

Ratios of deaf pupils and ToDs

Whilst there is nothing set in stone, the nearest document which can be of use is circular 11/90 (originally providing guidance for ratios of pupil to teacher in special schools) of which I attach an extract.

Deaf students (at least with statements) would fall into the second category - it indicates an expected ratio of 0.18 teachers per pupil – approximately one to six. This is of course for resource bases/units not peripatetic teachers!

We have always said that this applies to 'ordinary' deaf children and that if they have significant additional needs this can only be seen as the minimum. It also includes 0.18 TAs per deaf child. That also makes 1 to 6.

This is BATOD's recommendation as a minimum ratio in the absence of any official government policy. The circular itself was withdrawn in but BATOD feels that it still provides a suitable benchmark.

As far as peripatetic teachers are concerned there is some difficulty because it depends very much on the characteristics of the authority – urban, rural, small, large etc. and whether there are resource bases and special schools or not. Here is an extract from an unrevised BATOD document entitled 'Organisation and Management of Services' giving a rough idea:

"The following proposals are based on the detailed experience of a wide range of Heads of Services and represent a practical compromise between the ideal and minimal levels of provision.

Section 1 (under 5s)

One ToD: 5000 of the 0 - 5 years population. This should be regarded as basic provision and where any, or all, of the following factors are significant, the ratio should rise, to 1 ToD: 3000.

The relevant factors may be:

- a) a widely scattered population;
- b) a high proportion of the population having a first language that is not English;
- c) a level of educationally significant hearing loss well above the national average.

Section 2 (5-18 years)

One ToD: 5000 of the 5-16 years population, rising as necessary, according to the factors outlined in Section 1 above, to One ToD: 3000.

BATOD also recommends that the same staffing ratios are employed in the post-16 sector, based on the population of young people in full time education and/or training.

Section 3 (Requiring Highly Intensive Tuition)

One ToD: 3 hearing-impaired pupils who require highly intensive specialist tuition. This staffing should be independent of the basic staffing of a Service and LAs may wish to make the provision through their own Services or through specialist schools.

Extract from Circular 11/90

A Model

2. The following table illustrates one approach to assessing the staff time needed per pupil, in terms of teacher and special support assistants (SSA), to take account of the particular learning difficulties of each child. As indicated in the main text, it is based on observation of educational practice.

| Band of learning difficulty | Primary | | Secondary | |
|--|---------|------|-----------|------|
| | Teacher | SSA | Teacher | SSA |
| 1. Profound and multiple learning difficulties | 0.2 | 0.3* | 0.2 | 0.3* |
| 2. Severe communication difficulties | 0.18 | 0.18 | 0.18 | 0.10 |
| 3. Severe emotional and behavioural difficulties | 0.15 | 0.15 | 0.15 | 0.15 |
| 4. Severe developmental difficulties | 0.13 | 0.13 | 0.13 | 0.13 |
| 5. Other learning difficulties | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.05 |

* In a group of 10 pupils the maximum number of SSAs will be 3

3. Pupils aged under 6 may need an addition to the basic teacher time set out in the table above for each band of learning difficulty in order to cater for their particular needs.

4. Similar considerations apply to older pupils. For pupils in Years 10 and 11 it is especially important to provide for groups of varying sizes; to make appropriate arrangements for work experience, community involvement and link or bridging courses with colleges of further education; and to provide courses leading to public examinations, as well as non-examination courses for those pupils for whom this is appropriate. Teachers will also need to attend essential case conferences and procedures associated with pupils leaving school. A further addition to the basic teacher time proposed for pupils in bands 2-5 above may be needed.

5. Pupils over 16 should have a distinct curriculum appropriate to their age group; staffing for them should be at least as favourable as for the pupils in years 10 and 11 described above. In particular, provision of extended school education should include a substantial proportion of out of classroom experience. This will often be off-site and expensive in terms of staff time in relation to the organisation, travelling time and monitoring of students. The staffing of such provision should be independent of the staffing arrangements for the rest of the school.