BATOD National has invested in a Zoom Pro account with a large meeting add on which is now accessible to all regions and nations for meetings and training events, ensuring that we are being as cost effective as possible.

These experiences during the initial months of the pandemic led to the establishment of a Regional and National working group at NEC. The initial focus was to collaborate on the creation of a template to be used by all groups organising BATOD events, whether online, face-to-face or blended. This ensures, moving forward into the new unknown world and beyond, that all BATOD-led events will be cost neutral and accessible to all BATOD members, regardless of location.

Monthly meetings of the working group have led to the creation of the template below.

This template should be used by all groups organising

BATOD events: online, face-to-face or blended.

BATOD events should be accessible to all BATOD members and cost neutral.

If children or young people are involved in the presentation material, a consent form must be completed <https://www.batod.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Photo-permission-form-2020.pdf>

The first BATOD national webinar

Once the decision to postpone the national conference in March 2020 had been taken, six months of planning took place to create the first BATOD national webinar. The conference committee noted the successes and hiccups experienced by other groups within BATOD and other close partners. The organisation and technological wizardry of Emma Parker, BATOD National conference committee lead, took the committee through the transition from traditional format to the virtual world of webinars. It is a lot of hard work and the conference committee and BATOD SG are extremely grateful for the work Emma undertook, as a volunteer, to standards that other professional providers would see as competition, if she were to offer her services on the open market!

Emmie Wienhoven and Dr Helen Willis, who had been the keynote speakers for the postponed March conference, immediately accepted the invitation to provide the keynote presentations for the webinar. Again, due to the various

lockdown scenarios in Europe, another wise decision was made which enabled Emmie to attend her Question and Answer session for the webinar from The Netherlands. Helen's presentation follows a template that BATOD have sought permission to use and adapt for further events.

Exhibiting at these events is another issue BATOD will be reviewing as the virtual aspect of BATOD events is likely to remain even post-pandemic, whenever that will be, as a blended option. Exhibiting and sponsoring require careful consideration to ensure the companies are investing in a value for money option and that their presence can be accessed by all. Watch this space for further revisions to the BATOD media pack – this is another essential source of income to assist in maintaining the sustainability of BATOD.

Despite the ongoing challenges to businesses and organisations due to the Covid-19 pandemic since March, the sponsorship for this first webinar from Mary Hare School, Connevens, British-sign.co.uk and MED-EL was much appreciated and enabled costs to be covered.

As with all events, it seemed as if there was ample time to prepare the presentations submitted by Emmie and Helen at the end of August. RedBee was selected from the quotes sourced and their professionalism with the captioning and in-vision signing quality and actual placement on the recordings was noted often in the positive feedback from the day. Then it was October. Emma's careful planning had built in many practice runs. Hiccups were identified, discussed and on many occasions Emma researched solutions until the issues were resolved.

10 November finally arrived. 271 attendees had registered with 247 present on the day. We are aware some settings were using the event as a team CPD opportunity, which was fantastic. The feedback from attendees included...

So, with all the very careful planning, were there take-away lessons? Naturally, as reflective practitioners always do, we initially focused on the "it would have been even better if" issues, eg:

- if we had had the RedBee interpreters and captioning online earlier in the day to test run the caption key
- their involvement in the meetings with the project manager in the early stages of the process may have aided their understanding of the event planning

decisions at an early stage

- finding the magic wand that means all attendees had perfect internet access and that all attendees – even those with more seasoned virtual presentation experience – mute on arrival
- finding a way to enable truly accessible interactions in a networking space among small groups.

Nevertheless we experienced much positive feedback and we will be drawing on this and a number of helpful and constructive suggestions to inform our future planning.

Moving forward

Plans for the postponed BATOD 2020 Conference evolve as the conference committee respond to the ongoing pandemic situation. Watch the website for information.

BATOD Midlands had an opportunity to support the University of Birmingham, as part of the Festival of Social Science which presented 'Switched on for sound: how one device changed deaf children's lives forever'. Look out for an article from BATOD Midlands in a future magazine. BATOD Scotland is to team up with the Scottish Sensory Centre to deliver their postponed conference on Auditory Neuropathy with Dr Kai Uus (see *BATOD map*, page 87).

The online platform opens up opportunities to explore further co-badged virtual and blended events. All partnership events proposals will be considered and discussed at BATOD Steering Group and NEC meetings. The opportunities, however, for all BATOD members to access specialist CPD through BATOD are much greater now in this virtual world. Hopefully though, you, the reader, are still enjoying the traditional experience of turning the pages of your paper-based magazine. Of course, you can always shake the computer out of sleep mode to update your membership CPD log!



BATOD National Conference Committee

BATOD North webinar 'Technology for the New Normal'

Alice Brennan, QToD and BATOD North committee member reflects on the planning and delivery involved with the first BATOD North online event

Monday 23rd March 2020. The day the media would have others believe we stopped! At times we may have felt clumsy, fumbling our way through the ever changing advice. However, we worked hard to support the children who came into our schools each day; delivered virtual teaching; home-schooled our own children and offered distance support to families who were struggling to cope. Without a shadow of a doubt, we did and still are doing a rather grand job!

Thursday 4th June 2020. The first BATOD North webinar! Thank you for the continued invaluable feedback. Some took little nuggets whilst others gained monumental confidence to take their virtual support to the next level. We've been asked how QToDs could implement a webinar in their setting.

As a result of the BATOD North webinar, Salford HI service has recently delivered two successful virtual Deaf Awareness INSET sessions to mainstream teachers. We provided a blended approach, team members recorded a high quality training video to accompany our 'Deaf Awareness' booklet. This has been disseminated to mainstream teachers across the service. Another devoted team of QToDs was inspired to continue developing their skills to support our deaf babies, children and young people and their families.

During this article you'll learn from our mistakes as well as our triumphs.

The tiniest drip will create magnificent ripples!

The physical BATOD North meeting booked in for the end of March had to go virtual. We're not fossils! We had all used some form of virtual platform professionally and socially. With a number of us already using Zoom for work and family quizzes, we settled on Zoom. Alas! Our first Saturday morning meeting looked and sounded like a séance: "Hello?", "We can't see you! Can you see

us?" Technical issues solved, we discussed ways to support our colleagues during the challenging times we were facing. A number of the committee had attended various webinars and this seemed like the perfect solution to connect with our members. The more we spoke about the potential webinar the more barriers we seemed to face. Accessibility, security, engagement, topics, speakers, costing, communication, registration. Which platform to choose?

Making a big change is often scary, but what is more scary is regret! We all agreed, we would rather try to make a difference, no matter how small, to support our friends and colleagues.

Sleeves rolled up, I started to traverse the jungle of webinar platforms. Who knew there were so many?

Selecting a platform

Do we want a 'webinar' or a 'meeting'?

In short, a meeting is a virtual space where everyone has control of their own 'profile'. Although the host can mute



and turn the video off for each participant, you have no control over someone turning their video back on/unmuting themselves. Perfect for small groups. When you're planning on inviting 100 participants, it probably isn't a great idea! You would never get through the content of the webinar due to interruptions: "We can hear your kettle!" Or the notorious toilet scenes! We needed more control.

We were aware that being an attendee is a very different experience to hosting a webinar. As I delved deeper into the world of webinars, I soon realised it wasn't so easy to customise a video-conferencing system to suit our very particular wants and needs.

After narrowing it down to 12 possibilities there were some significant considerations we were not willing to compromise on, accessibility, security, cost and interactive functions. Below are some of our requirements, a number of questions you may ask yourself and top tips:

- Interaction: Q&A and chat: How to manage the Q&A? How to engage with the most important questions being asked? How do we create an engaging two-way communication?
- Accessibility: Can a BSL interpreter be seen whilst the presenter is sharing the screen? Ability to include captions.
- Registration page/confirmation page: Are they customisable? Level of privacy General Data

Protection Regulation (GDPR).

- Reliability and stream quality: Do delegates need to download software? Audio and video quality was not included in the requirements as there are so many variables, such as how good the broadband connection is, the equipment being used etc.
- Pricing: This wasn't an easy task. It quickly became evident that you can't simply look at the different pricing pages as each tool has different types of pricing plans for different features, and some tied you in for a year. Most commonly, pricing was based on attendees required. Your choice is narrowed considerably when faced with a basic package at £14.99 per month vs £2,368 per annum for an all-singing all-dancing package.

No platform is 100% bullet-proof; we wanted the best experience for our colleagues whilst being straightforward for ourselves as we, too, were trying to make our own way through the 'new normal'.

Here is a brief insight into six platforms we researched in April 2020:

Platform	Reasons
GoToWebinar	Most expensive option
ClickMeeting	Reports of loss of recordings Technology issues
Demio	Above average price, TeAverage engagement features

Cisco WebEx	Privacy and security conscious firm Often used in the corporate world, not small businesses Standard access is free – pay to unlock extra features
Teams	Privacy is a big strength, No Webinar feature Not everyone has access to Microsoft Teams as intended for business-to-business use It is not the most 'new-user' friendly
Zoom	Currently one of the most well-known video conferencing systems Privacy and security conscious – the problems emphasised by the media were caused by people misusing the system itself. Sharing a meeting link online and publicly (which could happen with any platform) so others could take part in the Zoom meeting would cause 'Zoombombing'. To avoid this, each person who registered was issued with a unique entry link. Engagement features (albeit basic) such as polling, Q&A and chat facility

After discussion the committee decided on Zoom. Entering negotiations with the Zoom representative for the UK was the next obstacle. We purchased a monthly business account with a webinar add on. Remember, Zoom looks and acts differently depending on the device, app or browser being used.

The features available on the business account and webinar add-on have since been updated and offer more advanced features.

Availability and charging

Who to invite? What to charge? This was a daunting new adventure. With the original limit of 100 places our initial thoughts were to keep it to BATOD North members with no charge for our first attempt. Next, advertising? We used mail merge to inform BATOD members. However, after a number of days we realised this had not worked. We are still not sure why, but we have all recently received the original email (September 2020) only four months late! We turned to social media. Within hours of being advertised on the BATOD North Facebook page and BATOD website, we quickly realised the popularity of the webinar. We opted for the higher attendee 'add-on' which gave us 500 spaces and opened it up nationally.

'Techy stuff'

Until you run a webinar in real life situations, you have absolutely no idea how it will work for you as the host and the attendees! The committee rehearsed before inviting our speakers and BSL interpreters to a dress rehearsal a week before the live webinar.

A list of 'techy stuff' may be of interest to you if you're planning your own virtual session:

- The 'host': Someone who is familiar with the platform and can troubleshoot. They're in the background, keeping an eye on the chat, Q&A, timing, technical issues and providing access to approved attendees. Attending as an attendee on another screen (on mute) is a great tip, the host screen often looks different to an attendee screen. Don't have the host speaking – they have too many other hats on!
- Pinning/spotlighting the interpreter: How do your attendees locate the interpreter if there are many faces on the screen? Think about using "Interpreter" as the name shown on screen. If a speaker unmutes or a screen is shared, does the interpreter remain on screen and can they be easily located?
- Interactive: Q&A – can you 'up-scale' FAQ ie group as one question those questions that very similar rather than having the same question repeated? Chat function – what will you use this for? How do you keep this separate to your Q&A? Poll – Will you include an instant poll?
- Sharing screen: How will you achieve this? Provide the host with extra PPTs in advance, to eliminate all possible technical issues.
- Raising hands: Allow this function? Will it slow the flow? Does the Q&A fulfil this need?
- Captioning: Check your captioning. We became victims to the captioning options. We believed we were provided with captions via the Zoom account we paid for but Zoom doesn't offer captions yet. You need a third party or a stenographer. We encouraged attendees to use a captioning tool of their choice and recommended tools such as 'Otter' and 'Live Transcribe'. We have looked into this for future webinars.
- Recording: It was an added bonus with the package we paid for but have you viewed our recording? We realised that by 'spotlighting' an interpreter they are seen throughout the recording, a split screen would have been better for the recording. You're welcome to learn from our mistakes!
- Running order/script: Ours were shared with committee, speakers and interpreters, so we all knew what to expect and when. A clear introduction was given to attendees, informing them of how the webinar works and how to use the different interactive functions. You may wish to have a 'welcome' PPT slide whilst delegates enter the webinar.
- Online evaluation: Use what you're familiar with. We chose 'Google Forms' as it's easy to set up and you receive an immediate report. Those who contacted us to inform us they couldn't access our evaluation were sent a PDF copy.



- Be early: Meet with your speakers and interpreters 45 minutes to an hour before you 'go live'.

Speakers

Kim Hagen of NDCS kindly agreed to present on 'Captioning Tools' and Ryan Brewer, a QToD, generously gave his time to present top tips on 'Familiar Software'. Although timings were confirmed with speakers, as with a physical event, speakers can run over their timings. How might you give a five-minute warning?

We also felt it necessary to discuss with both speakers how questions and answers would be dealt with both during the event and afterwards.

Interpreters

We were exceptionally happy with both interpreters. Neither had interpreted via a webinar before and both were extremely professional, problem-solving any issues faced together. This included communicating between themselves before and during the webinar, adding in suitable backgrounds and finding their signing space. For our next webinar we would like to invite our colleagues who use BSL to join us before the webinar starts.

The future

BATOD North hopes to host further webinars. We will always need to be mindful of the capacity of the committee to deliver CPD along with all their other work and personal commitments. Thank you to those who have offered to present at future webinars.

Moving your in-person event to an online event may seem like uncharted territory. But, with the right technology and preparation, you can make online events informative, interactive, and engaging. Remember you are all agents of change!



Alice Brennan is a QToD with Salford Hearing Impairment Team and a member of the BATOD North committee

Ewing Foundation's Collect and Return Service (CaRS)

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Ewing Foundation team member Paul Harris has developed a mobile monitoring, test and repair service that allows some of the work previously required in schools to be delivered from the lower risk environment of the car.

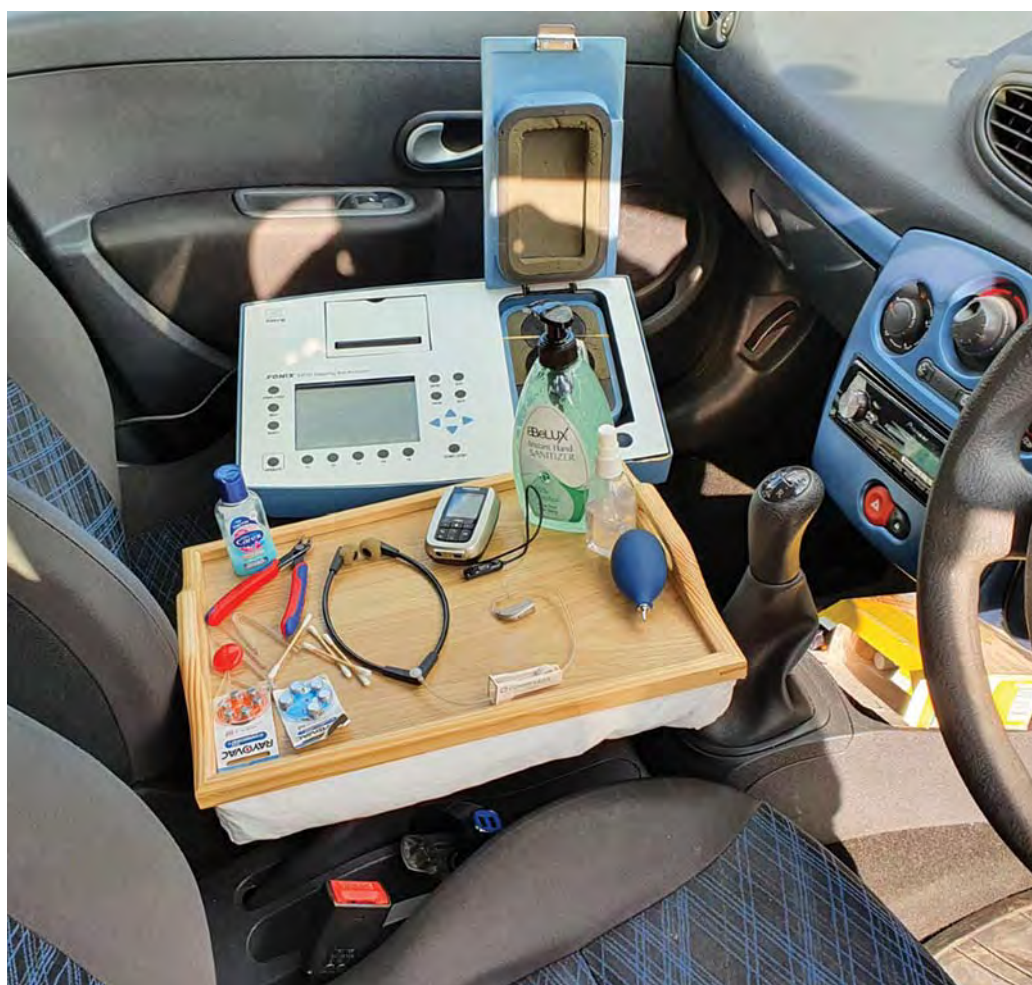
While some tasks require more involvement with the staff and young people, the Ewing Foundation's Collect and Return Service (CaRS) significantly reduces interaction with school staff, focusing instead on the hearing instruments and other equipment. Although supporting the student in the classroom is the preferred option, this service is available for those schools that cannot allow external visitors into their buildings at this time.

Other members of the Ewing Foundation team have since adapted their cars to offer this quick turnaround service. Team members are able to collect hearing instruments and personal wireless equipment directly from reception. Then, using the tools and power supply in their cars, they set up and monitor the equipment to ensure it is working optimally. Once checked and repaired, the equipment is returned to reception in protective bags, thus keeping handling to a minimum.

If you would like to know more about the specific details and costs of

adapting cars to provide this service, including options such as portable invertors, please contact the Ewing Foundation. The adaptations are also suitable for cars that are leased or shared across service staff.

In addition to offering in school and CaRS visits, the Ewing Foundation team are also available to support schools remotely by telephone, email or through online platforms such as Microsoft Teams or Zoom. For more information about CaRS or the Ewing Foundation's other services, please contact info@ewing-foundation.org.uk



Note: Ewing Foundation is a small, national charity promoting inclusion and achievement for deaf children and young people through listening and speaking. Our mission is to provide the optimum teaching and learning environment for professionals and the deaf children and young people they support. We achieve this by ensuring that classroom and personal hearing technology is working correctly, and that education professionals have the communication and teaching strategies in place to support their deaf students. We also help education professionals develop their expertise by providing training courses, a networking group and online resources.

Email: info@ewing-foundation.org.uk
 Web: www.ewing-foundation.org.uk
 Tel: 01273 301929
 Text: 07778 599939

EWING FOUNDATION
for deaf children

Meet the author – nine-year-old Maya Wasserman

BATOD was delighted, with support from NDCS, to have the opportunity to interview **Maya**, the author of popular new book **The Quest for the Cockle Implant**

As the winner of NDCS' book competition, Maya and her family were featured in a recent article, which can be found via this link:

<https://www.ndcs.org.uk/information-and-support/parenting-and-family-life/families-magazine/your-stories/primary-years-stories/a-write-success/>

So Teresa Quail decided to ask these questions:



I read you and your dad often make up your own stories and tell them to each other. What is the first story you ever remember creating with your dad?

Well, I remember when I was really young, my dad created a story about a little girl who lives in a black and white town (no colour) and she went into the woods to fight a dragon for a magic paintbrush. She made friends with the dragon, used the magic

paintbrush, and a magical rainbow appeared and stayed there forever.

What characters feature in your current stories?

I recently made up a story about what it was like in WW2 in an English class and my main character was a man who lost his daughter and was trying to find her.

I understand you have finished reading the Harry Potter series. What book(s) are you reading now?

I am reading The Series Of Unfortunate Events, Dork Diaries, Max Einstein, Jacqueline Wilson books, and His Dark Materials.

How long did it take you to create your story The Quest for the Cockle Implant?

It took 10–20 minutes to create names for characters and the theme and setting, 1–2 hours to create the story, and around a year for editing and publishing the book.

How did Lucy Rogers, a professional illustrator who is also deaf, decide what visuals were best for your story?

She had some input from me and started off from that, then she would show her ideas to me and I would give her feedback.

What have you learnt from this book writing and publication experience?

I have learnt that many kids will want to read this book because not a lot of books have deaf characters in them so they might think being deaf isn't





special or that they shouldn't belong here (which is not true!)

What has happened in school since you won this book competition? What comments and feedback have your friends and family given you about your book?

So, some of the year 3 teachers have added my book into their curriculum after Helen Keller, and then my teacher wants to do a whole lesson on it. My family and friends have congratulated me and have asked me questions, such as if I will write more books, which I really want to!

Have you helped your mum translate it into Spanish too?

Not yet, because the book has just come out, but I can tell she really wants to!

Are you working on any other short stories?

Like I said before, I have written

a story on WW2, but I haven't written anything else!

What advice would you give to other budding authors, young and old, and their parents?

I would say to get lots of inspiration, make the story as creative as possible, and have fun writing it!

What advice would you give to other budding dancers, young and old, and their parents? How often do you dance?

I would tell them to keep trying, practice makes better (because nobody is perfect), and that everyone makes mistakes. I dance anywhere at any time, but mostly when music is playing.

A free signed version is also available through the [ITV Signed Stories app](#)



Unlocking your radio aid's potential

Tony Murphy outlines some strategies to support cabled connectivity

Introduction

Traditionally, radio aids have been used for communicating at a distance or in noise. However, the modern teaching environment or daily life in general is more complex, if you consider the average day of a child and how many times they need to use some form of electronic device. This could be a TV, or a mobile phone on the way to school. At school, virtually all curriculum activities will involve some kind of electronic medium: interactive whiteboards, PCs, tablets or musical instruments. At the same time, they still need to communicate with the teacher or classmates as they work interactively with different groups and in challenging situations.

Increasingly they also have to work remotely, utilising various PCs, or online packages. Of course education does not finish in the classroom, so family activities or social mixing with friends are equally important for a child's development.

The latest hearing aids offer many formats for interconnectivity: multiple Bluetooth connectivity options and radio aids. T-coil is often forgotten, especially for the school environment, as the signal quality and interference issues do not make it ideal for young children at school. However, it is still the only truly universal wireless technology, so it should, in some specialist circumstances, be considered. It is too complex to discuss every technology type in one article, so I will concentrate on the direct connectivity, or hard-wired radio aid connectivity. The benefit of these solutions is that they tend to be more reliable, and although not fully immune, they will be less prone to interference. There is obviously a huge array of different devices, but the physical connections can be simplified into some basic concepts that can be used to solve the majority of issues.

Firstly, consider what you are trying to do. Audio connections are either inputs or outputs, commonly termed 'audio in' or 'audio out'. If you want to send information from one piece of equipment to another, you need to connect the audio out to an audio in. These are labelled, so they are relatively simple to find. PCs used to have separate inputs and output connections: the mic, or input, labelled usually with a green ring. The output was the headphone socket, labelled with a pink ring. You can still see this on some desktop PCs. Most laptops now only have one socket labelled with a headphone symbol. This signifies audio out and generally, it is this connection that will be used to connect directly into a radio aid. The same principle will also apply for tablets or smartphones. Even though some no longer have headphone sockets as standard, you can still use an adapter to do this.

If you wish to connect to a white board and a radio at the same time, you can use an adapter called a splitter. These are common items and there are many sources, but you cannot always guarantee their performance. However,

Connevens evaluates everything they sell, so they should be more reliable. Some whiteboards may not use traditional 3.5mm audio leads. They may use HDMI leads or USB connections. This may seem to be more complicated but the principles of connection are the same.

There are adapters for these also. You may need to consult your IT department as to the best options, but they are relatively inexpensive to purchase. They will have a HDMI input and output, so you can connect it in-between the laptop and the whiteboard, but it will also have a 3.5mm output that can be used for the input into a radio aid. If you have a USB connection it is the same principle but the adapter will have USB Connection and a 3.5mm audio out socket for connection to a radio aid.

Links to adapters



1. Standard audio lead 3.5mm audio lead

<https://www.connevens.co.uk/product/4833161/MX190251/Precision-3-5mm-stereo-jack-lead-1-5m>



2. Audio splitter

Stereo 3.5mm plug to two stereo 3.5mm sockets

<https://www.connevens.co.uk/product/2898/MXF387/Stereo-3-5mm-plug-to-two-stereo-3-5mm-sockets>



3. RCA

0.2m lead with two RCA phono plugs to 3.5mm stereo socket adaptor

<https://www.connevens.co.uk/product/5023594/MX112070/2-RCA-phono-to-3-5mm-stereo-socket-adaptor---0-2m>



4. USB

External USB audio adapter sound card with one 3.5mm aux TRRS Jack

https://www.amazon.co.uk/TROND-External-Adapter-Integrated-Microphone/dp/B07L56C28R/ref=sr_1_5?adgrpid=87521180316&dchild=1&gclid=EALaQobChMIg9O44brU7AlVmk3tCh3JzQQIEAAYASAAEgKBM_D_BwE&hvadid=408163842647&hvdev=c&hvlocphy=1007200&hvnetw=g&hvqmt=e&hvrnd=15644129564963466798&hvtargid=kwd-5885993251&hydadcr=4178_1794987&keywords=3.5mm+jack+to+usb&qid=1603790938&sr=8-5&tag=googhydr-21



5. HDMI

Allows you to extract an analogue audio signal from a digital HDMI input, particularly useful for connecting a radio aid transmitter to a classroom whiteboard, where the connection to the computer is via HDMI

<https://www.connevans.co.uk/product/25407157/93ACONV2/HDMI-Digital-to-Analogue-Audio-Extractor---Leads>

There are situations where you may wish to have multiple people communicating via a radio aid. If you have spare transmitters you can also connect these in a network with the transmitter that you are using to connect to the computer. Hence, the child can simultaneously listen to anything from the original transmitter and also anything from the other transmitters in that network. This includes: Digimaster Soundfield, Pass Around Mic, Media Hubs, Base Station, Touchscreen or Inspiro (Premium or Roger only). If necessary you could have up to 35 different transmitters in this network. Your options are essentially unlimited. You could use this arrangement for halls or school plays, if they have a large number of transmitters available. The network is also fully automated so it works via voice activation. We often use this arrangement for conferences to improve audience participation for questions and answers. This is more inclusive in general, but it is also particularly relevant for anyone with a hearing-related need.

Communication does not totally rely on one sense and no technology is perfect. It may be a drop in concentration or poor lighting that limits lip reading. There may be additional needs such as visual impairment. In this scenario, some method of recording the lecture is incredibly useful. There are many ways of achieving this. New PCs also have automatic voice transcription; Windows Speech Recognition Cortana or Mac Catalina work well. This can also be used on a smartphone or iPad, so it is a versatile solution.

Links to voice recognition programs

On Mac

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_Obpv14kD3I

On PC

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8f9i7NUjeWM>

The question is how do you integrate this into a radio network? Interestingly, the headphone socket on most

modern laptops can be configured as a mic or external input socket. You can use this to send information from a radio aid. This may seem counterintuitive, but it is relatively straightforward. If you only have one transmitter (Touchscreen only) and you only wish to record audio on an existing training material, you can simply change the audio setting from audio in, to audio out and use the Touchscreen as a wired microphone.



https://www.phonakpro.com/content/dam/phonakpro/gc_hq/en/products_solutions/wireless_accessories/roger_touchscreen_mic/documents/user_guide_roger_touchscreen_mic_029-3222.pdf
(Section 16.7 Audio Settings)

If you wish to record voice, in a more complex situation you can also input the transmitter into a PC as part of a network. You will need a Mylink or MLxS Checker with a Roger receiver. The MyLink or checker have a headphone output and it is this that can be used to enable recording information from the transmitter. If you have additional Touchscreens or Inspiro (Premium or Roger), the transmitter can also be linked to any other transmitter in that network. As a result, you can record automatically any other person using another transmitter in that network. This can then be saved in your preferred format, and used as a useful transcription for a remote lecture or from a classroom situation.

Please note the headphone output from the Mylink or MLxS checker is 2.5mm, so you will also need a 2.5mm to 3.5mm adapter

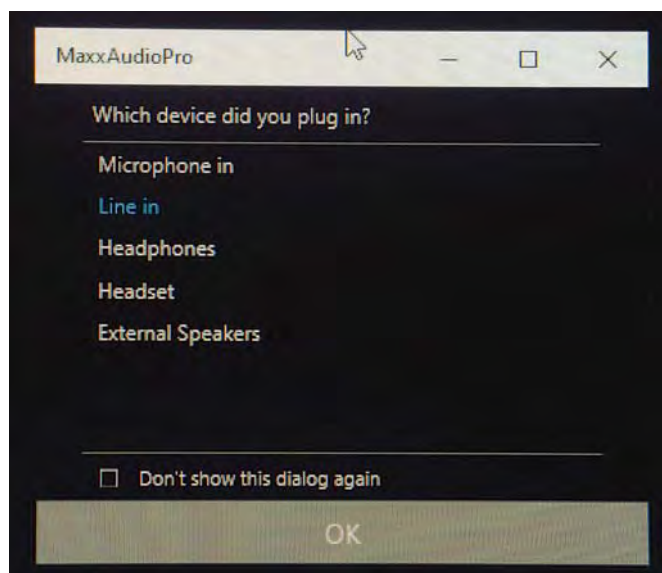
Connevans link

<https://www.connevans.co.uk/product/1016465/X35S25/3-5mm-to-2-5mm-stereo-audio-lead---1-5m>

Whilst this short article cannot cover every model of audio visual equipment, if you follow the basic principles of input and output connections, whatever technology or physical connections that are needed can be broken down into their constituent parts and hopefully utilise the full potential of the technology that in many cases you may already have.

Troubleshooting

If you are concerned that this system does not seem to be working, you can also test the output of the PC with a set of headphones to see if the sound is present. Or if you wish to check if the sound is coming from the network you are trying to record, you can use the Mylink or MLx Checker.



OC audio settings

If you are experiencing issues with the headphone output, it is usually that the volume of the PC or smartphone is too low, as the radio aid needs a certain level of input to switch on.

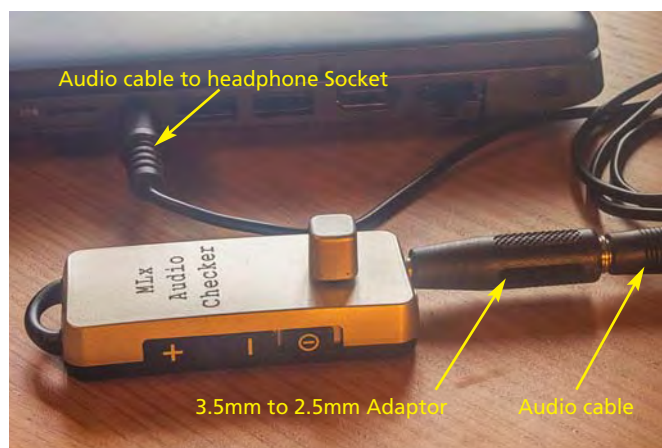
As PCs have multiple outputs, it may be that the sound is defaulting to another output and not the headphone socket, particularly if the laptop has just been used with something else recently. You can check this in the 'Sound Settings' of the PC.

Link to PC sound settings

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ko1A1qcqWWQ>

When you plug in your audio lead to the PC, it should ask what you want to do. In this case it recognises an audio input or 'Line in':

Audio input for voice transcription via Roger



How to connect to PC

Conclusion

This article cannot cover all the possible interactions that you may come across in the home or in the classroom. Hopefully, it is helpful in addressing the majority of scenarios. There is also no guarantee that all connectors are of good quality. Where possible, it would be sensible to purchase them via a reputable source. However, if the solution cannot be found within this article, there are

many sources of information that can assist you. Your IT department or the manufacturer should be able to advise you as to the best options and, of course, there are websites such as Google or YouTube. However, internet searches can lead to frustration, as many of these products may be untested, so again, advice from a trusted source with good quality components is always the better option.

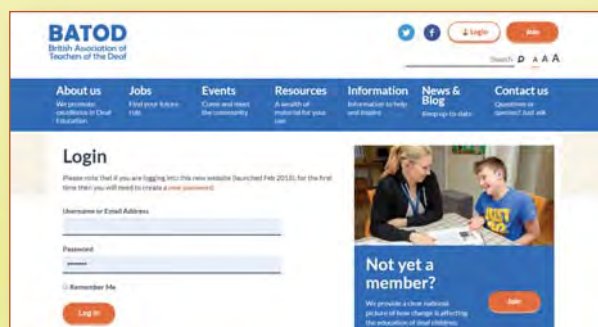
Tony extends his thanks to the team at Connevens.



Tony Murphy is the Business Development and Technical Specialist Manager at Phonak.

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On your first visit you need to click on 'Login' and then on 'Forgotten your password or logging in for the first time?'

You will need to provide the email address which is already in the database.

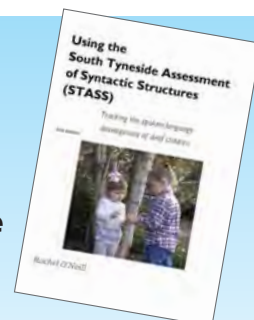
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Explore the fantastic resource that is **www.batod.org.uk**

Revised STASS Guide

Rachel O'Neill has revised the Guide to **Using the South Tyneside Assessment of Syntactic Structures**



Available to download from the Scottish Sensory Centre (SSC) website: <http://www.ssc.education.ed.ac.uk/library/publications/stass.pdf>

Ovingdean Hall boost Panathlon's support for athletes

Mike Dale provides an overview of their programme for deaf children and young people



Panathlon's incredible impact on deaf young people has been boosted by a £25,000 donation from Ovingdean Hall Foundation.

Panathlon is the charity which gives over 20,000 young people with disabilities and special needs every year the opportunity to take part in competitive sport.

Their programme of events specifically for deaf pupils – which includes swimming, boccia, ten-pin bowling and multi-sport events across England and Wales – saw over 1,500 competitors take part in 2019/20.

Ovingdean Hall Foundation has supported Panathlon since 2014 and their backing has been instrumental in the charity's rapid recent growth.

Most importantly, they have helped Panathlon make a hugely positive impact on thousands of deaf children by reducing feelings of isolation and building self-esteem.

Claire Simons from Ovingdean Hall Foundation commented, "One of the central tenets of the Foundation is to address isolation by bringing deaf children and young people together.

"That's one of the great things about Panathlon. It's hugely important work. It gives children really important experiences, boosts their confidence and develops new skills."

Funding from the Foundation enabled Panathlon to increase its programme for deaf students to 30 events in the last academic year. This included prestigious competitions such as the **National Under-18 Deaf Swimming Final** and **National Primary Deaf Swimming Final** at the London 2012 Aquatic Centre and the **South of England Deaf Boccia Championship** at the Copper Box Arena.

National and regional finals held in such high-profile venues give deaf children a huge boost in confidence, allowing them to dream, achieve and be inspired. These events also help embed sport into the deaf community.

One of the thousands of pupils for whom Panathlon has proved a transformative experience is ten-year-old Dexter Hanmer of Mildmay School in Chelmsford, Essex.

Before joining Panathlon's programmes, Mildmay pupils had very few opportunities to take part in competitive sport or in any extra-curricular activities at all. But since engaging in 2015, pupils' sporting achievements are celebrated regularly.

Autistic as well as profoundly deaf, Dexter found it very difficult to regulate his emotions and couldn't cope with

not winning. Panathlon has given him the confidence and self-esteem to turn those negative feelings and behaviour around.

Simon Ash, Teacher of the Deaf at Mildmay, commented, "I believe Panathlon has really helped to transfer this mindset into other school situations. It has led to us choosing him to be a deaf peer mentor, helping to support the younger children in our resource base with their own issues using his experiences".

Claire from Ovingdean Hall adds, "One of the best things we hear back from teachers is how it builds a willingness in the children to compete alongside hearing children when they're back at school.

"The testimonials we receive talk about how the children enjoy it so much; they are so proud of their medals and love taking them home to show their families.

"For us it's about the positive experiences that children can build on for the future and experiences they will always remember."

Ovingdean Hall Foundation was founded to build on the legacy of Ovingdean Hall School for deaf children in Brighton. The school closed in 2010 as a result of declining pupil numbers. Trustees set up the Foundation with a determination to see the school's spirit live on.

"We are delighted to support Panathlon because they embody the ethos of the school so well," added Claire. "You're all about bringing isolated children together and providing an environment for children to challenge themselves, work as a team and make friends."

Tony Waymouth, Panathlon's Chief Operating Officer, said, "We are extremely grateful to Ovingdean Hall Foundation for funding our deaf programme and continuing our partnership into its eighth year and beyond.

"Our deaf events have positively impacted over 1,500 young people in the last year alone, giving them a vital platform to fulfil their potential and thrive in an environment where they feel safe and supported. That would not have been possible without the Foundation's support."



Mike Dale supports the charity Panathlon.

Developing decision-making

Jane Sinson presents an overview of the decision-making process of deaf children and young people with additional needs and reflects on the role of QToDs and support staff in the process

We all make decisions every day, but are you aware of the process you use to make a decision? Being able to make your own decisions is an important life-skill, enabling you to have some control over things that happen in your life which in turn can have a positive impact on well-being. However, many children and young people (CYP) with SEN will need direct teaching and guidance, from the earliest age, to develop this ability as they are less likely to do so through incidental learning. Developing, facilitating, and supporting a deaf CYP with additional needs ability to make decisions should be embedded into everyday practice.

This article aims to prompt reflection and discussion about the role of the QToD and associated support staff in realising the aspiration for every deaf child and young person (CYP) with additional needs that **there will be no decision about my education without a contribution from me.**

An overview of the decision-making process is presented along with exploration of the QToD's role. More detailed discussions, practical advice, and resources, including education focused case studies, are presented in my book *'Developing decision-making with children and young people with SEN. A practical guide for education and associated professionals'*.

Background

The importance of CYP making their own decisions is recognised internationally and supported by UK legislation. All UK special educational needs legislation includes CYP participating in making decisions about their education as a core principle. The Children and Families Act 2014 (applying in England) and the accompanying SEND Code of Practice (SEND COP) emphasises preparation for adulthood from the earliest age, including making decisions. SEND COP 1.40 states that 'all professionals working with families should look to enable children and young people to make choices for themselves from the earliest age' (p28). From 16 years old it is expected that young people will make their own decisions, this is enshrined in the Mental Capacity Act 2005 (applying in England and Wales). However, if the young person has had minimal guidance or opportunities to make decisions prior to this, they are likely to experience difficulties exercising this right and achieving the autonomy this gives them.

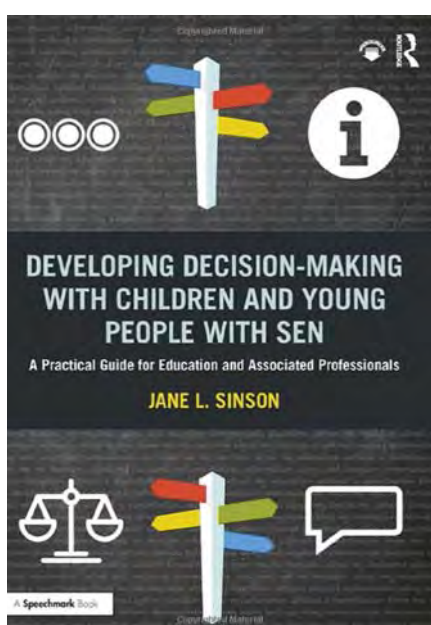
The Mental Capacity (Amendment) Act 2019, in force from April 2022 and applying to young people from the age of 16, amends the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards aspect of the Mental Capacity Act 2005. The relevance of this new law to developing deaf CYP with additional needs decision-making ability, is that it will become mandatory to ascertain the young person's views and feelings in relation to the proposed arrangements, which, may now include placement in a day centre and travel arrangements. Having the experience of making choices enables the development of views and feelings, such as preferences, likes and dislikes. This new law highlights the importance of young people, especially those who will always require a high level of supervision from education institution staff, parents, or carers, being able to make 'everyday' and, whenever possible, 'important' decisions, and to be able to demonstrate their preferences, as well as those supporting them to know these. Knowing the young person's preferences should assist those making a decision on their behalf if they lack capacity to do so, hopefully enabling the decision-maker to make the choice the young person would have made using the MCA COP 'best interests' checklist (Sinson 2016).

Research with individuals with significant learning disabilities has shown that most can make everyday choices involving concrete items such as food or drink, and that this has positive benefits to mental well-being, for example decreasing inappropriate and increasing appropriate behaviours. By implication, reducing difficult behaviours has benefits to the individual's educators and carers.

Decision-making

Decision-making is a learned cognitive process that begins in early childhood continuing into young adulthood. Children's and young people's experiences play an important part in developing the reasoning abilities that underpin decision-making skills. The importance of the role of experience in developing decision-making skills gives guidance to education and associated professionals to ensure they provide interesting and challenging activities to foster decision-making abilities.

Decisions can be categorised as 'everyday' decisions, e.g. what to eat, what to wear, and are developmentally the first choices a child makes, or 'important' ('more serious or significant') decisions (Mental Capacity Act 2005 Code of Practice (MCA COP)). 'Important' decisions can be



characterised as having long-term or life-changing consequences e.g. involving a significant change to a person's life, significant financial outlay or personal risk. In an educational context, 'everyday' decisions will include choosing lunchtime food, what activity to do at break times, which book to look at, or activity to do. 'Important' decisions encompass choosing a new education institution, options or courses, work experience; whether to take part in a day trip or residential; or what to do after leaving education.

Research has shown that people tend to think about making decisions in the same way, suggesting there is a common set of cognitive skills; identifying the decision, establishing the options, obtaining information about the choices, considering the pros and cons of each option to make the decision. It is this model that is set out in the MCA COP and is the recognised decision-making process in the UK; it provides a framework, language and model for the decision-making process. From the outset it would make sense to use the MCA COP language, thus familiarising the child or young person, education establishment staff, and parents/carers with the terminology and concepts. The author has devised a structured step by step decision-making framework based on the MCA decision-making process:

1. What is the actual decision that needs to be made?
2. What are the options?
 - a. What information needs to be gathered about each choice?
 - b. What format should the information be gathered or presented in e.g. photos, videos, objects of reference, by experiencing the options?
3. Identifying what is liked or disliked about each choice
4. Communicating the decision by any non-verbal or verbal means

Developing decision-making: the QToD's role

SEND COP 1.1- 1.10 sets out the obligations around CYP 'participating as fully as possible in decisions.....'(p19). However, deciding what 'participating as fully as possible' looks like and demonstrating that the child or young person has participated in making the decision may be challenging. Thereby raising questions about what practically QToDs and associated support staff can do in their everyday practice to develop, enable and support deaf CYP with additional needs ability to make their own choices from the earliest age. The starting point is acknowledging this involves a three- pronged approach, working directly with the CYP, collaborating with education institution staff and associated professionals, and supporting parents. Then there are a number of factors to be considered; however, given the brevity of this article only a few key ones can be explored. Nevertheless, if these suggestions are implemented, they would be beneficial first steps to support developing and enabling CYP's ability to make their own choices.

- **Strategy/curriculum:** A structured strategy/curriculum to enable and support the development of decision-making skills, including using a structured

decision-making framework and developing CYP's use of personal digital technology to assist making decisions, communicating choices and supporting parental involvement. Formulating a strategy begins by exploring what choices the CYP or those supporting them would like them to be able to make. The next step is considering appropriate approaches and resources, which should include assistive technology and suitable apps – an area QToDs must be knowledgeable in. If the CYP is approaching a change of educational placement e.g. Year 11 to post 16 provision, one post 16 provision to another, or leaving education, thought should be given as to how to involve the young person in the decision. This can be supported by formulating a decision-making outcome for this decision. To illustrate:

Jill (Year 14) does not understand she has to leave her current special school. Her barriers to learning are severe learning difficulties and a moderate bilateral hearing loss. She uses a few Makaton signs but mostly vocalises to show pleasure and displeasure.

Mrs Joseph, QToD, explained to Jill's parents that, as Jill is now an adult, she needs to participate in choosing her new placement despite having significant difficulties understanding the basic concepts relating to the decision. Nevertheless, Jill clearly demonstrates when she likes or dislikes something. Mrs Joseph advised Jill's parents that it is important to be aware of Jill's reactions during visits to the establishments and to visit each more than once to see if these are consistent. Mrs Joseph proposed working together with Jill's parents to identify the things that Jill would wish for in her next placement to assist her parents to make the decision. Together they identified that Jill likes cooking, art and craft, horse riding, going out into the community, animals and a quiet calm environment. She prefers being at school than home. Mrs Joseph suggested Jill's outcome for choosing her next placement as being:

By the end of the December: Jill will have taken part in choosing her next placement with support, she will have been helped to

- *choose an object of reference for each placement*
- *visit the placements and had photographs taken of key places and her joining in activities*
- *have her reactions noted to each placement*
- *have her reactions, likes and dislikes considered by her parents when making the decision on her behalf*

- **Language and communication:** to facilitate a CYP's decision-making ability it is essential there is consistent use of a shared language, non-verbal and verbal, by all who educate or care for the CYP. It is equally important that those who educate or care for the CYP are familiar with their preferred means of communication. As many QToDs visit several education institutions, being acquainted with each institution's way of referring to things, verbally and non-verbally, is essential. With the

CRIDE Update



Next year will mark the tenth birthday of CRIDE (Consortium for Research into Deaf Education), so **Paul Simpson** and **Tina Wakefield** felt that now is a good moment to reflect on CRIDE and its achievements and to update members about its work

Historically, over many years, BATOD sent out a paper questionnaire to gather data about educational provision for deaf children from heads of service. This gave useful information on the size of the population, placements and professional caseloads. However, by the early 2000s, the return rate for this paper exercise had dwindled. As a consequence, the information obtained was unreliable in identifying trends and also the relevance of some questions had diminished.

It was widely agreed that it is vital to keep track of the size of the population of deaf children and to know how, where and by whom they are being educated. The hope was, and remains, that this would also lead to an ability to link this data to deaf children and young people's attainments. So CRIDE was formed.

CRIDE is a consortium which brings together a range of organisations and individuals with a common interest in using research and data to improve the educational outcomes achieved by deaf children. There is a wide range of representation in the CRIDE group – at the time of

writing representatives include:

- the British Association of Teachers of the Deaf (BATOD)
- City, University of London
- consultants with expertise in deafness
- the National Deaf Children's Society, which provides a great deal of the infrastructure and does the data-crunching, the National Sensory Impairment Partnership (NatSIP)
- Frank Barnes School for Deaf Children
- Mary Hare School
- the specialist education services for deaf children in Kent, Camden, Cambridgeshire and Leeds
- the University of Edinburgh
- the UCLH and South Wales Cochlear Implant Programmes.

There is also a wider group which comments on draft surveys. All the surveys for England, Northern Ireland and Wales were designed and created by members of CRIDE. The Scotland survey was modified and further developed ►

► Continued from bottom of previous page

widespread use of personal digital technology and emojis becoming more commonplace in the wider environment and a universally understood language, should these now be used as a pictorial communication in place of Boardmaker or similar systems?

- **Experiences:** CYP's knowledge of their immediate environments and wider community is critical to developing their decision-making ability. Experiences offered should be relevant, purposeful and grounded in real life adding to the CYP's understanding of the world around them assisting the development of their knowledge to enable them to make choices. For example, if you have lacked opportunities to taste different foods, how will you develop your preferences and be able to make a choice? The DfE 'My activity passport' enrichment activities provide many experiences relevant to deaf CYP with additional needs, equally they can be adapted to ensure a breadth of relevant and purposeful experiences.
- **Outcomes:** To ensure a focus on developing decision-making it is essential that CYPs have a decision-making outcome in their EHC plan or part of person-centred planning. Therefore, QToDs should routinely include a decision-making outcome in their advice and champion this in the annual review or other meetings with CYP and parents.

Hopefully, these practical steps will prompt reflection on your current practice and what you may do differently to

ensure a focus on developing a deaf CYP with additional needs decision-making ability and embedding this in everyday practice. In turn this will facilitate CYP in making their own choices and enable you to demonstrate the extent of their participation in making the decision. What will you do differently tomorrow?

Write down your first step. ■

Jane Sinson is a Chartered Educational Psychologist and HCPC Registered Psychologist.

Save the date – 28th January 2021 1-3pm

At a NatSIP webinar event Jane Sinson will deliver a training session on Decision Making. A copy of Jane's book will be included in the price of the training. Further details will be available on the NatSIP website www.natsip.org.uk

References

DfE & DoH (2015). *Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0-25 years* (January 2015)

Mental Capacity Act 2005: Code of Practice. Available from www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/497253/Mental-capacity-act-code-of-practice.pdf

Sinson JL (2020). *Developing decision-making with children and young people with SEN. A practical guide for education and associated professionals*. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge

Sinson JL (2016). *Applying the Mental Capacity Act 2005 in education. A practical guide for educational professionals*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

by a separate CRIDE Scotland reference group.

Although it can be an onerous task to complete the survey, we are really pleased that it has been returned each year in very high numbers – the latest one had a return rate of 100% (a Freedom of Information request was used as a last resort in a very few cases). CRIDE is very grateful indeed for all the hard work because such a high rate of return helps to produce robust data.

The survey is usually completed by heads of service or team leaders within the deaf strand of a sensory support service. Where resource bases are devolved, consultation with the leaders of those units often occurs. Recently, special schools for deaf children were asked to complete a similar survey, because although deaf children in those schools should be captured in the service returns, the numbers of QToDs were not and this was an important statistic that was lacking. For similar reasons, numbers of ICToDs in auditory implant centres were also gathered.

In order to try to reduce the burden on respondents CRIDE agreed that the full survey would only be undertaken every other year, with a shorter, themed survey on particular issues in the intervening years.

CRIDE is the sole organisation producing this information in the UK.

The CRIDE survey reports provide a wealth of information for a range of professionals. The data can be very useful to heads of services and schools for deaf children when preparing for internal and external audits of local provision. The fact that the data is produced annually means that it is possible to monitor the number and location of deaf children, as well as the supply of Teachers of the Deaf and other professionals.

The information has been very useful when preparing a case to put to the DfE to encourage them to put in place bursaries for teachers to train as QToDs. Having to undertake regular data collection means that services often have the data they require for other purposes.

The information is also of great value to researchers who require robust data to support their work – and this is in the interest of the whole profession. Deaf people and families of deaf children and young people also report finding the data interesting and informative.

The data demonstrates that QToDs are working with an increasingly diverse cohort of deaf children, for example, in their use of technology, presence of additional needs, communication mode and use of other spoken languages. This information is very useful for those planning CPD both locally and nationally.

Just looking at some examples of the key findings of the last CRIDE survey highlights the range of knowledge and information produced:

- There are at least 53,954 deaf children across the UK
- Seventy-eight percent of school-aged deaf children attend

mainstream schools; 6% attend mainstream schools with resource provisions, 3% attend special schools for deaf children, whilst 12% attend special schools not specifically for deaf children

- Twenty-two percent of deaf children are recorded as having some form of additional or special need
- Sixty-four percent of severely or profoundly deaf children communicate using spoken English or Welsh only in school or other education settings; 9% use British or Irish Sign Language; 22% use sign language alongside spoken English or Welsh
- Thirteen percent of deaf children use an additional spoken language other than English or Welsh in the home
- The most common post-school destination for deaf young people is further education, with 70% taking this option
- There are at least 1,529 teachers employed as Teachers of the Deaf working in a peripatetic role, resource provisions, special schools for deaf children and/or special schools/colleges not specifically for deaf children
- Fifty percent of Teachers of the Deaf are due to retire in the next 10 to 15 years
- There are 295 resource provisions across the UK
- Fifty-five percent of services collect data on outcomes achieved by deaf young people at the end of Key Stage 4 (or S4 in Scotland).

A relatively recent development has been the establishment of a longitudinal study with NatSIP, University College London, and City, University of London. Its purpose is to investigate the relationships between pupil, provision and outcomes/participation variables with the overall aim of improving provision and outcomes for deaf children and young people with hearing impairments. It is a seven-year project and the first three years have been supported by the Ovingdean Hall Trust.

The CRIDE reports are published in two places – on the BATOD website

<https://www.batod.org.uk/information/cride-reports/> and on the NDCS website

<https://www.ndcs.org.uk/information-and-support/being-deaf-friendly/information-for-professionals/research-and-data/consortium-for-research-into-deaf-education-cride-reports/>

The CRIDE group is always working on making the survey more beneficial to the profession and deaf education and always welcomes feedback. Please let us know if you have any thoughts which might be helpful for us when considering the next ten years of CRIDE.



Paul Simpson is one of BATOD's Co-National Executive Officers and was Editor of BATOD Magazine from 2007 to May 2019.

Tina Wakefield is an experienced QToD, and presently Education Consultant for NDCS and NatSIP.

Technology update

Jeanette Hender addresses some real problems regarding auxiliary input which were raised by a parent and a school, examines some questions posed by newly-Qualified Teachers of the Deaf (QToDs), and gives some brief comments and suggestions regarding the delivery of online training

A parental enquiry

A family of three children (age range 1–6 years) all have tamper-proof, integrated Roger 18 receivers and a Roger Touchscreen Mic transmitter for use in both their school/preschool setting and at home. When taking a flight last summer, their mum was saddened that they had to watch the inflight film entertainment in silence for four hours (subtitles are not yet an option due to their level of reading development). On reflection, she wanted to know if it was permitted to use their transmitters on a flight, with auxiliary input, to access film audio.

The Touchscreen User Guide specifies the transmitter can only be used during a flight with express permission. I asked Tony Murphy, Wireless Communication Specialist for Phonak UK, whether such permission generally tends to be granted or denied. He acknowledged that airlines can be very wary as they probably don't know what they are. He suggested refraining from using a radio aid transmitter during take-off and landing but was not aware of any technical reason precluding its use during the flight. Tony advised those wishing to use a radio aid in flight to contact the airline in advance and send them the relevant data sheet so their tech team can make an informed decision.

The datasheet for a Roger Touchscreen may be accessed at: https://www.phonaknhs.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/datasheet_phonak_roger_touchscreen_mic.pdf

and the Declaration of Conformity can be obtained from: https://www.phonak-communications.com/fileadmin/user_upload/pdf/zertifikate/RED_DoC_Roger_Touchscreen_Mic_SF.pdf

A problem raised by a school

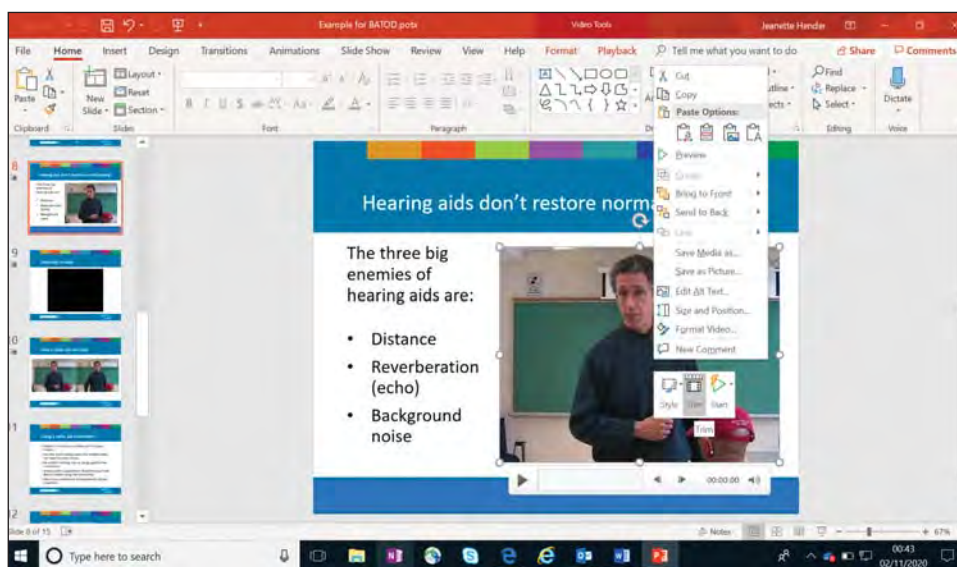
A key stage 1 cochlear implant user became distressed in his new class last September when a splitter and 3mm jack lead were used to connect his transmitter to the audio signal being broadcast from the class smartboard. This method had worked very well the previous year when the class was watching film and TV clips; however, he was now adamant that the signal was uncomfortably loud.

It transpired that this year's classroom had a new

smartboard with its own volume control. Whilst the volume was appropriate for those listening through ambient sound in the classroom, this had been achieved through raising the computer volume and lowering the smartboard speaker volume. Since the transmitter was receiving the sound directly out of the computer, only the pupil concerned was receiving an uncomfortably loud signal. Once the computer volume was reduced to a comfortable level for him, the smartboard speaker volume could be adjusted to an appropriate level of audibility for the rest of the class.

Newly-qualified ToDs asked about data logging: What is it? How is it accessed? Are there any issues about consent?

Information collected by hearing aid data logging varies between manufacturers. It is accessed by connecting the hearing aid to the programming software via a Hi-Pro box, and therefore would normally be done by the clinical audiologist rather than a QToD. It can provide the audiologist with information about how the hearing instrument is being used, such as hours of use or time spent in each programme. The more features or programmes that are enabled on a hearing aid, the more data that is likely to be available. In the case of adults or older young people, data logging is likely to assist the audiologist in their discussions with the user and may help inform any necessary tweaks to the programming. For younger children using only one programme, such as custom calm, available data may be limited to average daily use. Data logging may be best thought of as a tool at the audiologist's disposal. Whilst the data can be informative, it is difficult to be certain of its accuracy. For



Including a video clip with a PowerPoint presentation

example, a hearing aid could be left on in a drawer but appear to be used consistently. Audiologists may find it helpful to share significant data logging findings with the child's QToD, as they are perhaps more likely to have a rapport with the child/young person and family and may be better placed to follow up any issues.

There appear to be differences of opinion regarding consent. Since the data doesn't include details, such as GPS tracking or voice recording, the audiology departments consulted do not obtain formal consent but simply mention to the child's family that the hearing aid stores information about how it is being used. This approach is very similar to the information provided regarding radio aids. For example, the Roger Touchscreen User Guide (in section 24.3) informs the user that the "Device collects and stores internal technical data. This data may be read by a hearing care professional in order to check the device, as well as to help you use your device correctly". QToDs and Educational Audiologists should point this out to families and those who will be using the radio aid at the time of fitting, in a similar way to highlighting the other point in the same section regarding caution about pacemakers/medical devices and transmitter use.

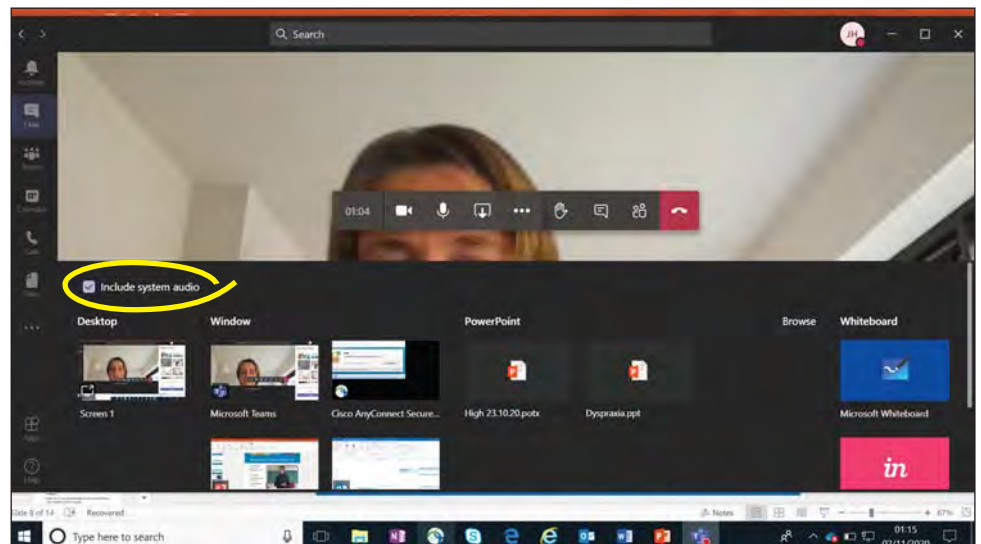
Although the clinical software has potential to recognise the use of a radio aid, eg in the section Roger DAI and mic, QToDs may obtain information about usage and link quality by using the check feature on the transmitter, if available, to read the information stored on the receiver.

The newly-QToDs also wanted information about tone hooks

Tone hooks, also known as elbows, enable the hearing aid to sit comfortably on the ear and to be connected to the flexible tubing of the ear mould. They are available in different sizes, such as those to fit a baby's ear, and in a range of colours. They need to be changed periodically, so QToDs should alert the family/audiology if they become loose, discoloured, cracked or split. Tone hooks can have a small impact on the frequency response of the hearing aid, and therefore need to be fitted when programming/testing the hearing aid. Tone hooks with filters used to be used more frequently in the days of analogue hearing aids, when every little change was sometimes needed in trying to achieve a match to target. However, when programming digital hearing aids, there is much greater potential to adjust specific frequency bands so the need for a filtered tone hook is largely obsolete.

Further to the list of potentially useful video clips that appeared on this page in the last magazine ...

During these times when QToDs are unable to



Tick the box to include system audio

demonstrate the limitations of hearing aids and the benefit of radio aids to staff through hands-on training activities, the following clip Hearing Aid – FM Simulation can prove a powerful illustration:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1I37IzLlqQU>

One secondary school that had requested whole-staff training had refused to use the radio aid for the first half term of this academic year due to fears of cross contamination from passing the transmitter between staff. They believed the student was coping fine, but he was telling his family to the contrary. After watching excerpts of this clip as part of remote training during an inset day, they were immediately keen to discuss how the radio aid could be safely incorporated in future.

Including video clips as part of remote training

The Insert tab within PowerPoint contains an option to add video or audio direct from the web; however, if local authority protocols block external content being included or cause PowerPoint to crash, freely-available software, such as ClipGrab, can be used to save the aforementioned video or any other clip from video-sharing websites in an appropriate file format such as MP4. It can then be inserted into a PowerPoint presentation and trimmed so only the most pertinent section is broadcast.

To trim, click on the inserted sound or video file and then right click to access the trim feature from the menu that has appeared:

If delivering training via a video conference platform, such as Microsoft Teams, remember to tick the box to include system audio when sharing screen so the audience will be able to both hear and see the presentation.



Jeanette Hender is the BATOD magazine Technology section co-ordinator and is a QToD and Educational Audiologist working in Sefton, Merseyside.

Barbados 'Calypso' project

Ken Carter, Ruth Montgomery, Peter Boos and Roseanna Tudor give an introductory insight into their exciting project

Calypso executive summary

Decibels, Audiovisability, Specialkidz International, and Barbados Council for the Disabled's 'Calypso' project will bring together deaf and hearing professionals from across three continents in a truly ground-breaking music and visual arts project based on the island of Barbados. Drawing on calypso's vibrant history, the activities will emphasise the island's culture, as well as take a wider look at deafness in the world at large. The message will be loud and clear: deaf people can do anything, except hear perfectly, and deaf Barbadians demand that their voice is heard. The project will have a community focus, involving people from all walks of life from Barbados. Young people will work alongside professional artists, musicians and role models, discussing themes of life that apply to them. It will promote engagement with the hearing world and give them the opportunity to begin harnessing their talents and using new skills to establish community projects and businesses of their own. We expect that with extended support, the impact of the project will include improved education for the deaf, better accessibility to events, more job opportunities for deaf people, and improved access to health care.

How the Calypso project began

It was at the government/ business/charitable/philanthropic meeting at Bay House, Cattlewash, Barbados on Wednesday 18th April 2018, when the proposed Calypso project was raised by Ken Carter and Helen Lansdown to Peter Boos and his Bajan colleagues.

Due to lots of interest by the delegates at the meeting about the 'Calypso' project idea, it was suggested that we would involve a number of outstanding deaf role models from the respective countries. It was Ruth Montgomery and Eloise Garland from the UK who took up the challenge, and through the generosity of the Peter Boos Family Foundation, they were both sponsored to visit Barbados and start putting together a business plan of how we might get this project off the ground.

On their visit to Barbados they met up with Mr John King, Minister of Culture in Barbados, and other important individuals, such as Bonnie Leonce who is a professional Interpreter for Deaf People on the island.

It was decided that the representatives of our four organisations would put a business plan together with an appropriate budget and submit it to possible sponsors. After a lot of hard work, the application was submitted and it was finally successful.

What the 'Calypso' project wants to achieve

It has been made clear by all concerned that we definitely want to engage the Deaf community in Barbados, give them a voice and engage wider society with the project, creating new links between Deaf and hearing communities. At the same time, we want to create opportunities and worldwide networks for the Deaf community in Barbados. It is our intention to create three new calypso/hip-hop fusion songs with videos in collaboration with Sean Forbes, Wawa, and Barbadian musician Teddy Calderon, drawing on the culture of the island and being deaf in the world at large.

We think this project is very important as the creative arts have a wonderful and instant way of giving the Deaf community a voice through the medium of music, visual arts and sign language at a mainstream level. It is a known fact through research that Deaf people in Barbados seem to be marginalised by society – Bonnie Leonce states that: "Deaf people in Barbados leave school and are in a world of their own unless they go out and find a job which pays them very little... The sad thing about this is that when you ask them what their dreams are the answer is simply: nothing! Why? Because as they see it, their future is a dead end".

As music is powerful enough to bring communities together, this project is unique because it is rare to see music and Deafness/sign language being used together.



Meeting with Mr John King, Minister of Culture in Barbados (third from right)



agencies to effect change and champion the rights of all persons with disabilities, ensuring their full and effective integration into society.

In its 44 years of existence, the Council has seen a number of successes. The major success has been the ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities by the government of Barbados.

The ratification of this UN Convention means the Council

Through music and with top professionals, we can show that Deaf people can achieve the same as hearing people. We want to use the best professionals in the field for music, art, film making, and writing by running workshops for Deaf and hearing communities across the island, bringing in teachers, families, support assistants etc in schools and community centres.

What are the deliverables over the next five years?

Whilst Covid-19 has affected and delayed our plans in 2020, we are planning to start the project in Barbados, hopefully in Spring 2021.

Whilst we have funding to deliver the first stage of the 'Calypso' project, we are actively seeking ongoing investment for the period 2020–2025 to allow us to deliver an infrastructure in Barbados that supports deaf people's success in Deaf creative arts, medical, education, and technology enterprises.

What is our message?

Our message is loud and clear:

"Deaf people can do anything, except hear perfectly, and deaf Barbadians want their voices to be heard".

It is society – not deafness – that disables, and 'Calypso' will raise awareness of this across the community, inspiring a new generation of Deaf Barbadians. Decibels, Audiovisability, Specialkidz International and the Barbados Council for the Disabled want to create, support, and preserve new networks that integrate deaf and hearing professionals and audiences.

Organisations involved

The Barbados Council for the Disabled

The Barbados Council for the Disabled has a mandate to partner with all sectors of the community and international

is now armed with the necessary tools to pilot the required changes to the laws that would include services to persons with disabilities in Barbados.

Audiovisability

The name 'Audiovisability' is derived from three separate words: 'audio' (sound/music), 'vision', and 'ability'. Generally, society perceives Deaf people as having an 'audio disability'. However, Audiovisability highlights that Deaf people are able to listen to, appreciate, and interpret music, particularly through its inherently visual nature.

Audiovisability offers professional, mainstream platforms



Ruth Montgomery



Ruth Montgomery working with a group of hearing young musicians at Guildhall School of Music and Drama, London

for often unseen, and unheard Deaf musicians and artists. By offering unique opportunities for collaboration and a high-quality, accessible platform, Audiovisability dispels the myth that deafness and music do not go together. Audiovisability believes in creating a voice of our world that creates a shift change, as we showcase our ways of seeing and perceiving the world; as a result, we improve on audience engagement, innovation, rights and accessibility. Visual arts often go hand in hand with music, here in Audiovisability – opening up skills-sets, appeal, pushing new boundaries, and storytelling, which is directly related to our Deaf lives.

Audiovisability has enjoyed successful projects since its conception in 2016: The Elements of Music with visual artists, The Unheard World with Arab musicians, and Dressage with horse and riders. All three projects have adopted a multidisciplinary approach, collaborating with professionals from across the arts and beyond.

Ruth Montgomery – Founder and Director of Audiovisability.

Decibels

Decibels was founded as a charitable company limited by guarantee in April 2005, with the aim of promoting the education and training of children and young people with a variety of special needs and disabilities, for the purpose



of enabling them to learn, appreciate and enjoy sound, music, the arts and drama through the use of technology. It seeks to advance this work by providing facilities, equipment, research and a spirit of innovation, incorporating technological developments with a view to including young people in the community and the musical and artistic worlds.

Some of its projects have been: KidzAloud, Sign along with Music, Colour Music, Circle of Sound, Seeing Music, Hands on Shakespeare, The Week of Sound, Dressage, Art and Music Workshops, Challenges of creating music through Audiological Technology, Makey Makey, and Playing Music together.

Decibels' Mission Statement: "Empowering people with disabilities to access music, sound, arts, film and performance through the use of ICT".

Decibels U.K. Registered Charity (No:1109004) and Company Limited by Guarantee (No:5301729)

*Paul Townson – Chair of Trustees;
Ken Carter – Founder & Executive Director;
Deborah Flory – Financial/Office Administrator*

Peter and Jan Boos Family Foundation

Peter and Jan Boos Family Foundation supports youth development, entrepreneurship, education, addiction treatment, environmental protection, arts and culture development, relief of poverty, and support of various community and charitable causes that focus on Integral Human Development.

Peter Boos – Peter and Jan Boos Family Foundation.

Specialkidz International

Specialkidz promotes the education of children and young people with a variety of disabilities and/or difficulties, for the purpose of enabling them to learn, appreciate and enjoy the skill of communication through the use of technology. It creates and establishes a spirit of innovation by incorporating technological developments into various aspects of accessibility and inclusive practice for those whom we want to educate and train. It advances the above by providing facilities, equipment and research with the view to building and maintaining the social networks of children and young people. It is now developing its international arm through the Calypso project. SpecialKidz is a UK Company Limited by Guarantee – Registered Company Number 07923265 and registered charity number-1191404.

*Peter Boos – Honorary President and
Ken Carter – Founder & Chair of Trustees*



This article was collaboratively written by Ken Carter – Decibels, Ruth Montgomery – Audiovisability, Peter Boos – Specialkidz International and Roseanna Tudor – Barbados Council for the Disabled

Covid-19 – a global epidemic

Chris Kubwimana, a Deaf Burundian who works in London, reflects on how Covid-19 has impacted his Deaf community in his home country

Chris Kubwimana, a Deaf Burundian who works in London, reflects on how Covid-19 has impacted his Deaf community in his home country

[Photos] The concept of the Latin phrase 'Nihil de nobis, sine nobis' or 'nothing about us without us', coined in the 1990s, is a powerful and famous slogan. It originated from the disability rights movement but has shifted to other interesting groups, whose aims or aspirations focus on the liberation from systemic worldwide oppression.

Nowadays, 'leave no one behind' is a catchphrase which also seeks to promote an inclusive agenda and encourage countries to undertake the surveys necessary to identify those at high risk of being left behind. We can dispute these well-meaning slogans, but the reality is that disabled people globally, including deaf people, are left behind in a crisis.

In a global crisis like Covid-19, more than one million people with disabilities, including deaf people, are largely "left feeling abandoned, ignored and devalued".

Since the World Health Organisation (WHO) declared the Covid-19 outbreak as a global epidemic earlier this year, it has, unimaginably, claimed more than one million lives and sadly the death toll is still rising. Some parts of the world are hit harder than others. For example, amongst other countries, the UK, perhaps, felt the force of the virus's impact with a full lockdown that commenced in March 2020. At the time of writing this article, in England we are going through a three-tier system, with different areas facing different restrictions.

In contrast, a country like Burundi, which has also had confirmed Covid-19 cases, did not experience a lockdown



at all. However, unlike the UK where borders have been reopened, since March, Burundi remains largely closed to the outside world.

The WHO and world governments have introduced many preventive measures, including a directive guidance that includes "Disability considerations during the Covid-19 outbreak". It highlights that "actions need to be taken to ensure that people with disabilities can always access health-care services, water and sanitation services and public health information they require, including during the Covid-19 outbreak".

The directive guidance is clear, it recommends that public health information and communication is accessible – including captioning and sign language for all live and recorded events and communications. This includes national addresses, press briefings and live social media. For more than one billion people living with disabilities



worldwide, including deaf people, this seems plausible, acceptable, or adequate in theory, though the reality suggests otherwise.

The deaf community in Burundi is an example to be taken into account: a country that DeafReach UK works in jointly with Aurora Deaf Aid Africa. Initially, the government of Burundi overlooked the significance and gravity of Covid-19 even after the virus was confirmed in the country. Burundi even went on to expel the WHO's officials.

However, things changed dramatically following the new incoming government in July 2020. The government, in order to contain the spread of the disease, put in place a series of preventative measures including quarantine sites, screening tests and the closure of borders. The results of a rapid assessment conducted by the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) on the impacts of Covid-19 on agriculture and food security were expected in July. However, the negative effects on food accessibility due to increased prices have already been observed (for example, maize is 37–61 percent above prices from the same time last year).

Despite the efforts of the government and international non-governmental organisations (NGOs) operating in the country, there is still a sense of claustrophobia amongst the Burundian population, let alone the deaf community. The Deaf community has reported intensified experiences of anxiety, fear and even paranoia during this pandemic. This is due to the lack of access to vital information about Covid-19.

Whilst there is no formal research into deaf people's experiences during this epidemic, their narrative and anecdotal accounts show that they are feeling largely isolated, ignored, left behind and unaccounted for. The government holds regular workshops and daily briefings via live television broadcasts to update the country on its Covid-19 response initiatives. However, the Deaf



community feels that it's as if they don't exist. They are never invited to participate in any Covid-19 awareness events nor provided with any information in sign language, and the daily TV briefings do not have sign language interpretation. People within this community simply do not know what is happening around them or where to go to seek help. Their immediate families and friends are unable to help either due to communication barriers.

DeafReach UK: supporting the Deaf community in Burundi

DeafReach UK, which amalgamated with Aurora recently, is a humanitarian not emergency organisation, and does not prioritise emergency appeals; however, it feels that it is vital and compelling to do something for the deaf community in Burundi. This was due to the recent major events that occurred in Burundi, ie several floods that left many people dead and others displaced, alongside the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

We realised that the Covid-19 crisis exacerbated the existing situation for deaf people in Burundi. We also realised that deaf girls and women suffer quadruple discrimination – by gender, by disability, by geography, and by unmet health care needs.

From our contact with the deaf community in Burundi and other organisations working in emergency aid, we recognise major health issues faced by deaf women such as 'period poverty', which has been exacerbated by the coronavirus pandemic. Deaf girls and women tell us that amongst the items that they need the most are sanitary towels, wipes and soap, so that they can manage their periods hygienically and with dignity and humanity.



We understood this need and engaged our efforts with a local partner in Burundi. The first program was devised to inform vulnerable deaf people in the capital Bujumbura about the virus



and ways to prevent it from spreading. This was done through a workshop in sign language, held in July 2020, and also included a wider plan to spread information and awareness amongst deaf people nationwide. Other assistance provided included face masks, food, hygiene kits for deaf girls and women. This program was delivered and implemented by the Burundi 'Association Action pour l'Encadrement et la Promotion des Sourds-Muets au Burundi' (AEPSM-Burundi).

A second similar Covid-19 assistance program for the deaf community in Burundi was held in October 2020 in the capital Gitega, the second capital city of Burundi. This was delivered by 'Association pour l'Auto-Development de Femmes Sourds du Burundi (ADFSB) with support from the Burundi National Association of the Deaf (BNAD).

Despite these best efforts, the needs of deaf people in Burundi are largely unmet. They are an extremely vulnerable group and exposed to great risks with no social protection in place. With no social services in place to help to reduce their exposure to risks or to enhance their capacity by empowering them economically or socially, they remain at great risk of exclusion.

Covid-19 only exacerbated the already existing major issues. The worst scenarios are a denial of basic human rights, such as lack of provision for education and lack of access to information and employment. It should also be noted menstruation is a taboo topic in myriad

parts of Burundi's society.

Burundi is a poor country. It could be excused for being one of the poorest countries on the planet; however, it is failing to identify and to provide services to those that are at high risk, such as the Deaf community. This is unacceptable, particularly given that Burundi is a signatory of international treaties, such as the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

The Deaf narrative in Burundi is that the community feels excluded from life's spheres, excluded from education, excluded from employment and training and, even more so, excluded from humanitarian responses including the Covid-19 pandemic.

The WHO has some practical steps that are also applied to the deaf community globally to help to bridge the gaps and remove barriers; this includes ensuring that public information and communication are accessible. For deaf communication this means the provision of workshops, captioning or sign language interpretation for

all live TV press briefings and live social media. Other steps include working with deaf people directly and also their representative organisations in order to identify actions essential to protect deaf people who are at high risk. The WHO recommends the provision of good hygiene and sanitation, where washing facilities and supplies are made available and accessible.

According to deaf people's experiences in Burundi these simple steps are non-existent.

Deaf people and other people with disabilities, not only in Burundi but globally, deserve attention in a crisis and they deserve better than this.

DeafReach amalgamated with Aurora and both organisations now work as one and work with deaf, and deafblind people and their families in Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda and DR Congo. If you want to know more about our work, contact us on info@deafreach.org



Chris Kubwimana is the DeafReach Trustee responsible for Aurora-led projects in Burundi and Rwanda.

A Source of Inspiration

Hazem M Shehada and Bahaalddin M Serhan describe the DSIC for Deaf Students at the Islamic University of Gaza

Abstract

The Islamic University of Gaza has adopted the concept of inclusive education ie mainstreaming concepts in education, and has established a specialist Center called the 'Disability Services and Inclusion Center' (DSIC). The Center developed policy and guidance to ensure accessibility.

The Islamic University is leading the way in facilitating access to a university education according to the criteria established by the international convention for persons with disabilities.

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

Inclusive Education is directly relevant to the Palestinian Disability Law and the Ministry of Education's 'Education Sector Strategic Plan', which concerns the rights of Palestinians with disabilities to education, Article 10, Item 3: In the Education Sector "... guarantee[s] the right of the disabled to attain equal opportunities to enroll in the various educational and training facilities and in universities in accordance with the curricula determined in these establishments." The law also stipulates providing "... appropriate educational and training curricula and approaches and other suitable facilities" and also ensures providing "... various types and levels of education to the disabled individuals according to their needs." Most importantly and most relevant to this master's program is the subsection "preparing qualified educators to train the disabled according to the type of disability"¹.

DSIC depends on information and communication technology because it is the backbone of a knowledge-based economy where the fittest survive, whether they have a disability or not. The deaf can now compete on an equal footing with hearing persons on the basis of knowledge and technological competence. Studies have shown that assistive technologies help people with disabilities to enjoy a more satisfactory life².

1.2 Motivations and aims

This paper presents deaf education at the Islamic University of Gaza as a case study. It shows the capabilities, resources, and achievements and, at the same time identifies barriers and ways to overcome them in order to facilitate better inclusion of the deaf. It also analyzes the current situation and makes recommendations.

The paper is organized as follows: section 2 talks about the Islamic University of Gaza and its DSIC; section 3 outlines DSIC and CDI (Community Development Institute) achievements; section 4 talks about the problems and challenges facing deaf education; section 5 outlines future plans; section 6 concludes the paper.

2 DSIC at the Islamic University of Gaza

2.1 Islamic University of Gaza (IUG)

The Islamic University of Gaza (IUG) is the leading institution for higher education in the Gaza Strip. IUG has over 19,000 students and over 900 teaching instructors. Over the last five years, IUG has started to offer online courses through Moodle

and to supplement courses with online materials.

2.2 Disability Services and Inclusion Center (DSIC)

Disability Services and Inclusion Center at the Islamic University initially focused on the inclusion of persons with visual disabilities in university education, and then expanded to include people with physical disabilities, and finally to include persons with hearing disabilities (deaf) in university education. Initially enrolled on professional diploma programs at Community Development Institute (CDI), students will be included in undergraduate programs later. In DSIC and CDI we work together with specific objective strategies which are:

- Enhancing academic skills and improving the level of knowledge of students with disabilities.
- Personal development for students with disabilities and achieving independence.
- Strengthening the center's role in serving people with disabilities in society.
- Integration of graduates with disabilities into society.
- Increasing and expanding educational opportunities for deaf students.

2.3 DSIC resources

The following devices are available at DSIC: alternative keyboard, Braille embosser, alternative mouse, screen reader, speech synthesizer, speech recognition software, FM systems for deaf students, and TTS system (a text-to-speech technology that is used in accessibility applications for people with visual impairments). The center is building its own library by reproducing reference books and publishing textbooks. The center distributes the textbooks to students and continues to build its own library. The center also keeps local newspapers and magazines available to its students through the center website. It now provides academic support in the form of curriculum materials in Braille or large print, and adapting curriculum materials with sign language.

3 DSIC and CDI achievements

In 2014 114 deaf students enrolled to study professional diploma programs at CDI. The first course to be offered was Creative Technology and the next Computer and Smart Device Maintenance. Twenty-five textbooks have been adapted with sign language for deaf students. There is free tuition and free transportation for 114 deaf students. This program is ongoing and has received a group of deaf students who have finished secondary school every year over the past five years.

In addition, 100 university staff in the various departments and colleges of IUG were trained to use sign language to communicate with deaf students through five training courses in sign language. The following table shows the graduation of students with hearing impairments during the previous years.

3.1 Active participation and initiatives

The DSIC students; students with visual impairments, motor disabilities and deafness face great difficulties in their lives, especially in completing their university studies, but DSIC help them to respect themselves and to rely on themselves. DSIC is

Table of No. of students enrolled at CDI-IUG

Academic Year	No. of Students*	
	Creative technology program	Computer and smart device maintenance program
2015/16	97	17
2016/17	31	32
2017/18	--	42
2018/19	--	32
2019/20	--	19

* The decrease in the number of deaf students is due to the decrease in the number who finish high school.

sharing its experience and expertise with other institutions, such as Palestinian universities in Gaza opening their own DS centers. Currently, the DSIC is running a series of customized training programs for other Palestinian universities in Gaza and the Atfaluna Society for Deaf Children.

3.2 Stories of Success

This program was successful, resulting in a change in the lives of deaf students integrating them in their communities with full rights, equal to their non-deaf peers.

One of the female students who graduated from the program was able to find a job opportunity in Net Steam, which is a company for internet and communication services. Due to her good performance, the company adopted integrating people with hearing disabilities into its program. The company started changing its environment to facilitate communication between her and the local community, by translating all guide signs into sign language. The staff of the Islamic University was trained in sign language; the number of staff willing to learn sign language indicates the university's increased awareness of the issues relating to disability. Consequently, communication between deaf students and different departments of the university is becoming easier day by day and the university is transforming into an environment which supports the integration of people with disabilities.

4 Problems and challenges

- Poor reading and writing of students with hearing impairment.
- Lack of specialized sign language interpreters.
- Teachers' lack of knowledge of the characteristics of students with hearing disabilities.

5 Future prospects and projects

The university recently won a project in the field of inclusive education 'Empowering teachers for inclusive education in Palestine' in partnership with European and Palestinian universities in the Erasmus Plus program grant. This project led to a joint master's project in inclusive education in Palestine. It prepares specialized teachers in the field of inclusive education for students with hearing disabilities and long-term residency in education, vocational training, training and educational projects devoted to vocational and school education and training in the field of education.

6 Conclusion and recommendations

The DSIC and deaf education at CDI has enjoyed great success over the last five years, as it has been able to make a difference in its deaf students' and graduates' lives. However, it also faced problems and challenges that it needed to overcome and was able to make plans to do so. Basically, this paper presents the DSIC and CDI as a case study, which looks into the center's achievements and challenges.

- Providing a unified academic reference guide in sign language.
- Working on developing the skills of sign language translators through intensive specialization courses.
- Adapting curriculum textbooks for students with hearing disabilities.
- Instructing teachers about the characteristics of students with hearing disabilities.
- Exerting extra efforts towards integrating deaf students and students with hearing disabilities into the labor market through job creation programs or projects.
- Increasing fields of specialization to cover new topics and new qualification majors.

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Reality and Aspirations

Khalil Alawneh and Mahmoud Abdel-Fattah summarize deaf education in Palestine

Introduction

It is important to understand the history of the political and humanitarian context in Palestine in order to understand the consequences of such history on the different aspects of Palestinian life, including education.

The Palestinian Authority was established in the West Bank and Gaza in May 1994 as a result of the Oslo Agreement between Israel and the Palestinian Liberation Organization. The Palestinian Ministry of Education (MOE) was created in August the same year. Since then, the MOE has unified the education systems that are used by the supervising parties who provide education for students in Palestine: MOE, UNRWA (United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East), and the private sector.

The General Census of the schools in the scholastic year 2018/2019 showed that there are 3,037 schools (2,300 are in the West Bank, 737 in the Gaza Strip) overseen by the supervising bodies: 2,234 are governmental schools, 370 are UNRWA schools, and 433 are private schools, with a total number of 1,282,054 students attending schools, of whom 9,383 are special needs students enrolled in governmental schools (6,160 in West Bank, 3,254 in the Gaza Strip) and about 3,100 special needs students with 'different disabilities' enrolled in private sector institutions.

The main findings of the census in 2017 showed that the total percentage rate of disabilities in Palestine had reached 5.8%, with a total number of 255,228 disabled persons from a total population of 4.78 million in the same year. The percentage of the deaf was 1.6%, which means that there are 76,480 deaf or hard of hearing persons, 46,080 in the West Bank, and 30,400 in the Gaza Strip.

Background

Deaf people in Palestine face many challenges and problems in their society and in all walks of life: education, work, media, social relations and interpretation. However, there are deaf people who are employed and studying, fighting for their rights and working hard against all obstacles.

The deaf community was first cared for through benevolent societies and NGOs (non governmental organizations). The first deaf school was opened in 1971 in Bethlehem. This school has basically used the oral approach until now. In 1992 more deaf schools were established after the first Palestinian sign language dictionary was published. These schools basically used the total communication approach in teaching deaf students using the sign language dictionary. Currently, 17 NGO institutions (schools) provide educational services for the deaf in the West Bank and Gaza, with an approximate number of 900 deaf students, and it is estimated that 1,700 students who are deaf and hard of hearing are at public schools (MOE, 2019). Disease was considered to be the main reason that caused deafness, while heritage was

considered to be the second cause. About 17.4% of deaf students use hearing aids, 3.2% use cochlear implants, and about 10% use sign language in their communication.

Ministry of Education policy and quality of education

The Palestinian authority adopted inclusive education (IE) in 1997. At the time, the Palestinian Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MOEHE) had, together with most countries in the world, adopted 'Education for All' as its educational policy.

Then, only five types of special needs students, the ones that were the easiest to identify, were integrated in normal classes: students with vision, hearing, mobility, speech, and mild to moderate cognitive disabilities. Meanwhile, other kinds of disabilities were probably 'integrated' in normal classes without any specialist attention and support.

MOE succeeded in dealing with some of the above disabilities correctly; the visually impaired were provided with a syllabus for blind students in Braille, as well as some equipment and materials. Students with mobility-related disabilities were supported by making changes to the school environment, as well as providing them with the necessary equipment. However, teachers are still not fully qualified to deal with all types of special needs. For example, deaf, cognitive disabilities, or autistic students did not receive a special syllabus or attention, and this can be clearly seen in the low level of academic achievement of these students. This is why many challenges have not been successfully solved so far.

Challenges facing deaf education in Palestine

The deaf community in Palestine faces many challenges that can be summarized as follows:

- 1 The data available regarding the total number of deaf students who should be in schools are still inaccurate.
- 2 The government school environment has not been adapted successfully to integrate the deaf and hard of hearing students in school buildings and classes.
- 3 Deaf and hard of hearing students are using the same government curriculum, and this has not been adapted to be suitable for the students. However, nowadays, there is a debate on having a special curriculum for deaf students or adapting the current one for their needs.
- 4 The majority of teachers employed in government schools are not qualified to communicate and deal with deaf students because of their lack of knowledge of Palestinian Sign Language. The teacher must deal with all kinds of special needs students integrated in the class.
- 5 The Ministry of Education used to integrate students with mild and moderate disabilities in public schools with no fees, while the lucky severely deaf student

might be enrolled in a deaf school with monthly fees that caused financial problems for many families even though the Ministry of Education used to support these schools with teachers whose salaries were paid by the government.

- 6 Deaf and hard of hearing students used to sit for The General Secondary Certificate Exam like other students. The Ministry used to give the same adjustments for the exam, such as hiring interpreters for deaf students, giving them 30 minutes additional time to enable them to finish the exam, omitting some topics especially comprehension in Arabic and English, and having the correction (resit?) of the exam for all students take place at one correction (resit) center; nevertheless, the percentage of success was always low.
- 7 The Ministry of Education used to employ 5% of the graduates with special needs to work in the field of education; however, the deaf graduates are still not getting the full chance to be employed in positions at the Ministry of Education.

Schools for the Deaf

There are 17 main deaf schools that offer education for both deaf and hard of hearing students in Palestine. Two of them are in the Gaza Strip, which are run by the government. Special schools for the deaf started to open at the beginning of the 1990s when the first sign language dictionary was published by the Benevolence Society for the Deaf in Ramallah City. In total, these schools teach around 900 deaf students. There are no recent studies that give the figures for the total school enrolment and deaf student enrolment in both private and government schools. The situation of teachers in deaf schools is also a key issue. Of the 235 teachers, 99 percent were women, of whom 102 teachers were employed by MOE to support deaf schools. Some deaf schools have a complete staff team, others do not. Teachers have different educational levels; some teachers have been schooled up to the 12th grade and have completed courses in teaching deaf people, others have only got a diploma, while the majority have bachelor's degrees in different subjects. Only two teachers have a master's degree.

The schools also have different levels of resources. More than 90 percent have their own website, computer labs and alarm systems. The differences are chiefly in the main human resources, like the number of teachers and the level of education.

Challenges Facing Special Education Schools

Special education schools in Palestine face many challenges that make it difficult for them to function and deliver suitable services for their enrollees:

- 1 The majority of deaf schools have no clear strategy for advancing the education for the upper grades of high school. The majority of schools stopped offering teaching after the eighth or ninth grade. This was mainly linked to the availability of resources, mainly financial. Today, only four deaf schools offer education for deaf students up to the 12th grade.

- 2 Most of the deaf schools are located in the main cities and, therefore, many of the deaf students are unable to attend their educational institutions especially when they are hampered by Israeli checkpoints, curfews, financial problems due to the poverty of many families, or transportation difficulties.
- 3 The location of some of these schools is not suitable, or the maximum capacity is not sufficient, to accept more deaf students. For this reason, many deaf people are on waiting lists while others go to mainstream schools.
- 4 All deaf schools are non-government institutions (NGOs). Each school has a different policy with independent financial and administrative work not subject to interference by government institutions. The Ministry of Education issues educational certificates for schools to be eligible for teaching deaf students according to special criteria. The Ministry also helps in providing teachers for these schools by covering their salaries (a total of 62 teachers). The schools cover the salaries of the other teachers.
- 5 There is a big difference between the monthly salaries paid by the Ministry (around \$900) and the salaries paid by the deaf schools (\$400). This will reflect negatively on the job satisfaction of many teachers.
- 6 There is still a shortage of teachers and educational specialisations, as well as a shortage of training that all teachers should obtain in the field of teaching deaf students.
- 7 All the schools are using the same curriculum in teaching deaf students that is used for teaching regular students, with the same evaluation given to hearing students and so on. There are many problems related to this: there is not enough time to complete the whole syllabus in one school year, and many of the schools do not have all the tools and educational materials to succeed. There are limitations in the sign language used as well as with the relevant materials, which are only available up to the seventh grade. There are also limited possibilities to work individually with deaf students in the class.
- 8 The use of Palestinian Sign Language in teaching varies. All deaf schools are using Palestinian Sign Language and the educational sign language dictionary but this only covers signs up to the seventh grade syllabus. Some schools use the total communication model perfectly, while others use sign language without being systematic. Some prefer not to use sign language at all and instead opt for the oral teaching method.

Deaf clubs

The deaf clubs started opening in 1991 after the publishing of the first sign language dictionary. The first deaf club was founded in Ramallah City and currently there are five deaf clubs with a combined membership of one thousand deaf members.

The founding of the deaf clubs was important. It was a sign of an awakening: the club gathered deaf people to form a special entity of their own, and to foster their own

culture. This led to the opening of institutions and educational clubs, particularly aimed at deaf people as in many places there were no schools for the deaf. The clubs were also important in spreading sign language through courses for parents and children as well as connecting experienced translators with the society. Deaf people understood that they were the owners of their language and it was their duty to spread it in society and teach it to others. Also, in the deaf clubs it was understood that deaf Palestinians were able to communicate with other deaf groups outside Palestine through meetings, conferences, workshops and creating relations with them.

Usually, deaf clubs help in giving a notification card for their members to show that they are deaf, which helps them if they apply for entry into Israel. Clubs also provide interpretation through their interpreters when their members face communication difficulties or, for example, if Israeli police detain them inside Israel.

Sign language interpreters and interpreting

Interpreters and interpretation services are a key issue for the lives and rights of deaf people. It is important that there are interpreters and that they are professional and officially recognised. It is important that they have a professional degree and follow the ethics of interpretation. It is not unusual for a deaf person to be abused or cheated by an interpreter who is not qualified.

The situation in Palestine is worrying in this sense. None of the interpreters in Palestine have higher education in sign language, that is before there were sign language programs available in any local university. Recently in 2019, a government university has started to give a diploma in sign language; however, this program has not yet been evaluated to see how effective such programs are. It is the deaf clubs that are the main education places for the interpreters together with the deaf schools, especially when they have a deaf employee at the school. The ability of an interpreter to practice interpretation depends on the deaf club members and their knowledge of signs and concepts, as well as the time spent by the interpreter among the deaf. A hearing interpreter or an expert in deaf education is usually the one who teaches sign language among hearing people and parents.

Birzeit University, a well-known local university in Palestine, launched a sign language course for registered students in September 2014, for the first time in Palestine. This project was completely supported by Finish Evangelical Lutheran Mission FELM for the first two years in cooperation with the Benevolent Society for the Deaf in Ramallah.

Conclusion

In general, deaf people in Palestine face many challenges and problems in their society and in all walks of life: in education, work, media, social relations, and interpretation.

The challenges are very often faced individually; it is left to each individual to get the services they need. This is due to a situation where the Deaf Union is weak and inactive. The Deaf Union is not strong enough

to defend the rights of deaf people in Palestinian society. Deaf adults are not supported adequately. Their capacities are not strengthened and there are very few opportunities to develop skills or complete basic schooling for those who did not have the chance to go to school as children. There are no professionals or experts working with deaf adults and there are very few expert teachers in the schools. The Ministry of Education is now working on the evaluation of the NGO schools and finding the exact number of deaf and hard of hearing students who are at school age school, in cooperation with other related stakeholders.

The Disability Rights Law in Palestine (1999) has not been fully applied. However, it is important for improving the situation of deaf people. The delay in applying this law may be due to the difficult situation in the occupied Palestinian territory, the political instability, and the financial difficulties. The Ministry of Social Development is now working on a renewed Disability Rights Law in Palestine at the first draft, and a research study to give the estimated budget of the cost of implementation of the law.

In addition, deaf people in Palestine need a formal representative association that would protect the rights of all deaf people, both children and adults.

Language-planning is important for Palestinian Sign Language. The language still lacks signs in many fields that will become necessary if deaf learners were to study further and have higher level professional careers. Palestinian Sign Language needs to be taught more widely; there is a need for community members and relatives to learn to use it to enable them to communicate with deaf people.

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Audio-phonetic rehabilitation

Sister Lara Hijazin describes the provision in the Pontifical Institute 'Effetà Paul VI', Bethlehem for audio-phonetic rehabilitation

Effetà Paul VI Institute is a school that aims to provide audio-phonetic rehabilitation and education for deaf and hard of hearing Palestinian children from preschool until the end of high school. The school is managed by the Sisters of St. Dorothy, Daughters of the Sacred Heart in Vicenza (Italy), with the cooperation of 46 specialized local teaching staff. The principal aim of the school is audio-phonetic rehabilitation that will lead to an integral and harmonious development of students as they overcome their handicap through audio exercises and oral communication.

The institute is situated in Bethlehem (Palestine) and was founded in 1971 in response to the wish of his Holiness Paul VI in the wake of his pilgrimage to the Holy Land in 1964. Currently, the institute provides rehabilitation and education for children aged 1-18 years who are deaf or who have a mild to severe hearing impairment.

Every year, Effetà Institute welcomes about 180 deaf/hearing-impaired children of every religion, constituting, in fact, in everyday life, an educational center for coexistence and mutual tolerance. The students come from different cities of Palestine: Bethlehem governorate and its neighboring villages, in addition to Hebron and neighboring villages, Ramallah and Jericho.

Rehabilitation methods of Effetà Institute

Through gradual and progressive education, any child attending Effetà Institute is helped to relate to others, to communicate adequately and to integrate positively into society. The method used by the school's speech therapists, teachers and educators is defined as 'oral'. From preschool onwards, language is developed through a combination of auditory training, the use of residual hearing and lip-reading together with speech practice. Subsequently, the

child is supported to develop competence in more complex language including the ability to use and understand grammar and syntax.

Education cycle at Effetà Institute

Early rehabilitation: The early rehabilitation speech therapy program includes a personalized bi-weekly meeting with a speech therapist for one to three-year-old



children. This service was established with the purpose of developing the communication skills of every deaf/hearing-impaired child through the visual, mimic-expressive and auditory-vocal channels; it is also useful to get parents and children familiar with the use of hearing aids.

Kindergarten: The kindergarten welcomes children from three to six years old, divided by age into three levels. Our kindergarten offers several activities tailored to the challenges that hearing impairment causes for language learning. The educational methodology includes games and exercises for auditory training to stimulate attention, to allow children to learn lip-reading and to increase their interest in communication.



Compulsory schooling: According to the Palestinian Ministerial Plan, the institute is open from Monday to Friday to students from 1st to 12th grade (primary school to high school). The average stay of every student at the school is 13 or 14 years in order to obtain the maximum benefits. The minimum number of students per class is 4, while the maximum is 12. The students are helped collectively and individually to overcome the difficulties of understanding and are stimulated to communicate and learn. In the classroom, the teachers carry out activities aimed at developing the main language skills: the production and comprehension of written and spoken Arabic. These lessons are also accompanied by the teaching of complementary subjects such as history, geography and natural sciences. The teaching staff, while adhering to the ministerial programs, research and use innovative methodologies and activities, suitable for the rehabilitation of the hearing-impaired child. The integrated use of bespoke teaching materials specifically created for the purpose, such as illustrated charts, posters, audio-visual media and computer tools, facilitates the learning process of the students.

Effetà Institute's other services

Individual speech therapy intervention:

The institute provides individualized sessions in which the speech therapist teaches each child – through phonetic exercises – to understand and formulate oral messages. During each session, every child is encouraged to learn to clearly express his/her thoughts and emotions. Throughout the entire school education process, the student undergoes individual or group speech therapy in which he/she initially learns to use his voice and to form words. Subsequently, each student learns to express sentences, to communicate, to understand oral messages and to transmit them.

Social assistance:

Within the institute, a social welfare service is available for the students' families. The purpose of this service is to provide parents with useful information and assistance for



dealing with their children's deafness and any economic and working difficulties of the family. The service also manages relations with other Palestinian public institutions, centers and services to allow students to continue their studies and subsequently facilitate their job placements.

The residential center:

Effetà institute offers female students arriving from remote areas, from Monday to Thursday, the chance to use the residential center within the Institute itself. The girls who reside in the institute are looked after during play and study afternoon activities by teachers and volunteers; they are also accompanied in their daily needs by the Sisters of Saint Dorothy. The older female students are taught to help the religious Sisters in the task of looking after the younger girls. Due to the coronavirus spread in Palestine, the school is unable to house the female students this year, so the residential center is closed.

Parenting group training

Parents remain the first and main responsible people for



the education of their children. On this basis, the institute organizes monthly meetings for the parents to increase their basic cultural knowledge and their skills concerning the communication issues of deaf/hearing-impaired children.

During these meetings, the institute's teachers and external experts convey knowledge and useful tips to families to continue the educational and rehabilitation work carried out in the institute at home, in addition to supporting their children in the study and learning process.

Sister Lara Hijazin is a Director of Effetà Paul VI School Bethlehem.

BATOD was there representing you...

Between the NEC meetings, members of BATOD attend various meetings that are of particular interest to Teachers of the Deaf. This list is not exhaustive. Your representatives at the meetings listed (as known at the time of writing) included: Sue Denny, Helen Devereux Murray, Steph Halder, Conor Mervyn, Rachel O'Neill, Paul Simpson, Lindsey Stringer, Teresa Quail, Stuart Whyte, Nicky Weightman.

Date	External participants	Purpose of meeting	Venue
October			
6	NITC (Northern Ireland Teaching Council)	Contact meeting	Zoom
8	University Reading	Research meeting	MS Teams
14	Institute of Apprenticeships	Trailblazer meeting	MS Teams
15	NDCS and NASUWT	Meeting about face coverings	Zoom
20	STRB	Remit for 2021	MS Teams
21	Communication Trust	Regular meeting	Zoom
27	ToD from US	Discussion re coming to UK	Zoom
29	Deafness and Education International	Annual meeting	MS Teams
November			
3	VOICE	Follow up meeting	Zoom
5	CRIDE	Regular meeting	Zoom
5	Ofqual Access Consultation	Forum on 2021 exams	MS Teams
9	UCAC	Contact meeting	Zoom
10	Ewing Foundation	Meeting with CEO	Zoom
12	NatSIP Working Day	Examination workshop	Zoom
19	University of Hertfordshire/Mary Hare Course programme	Committee meeting	MS Teams
23	Ewing Foundation	Fundraising discussion	Zoom
25	NAATD	Discussion re Australian version of CRIDE	Zoom
30	NDCS	Regular meeting	Zoom
December			
1	Alliance on Deafness and Hearing Loss	Regular meeting	Zoom
3	Edexcel/Pearson	Contact meeting	Zoom
3	British Society of Audiology	Contact meeting	MS Teams
8	University of Cambridge	Deaf awareness training	Zoom
10	NatSIP HoSS/NatSIP	Planning meeting	Zoom
11	NatSIP	Reference group	Zoom
15	Ofqual Access Consultation Forum	Regular meeting	MS Teams

Please inform the National Executive Officer, Paul Simpson, if you know of any meetings where you feel representation on behalf of Teachers of the Deaf would be of benefit. Although there is no guarantee that BATOD would be able to attend every meeting, situations could be monitored and the interests of ToDs represented.

Snapshots from Social Media platforms

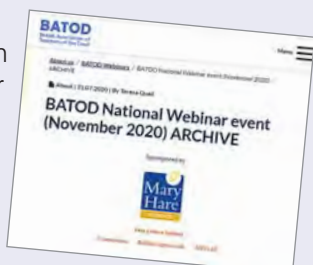
Coming to the end of 2020, definitely the most challenging year of my teaching career so far, there is a lot to reflect on. This year has forced us all to approach life and teaching differently, and the possibilities that the internet offers us to connect with others have never been more valuable. I hope that through the difficulties we have all faced, you have also found moments of joy and I wish you a positive and productive 2021.

BATOD National Webinar Event 10th November 2020

Did you manage to take part in BATOD's first National Webinar on 10th November?

Over 250 delegates gathered to hear the fascinating keynote speeches from Emmie Wienhoven on *Literacy for Deaf and hard of hearing children in Uganda and Tanzania* and Dr Helen Willis *The future for the cyborg generations: Helping CI users live in harmony with their technology*. If you missed the event you can view the recording on the BATOD website. It's well worth watching!

www.batod.org.uk/about-us/batod-national-webinar-event-november-2020



NDCS 'Expert Parent Programme' and 'Your Community' forum

www.ndcs.org.uk/our-services/our-events/events-for-parents-carers-and-families/expert-parent-programme

NDCS has developed a new online programme to support parents with deaf children to achieve the best outcomes for their child. It has also created an online forum 'Your Community', which is a great space for parents to connect with and receive support from other parents of deaf children.



Quality standards: Resource provisions for deaf children and young people in mainstream schools

www.natsip.org.uk/3807-quality-standards-resource-provisions-for-deaf-children-and-young-people-in-mainstream-schools

For those working in resource provisions in mainstream schools, the quality standards have recently been updated and are an interesting and informative tool for self-reflection and development.



'Where's the interpreter?' campaign continues

www.disabilitynewsservice.com/deaf-activists-on-200-mile-trek-to-bring-wheres-the-interpreter-message-to-callous-pm

Whilst coronavirus briefings are no longer happening everyday, the campaign to make news broadcasts and important announcements accessible to BSL users continues. Recently, two intrepid activists trekked 200 miles and others are doing similar feats to continue to bring the message to the government and the media. These role models have inspired my students into their own action this term. Do you work with any families or students who might like to contribute to this campaign?



Clear face masks become more widely used

limpingchicken.com/2020/11/10/deaf-news-bbc-news-to-expand-clear-masks-for-reporters-after-successful-trial-period

Following the NHS procurement of clear face masks for clinical settings over the last few months, other local and national organisations have been introducing these to help support communication. The most recent, notably, being the BBC who has begun to use them in news broadcasts. As long as masks continue to be needed in a variety of settings, the increased use of clear face masks is a positive step forward for equality and accessibility.



Helen Devereux Murray is a QToD and the co-ordinator for the BATOD magazine Social Media Snapshots section

Coming soon in 2021

Revised assessment information

A completely updated version of the NDCS Assessments for Deaf Children and Young People. This resource aims to support Teachers of the Deaf to carry out specialist assessments of deaf children.

It will also be of interest to all those involved, including parents, with assessing the needs of deaf children and young people, planning education support and monitoring their progress.

In this new online information you can:

- read about key principles and effective practice in assessment
- look at the purpose of assessments and good practice in preparing for and carrying out an assessment
- see the updated assessments and their pros and cons
- consider the steps to be taken following assessment
- look at an example of service practice.



Recently published resource –

How to support deaf children's mental health and wellbeing at school

Share    

How to support deaf children's mental health and wellbeing at school

Published Date: 07 Dec 2020




Photo: Read our tips on how to protect deaf children's mental health in school

The coronavirus pandemic has brought to the fore the importance of good mental health and well-being, so knowing what we know about the difficulties and barriers deaf children and young people face, how can we best support and promote their mental health?

There is little doubt that deafness, alongside a range of environmental and individual factors, such as gender, age of identification and personality, have a wide ranging impact on the communication, learning and social and emotional needs of deaf children. But just being deaf in itself does not increase mental health difficulties in fact some studies report that those with milder hearing loss are more likely to report

Categories

- Policy and research 
- Campaigns 
- Events 
- Fundraising 
- Deaf friendly 
- Alerting 
- Entertainment 
- International development 
- Technology 
- Tips 
- Early years 
- Education 
- COVID-19: information for families 
- COVID-19: information for professionals 
- Primary years 
- Secondary years 
- 15-18 
- 19-25 
- At home 
- Top tips 
- Sport and leisure 
- Social 
- Deaf awareness 
- Health 
- Education
- Technology

BATOD Magazine Archive online

Did you know that there are copies of all the BATOD magazines on our website going back to 1999?

These are invaluable for historians, researchers and students but also of great interest to the readership at large. Have a look through and see how things have changed – and what has stayed the same! Search 'magazine'.

www.batod.org.uk ► Information
► Publications ► Magazine
► and pick a year!



Review

The Quest for the Cockle Implant

Author Maya Wasserman (age 9)
Illustrator Lucy Rogers (23)
Date 2020
Publisher National Deaf Children's Society
ISBN 978-1-5272-6458-8
Price £6.99
Reviewer Ann I'Anson, Teacher of the Deaf
 IPaSS Hull City Council



and to understand, identify and explore the emotional reactions of the characters in the book. Sharing this book with my pupil generated discussions about gender, the environment, geography, science and our planet.

This book could be used equally well with younger pupils, again relating it to their understanding of deafness and the care and

This book was the result of a competition set by the NDCS giving deaf children the opportunity to write a story to be published for the NDCS. Deaf children aged 7-11 were invited to write a children's story and send it in to be judged. One of the panel judges was renowned children's author, Julia Donaldson. The Quest for the Cockle Implant was the winning entry. The story is about a deaf mermaid who loses one of her implants. She goes on an adventure with her sister to find it. The story is set on the sea bed, home to sharks, squid and strangling seaweed! They come face to face with the scary Merkitty and use sign language to communicate.

This is a very attractive book which will appeal to many young readers. The illustrations are lively and colourful and contain lots of detail about life under the sea and also environmental issues. I shared this book with a pupil on my peripatetic caseload who has a moderate hearing loss. This book captivated my pupil, especially as she is the same age as the author. This book is ideal to explore and develop deaf children's personal understanding of deafness as there are many opportunities to relate the storyline to themselves

management of their audiology equipment. It would be a great book to use as part of a peer deaf awareness session with further work being undertaken by the class teacher in the cross curricular areas mentioned above. This book would have a valid place outside of the peripatetic setting, in a Foundation Stage or Key Stage 1 setting and would sit very well alongside the popular books found in the reading corners of these classrooms. As this book is written by a child – 9 year old Maya and illustrated by Lucy aged 23 (both profoundly deaf) it could serve as a motivating resource about what can be achieved by deaf children and adults. This book could also be used by KS2 students (hearing or deaf) as the inspirational starting point for a book of their own, turning it into a stimulating and thought provoking KS2 literacy resource. This book will certainly become part of my peripatetic bag of essentials.

See *Meet the Author* on p58 for an interview with Maya.

Summary – marks out of 5

Quality	5
Educational usefulness	5
Overall	5

Regions and nations

BATOD members can register for any event across all regions and nations



BATOD Northern Ireland
Possible webinar event
Watch this space

BATOD Cymru
Possible event in Autumn 2021
Watch this space

BATOD South West
Possible event
Watch this space

BATOD Scotland
Webinar event with SSC
ANSD from birth
9 March 2021, 4-6pm
More details to follow

BATOD North Annual Study Day
Save the date
14 October 2021
Huddersfield

BATOD National Webinar
held on 10 November 2020, 2-4.30pm
Recording of the National webinar is now available here:
<https://youtu.be/IUL2LPfoUg>

BATOD Conference
Postponed event details available soon

BATOD Midlands
University of Birmingham and BATOD Midlands via the Festival of Social Science
'Switched on for sound: how one device changed deaf children's lives forever'
held on Friday 13 November, 6-7.30 pm
Recording of the event can be found here:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1UCQEsJexM&list=PL5TjiPlpilP9js50AOPVL8oumy4A7Ov_1&index=14

BATOD South
Possible webinar event
Watch this space

BATOD East
Possible webinar in Spring/Summer 2021
Watch this space

Poetry Corner

Simon isn't Simple

Simon isn't simple by any definition of the word.
 "Put your hands on your head," a tall woman says.
 "Point to your ears, where are your eyes?
 Eyes- eyes- eyes- eyes," she says with a sigh
 So he tries.
 He can't lipread head or ears or eyes or nose
 but this is a test;
 this Simon knows.
 She frowns and her hands go up in a flurry
 So he copies in quite a hurry.
 Simon isn't simple but he can't explain.
 He can't hear because he's deaf
 and now he's anxious and quite afraid
 of this tall woman who nods too much and
 has a fixed smile.
 If she showed him just once he would do it again
 but she's talking and pointing up there about him
 So he walks away to play.

It's not so simple for Simon but he survives.
 All day he watches and follows for cues.
 All day he watches children and what they can do.
 He wishes he could do it all too.
 But Simon isn't ready despite his device
 that brings sound to his brain to decipher it out.
 He makes noises not words
 can giggle and cry,
 Slowly making sense of this world of words.
 The warm furry companion lying at home on the mat
 will come out of his lips one day as cat
 No not cat but cak as that's what he hears
 but he will work hard to get it right as' cak sak on the
 mak' is what musn't be said
 if Simon wants to make sense in this world of words.

© Helen Shenton – *Helen is a QToD.*
 From her poetry collection "Different Perspectives"

There's a new girl in school today

There's a new girl in school today her name is Sally May.
 She's different from me so I don't think I want to play.
 There's a new girl in school today, she doesn't sound the same as me.
 She's standing over there, alone under the tree.
 There's a new girl in school today she talks with her hands.
 I'm not sure how she does it, I just don't understand.
 There's a new girl in the school today, the teacher says she's lonely.
 But I want to play with my friends and my friends only.
 There's a new girl in the school today, the teacher told us she can't hear us.
 But we shouldn't be afraid, she just wants to be near us.
 There's a new girl in the school today, our teacher taught us to sign hello.
 She signed back to me her favourite colour is yellow!
 There's a new girl in the school today and she is teaching us to sign.
 I'm thinking, she could be a friend of mine!
 There's a new girl in the school today, I'm sad I caused her sorrow.
 I'm definitely going to ask her if she'd like to play tomorrow!
 There's a new girl in the school today, we're different but that's ok.
 We've had fun and enjoyed our play.
 There's a new girl in the school today, we like that we aren't the same.
 She's promised that tomorrow she will show me how to sign my name.
 There's a new girl in the school today, I held her hand in afternoon play and told her don't be sad.
 I showed her all the cool places on the playground and said the school isn't that bad.
 There's a new girl in the school today and she reads my lips.
 To help her understand me my teacher gave me tips.
 There's a new girl in the school today and she is my new friend.
 I've written her a card to say friends till the end.
 There's a new girl in my school today her name is Sally May.
 We're different from each other but that doesn't stop our play!

© Michelle Carr – *Michelle Carr is a primary education student teacher and BSL learner.*

BATOD membership

BATOD activities are funded from your membership fee and some advertising income.

Colleagues who share your Magazine and Journal also benefit from BATOD negotiations with government and other influential bodies – but they are not contributing! Persuade your colleagues to join BATOD and you will receive 10% of their membership fee as an ‘introduction fee’.

Full details of membership are available on the website and new members are able to join online at www.batod.org.uk

ToDs in training will be entitled to a £20 reduction in annual membership fee. This applies for the two years of the course.

The BATOD Treasurer may be contacted via treasurer@batod.org.uk

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