

Are You Listening? – Conference
Saturday, 4th September 2021 Cedars Hall, Wells Cathedral School 12-4 p.m.

Thank you for your interest in attending the 'Are You Listening' conference this September. This is the first of its kind and will bring deaf and hearing practitioners and key organisations from the music and education world together.

The conference is organised by [Audiovisability](#) and [Decibels](#) in partnership with [Wells Cathedral School](#). Audiovisability is a leading music organisation run by D/deaf musicians and Decibels a charity committed to music education for the deaf. Wells Cathedral School runs a specialist music school within an "all-round" school for pupils aged 2 - 18.

There are around 50,000 deaf children in the UK, with levels ranging from mild to profound. It is therefore perhaps surprising that there are very few deaf musicians currently practising. Furthermore, there are limited musical opportunities for deaf young people, and standards of inclusive music provision vary widely across the UK. We feel it is time to bring people together to discuss honestly how we can address some of these issues. We want to create a space to share best practice and ideas, as well as creating more opportunities and raising expectations for young deaf musicians. We hope to establish a network where we can support each other and help organisations to make their musical activities more accessible through training, representation, and development of national policy. We don't have all the answers but hope this conference will help us start this journey together and push for real change.

The first part of the conference will feature keynote speeches by accomplished Deaf musicians. Between them they have a wide range of personal and professional experiences, spanning several decades, showing real insight into the world of music and deafness.

Speakers include: [Ruth Montgomery](#), Flautist, Artistic Director of Audiovisability and [Paul Whittaker](#), Organist and pianist, founder of Music and the Deaf. There will also be two breakout sessions giving an opportunity to discuss key issues in smaller groups including policy making & best practice, and a plenary to sum up the day.

Our lunchtime concert will give the opportunity to hear some emerging young deaf musicians in the country perform. We hope this conference will be the first of many. We look forward to meeting you so we can all work together to shape the future.

How to book: Tickets cost £15 for conference, £20 INSET, £30 for both. Tickets include lunch and coffee. They can be booked through Wells Events website:

<https://uk.patronbase.com/WellsEvents/Productions/3R1/Performances>

The conference will be fully British Sign Language interpreted. Wheelchair access.

Please email hello@audiovisability with all access needs so we can assure the conference is fully accessible.



INSET Training September 4th 4.15-5.45 p.m.

INSET 1: Making Music Accessible in the Classroom Led by Eloise Garland

For: Music teachers in schools and music hubs.



This session will cover a variety of practical skills, techniques, and resources to make music more accessible in the classroom environment. Very few deaf children have no useful hearing. Most deaf children can hear some sounds at certain frequencies and loudness, and with the use of hearing aids or implants they are often able to hear more sounds. We will share tried and tested methodology to help tailor lessons for individual needs, whether teaching music to an individual deaf child in mainstream setting or to the whole class in a specialist school.

Contents include:

- The benefits of music for deaf children and young people
- Music in the classroom – barriers to learning and how to make music lessons fully accessible.
- Visual communication
- Resources to use in the classroom/when planning music lessons
- Opportunity to discuss case-studies

Eloise Garland is a professional musician, teacher, producer, and Deaf awareness campaigner based in London, UK. She works alongside a number of charities, organisations, and companies to promote full inclusion and access to music for people who are Deaf or hard of hearing. In 2017, Eloise presented the radio documentary *Listening Without Ears*, which was broadcast on BBC Radio 4 as part of the station's *The Art of Living* series. The documentary explored ways in which people with hearing loss engage with music and sound and challenged listeners to consider music appreciation from another perspective. Eloise has worked with Audiovisability since 2016 to further visual music education and has played a role in all of Audiovisability's projects to date.

INSET 2: Supporting Deaf Students in Orchestras, Ensembles, and Private Lessons.

Led by Ruth Montgomery

For: Ensemble leaders and teachers in specialist music/private settings.



A session designed to give awareness into the challenges and barriers deaf musicians face when learning an instrument and playing with others. Ruth will share her personal experience including the trials and tribulations of a deaf professional musician and teacher, as well as offering practical solutions and insight in how to nurture and support young deaf musicians across a variety of settings.

Contents include:

- Best practice for inclusive ensemble leadership
- Support for deaf students in orchestras and ensembles
- Raising expectations in specialist education
- Music examinations: access and adaptations

Through her work as a professional musician, Ruth proves that music is not just auditory in nature. Coming from a musical family and having studied at the Royal Welsh College of Music for her B.Mus honours degree in music and flute performance, she is a flautist, music teacher and workshop practitioner. For 20 years, Ruth has established a successful teaching practice from early years to working with young musicians at advanced levels. As a visionary artist and Clore Leadership fellow, she has also developed professional relationships with arts, music and media organisations locally, nationally and worldwide.

As a performer, she was given the opportunity to perform with some of the world's best orchestras as a soloist - playing the Danzi Concerto with the Royal Philharmonic in London at Cadogan Hall and the Russian National Orchestra in Moscow and St Petersburg with the [Music of Life Foundation](#). She has performed as both a soloist and as a member of an ensemble.

Since 2005, Ruth has worked with hearing students as a music practitioner for Essex Music Services, as a flute teacher, Woodwind lead, and teaching music theory. She has entered over 200 students for their ABRSM examination and has a pass rate of 100 percent. Many of them have taken up orchestral, music college and university positions. She has delivered music workshops for deaf children for many organisations such as NDCS, MatD, RAD, and Essex Funding.

She leads the 'Music of Life' Deaf teacher training programme – a pioneering programme to expand the number of music teachers qualified to teach deaf students.

Ruth's vision is of a more cohesive society, which recognises the innate talent of deaf musicians and visual artists through the forging of partnerships and innovative thinking. She has devoted her career to revolutionising the teaching of music to deaf students by adopting a visual style and continues to push for changes in current educational methods.

INSET 3: Deaf Awareness Training

Led by Bryony Parkes

For: Classroom Teachers, SENCO, SMT, admin staff/ CEOs



A Deaf awareness session to support confidence and understanding when working with deaf people. The session will explore communication on a meaningful level and support those attending to consider the impact of being a Deaf person in today's society. We will look technology, levels of deafness and communication methods and how you can internalise behaviours to always be inclusive.

Contents include:

- Deafness: looking at the different levels and what this means
- Technology: understanding what is available, what it does and when to use it
- Communication: exploring communication methods, strategies for effective communication and supporting reflections on your approach (note that although if time allows, we may cover some BSL terminology, this is not a session to learn BSL skills)
- Impact: considering what it means to be Deaf in today's society, what is deaf culture and what you can do to support those you work with.

Bryony Parkes is a Profoundly Deaf, proud BSL user with a strong Deaf identity. Growing up in a hearing family, with a hearing husband and children, Bryony has always been driven to support the hearing population in embracing what Deaf people bring to the table in a different light. For most of her professional life, she has worked for leading Deaf charities, with a passion for ensuring Deaf Young People reach their full potential. She is particularly vocal about good communication, rights to access and intersectionality.