



## **BATOD 52-week cover guidance for QToDs**

The British Association of Teachers of Deaf Children and Young People (BATOD) is the UK's only professional association dedicated to Qualified Teachers of Deaf Children and Young People (QToDs).

The Association advocates for the interests of QToDs and the deaf\* babies, children, and young people they support, engaging with governments and key agencies at national and regional levels. BATOD provides ongoing professional support through continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities, as well as national and regional meetings. These initiatives ensure members have access to current information, resources, and best practice guidance.

This guidance document applies to all QToDs employed by the service and covers all holiday periods, including half-term breaks, summer holidays, and other non-term times.

\* Throughout this document the term 'deaf' covers the full range of deafness to be found in the population.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this document is to ensure continuity of support for newly identified deaf babies, children, and their families during school holiday periods. It is recognised that local arrangements may vary from input only to referrals from audiology following newborn hearing screening, to input for at-risk children and high-need families. The document outlines the responsibilities and good practice examples for QToDs providing holiday cover.

### **Responsibilities of a QToD service**

- Supporting families following the formal diagnosis of deafness
- Maintaining availability for some 'at-risk' cohorts
- Coordinating with audiology and speech therapy teams for continuity of care
- Working within the remit of the employer's lone working and safeguarding policies<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The public liability insurance cover and lone working policy within sensory support service can be extended to the non-term working/statutory 190/195 working days.

It is not mandatory to provide 52-week cover; however, since the introduction of the newborn hearing screening programme, many local/education authorities across the UK have embedded arrangements in their service offer and they may have it listed it as an explicit item in their job description. QToDs might operate on a rota basis or a bank of staff who have volunteered to be available. The teaching unions are aware of the reasonable request that may often operate as a time in lieu arrangement or, less often, as an additional payment. The cover, subject to local agreed arrangements, can be achieved in different ways:

- A day in lieu may be given for taking phone calls for a week.
- A day in lieu may be given if a visit to a baby/child and family is required.
- Some services may have an arrangement with colleagues in portage/early years services due to the structure of the sensory support service within the wider children's services.
- In areas where deaf specialist speech and language therapy (SaLT) services are offered from the point of identification, the SaLT team may lead on the cover during the education holiday periods.

## Good practice

- Ensure a rota system is in place for urgent cases and shared with the NHS Audiology service
- Follow the employer's 52-week cover guidance so all team members follow the same system
- Share the cover guidance with the NHS Audiology Service
- Respond promptly to reports of equipment failure or safeguarding concerns
- Escalate issues to senior staff or relevant agencies as per service protocols.

## Quality standards for specialist services

The [CRIDE nation specific reports](#) provide some data on how soon families were contacted and visited following initial referrals.



NatSIP (2016)<sup>1</sup> advises that the family is contacted by a QToD within two working days if their child is identified as deaf through the newborn hearing screening programme; five days if they are identified as deaf outside the newborn hearing screening programme.

Scottish Standards for Deaf Children (0–3) (2011) advises that the early support team will contact the family the day after a referral has been received.

Created by BATOD National Executive Council (NEC).

BATOD NEC welcomes feedback on this publication. Contact BATOD National Executive Officer, Teresa Quail, via [exec@batod.org.uk](mailto:exec@batod.org.uk)

*First published in March 2026. To be revised in March 2027.*

Other BATOD documentation can be found on the BATOD website – [BATOD papers: policies and statements](#).

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<sup>1</sup> Informed by the government's quality standards for the Newborn Hearing Screening Programme (2010).  
See: [www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/422755/NHSP\\_Quality\\_Standards\\_September\\_2010.pdf](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/422755/NHSP_Quality_Standards_September_2010.pdf)