

# BATOD

**British Association of Teachers of the Deaf**

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## Literacy

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## From your editor

From time to time the BATOD magazine takes literacy as its theme. Clearly literacy underpins all aspects of the work of a Teacher of the Deaf from those working with very young children who are laying

the linguistic foundations on which literacy will be built to those working in the post-16 sector where literacy is vital for access to qualifications both vocational and academic – and for life after formal education. Since the last time we considered this subject social media and tablets and apps have gained much more prominence in the lives of young people - and of their teachers – and thus literacy continues to be a vital aspect of the work of the Teacher of the Deaf. Some of these recent developments are reflected in the articles in this edition. I hope you will find them stimulating and that they might inspire you to try something different or to share with colleagues, via the magazine, something you are finding particularly effective in your work.

If you have anything to share we are always happy to include articles relevant to previous magazine themes in the general features section so don't worry if a specific edition has passed – your articles are still very welcome.

## Forthcoming topics

May	Conference edition: developing effective practice
September	Multi-disciplinary working
November	Supporting deaf children in the mainstream
January 2015	Bone anchored hearing systems

*Paul A. Simpson*

Magazine Editor

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## Need to contact BATOD about other matters?

Talk to Executive Officer Paul Simpson

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answerphone/fax: 0845 6435181

Cover Photograph:

Thomas Battle loves learning to write – he is four years old, has been implanted for two years and attends a mainstream East Riding school.

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## Online... and up to date

Following her inauguration at the AGM earlier this month, Andrea Baker makes her first presidential contribution to the magazine

The two years I have been President Elect have flown by and here I sit feeling hugely honoured and very enthusiastic – but when I look back at the list of previous Presidents, slightly nervous. Shadowing Karen over the past two years has been a privilege. Her tenure has seen BATOD through difficult times for both the profession and the organisation and she has led with measured, calm professionalism. She hands over the baton leaving BATOD in a strong position, having guided us through some challenging financial times, and I would like to thank her on behalf of the membership for her vision and direction.

Thanks must also go to Ann Underwood who is in no small way instrumental in my present tenure. Ann has been a very active member of NEC for 27 years and we have much to thank her for. During her time she has overseen the emergence of the Magazine into the quality publication it now is, has been a driving force behind the website and a tireless organiser of Conferences, as well as serving as President. She has guided and encouraged me during my time on NEC, as well as frequently twisting my arm as only Ann can! She will be missed on NEC but I know she will always be available to give advice.

Ann always took a keen interest in membership issues and it is fitting that, as she bows out of NEC, we continue to have a solid and consistent number of members despite our concerns about the age profile of the profession. According to our latest figures we estimate that around three-quarters of ToDs are members of BATOD. This is in no small part thanks to Tina Wakefield's great work in promoting BATOD to ToDs in training around the UK. I was able to support Tina's work at the University of Birmingham in September and was heartened by the enthusiasm, knowledge and commitment of the students – all of whom saw the value of joining BATOD. As one of the fortunate generation who was sponsored through my ToD training on a full time course I am full of admiration for more recent trainees, many of whom complete the course whilst holding down a full time job and some who also fund themselves to join the profession. I'm therefore really pleased to be involved in a recent initiative which aims to provide support for this latter group of students. BATOD has been asked by the Ovingdean Hall Trust to oversee the administration of the Con Powell Scholarship. This plans to provide funding of fees for up to five students a year who would

not otherwise have access to support and will hopefully go some way towards 'filling the gap' as some of us head towards retirement.

Things move on and change, as they must. As a profession we should be used to change. Having been promised no new initiatives it is still sometimes difficult to keep abreast of the current reforms – EHC Plans, Local Offers, funding, auxiliary aids.... We are often so busy doing the day job that it is hard to find time to read and respond to consultations or fully understand the implications of proposed changes. I have always found Paul's BATOD summaries and responses invaluable in the quest to remain up to date and they are now available at the touch of a button, thanks to the website. From this, and the changes we are making to the BATOD website, came the idea for my strap line – 'Online... and up to date'.

There has been a lot of work happening behind the scenes over the last year to re-launch the BATOD website as a resource that will be increasingly useful to members, with the intention of keeping us online and up to date. Information has been organised in what we hope is a more logical and accessible way, improvements made to the Search facility, new items are flagged each time you log on and we are developing a Teaching Materials area where members can share resources and ideas that they have found useful. We will also be uploading back copies of the previous year's Magazine to the website (for members only!!) so that you can quickly find useful articles without trawling back through your bookshelves. As funding gets tighter and there are fewer opportunities to attend courses I believe this is an excellent opportunity for us to share good practice. This is very much a work in progress and its success depends on you, as members, making use of it and feeding back to us if you have suggestions about how we could improve or resources you would like to share.

As a profession we have much to be proud of and so much expertise to share for the benefit of deaf children and their families.



# Literacy at Laycock Primary School

Aaron Blythe looks at how mainstream staff and ToDs work together to ensure that hearing-impaired children at the school get the best out of their education

Laycock Primary School is a two form entry mainstream primary school with 420 children which includes a provision for 70 hearing-impaired children. We have a hearing-impaired class at each year level from nursery up to year 6. The Teachers of the Deaf plan each week with their mainstream colleagues. This is to ensure that all children cover the same topics, receive a balanced curriculum and also to plan programmes of inclusion for individuals or groups of children.

The hearing-impaired children follow the same curriculum as the mainstream children and the literacy and reading policy is the same for both. Where individual lessons differ from the mainstream is through the greater use of visual cues, photos, video clips, animations, story props etc and targeted vocabulary.

This year as a whole school we are using Learning Intentions (LI) which are displayed and referred to at the beginning of lessons. This is presented in a child-friendly statement and will be referred back to several times during the teaching portion of the lesson. Also to support the children we are using Steps to Success, which are building blocks to help focus the children on how to achieve the LI.

## Writing

In the foundation stage teaching is focused around specific topics and children work in groups or individual sessions looking at key vocabulary. Teachers aim to immerse the children in the topic and provide

opportunities for them to experience language through a variety of experiences. This involves trips, role play, stories, functional sentences, scaffolding, copying, tracing and mark-making.

Individual sessions will also be directed to the needs of each child and at speech therapy targets. Writing in nursery will begin with note-making, name recognition, and tracing.

Year 1 spends a lot more time building up to writing through a number of different activities which include a lot of initial talking about a topic, sharing stories, creating story maps and providing opportunities for children to role play scenarios. These activities help to reinforce the children's understanding of the genre, the language used and through scaffolding build up to more independent writing activities.

In addition to this we have also been introducing Colourful Semantics which is reinforced through individual speech therapy sessions. Colourful Semantics is a programme that colour codes the different parts of speech in a sentence. By doing this the children learn that there are different parts that make up sentences. We have found that this helps the children improve the quality of their writing and also their spoken language.

From year 2 to year 6 we are using VCOP which refers to Vocabulary, Connectives, Openers and Punctuation. This helps to provide support and remind children of what they can use to make their writing better. It also

works as a check list so that the children can make sure they are using the correct punctuation or connectives. Every class will have a VCOP display and this will act as a working wall. As the topic or genre changes so will the vocabulary. This display needs to reflect the topic, the children's writing levels and provide enough extension to challenge children without confusing them with too much new vocabulary.

Each week all the children from year 2 to year 6 will take part in a 'big write' which provides the children with an opportunity to write at length independently. This piece of writing will be marked in more detail and will reflect on the LI. In key stage 1 we use two stars and a wish. This acknowledges two things the children did well and one that we would like them to



improve. Where possible children will be given the time to either correct or add more detail at the beginning of the next lesson.

In key stage 2 when marking we focus on What Went Well (WWW). This will also relate to the learning intention and the steps to success. The children will also be given an Even Better If (EBI) and again given the opportunity to improve their work. This might be writing out a sentence again including an adjective, or putting in a word ending they have missed out.

When assessing writing we use Ross Wilson writing criteria and during our assessment weeks each term we look at several pieces of independent writing to ensure the children receive an accurate level. From this assessment we look at the next steps which are needed to develop their writing to the next level.

### Phonics

With earlier diagnosis, high quality hearing aids and cochlear implants children now have access to a majority of sounds across the frequency range. And indeed it is unusual if they don't. This has enabled them to access the same phonic approach as the mainstream children.

This year as a school we have begun using Floppy's Phonics programme. This is a rigorous and systematic phonics programme, which offers comprehensive multi-sensory resources. We are using Floppy's phonics from Nursery up to year 3 and in the hearing-impaired unit our year 4 and 5 classes are also following the programme after initial assessment focusing on the sounds the children either didn't know or found challenging.

In Nursery to year 1 they have 5 lessons a week and cover two sounds. The first lesson is a revisit and review followed by a teaching session before finishing with a practice activity. The following day the follow-on lesson will focus on applying the new sound from the day before, providing an opportunity to consolidate and further practise. Friday's lesson revises the two sounds taught during the week.

Year 2 and year 3 are currently having two lessons a day and teaching five sounds per week in the mainstream class. They started at the beginning of the programme and found that a majority of the children already had a sound knowledge of the earlier stages and were able to progress more quickly.

The hearing-impaired classes in the nursery, reception and year 1 are using visual phonics alongside Floppy's phonics to help the children understand where the sound is produced. They have found that this provides additional information and reduces the chance of the child getting the incorrect sound. The children feel more confident and the teachers have found that it has had a beneficial effect on the children's speech intelligibility. The visual support provided by visual phonics is withdrawn by year 2 when knowledge and audition of



Visual Phonics (a)

sounds is more secure. Children with speech and language difficulties use colourful semantics for both spoken and written English.

This is a very brief overview of our approach to teaching writing and phonics which works well for the children in our school and helps us focus on the individual needs of each child.

*Aaron Blythe is a Teacher of the Deaf at Laycock Primary School.*

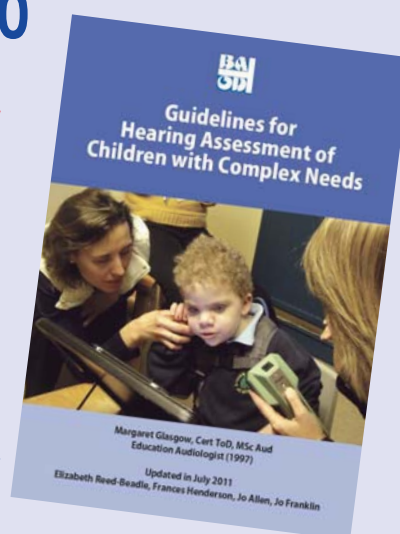
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# Supporting literacy development

Graham Groves shows how the approach of a local authority education service across the Primary Phase is benefiting deaf children in their area

## Background to the Service

The Sensory Inclusion Service (SIS) supports deaf children within Telford and Wrekin and Shropshire. Service delivery is completely peripatetic. The vast majority of children in the area use oral/aural methodologies with a small number of children using Sign Supported English approaches within mainstream settings. We do not currently have any families who have chosen to use BSL as their approach to the development of receptive and expressive communication.

## The challenge of early diagnosis and the expectations it brings

The introduction of the newborn hearing screening programme has raised the bar for support services. There is now the potential for early intervention and improved language outcomes for deaf children. The challenge for services is to ensure that improved outcomes in language skills are reflected in improved literacy outcomes.

## Principles underlying the development of the service approach to literacy

The potential impact of hearing loss on communication and language acquisition as well as literacy is well documented through many research papers and the experiences of Teachers of the Deaf around the UK. If a deaf child or young person does not develop communication skills in the language(s) of the home and the communities of which she/he is a member, then there will be a resultant impact on access to learning, inclusion into society and even to family experiences. Significant delay in the acquisition of literacy skills can potentially have the same impact.

Any approach toward the development of literacy skills has to be underpinned by principles regarding the broader development of communication skills. SIS has a number of underlying principles which include :

- 1 There is no intrinsically correct method or approach to the development of effective communication skills for deaf children.
- 2 Families should be supported in making informed choices around communication approaches or methodologies.
- 3 Using language in any form: signed, spoken or written is concerned with the effective sharing of meaning.

SIS activities related to literacy are based on the principle that the development of effective literacy skills

is dependent upon the development of effective receptive and expressive language.

## Development of literacy

Development of language forms the basis of the development of meaningful and effective literacy skills and it is generally agreed that children with well developed language have a distinct advantage in the development of literacy. Just as the development of language is a life long process so is the development of literacy on all levels.

SIS puts a strong emphasis on the development of receptive and expressive language as the foundation for the development of effective literacy skills. We view that literacy learning needs to build on language that the child already knows and understands. It is very difficult to learn to read and write a language that is unfamiliar in its meaning, sounds and structure.

Deaf children may come to the process of the development of literacy skills with delayed language which may include delayed syntactic development and delayed development of tense structures. These difficulties may be compounded by difficulties discriminating inflected endings such as 'ed' and 's'

How do we address these issues?

## Working in partnership at home

The NDCS's excellent 'Communicating with your Child' reminds us that the natural development of good language and communication skills is affected by the language and communication environment and how adults and children interact and take part in communicative exchange.

We aim to develop a rich linguistic environment within the home based on family strengths. We work in partnership with families so they can appreciate that the environment they create in supporting the development of language will support the development of literacy. There are many studies that indicate that surrounding children with a language- and literacy-rich environment at an early age is a critical contributor to later literacy and academic success. Families are encouraged to engage in literacy-based activities in the wider sense such as the use of nursery rhymes and singing. They are encouraged to share stories in an interactive way through engagement and appropriate questioning and as a basis for a communicative exchange. Teachers of the Deaf have access to PSPs where they can video these sessions and look back on them with families, building on positive aspects of engagement. The use of

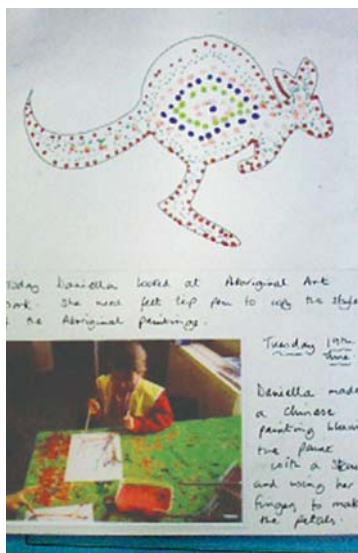


the Common Monitoring Protocol Level 2 materials is a good resource for considering family interaction and fostering positive interaction and allows Teachers of the Deaf to explain 'why' certain interaction patterns are useful. Families are encouraged to explore text in the environment such as recognising the 'McDonalds' sign as well as new technologies such as text, mobile and computer activities. This is encouraged alongside the use of early mark-making activities such as writing shopping lists together etc. As children begin to move forward with more formal literacy activities it is important that parents are given the opportunity to engage and understand approaches used. If their children are bringing home self-made books or materials with adapted text it is important that families understand and support the approach.

**Support in the early years and into school**

Home school books provide a vital resource for families within early years settings and through the Foundation Stage.

For deaf children with delayed language who enter educational settings the connection between home



and school is vital. The development of language is based on shared meaning and these resources allow families to share times within settings and home with key adults in their lives. They provide a shared meaningful context for interaction and conversation. These books also allow children to begin to experience text in meaningful contexts

where they can begin to develop recognition of key words and relate their experience to text as well as to pictures.

**Supporting reading development at primary school**

The guidance for 'Letters and Sounds' says 'all but a very few children understand a great deal of spoken language long before they start learning to read'.

Clearly, it is possible that a deaf child may be one of those few and this has implications for how literacy is approached. When children enter the Reception phase this is often the first introduction to more formal reading material such as graded reading schemes. These materials, such as Oxford Reading Tree, make a broad assumption that children have age-appropriate language and include the use of a range of grammatical as well as tense structures that may not be part of the deaf child's own language. Teachers of the Deaf will often talk through with staff in mainstream settings the need to delay the introduction and use of formal reading schemes with deaf children. In this context, partnership with parents is critical to ensure they are happy to support this particular approach to the development of literacy.

It is clear for all learners that early literacy experiences should be relevant, purposeful, and functional. SIS works on the principle that deaf children do not read vocabulary and experience structures within text that are not part of their own language. It is important for children's self-esteem and inclusion, however, that they have the same opportunities and access to literacy-based activities as their peers.



In the early stages in the development of literacy, SIS uses self-made books.

These books are developed using the children's own language. This ensures that the children are reading and experiencing structures and vocabularies they understand and use in their expressive communication.

It is also possible, as children's reading skills develop, to use traditional reading schemes such as ORT and adapt text within them to meet the needs of the deaf children.



### Supporting the development of phonic skills

The development of phonic skills is a particular challenge for deaf children on many levels but clearly should not be bypassed. The foundation for the development of phonics lies in the effective use of residual hearing and the SIS team invests a great deal of time in ensuring that technology and acoustics are at optimum levels. Primary Schools are either following guidance outlined in *Letters and Sounds – Principles and Practice of High Quality Phonics Primary National Strategy (2007)* or more recently by following the *Read Write Inc Training Programme* which is a systematic approach rooted in phonics.

The excellent NDCS document 'Phonics Guidance' provides support for schools and Teachers of the Deaf in managing the development of phonics. The use of a multi-faceted approach using visual, auditory and kinaesthetic activities related to sounds is used, with the opportunity for frequent repetition. This repetition, where possible, is conducted in quiet withdrawal areas to ensure that the effects of reverberation and noise are limited. Teachers of the Deaf work closely with mainstream teachers to inform them of any particular issues for individual children related to their hearing loss profile that may mean that particular sounds may be difficult for them to detect or discriminate.

### Supporting the development of writing

The development of writing skills is also underpinned and supported by the principle that deaf children do not read vocabulary and experience structures within text that is not part of their own language. Teachers of the Deaf work closely with schools to explain this approach and ensure that it fits within the overall approach that any school has to the development of literacy. The basis of the approach has a number of key elements:

- The child's writing reflects his or her spoken language.
- It is important to ensure that there are lots of opportunities for talking before the child puts pen to paper.
- There are opportunities for children to reflect upon their writing and its content.

Moving children on with their written work requires attention to the development of their expressive language. New grammatical structures in writing such as possessive 's', connectives such as 'and' as well as the use of tense markers such as 'ed' are only introduced if it is clear they are emerging in spoken language. Illustrated below is a piece of written work completed by a profoundly deaf child alongside the Teacher of the Deaf.

#### **Mercury**

*Mercury is really hot it a 430c!*

*Because it hot because it closer to a sun and it can mete tin and humans.*

*They have many craters on mercury because meteorites keep hiting the planet, And they have sunshine but it the only weather on the planet*

This work was them reflected upon with the child who was given the opportunity to read back what he had written:

#### **Mercury**

*Mercury is really hot its a 430c!*

*Because its hot because its closer to the sun and it can mete tin and humans.*

*They have many craters on mercury because meteorites keep hiting the planet, And they have sunshine but it is the only weather on the planet.*

These 'corrections' were made by the child and reflected that he did have these grammatical constructions within his own language as when he read it back he used these 'corrections'. As we strive for children to develop correct forms, Teachers of the Deaf need to ensure that deaf children are given the opportunity just to write and express their creativity whilst at the same time not losing sight of the stage of their wider language development.

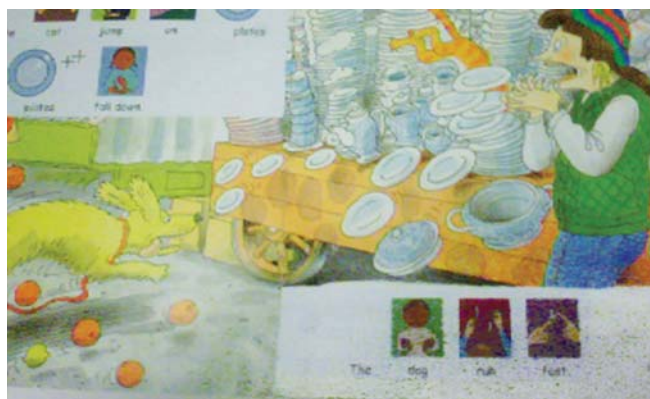
Tablet computers such as iPads offer new ways to engage and develop literacy skills and encourage the creative process. 'Create a story' is used by Teachers of the Deaf with children and allows the opportunity to create a story using the child's own spoken language on the iPad. The child's verbal contributions are



recorded and turned into print form. This allows the child to reflect upon style of language and vocabulary used. It also provides a good basis for the development of auditory and listening skills

### Supporting literacy for a child who uses SSE (a case study)

Helen (not her real name) has a profound bilateral sensori-neural hearing loss and wears two Harmony cochlear implant processors. Her receptive and expressive language skills were significantly delayed and, alongside the family, a Sign Supported English (SSE) approach was introduced to support communication. All of SIS activities related to literacy are based on the principle that the development of effective literacy skills is dependent upon the development of effective receptive and expressive language. In the context of this child, formal sessions have been delivered to the whole staff, Helen and her extended family to support Helen's communication. Helen's class teacher, Teacher of the Deaf, teaching assistant and class members use SSE to communicate with Helen. As a result of her delay, her literacy skills are also delayed. Helen spends time each day in 1-1 withdrawal with her teaching assistant or Teacher of the Deaf in a quiet room when she is able to work on literacy or numeracy topics at her own pace and level, using support strategies such as symbolic representation based on Sign Supported English.



Helen uses the communication programme 'Communicate in Print' to support her written work and for teaching assistants to produce word banks to support Helen's curriculum work.

Helen is able to access this using a laptop in school and through the Teacher of the Deaf's laptop. Reading books have also been adapted using symbolic representation based on SSE. This has helped Helen to access reading independently.

### Finally

As literacy skills develop, Teachers of the Deaf administer a range of reading assessments including Edinburgh Reading Tests which inform targeted intervention and support. This is not within the scope of this article and so has not been described fully.

The development of effective literacy skills is a vital element in the successful inclusion and achievement of deaf children. This is a challenge to all Teachers of the Deaf. This article does not seek to provide a definitive model, as it is clear that individual deaf children need individual ways of working. I hope however, it has given some insight into a particular way of working.

I would like to thank my colleagues within the Sensory Inclusion Service for their support with this article.

*Graham Groves is an Advisory Teacher of the Deaf and Educational Audiologist. He leads the Sensory Inclusion Service for age groups 0 to Year 4.*

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# The impact of new technologies on deaf children's literacy skills

An introduction to a new longitudinal study by

Emmanouela Terlektsi, Margaret Harris and Fiona Kyle



Ten years ago we followed 24 deaf and hearing children through their first two years of literacy instruction, beginning when the children were five-years-old (Kyle & Harris, 2011). The children were given a range of reading, language and cognitive tasks at the start, midpoint and end of the study. Although the reading skills of deaf and hearing children were similar when we first assessed them, the deaf children showed increasing delays in their reading skills over time and, by the end of the study, they were reading at an average of nine months below chronological age. The predictors of reading in deaf children after two years were English vocabulary, letter-sound knowledge and speech reading ability (also known as lip reading). Phonological awareness was not a predictor of reading, as it was for hearing children, but reading at the start of the study predicted phonological awareness one year later. This suggested that, in contrast to phonological awareness being a pre-requisite for hearing children's reading skills, deaf children might develop their phonological skills in the course of learning to read.

Only a minority of children in the Kyle and Harris study had received a cochlear implant and there was considerable variation in the age at which hearing loss had been diagnosed. Ten years on, the rollout of the New-born Hearing Screening (completed in 2005) and the wide availability of cochlear implants and digital hearing aids might be expected to have an impact not only on reading outcomes but also on the predictors of literacy skills. Our new study aims to find out whether these technological advances in diagnosis and the provision of hearing aids have had a significant effect on deaf children's literacy.

We want to explore how the reading, spelling and phonological skills of deaf primary school children compare to those of their hearing peers and also of the deaf children we assessed ten years ago. We will also look at which skills at age six predict reading one and two years later and how these skills compare to the ones identified in the previous study. We will also be looking at how children are learning to read and what kind of strategies they are employing.

The study is funded by an ESRC grant. The initial assessments are taking place in late 2013 and early 2014. Every 12 months, children will be given a range of assessments of reading, spelling, phonological awareness, speech reading (silent lip reading), English vocabulary and letter-sound knowledge. These

measures are very similar to the ones we used in our earlier study so that we can make direct comparisons between the findings. In between the assessments we will observe children in their classroom so that we can see what strategies they are using in reading and spelling. Our aim is to recruit 40 deaf children from Schools for the Deaf, Hearing-Impaired Units and mainstream schools across the country. We want to recruit a sample of children that is representative of the population of children with severe/profound hearing loss in the UK.

We expect that the findings of the study will be significant in various ways. First they will contribute to the evaluation of early diagnosis and appropriate aiding. For example, if children who receive Cochlear Implants early in their lives develop secure reading skills throughout their school years, this will contribute to the evidence about the value of cochlear implantation. Also, this research will provide evidence on which are the most appropriate strategies when deaf children learn to read. If phonological skills prove to be important for deaf children's reading skills this would suggest that a phonics-based approach to teaching reading will be most appropriate. If speech reading continues to play a mediating role in deaf children's reading skills this could further support the idea of promoting speech reading skills in the classroom to support reading.

The support of the Teachers of the Deaf is an invaluable part of the current study particularly in relation to recruitment and identification of the strategies used in teaching reading. Outcomes of the study will be reported again here and we also plan to host a workshop at Oxford Brookes to discuss our key findings.

*Emmanouela Terlektsi is a qualified Teacher of the Deaf and currently a post-doctoral researcher in deaf children's literacy at Oxford Brookes University.*

*Margaret Harris is Professor of Psychology and Head of the Department of Psychology, Social Work and Public Health at Oxford Brookes University.*

*Fiona Kyle is a Lecturer in Language and Communication Science at City University London.*

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# A pen-free approach to teaching

No Pens Day at St Mary's School for Deaf Girls gave both pupils and teachers a challenge but, as [Maggie Owens](#) reports, it was also an excellent success

At the assembly the students looked on as the school's deputy principal took out a pen to do the roll call and told her with great delight that she wasn't allowed to use it. It was No Pen Day and no-one, neither student nor teacher, was allowed to write anything. Across the school's classrooms, teachers were encouraged to work out how to teach their subjects orally and through sign language without resorting to the comfort of their white boards. Students were not off the hook either – just because they couldn't write notes didn't mean they weren't expected to learn on this day. No Pens Day is a UK initiative which has been organised and run by the Communication Trust since 2011 to combat the low level of verbal engagement of students in the class. Research by the Communication Trust has revealed that the average contribution of a child in the classroom is just four words! Over 2,400 schools took part in the British event this year, while St. Mary's School for Deaf Girls is thought to be the first Irish School to be involved in the project.

Introducing No Pens Day into St Mary's was initially a daunting notion. But promoting language acquisition through effective communication is at the heart of what we do in St. Mary's School for Deaf Girls, so I thought we would be the ideal school to try out what no school in Ireland had ever tried before. No Pens Day would give us an opportunity to create high quality interaction with our students. Teachers were encouraged to engage their students in meaningful conversational exchanges, group discussions and a variety of activities, to enhance their communication and language skills – all without using a pen!

After a great build up the day was finally upon us in early October last year. During assembly in the main school hall, students gave the principal, Regina O'Connell, ideas for how to keep track of her appointments without her pen. She opted to take up



*Maggie Owens leads the maths workshop at St Mary's*

one student suggestion – to use stickers! Two 17-year old students gave a PowerPoint presentation on the importance of developing speech/signing and listening skills. The students used a photograph of Sir Alan Sugar from The Apprentice to illustrate their point that good communication is essential or you could be fired!

We decided we would break away from the normal timetable routine and do a whole school approach to learning in a cross-curricular way, in keeping with the current focus at a national level in the 'Literacy and Numeracy Strategy for Learning and Life 2011 – 2020'. Groups of students comprised of different year groups attended workshops in Mathematics, English, Drama, Home Economics, Science, Performance Art and Media. The main objective of each was to create a more student-led learning environment and to get the students involved in discussions and conceptualisation exercises.

## Mathematics Workshop

Being a Maths Teacher, I organised a workshop where students were given an opportunity to engage in a more cognitively challenging aspect of problem solving by 'Unlocking the locker problem'. Students manipulated the interactive lockers on the smartboard, accessing mathematical discussion and analysing patterns whilst learning about the characteristics of unique numbers such as multiples, factors, prime numbers, square numbers, indices etc. I found that I could differentiate this lesson and make it accessible to students with learning needs and that it also challenged the intellectually more able students.

## Sensation Nation Workshop

The Home Economics and the Business Studies Departments worked together to organise a 'Sensation Nation!' Students had a hands-on experience with all their senses such as exploring their sense of touch with feel boxes with different things inside, exploring the sense of smell and experiencing a blindfold tasting. Students also participated in a branding discussion where they had to drink two different types of cola (Coca Cola and Tesco Coke) and discussed the taste and the importance of branding. This workshop was voted the best activity of the 'No Pens Day'.

## Drama Workshop

The goal of the drama workshop was to encourage the students to develop effective communication skills. As tension in the body causes disharmony between the intention of the words – voice or sign – and the communicator's ability to implant that intention, the students did warm-up exercises to release any stiffness



Students amazed at egg squeezing through beaker in the body, neck, shoulders, face and jaw. Then students, teachers, SNAs and... journalists alike had lots of fun and indeed spirited competition, playing a variety of theatre games, designed to develop good eye contact, observation skills and emotional expression.

**Science**

In science, students were amazed by an ‘eggsperiment’, an air contracting trick that made a boiled egg squeeze itself through a narrow opening. The students discussed how this trick worked and what made it happen.

**English**

In the English workshops, the students took part in walking debates in which they were given a number of controversial statements to consider. Different areas in the room were designated the ‘agreed,’ ‘disagreed,’ or ‘unsure’ areas and the students moved to the area that reflected their views. They then gave a rationale for their decisions and briefly discussed the topic. Students also took part in a ‘Desert Island Dilemma’ activity where they discussed the three essential items they would choose to bring with them if they were marooned on a desert island. These activities energised the students and encouraged good listening and discussion.

**Performance Art**

The highlight of the day was the Performance Art workshop where we invited Amanda Coogan, one of

Ireland’s leading performance artists, to organise a workshop. Amanda showed examples of her work in a PowerPoint presentation. Students and staff were amazed at the surreal images. She rounded off her presentation by involving the entire school in a sign language performance of ‘Bohemian Rhapsody’ by Queen.

**Media and Evaluation Workshop**

At the end of the day we had a Media and Evaluation Workshop. A producer from the ‘Mind the Gap’ film company gave a short talk on the importance of effective communication. Each group was selected as either a ‘reporter’ or an ‘interviewee’ and they were filmed discussing their experience of the No Pens Day. The students were very enthusiastic and excited as they could play back and analyse their communication skills on a television monitor.

Mark Marschark and colleagues have highlighted the fact that deafness influences many aspects of learning, and it is necessary for both teachers and researchers to go that extra critical step in learning more about the best ways to match the classroom to the student. I found that the No Pens Day was an excellent initiative for encouraging deeper discussions which avoid ‘cognitive narrowing’ where students are not given the opportunity to engage in the more cognitively challenging aspects of problem solving.

No Pens Day was an excellent success. It enabled the students to blossom in confidence in their communication and language skills. Feedback from staff and students was very enthusiastic with one student saying we should have No Pens Day every week! I really hope that more Irish and UK schools will adopt the No Pens Day initiative next year and not just because it means we don’t have any marking to do that night!

*Maggie Owens is a qualified Teacher of the Deaf and is passionate about teaching mathematics in St. Mary’s School for Deaf Girls (she is a past pupil of the school). She has recently completed an MA in Deaf Education entitled ‘How to enhance deaf children’s problem solving and critical thinking skills in Mathematics’.*

To see examples of the school’s No Pens Day activities, go to [www.stmarysdeafgirls.ie](http://www.stmarysdeafgirls.ie)



Performing artist Amanda Coogan (far left) working with pupils of St Mary’s School for Deaf Girls

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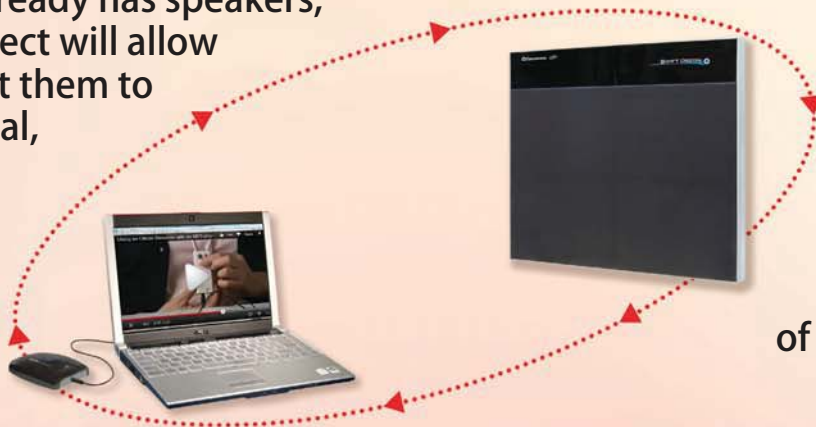
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# Developing literacy skills with deaf children

A snapshot of one authority's approach to developing literacy skills with deaf children from [Veronica O'Hagan](#)

St. Roch's Primary school is situated in the North east of the city of Glasgow. It is a large Primary school with 310 pupils, which includes 40 deaf children from the ages of 4-12. The population is diverse, with pupils representing over twenty countries. The school has a specialist department for deaf children, many of whom have a range of learning needs in addition to their hearing loss. This was established in 2010. The department provides dual methodology pathways with the majority of pupils following an aural/oral approach. Inclusion in the school is carefully planned in order to meet the individual needs of learners, many of whom are fully included. St. Roch's has a well established reputation for its innovative approach to the development of literacy skills, particularly in writing.

Our experience is working with deaf children who generally have a delay in language development, but who are cognitively age appropriate; many have limited life experiences and many have not experienced a linguistically nurturing environment.

## Why do people write? Take a minute to jot down everything you have written in the last week or so.

As adults, we are motivated to write for a reason. Children are no different.

Classroom contexts have to be planned with this in mind. We need to plan so that learners are confident in using a wide range of genre e.g. narratives, recounts, procedures, reports, explanations and expositions as well as personal and imaginative writing.

It is vital to foster a positive ethos, where there is no pressure on learners, where they have clear criteria/outcomes shared with them from the outset, where they can have fun.

*'What I say, I can write and what I write, I can read.'*  
Avelyn Davidson

Our approach to supporting literacy development with deaf children has developed over many years. It is based on research findings, professional development and practical experience.

Several years ago, we decided to take a closer look at some of our practice in writing because we realised that this was not an area where our learners readily achieved success. Over-scribing and over-correcting altered what children had said beyond recognition. Learners had no ownership of their own words, lacked confidence and were unable to generate independent

writing. We were unable to accurately assess writing progress or identify next steps in writing.

Our first task was to recognise that writing is a developmental process, with clearly identifiable stages and that Listening and Talking are the foundation for writing skills.

We acknowledged that not all of our learners could;

- say what they think
- write what they say
- read what they write.

## Shaping Current Practice

A cornerstone to our approach was acknowledging that writing was risky and that getting things wrong was to be expected and part of the learning process for teachers and learners alike. Learners were encouraged to 'have a go' at writing.

In order to create motivating and appropriate contexts, we recognised that classroom ethos and methodology were crucial.

*We had to 'contrive to make the normal happen.'*  
(Morag Clark)

Writing became a 'fun, familiar and frequent' process, based on real life contexts which motivated learners to talk and communicate about their experiences with enthusiasm.

Purposeful talk underpins all writing activities. The actual recording of the experiences is not the main event in our writing lesson, but is the end result of carefully planned, staged activities ensuring the writing is purposeful.

All activities are planned to ensure learners are engaged in learning, becoming the 'drivers' as opposed to 'passengers.'

Learners are involved in the planning of their learning and are supported to know how they learn, identifying which strategies they can use.

There is a range of strategies to employ, based on teaching for effective learning:

- self/peer assessment
- shoulder partners
- working in pairs/trios
- identifying roles within groups
- individual and group target setting
- learning logs/personal learning plans
- think, pair and share



- stop, reflect and review
- interdisciplinary learning to support transferability of skills.

In planning for writing experiences our key focus is the generation and encoding of thoughts as a consequence of the purposeful talk. Technical targets, rules for grammar and handwriting are common threads which run through the writing process from early through transitional to fluent writing and are always practised in context.

### Grammar

Grammatical rules require to be taught and practised in meaningful contexts at the appropriate point in a child's learning journey.

However, many deaf children find these rules challenging to apply as the grammatical structure of their fluent communication can differ at times due to the nature of their hearing loss. Words and consonants can be difficult to hear in fluent speech by a child with severe to profound loss and may not be reproduced in their expressive language.

The 'up-levelling' of writing as described in 'Big Writing' is a useful and successful strategy in making improvements to grammatical structure.

Teachers need to make the decision about when to intervene to improve a child's writing based on their knowledge of the learners' communication skills and their ability to understand what is being asked of them. Intervention at the wrong point in the child's learning experience can create more difficulties shaping the child's perception that they 'can't do it'.

### Evaluation and Assessment

Evaluation and assessment are crucial in securing achievement in writing. Teachers need to be 'Writing Detectives' in order to identify strengths and development needs.

Critical elements are:

- planning and evaluating cycle – tailored planners and assessment proformas which reflect the skills continuum and small, achievable steps in learning
- learner conversations which provide valuable information to the class teacher and feedback to the learner as how to improve
- application of skills across the curriculum
- opportunities for teachers to evaluate their experiences, share and reflect on their practice with colleagues
- moderation – to ensure that the writing produced by children meets the benchmark criteria for our National Curriculum
- assessment of 'cold' pieces of writing by both teachers and learners
- up-levelling of learners' writing – teacher/peer-led discussion around identifying ways to improve, followed by an individual or group rewrite.

Time is a major consideration for both teachers and learners, but we cannot emphasise enough the importance of setting aside time for purposeful dialogue.

Teachers need time to:

- reflect
- experiment
- consolidate and refine current strategies
- feel comfortable with the strategies they are implementing.

Until we changed our approach to the acquisition of literacy skills, we were unable to recognise and celebrate those small steps of success our learners were taking. We needed a tool kit to first identify where our learners were in terms of the skills continuum and plan their next steps.

In effect we are planning a 'scenic route' for them, clear that their journey will lead them to the same destination as their hearing peers.

*Patricia Woods, as Deputy Head Teacher in St. Roch's shares the responsibility for the specialist department. Patricia qualified as a Teacher of the Deaf at Oxford Brookes in 1979. She taught overseas for two years and took up her post as a Teacher of the Deaf in Glasgow in 1982. Patricia has worked in a variety of provision in Glasgow, using both signed and oral/aural approaches. Patricia has been involved in developing approaches to literacy for deaf children throughout her career.*

*Veronica O'Hagan is a Quality Improvement Officer in Glasgow, responsible for the training of Teachers of the Deaf. Veronica qualified as a Teacher of the Deaf at Oxford Brookes in 1980. She taught at Birkdale, Southport for three years before returning to Scotland, to take up a post as Teacher of the Deaf in Glasgow. Veronica became Coordinator of St. Joseph's Unit, a co-located provision for primary aged children, in 1999. A key focus for development was literacy, especially writing. The Unit gained recognition from the main training providers as a centre of excellence. The Unit relocated to St. Roch's in June 2011.*

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# The use of Visual Phonics by Hand in an oral setting

Karen Hardwicke discusses the advantages of this system which helps deaf children understand sounds better and improves their language skills

Visual Phonics by Hand is a system designed to offer fair access for deaf children to the phonic element of words. Each of the phonemes is represented by a single discrete action which reflects the manner and placement of the sound. The actions have their origins in the fingerspelt alphabet and focus the child's attention on the user's face – thus aiding lip-reading. With its visual as well as auditory information, the system accommodates the most profoundly deaf children as well as children who have greater access to sound via cochlear implants.

My first experience of Visual Phonics by Hand came whilst I was working as a Teacher of the Deaf in a Total Communication provision. I had the pleasure of learning the system via a workshop run by Babs Day, who devised the system. With daily sustained use, the impact of Visual Phonics by Hand on my Key Stage 1 class was clear. Most memorable was a five year old profoundly deaf child who, with the aid of Visual Phonics by Hand, was able to sound out CVC words independently.

I then moved on to my present position at Mary Hare Primary School. I was excited to find out the applications of Visual Phonics by Hand in this, an oral school for deaf children.

Jolly Phonics was already in place at Mary Hare. This is a system widely used in mainstream schools. It uses a multisensory teaching approach (visual, auditory, kinaesthetic) to help children learn the sounds of speech. Each sound has a discrete action e.g. the short 'a' sound is represented by the hand pretending to be an ant crawling up the arm and saying 'a a a'. Jolly Phonics is generally used in the early stages of learning to read and is more suitable for the younger child in its use of large, 'mime-like' actions.

Jolly Phonics, like all systems, is not without its limitations. Once the children have learnt single sounds and are ready to begin blending them, it is more difficult to apply Jolly Phonics due to the gross motor actions and accompanying repetitive sounds. Thus, if a child tries to blend the sounds 'c-a-t', using Jolly Phonics, it becomes 'c-c-a-a-t-t'. There is a need for a system that facilitates blending for reading. In addition, one that is appropriate for the older deaf child working at a delayed level in terms of their phonic knowledge is also needed.

Visual Phonics by Hand has been introduced alongside Jolly Phonics at Mary Hare Primary School and is used according to the needs of the individual child. It is the system I have found to be most useful, both with last year's class of lower Key Stage 2 children, for whom the

finer hand shapes were more appropriate and whose experience of fingerspelling rendered Visual Phonics by Hand an easy system to learn, and also for this year's class of younger children who have enjoyed learning the actions for the Phase 2 letter sounds. For both age groups, the system has proved fun and accessible and has significantly bolstered the children's segmenting/blending skills.

## A typical session looks like this:

The session begins with a song about segmenting and blending sounds for spelling and reading. The children have designed their own actions and enjoy learning and using correct terms such as 'phoneme' and 'digraph' in the song.

As a warm-up activity, flashcards are used to revise previously learnt sounds and their Visual Phonics by Hand action.

The sound of the day, for example 'ai', is introduced – its spoken form, its Visual Phonics by Hand action then its written form.

The children are asked to blend the sounds for reading. All of the words contain the sound 'ai' – rain, pain, train, sprain. This can be an opportunity to introduce new vocabulary.

A puppet is often used at this point. She is asked to blend the sounds of a word for reading eg 'h-e-n'. Visual Phonics by Hand actions accompany each of the sounds. She invariably makes a mistake and mispronounces the word 'p-e-n'. As well as causing much amusement, the error generates discussion as to which sound she got wrong – initial, middle or final.

The children then work in differentiated groups – those who can segment CVC words and those working at a CCVC/CVCC level. They are asked to segment five words containing the sound of the day on five individual strips of paper. As well as hearing the word, the children are given a visual clue with the use of sound buttons – indicating single letters, and sound lines – indicating two or more letters but making one sound (ai, ee, igh). More able children are asked to think of and to record other words that rhyme with 'rain'.

Finally, the children are asked to look at the words and match those that rhyme – 'train' and 'main', 'fail' and 'mail' and to identify the 'odd one out' – for example 'paid'.

The use of Visual Phonics by Hand has had positive offshoots. Implementing a new system needs the involvement of the children's parents. There have been

two workshops held for parents, in which they have been taught each of the Visual Phonics by Hand actions. Parents have responded positively and have made comments such as: 'With Visual Phonics by Hand I can help Jake to break down the words when we are reading. It can also help him understand how to say them.'

All the parents agreed that Visual Phonics by Hand helps to support their child's reading and writing skills and they are reinforcing the system at home.

Another positive benefit of Visual Phonics by Hand has been its impact on 'joined up' working between Education and Speech Therapy.

The workshops were a joint project with Claire Whittaker, a Speech and Language Therapist at MHPS who has embraced the use of the system in her work. Claire has written the following about Visual Phonics by Hand:

### Why Speech Therapists should use Visual Phonics by Hand:

Having worked as a Speech Therapist for over 15 years, I have learnt how significant the correlation appears to be between a child's poor intelligibility and his or her struggle with phonics. No matter what the difficulty may be with the oral motor co-ordination, it is often the case that, with closer examination, the child may not know the correct sound that he or she is actually aiming for. This is certainly evident with children who have a signing background. The children that I work with at Mary Hare Primary have very poor phonological awareness and

have not picked up phonological skills spontaneously as a hearing child would. The children are often unsure what sound a letter makes or what sound a word starts or ends with. I believe that, in order to improve the clarity of their speech, it is vital that work should be carried out that focuses on improving the child's phonics. In the past I have tried many different approaches to address this – Cued Articulation, Jolly Phonics, Superphonics etc. Each method can work and is often appropriate for an individual child but, for a Speech Therapist working with deaf children, I have found that Visual Phonics by Hand has just 'ticked all the boxes'.

When addressing the production of a specific sound, it is useful to initially describe to the child where that sound is made in the mouth. For example, when working with a child who is 'fronting' (replacing the sound 'k' with a 't'), the visual phonic actions clearly illustrate how the 't' is made at the front of the mouth and the 'k' is made at the back. Not only does Visual Phonics by Hand illustrate placement but it goes further than this and at the same time helps reinforce letter shape (for example with the 'k', the finger shape mirrors the letter shape). It is therefore appropriate to use Visual Phonics by Hand with a hearing child or any child who needs phonic support.

There are many similarities between Visual Phonics by Hand and Cued Articulation (which is also a useful tool for Speech Therapists). However, Visual Phonics by Hand was developed specifically for the deaf child and based around finger spelling, so not only does it show placement and mirror letter shape but it also emanates from a system that most deaf children have already been exposed to. For example, the 'm' action not only highlights the nasality of the sound and the fact that the letter has three vertical lines, but it is also simply the spelling action on the nose rather than on the palm of the hand.

In my experience, the deaf children I have worked with pick up Visual Phonics by Hand surprisingly quickly. I have been amazed by how beneficial this system is and how, by providing this added information about each phoneme, the children appear to be able to store the individual sounds and to retrieve them and use the phonemes appropriately. The clarity of their speech therefore improves quickly and consistently.

Visual Phonics by Hand is well regarded by a range of specialists in deaf education. It can be used effectively in a variety of contexts: for deaf children in special schools as well as resource bases, by Teachers of the Deaf and Speech Therapists. It has applications for oral as well as signing/TC settings.

Visual Phonics by Hand increases the possibilities of a level playing field for the deaf child in his/her access to literacy.

*Karen Hardwicke has worked as a peripatetic Teacher of the Deaf with pre-school children and as a Teacher of the Deaf in a TC provision. She now enjoys working at Mary Hare Primary School. Being the parent of a deaf child was her initial driving force.*



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# Do deaf adolescent girls read for pleasure?

Lesley Anne Smith has been studying the question of the reading skills of deaf girls and how it affects their enjoyment of reading

I chose this research for my MEd as I have been a teacher of English in mainstream schools for many years. I am an examiner for the AQA GCSE English Exam and I have been a Teacher of the Deaf (ToD) for ten years. I have worked as a specialist Teacher of English in an oral school for the deaf in the secondary department and I now work as a peripatetic ToD in Leeds, Yorkshire.

When I first began to work as a ToD I discovered that a lot of my students did not read for pleasure or they read texts targeted way below their chronological age. Often, a student's reading age was not matched with their chronological age. New vocabulary seemed to cause reading problems so that a lot of reading material was not a pleasure for them; they simply switched off. I asked myself: are these deaf adolescents representative of a trend? do deaf adolescents read for pleasure?

It was an initial study of four deaf and four hearing adolescent girls selected by gender, age, similar academic level, audiological status, either hearing or having a profound hearing loss. All of the deaf participants communicate orally and all were born deaf. For each participant English is her first language, she considers herself a good reader and her parents are hearing. At the start of the study the age range of all eight female participants ranged from 14 years to 21 years. Each participant's reading age and vocabulary age was individually scored using The Edinburgh Reading Test (ERT4, 2010) and The British Picture Vocabulary Scale (BPVS 2nd Edition). Each participant was also individually questioned using two methods compiled by myself: a reading habits Participant Survey and a Reading for Pleasure Interview.

There are several questions and ideas which were a vehicle for my research. These are:

- What is reading?
- What is the process of reading for hearing children and for deaf children?
- What is reading for pleasure?
- How can reading for pleasure be measured?
- What prevents or inhibits a person from reading for pleasure?
- Do deaf adolescent girls read for pleasure?

The purpose of reading in schools over the years seems to have shifted from reading for enjoyment and pleasure to reading for assessment. The focus of this study is on three types of reading: traditional reading (books);

environmental reading (magazines) and techno-literacy (online information, email, texting, social networking).

It has been reported that deaf children often have difficulty learning to read; therefore the research project asks whether this impacts negatively on their likelihood of engaging in reading for pleasure. Currently there is very little published research based on the theme of reading for pleasure and deaf teenagers. Vocabulary knowledge and vocabulary acquisition of deaf readers are two important areas of recent research; one must understand what is being read in order to gain pleasure from it. In my study it is the level of vocabulary knowledge reached by the participants which allows them to access adolescent texts for pleasure which is under investigation.

The results of my research show that all four of the hearing participants' Reading Age is higher than their Chronological Age in excess of 1 year 7 months. Conversely the results for the deaf participants show that their Reading Age is consistently lower than their Chronological Age. At first sight the BPVS results appear to follow the findings of the ERT 4 Sub Test B (Vocabulary) in that the hearing participants all scored a higher Vocabulary Age than the deaf participants. The deaf participants' scores are not age appropriate. It can be seen that for the hearing group, their Chronological Age matched their Vocabulary Age.

The Participant Survey responses indicate that both the hearing group and the deaf group enjoy reading *Books/Fiction* the most with *Social Networking* being the second favourite choice for both the hearing and the deaf participants. *Magazines* came third as the most enjoyable to read for both groups. The reading of *Internet research* and *Email* featured low in the responses for both the hearing and the deaf groups. When asked to choose from the list to indicate 'in any given week, which do you read the most?' the top choice for the hearing group was equally *Books/Fiction* and *Social Networking*. The deaf group chose social networking as the most read with *Books/Fiction* close behind. The responses follow a very similar pattern for each group with *Emails* and *Newspapers* scoring as the least read in any given week by both the hearing and the deaf group.

All participants, deaf and hearing, remember reading with a family member as a small child and they all have books in their home. They were asked to complete the following sentence: 'I read because...' and it generated responses which are in the same order for both the deaf

and the hearing groups of participants. Both the deaf group and the hearing group awarded first place to 'It is fun/I enjoy it'. Second place for both groups was 'I learn how other people feel'. 9th place was 'It will help me find a job'. The bottom and therefore the least important factor for reading in both the deaf and the hearing group was 'Because I have to'.

All eight participants were asked questions at the start of the interview, including 'Have you read a book in the last four weeks?' All replied that they had and they all said 'enjoyment' was a reason why they read. In response to 'What do you enjoy reading the most?' all participants chose *Fiction* from the list. When asked 'What would you miss the most if you were not allowed to read for a month?' the responses included: *the enjoyment of reading, me time, winding down before sleep, chill time, private time, the escape, forgetting everything else, the excitement of the story, characters and going into another world.*

The responses to the question 'What was it you enjoyed about the last thing you read?' were very similar for both groups. For the hearing girls the responses included: 'Controversial issues... real issues... good characters... learn stuff... relaxing.' For the deaf girls the responses included: 'easy reading... relaxing... excitement of the plot... good writer... real people... funny... empathy with the characters.'

Performance in reading tests was not a marker for reading achievement. It seems that the desire to read and the enjoyment gained from a variety of texts is a driving force. The connection between reading, relaxation, enjoyment and pleasure is revealing given the reading and vocabulary scores for the deaf participants. Their desire and motivation seem to compensate for their lower test results.

Social networking sites feature highly as reading material alongside fiction for all eight participants. They are all reading a variety of material and choosing to read during their spare time. They are equally enthralled by the social drama unfolding on Facebook as they are by the literary plot of a novel.

Although the sample in this study is small, the responses in the survey and the interview associated with reading materials and habits appear to lead to the conclusion that the modern adolescent girl, hearing and deaf, is regularly reading a variety of texts including fiction.

It is the combination of all of the test results, interview and survey responses viewed as a whole that are important in this research; viewed together they help to address the research question. The participants are all reading a variety of age-appropriate texts. They have competence levels of reading which allow them access to adolescent texts. The desire to read and the pleasure of reading are at the heart of the motivation and success. Despite the reading age and vocabulary age scores being lower for the deaf group this does not

appear to affect their time spent reading, choice of reading material, reported enjoyment of reading and the level or challenge of the reading material chosen. Coping strategies are used to help them to read challenging texts and materials which are of interest to them; they are motivated by the goal.

The initial findings here would seem to suggest that the desire for knowledge, enjoyment, entertainment, gossip, social interaction and relaxation overrides any lower reading or vocabulary ages. Indeed life in the 21st century requires us all to read a multitude of texts for many different purposes.

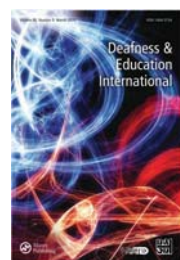
The general message that has emerged from this initial study is: ToDs worry not; the pleasure of reading is indeed present in this technological age for the deaf adolescent female reader. There is comfort indeed that their selection and choice of wide-ranging material is a reflection of the modern era in which they live.

Finally the research question can be answered simply as yes. Yes, deaf adolescent girls do read for pleasure. I hear you now ask 'What about deaf adolescent boys and reading for pleasure?' That question my dear ToD is yet to be answered. Do I have any takers?

*Lesley Smith is a Peripatetic Teacher of the Deaf for the Sensory Service in Leeds. This research was completed as part of an MEd (Sp.Ed: Hearing Impairment) at Birmingham University.*

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# Cued Speech – advantages for literacy

Anne Worsfold looks at the mechanics of how deaf children using Cued Speech learn to read and what advantages they gain

Cued Speech has never been in widespread use with deaf children in the UK although it is commonly used in some other countries and there is now a wide body of international research which demonstrates its effectiveness. Possibly the name gives the false impression that the system is designed to develop speech instead of giving access, through clarifying the speech of others, to the English language and consequently to reading. The name Cued Speech (CS) describes the system of 8 handshapes and 4 positions which clarify the lip-patterns of speech and it is quick and comparatively easy to learn. CS can be used in many different ways, from giving whole-language access to simply disambiguating phonics, and its use can change over time, usually lessening as a child's language develops. The children's outcomes will vary according to the amount of CS-use.

The aim of this article was originally to give an overview of international research and best practice which demonstrate the beneficial effects of CS on literacy, drawing mainly from the book 'Cued Speech and Cued Language for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children' (2010). This edited volume (which has 42 international contributors, including 25 professors or assistant or associate professors) draws on twenty years of international research to inform the four chapters which are devoted to the effects of CS use on the development of reading. The chapters include theory and research around reading in the narrow sense (de-coding), in a broader context (comprehension), phonological awareness, short-term memory, and rhyming ability.

Distilling these four chapters (115 pages!) into a two page article has proved impossible and I urge all teachers to get hold of the above book and, at the very least, read the first section, the literacy section, and a chapter entitled 'Experiences and perceptions of cueing deaf adults in the US', a survey which gives insights into the achievements and opinions of 32 deaf adults brought up with CS – including the fact that 31 of them reported finding the English language subjects 'easy' in elementary school.

Since American research found no significant difference in reading achievement between the matched groups of hearing and CS-using profoundly deaf pupils research has mainly looked at the mechanics of how



CS-using deaf children learn to read – which is what this article will now concentrate on.

Cued Language and the Alphabetic principle – Children who have been brought up with CS bring to school a very different skill set from most deaf children. They consistently see the ‘spoken’ language which surrounds them in a clear, unambiguous, visual form i.e. cued language, a full visual mode of spoken language in which all the phonological contrasts are clearly marked. As Laybaert, Colin and LaSasso say in Chapter 11 (255-256) of the above book: ‘The advantages [of this] are threefold:

- 1 ‘Once children have learnt the correspondences between graphemes and the manual cues from Cued Speech, they can be autonomous readers (Jorm and Share, 1983) in the sense that they can get the meaning of words they have never encountered in print before (for evidence see Alegria, Aurouer, & Hage, 1997).
- 2 ‘Children exposed to Cued Speech will be able to use grapheme-to-phoneme correspondences for reading printed words and phoneme-to-grapheme correspondences for word spelling (for evidence, see Leybaert, 2000; Leybaert & Charlier, 1996; Leybaert & Lechat, 2001)
- 3 ‘The use of correspondences between graphemes and corresponding visual ‘phonemes’ (i.e. manual cues and mouthshapes) makes possible the development of phonological awareness (Charlier & Leybaert, 2000).’

Rhyming – Children who perform well on rhyming tasks do markedly better in early reading than those with poor rhyming ability. Dr Cornett devised CS in order to ‘ensure that the deaf child comes to think in the phonemic equivalent of spoken English’. If he was successful then a deaf child brought up with CS should be able to develop rhyming skills before learning to read, as do hearing children, and their rhyming judgments should not be affected by spelling or by lip-reading similarity. Research (Charlier & Leybaert 2000) showed that in French-speaking children this was indeed the case. CS-users achieved a high level of accuracy in rhyme judgment about pairs of pictures which was not influenced by spelling and was within the range of hearing children. In contrast deaf children from oral or signing backgrounds relied on spelling and lip-reading and therefore made many more errors. American research (Crain, 2003) found similar results with emerging readers of English whose rhyming abilities were comparable to their hearing peers.

CS is, however, primarily a tool to give visual access to whole language and – just like speech – it gives access to words, phrases and sentences through the smaller units of phonemes as they occur in natural language contexts. Through CS the child can ‘naturally and simultaneously acquire the phonological structure of the language necessary for phonic-based decoding, and

the vocabulary, syntax and figurative language necessary for fluent independent reading’.

I leave the final words to a parent: ‘After only the first week of training we could say to our son anything at all that we wished in the English language (just as we would be able to type it) and he could fully access this, regardless of the fact that he couldn’t hear a single sound of it.’

‘It seemed unbelievable and miraculous to us that we could cue to him nonsense words, silly sounds, nursery rhymes, read stories to him, chat to him, say to him whatever we pleased in English with every bit of syntax, grammar and vocabulary fully, simply and easily represented as though speaking normally. The discovery of CS and what it could do for our son and for us as a family was truly and profoundly life-changing, and continues to be thirteen years down the line.’

‘He took very easily to reading and writing – more easily than many of his hearing peers – perhaps helped by already having a visual phonic ‘map’ in his head from his early exposure to CS.... by age 6 he had a reading age of 10; he achieved Level 4/5s in his English SATs in Year 6; and now, at 14, he has a reading age of 16+.’

The book referred to above, which is edited by Carol J. LaSasso, Kelly Lamar Crain & Jacqueline Leybaert, can be bought from Amazon.

*Anne Worsfold is the Director of the charity Cued Speech Association UK – [www.cuedspeech.co.uk](http://www.cuedspeech.co.uk) – which provides information about, and training in, CS. They have a bursary fund for parents.*

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# Teaching English grammar – the ESL approach

Alicja Lievaart has taken the principles of teaching English as a second language and transferred them to teaching English grammar to deaf children in her care

Deaf pupils demonstrate considerable difficulties in learning English grammar caused in part by its inconsistencies and the huge variability in its use – so Teachers of the Deaf sometimes struggle with teaching it. Taking into consideration language profiles of deaf students at Elmfield School and that these deaf children show some similarities with hearing learners of English as a second language (ESL), I decided to apply ESL principles to teaching English grammar to deaf children in my setting.

## Why should we teach English grammar separately?

Literature reviews, analysis of writing samples and data tracking from my setting revealed that the most problematic areas for deaf children within English grammar are tense markers –s, -es, -d, -ed, -ing, plural and 3rd person singular –s, -es, omissions of articles *a, an, the* and some function words such as *was, is, does*, as well as basic word order and subject-verb agreement. These result from differences between English and BSL in tense and plural marking and lack of function words, and the nature of spoken English where final syllables and function words are unstressed and more difficult to hear. For these reasons, many pupils fail to progress as well as their hearing peers at all levels of education.

Other important reasons why some deaf students need a formal grammatical instruction just like ESL children are late exposure to English limited mainly to school experience and the lack of ability to acquire grammar subconsciously that is crucial to achieving proficiency in English. Because many deaf children cannot pick up spoken grammar, they cannot use it in writing correctly with consistency. It can be argued that deaf children with cochlear implants and/or hearing aids who have had access to sound from an early age and use spoken English may have an advantage, but my experience with secondary CI and HA users showed that not all of them have been able to capitalise on this advantage and produce grammatically correct written sentences with required consistency. This situation is quite similar to hearing ESL children who can often speak grammatically in everyday situations but fail to perform equally well in writing grammatically in English.

## What to teach?

On the basis of what I have determined about the grammar needs of my pupils I have selected four items for the initial grammar intervention: the articles (*a, an, the* and zero article), plurals of nouns, past simple (-ed), and subject-verb agreement. Just like ESL methodology

suggests, I used two types of criteria to select the material: usefulness and frequency. I considered the following: was the grammar item useful to deaf learners at a particular stage of their education, what impact would it make on their writing and would it help them progress to another level and increase their grammatical accuracy? As far as frequency goes, the questions were: how often is a grammar item included in the input, and how often would a deaf student have to produce it accurately depending on the purpose, audience and assessment criteria of writing? After that I graded the selected grammar items to make sure they were not too complex but complex enough to provide an appropriate level of challenge for students, and that the deaf students had a linguistic, metalinguistic and cognitive capacity to learn new grammar.

The intervention showed that formal grammar instruction based on ESL methodology improved the writing of deaf children in my provision, so the next step was to incorporate grammar into everyday English lessons and develop a grammar programme for each key stage based on individual needs and curriculum requirements. The programme is based on two 20-minute sessions every week. During the first session, a grammar item is explained (theoretical part) and during the second session, it is practised using drills. The following week, students have to perform various tasks improving their vocabulary and general knowledge that contain the specific grammar item so that it becomes meaningful and they know how to use it in a number of contexts. After all selected grammar items have been covered, the cycle begins again but at a higher level. The topic cycle and progression can be seen below.

In addition to this, other subjects have been reviewed to find opportunities for incorporating the same grammar items into the curriculum to provide opportunities for pupils to notice and use target grammar in a variety of academic contexts and make sure that target grammar is included in the language input in all lessons, not just English.

## How to teach English grammar?

Although there are lots of interactive strategies for teaching English grammar, I have found that for deaf children the best strategy is teaching grammar using rules, examples and texts. There are two approaches here: deductive and inductive. A deductive approach is essentially presenting a rule followed by examples and application by a student. An inductive approach works the other way round: first students look and analyse



examples and then they come up with a rule for a specific grammar item. It is vital to consider the application of the two approaches for deaf pupils.

Firstly, in a deductive approach deaf pupils will find a significant challenge in understanding and talking about grammar and language if their metalinguistic skills are underdeveloped. Second, deductive teaching is a teacher-centred approach where the teacher explains or presents the new grammar first, so pupil participation and interaction may be limited; but that can be easily tackled by using examples and texts from a curriculum area students are familiar with to make them notice new grammar and see how it is used. Lastly, deductive teaching can be time-saving and teachers can be very selective about how much grammar they need to cover at a time – there are a lot of resources available for teachers who feel less comfortable with teaching grammar.

Examples and texts can also be used in an inductive approach. It gives deaf students opportunities to notice and discover new grammar and formulate rules of language that can foster the development of cognitive thinking skills leading to better memory and problem-solving skills by improved pattern-recognition and independent learning. However, inductive teaching is often more time-consuming as you do not know how long will it take for pupils to discover what you want them to discover, and professionals feel worried that it can compromise the pace of a lesson. It also takes a lot more planning from teachers who need to predict possible responses and problems that deaf pupils may face

#### WORD LEVEL

- Week: session 1: nouns, plurals, common vs. proper noun  
session 2: L-days and months, C-countries
- Week: session 1: articles a/an/th  
session 2: everyday objects
- Week: session 1: personal pronouns, demonstrative pronouns, question word  
session 2: writing-personal information
- Week: session 1: adjectives (L: size and colour, C: comparative and superlative)  
session 2: describing people: physical appearance and clothes
- Week: session 1: verbs (L: identifying and simple sentence SVO; C: subject-verb agreement)  
session 2: There is... /There are... describing places, subject and verb agreement
- Week: session 1: Present Simple (C: including questions and negations; L: 3rd person singular s/es)  
session 2: daily routine
- Week: session 1: adverbs (time, place, manner)  
session 2: daily routines and free time activities-adverbs of frequency, subject and verb agreement
- Week: session 1: Past Simple: L: -ed regular verbs/to be/to have/to do  
session 2: last holiday, last weekend, describing what happened in a book you are reading
- Week: session 1: prepositions of place (L) and direction (C)  
session 2: There is/there are/describing places

#### SENTENCE AND TEXT LEVEL –

<http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/grammar-vocabulary/grammar-snacks>

Order of clips (activity pack with transcripts and worksheets for each clip)

- Countable and uncountable nouns
- The definite article
- Personal pronouns and possessives
- Question words
- Comparative and superlative adjectives
- There is/there are and It
- The Present Simple
- Adverbs of frequency
- The verb “to be” present and past
- The Past Simple (regular and irregular)

during the lesson, and, because of these factors, the whole experience can be quite frustrating both for students and teachers.

As far as resources go, there are plenty of ESL course books, teaching guides and websites. Some of the most popular ones are: ‘*How to teach Grammar*’ by Scott Thornbury and ‘*How to teach English*’ by Jeremy Harmer, which introduce theoretical aspects of ESL methodology, and ‘*Essential Grammar in Use*’ by Raymond Murphy which has explanations and drills – a great starting point for teaching grammar – and the British Council website also offers a range of activities as well as teaching tips.

#### Challenges

It all seems common sense but when it comes to practice, some professionals feel lost and do not know where to start. A few things are crucial to achieve success in teaching English grammar: training, whole school approach, time and consistency.

All staff should be trained in ESL methodology and bilingualism to identify opportunities and barriers for deaf pupils. Time for separate grammar sessions should be allocated while students should be expected to communicate in grammatically accurate written English in all aspects of the curriculum where the written mode is used. It is crucial because deaf students are assessed on the basis of the quality of written communication in most subjects. Therefore, all professionals working with deaf pupils have to be aware what grammatical features deaf students may struggle with, and ensure that they have high expectations of deaf students to produce grammatically correct written responses even in subjects such as science, geography or citizenship. At Elmfield, staff training took place on how to support deaf pupils in learning English at the beginning of the year where writing success criteria for each pupil have been discussed and handed out as a checklist, so that all staff are actively involved in grammar monitoring across all subjects and ensure that the transfer of skills takes place. Teachers have to ‘upskill’ themselves by using available literature and resources and simply trying things out, not getting discouraged if after a few lessons students will make mistakes or will not demonstrate grammatical accuracy. It is a natural part of learning to make mistakes and it should be expected, and sometimes teaching has a ‘delayed effect’ which means that pupils will only ‘click’ how to write grammatically after a while – sometimes after years of exposure to target grammar!

*Alicja Lievaart is a secondary teacher of English and humanities at Elmfield School for Deaf Children in Bristol. She has an MA degree in applied linguistics and teaching English as a second language (ESL) obtained in Poland which together with being a non-native speaker of English gives her a unique perspective on teaching English grammar to deaf children.*

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# Improving deaf children's morphology skills

Ian Noon, Head of Policy and Research for the National Deaf Children's Society, sheds light on 'The Secrets of Words'

This article summarises the purpose of a new National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS) resource 'The Secrets of Words', developed for education professionals working to support deaf children with under-developed literacy skills by focusing on their knowledge of morphemes.

## What is 'The Secrets of Words?'

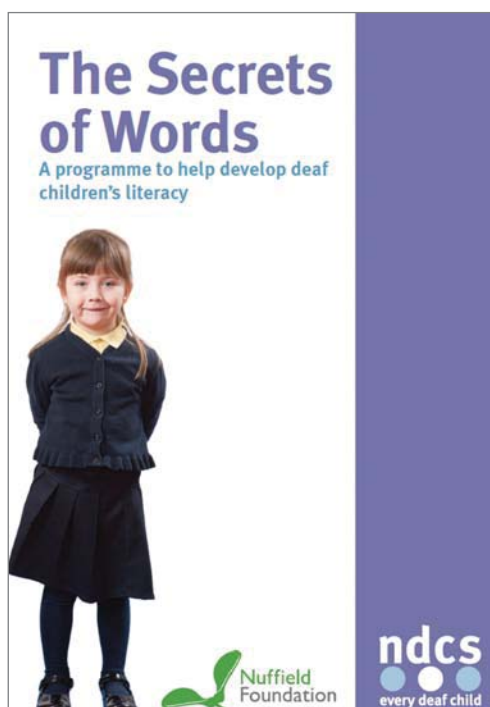
Published in 2012, the resource was produced in partnership with the University of Oxford, the Nuffield Foundation and BATOD. A dedicated website later followed. It consists of a programme of lessons, exercises and games accessible online along with an accompanying booklet explaining the background research.

The resource is aimed at primary school teachers working with deaf children and the Teachers of the Deaf and teaching assistants who support them. It is intended that the resource will be of most benefit to deaf children aged 7 to 11, particularly those who are not performing at the expected level for their age.

## Evidence-based research

It is well known that children who grasp how morphemes work can anticipate the meaning of words that they have not encountered before. For example, if they had never come across the word 'mathematician', they could have a good guess at what it means on the basis of its morphemes. Because morphemes influence sentence meaning, children's understanding of morphemes is closely related to reading comprehension.

Research carried out by Oxford University identified that the development of literacy skills for deaf children remains a challenge, even with the latest hearing technologies. Their research identified a need for a



resource to improve deaf children's understanding of morphology and so improve their literacy skills.

Existing methods of assessing hearing children's awareness of morphemes were considered inappropriate due to the oral language demands that these tasks make. Terezinha Nunes, Deborah Evans, Diana Burman and Rosanna Barros at the University therefore tested a new programme to improve deaf children's morphology skills. They found that deaf pupils using this newly created programme especially for deaf children made greater progress in spelling and reading comprehension than deaf pupils in a control group. In

doing so, this improved their spelling, reading comprehension and text writing.

The programme is in ten units which build on each other and are intended to be used in order. Although the ten units were originally designed to be taught over ten weeks, some teachers involved in the research project found that they had to move at a slower pace and were able to adapt the materials to do this.

## Impact

The finished resource 'The Secrets of Words' has proved to be one of NDCS's most popular resources for education professionals. 2,376 copies have been ordered from the NDCS Freephone Helpline. Moreover, 200 professionals have attended workshops on the resource.

The findings from various evaluations of the workshops and the resource show that the majority of teachers have learnt something new from using the resource, with nearly all saying that they believed it would be very useful or useful when working with deaf children.



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When asked how they would use the resource, responses have included:

- As a tool to accurately assess a child's progress and to set targets and plan next steps with increased confidence
- To provide teachers in mainstream classrooms with more specific advice on individual children
- To inform a child's Individual Education Plan.

Although it's difficult to identify long-term impact at this stage, teachers were already clear that the resource was having a positive difference:

- Pupil engagement in and confidence around literacy is increasing with use of the resource
- Pupils are progressing in specific areas around literacy including verb understanding, grammar and sentence structure
- Teachers of the Deaf are disseminating the resource widely to school teachers and teaching assistants, who seem to be using it.

Some of the supportive quotes received include:

'I was amazed to see the difference shown in one child's performance – pre/post intervention. I would like to think some of my students might make similar progress.'

'So useful – just what we needed, so very thankful that you have produced this tool to use – we have

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For more information visit [www.ndcs.org.uk/morphology](http://www.ndcs.org.uk/morphology)

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# Phonological awareness and deaf children

Lorna Gravenstede has been studying how closely the phonological awareness of deaf children affects their reading abilities

Phonological awareness (PA) and its relationship to the development of literacy skills have received a great deal of research attention over the last thirty years and yet there are still many unanswered questions with regards to the nature of this relationship and the relative importance of different aspects of PA for deaf children learning to read and spell. PA refers to the ability of an individual to reflect upon and manipulate the sound structure of spoken words. There are different levels: the syllable, onset-rime and phoneme, which are often defined as following a developmental pattern. There are several different types of task that can be used to assess phonological awareness at each of these levels and these include tasks of recognition (e.g. how many syllables in 'banana'?), generation (e.g. which words rhyme with 'cat'?), and manipulation (e.g. say key, but don't say 'k').

It has long been known that in hearing children PA skills are correlated with reading ability, predictive of later literacy skills and impaired in subjects with significant literacy difficulties. However, in a detailed literature review, Castles and Coltheart (2004) came to the conclusion that there is in fact no unequivocal evidence of a causal link from competence in PA to success in reading. Some researchers have posited that the relationship between PA and literacy skills is reciprocal, so learning to read may actually lead to improved PA skills as well as vice versa. In a more recent meta-analytic review of the literature Melby-Lervag et al (2012) found evidence in longitudinal and training studies that there 'may be' a causal relationship between phonemic awareness and word reading in hearing children, but they did not find such a relationship between rime awareness and word reading.

Clearly, deaf children are a heterogeneous group and so it is probably no surprise to find that the many studies into the PA skills of this group and how these appear to impact upon the development of literacy skills have yielded differing results. There are, of course, many studies that do find correlations between various PA tasks and literacy skills for groups of deaf children (e.g. Johnson & Goswami 2010). Interestingly, when studying students at Mary Hare School (an oral specialist school), I found a group of pupils in years 7-9, who had real and non-word reading skills within the normal range for children of their age, good grapheme-phoneme knowledge, but relatively poorly developed PA skills. These students were all congenitally severely or profoundly deaf individuals who were hearing aid users. Somehow these students had all become good readers,

in spite of weak PA skills, which should not be possible if PA is **necessary** in order for reading to develop. A very recent review paper by Miller and Clark (2011) draws a similar conclusion, that many pre-lingually deaf children develop word reading at comparable levels to their hearing peers in spite of remarkably poor phonemic awareness. The authors conclude that these children are able to use orthographic knowledge in conjunction with syntactic awareness and metacognitive skills in order to boost their word reading and comprehension of written texts. In a longitudinal study of reading development in deaf children over a three year period Kyle and Harris (2010) found that earlier reading was related to later phonological awareness skills, suggesting that at least some deaf children might develop their PA through reading.

So, given the mixed findings in the research, what does this mean for our practice with deaf children as they learn to read? It is clearly important that, as happens anyway, everything is done to promote the best possible development of all of the skills that have been found to be related to literacy in this population. This includes all aspects of language development and speech reading. Given that some researchers are still reporting an important role of at least some aspects of PA for the development of literacy skills, we cannot ignore this area, but we do need to be aware that for some children, fluent reading will develop as a result of other strategies which in turn will ultimately facilitate PA skills. Deaf children are all very different and each case needs careful individual consideration.

For young children, we need to know their PA skills levels and put programmes/activities into place to boost these skills if they are not developing in line with other skills. Ultimately, the types of activities that are carried out in PA training programmes are also useful in terms of development of listening and speech as well as any possible impact on later literacy skills. These are activities that Teachers of the Deaf have always encouraged carers of young deaf children to carry out (e.g. singing nursery rhymes, clapping syllables etc.).

Deaf children who do not have good access to speech are those who are at the greatest risk of having poorly developed PA skills. Various strategies are already routinely used with this group of children in order to make the sound pattern of spoken language accessible in a visual form. These include visual phonics and cued speech. Studies carried out on children who learn cued speech from an early age show that as a group these

children do develop phonological awareness skills comparable to their hearing peers (Charlier & Leybaert 2000). There is relatively little published research on the effectiveness of visual phonics. In one study by Narr (2008), this system was also found to improve children's use of phonological information and ability to make rhyme judgements, but no relationship was found between the subject's reading ability and the length of time they had been exposed to visual phonics. I am hoping to learn more about the effectiveness of these two forms of instruction in this edition of the BATOD magazine!

For older deaf children who are experiencing particular difficulties with their literacy skills, PA is one area that should be explored, along with all of the other many skills that are known to underpin the development of literacy. I have worked with deaf children in the past who, in spite of good speech perception, speech production and language skills, persist in finding learning to read and write very difficult. In other words, deaf children who are very clearly presenting with specific difficulties with literacy skills. My experience is that these children also tend to have weak PA skills and that training on PA skills does sometimes appear to have a positive impact on their literacy skills. It is, of course, difficult to unpick whether it was PA training or another aspect of the literacy instruction they received that made the difference for them. We really need studies on children such as these, where the impact of a PA training programme on the development of PA skills and on reading and spelling is carefully measured and written up for publication. Such studies need to try and tease out whether input needs to occur at all levels of PA (syllable, rime, phoneme) or whether concentrating on particular aspects of PA (phoneme awareness looks to be the most likely candidate) is sufficient to bring about improvement in reading and spelling. To date, I can only find one published study, Palmer (2000), that looks at PA training in deaf children. In the two cases reported in this study, the children received PA and grapheme-phoneme training and an improvement in both children's PA and reading skills were observed after the intervention. We also need more studies on how PA skills develop in as many deaf

children as possible over time. So, I would encourage anyone working with this population of children who has the time and resources, to get researching and add to our knowledge base so that it becomes easier to be sure about exactly which skills should be trained, when and how!

*Lorna is a specialist speech and language therapist and works for The Burwood Centre and Mary Hare Training services. Her interest in phonological awareness (PA) began as an undergraduate and her dissertation was on the relationship between PA and literacy in young hearing adults. Lorna has since carried out research into the relationship between PA and literacy in deaf children.*

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# Assessing communication, language and listening in deaf children

Sue Archbold introduces a new NDCS online resource on assessments – with thanks to Sue Lewis, Lynda Holland, Brian Gale and Liliias Reary

Children who are deaf have long been recognised as having particular educational challenges. They are one of the few groups of children and young people recognised by the government as entitled to specific teaching or overview of programmes by a workforce which has certain mandatory competencies. This is because it is recognised that significant permanent hearing loss brings with it potential challenges to key skills and understanding fundamental to learning in school. Although it is important to identify the hearing loss, to fit appropriate amplification systems and offer an intervention programme, the challenge is to monitor and assess progress in a number of inter-related areas continually, in order to identify needs and strengths, diagnose additional difficulties and use this to plan and deliver appropriate teaching and learning strategies and targets.

The underachievement of children who are deaf is well documented and despite the recent technological advances, including the advent of newborn hearing screening and cochlear implantation, too many deaf children are still leaving school with attainment considerably lower than that of hearing children. However, at the same time, we have evidence of individual profoundly deaf children achieving at least as well as their peers and their siblings. Research continues to show us that there is enormous variation in the educational achievements of deaf pupils, and many variables affecting progress. The factors influencing progress of deaf children are many and complex; in addition to those influencing progress in hearing children, such as cognition and learning style, they include age at diagnosis, age at and type of early intervention, aetiology, the presence of other disabilities, age at fitting of hearing technology, type and fitting of technology used, and nature of parental interactions.

These additional factors make assessing and monitoring progress a complex process, but essential. For deaf children, assessment is likely to include a range of professionals, using specialised assessments, and to include the views of parents and young people themselves. Information must be gathered on the child's individual progress and development, as well as obtaining a comparative measure with hearing children of similar ability, and interpretation of this information requires skills and experience.

## Purpose of assessment

We assess to:

- diagnose the difficulties children and young people may be experiencing and identifying areas of strengths
- identify areas of development or behaviour causing concern including any deviance from expected norms
- describe the child's development and compare it with previous assessments so that progress can be monitored
- make judgements about whether progress is sufficient for this stage, taking into account other factors, for example overall development, family concerns, age of fitting and maintenance of aids
- inform planned intervention, teaching programmes, and targets
- inform and support family decision making, for example regarding approach to communication, placement, amplification package and levels of support
- explore the effectiveness of the amplification being provided to the child to provide information to clinic-based professionals such as audiologists about the child's functioning in everyday life
- identify areas which require further exploration by other professionals, for example a speech and language therapist or psychologist and provide information to them
- inform early years setting, schools or colleges of the reasonable steps that need to be taken to ensure deaf learners are not treated less favourably than other learners with regard to accessing the curriculum and teaching and learning (i.e. to help ensure compliance with equality legislation).

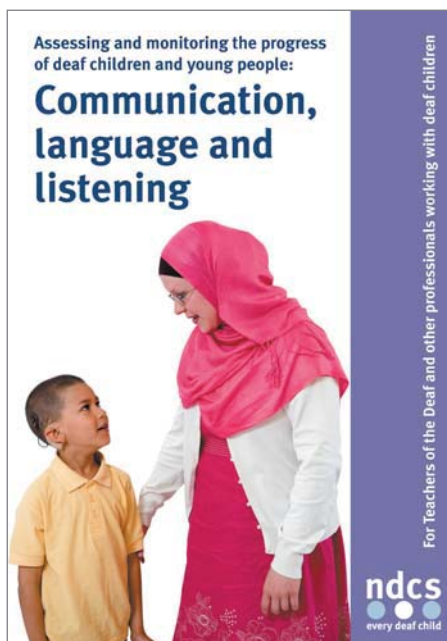
## Assessment considerations

To ensure that assessments are used effectively to influence future management and learning of the child or young person it is important that:

- all involved, including parents and non-specialists, should be able to understand the assessments and their implications
- those undertaking assessments should share the outcomes with others in accessible formats, with parental consent
- the assessments should be taken together to give a comprehensive picture of progress and not taken in isolation
- the assessments are appropriate to the child and what is being assessed and tell us what we think they tell us
- the assessment is not compromised by any communication or language delays or misunderstandings by child or assessor.

It is equally important to regularly assess any area of development known to be at risk because of early childhood deafness. Support services need to be proactive, rather than reactive and only responding when a need is evident. The areas that could be problematic for deaf children include:

- language and communication – ensuring that all aspects of language develop smoothly as the child progresses towards complex language
- academic achievement across the whole curriculum – ensuring a gap does not open between the child and his/her peers in attainment (particularly in the core curriculum subjects of mathematics, science and ICT)
- literacy – reading and writing, including progress to more complex ‘higher order literacy skills’
- attending and listening skills – the ways in which the child attends and listens in the classroom and thinks about what is said by the teacher, classmates etc and learns from it. For deaf children, the way in which their hearing loss is managed will influence this and must be monitored
- personal, social and emotional development; the health and well being of the child as evidenced by their behaviour and interactions with others, how they express their feelings and so on.



Section one provides a background to assessment, with the differences between assessment and monitoring clarified, and the different types of assessment available described. Section 2 goes on to give a summary of the assessments most commonly in use with deaf children in the UK. It also gives some tips on the use of these assessments with deaf children. It is not an exhaustive list and you may come across other assessments that have been used. It gives a practical table of the assessments by age and by category: communication skills, receptive language, expressive language, functional listening and use of audition, and speech production. We are aware that other categories such as literacy skills,

cognition and social and emotional development are important to consider, and these will be added later.

Within each of the categories, a table provides a summary showing where one can obtain the assessment, the age range it is used for, and who can use it. Links will take you directly to the source of the assessment, which will provide more information. The section then goes on to briefly describe each assessment, with further information on what it measures, its practical use, and any limitations.

Section three provides a helpful discussion on assessment in practice with case studies covering a range of ages and issues. They illustrate the use of various assessments in practice, why they were chosen, the results given, and the outcomes arising from the assessment. The case studies provide rich information about assessments being used by busy practitioners, and we are grateful to those who provided them.

### Future plans

Following the launch of this resource, the National Deaf Children's Society has begun delivering, with the Ear Foundation, a number of workshops on assessment, which utilise some of this information and which have been favourably received. In addition, as this is an online resource, it will be regularly updated. We also hope to provide more information in the future on assessments on literacy, cognition and social and emotional development. We welcome ideas for development and about any information on assessments you have found useful, as well as any case studies illustrating the effective use of assessments in practice.

For more information or to share your feedback, please contact [professionals@ndcs.org.uk](mailto:professionals@ndcs.org.uk)

*Be among the first to find out about new resources from the National Deaf Children's Society: join us free as a professional member at [www.ndcs.org.uk/membership](http://www.ndcs.org.uk/membership)*

*Sue Archbold is the Chief Executive Officer of the Ear Foundation.*

### New National Deaf Children's Society resource

The awareness of the importance of assessing and monitoring the progress in deaf children, and of the complexities described above, led us to develop a resource about assessment and the issues involved. It became clear that, with a growing range of assessments used, and a range of knowledge of these and skills in using them, there was a need for a resource which provided practical information about assessment and monitoring, and information about the range of assessments necessary. In order to be able to keep this resource up-to-date, and for it to be easily accessible, it was decided to provide it on-line, with regular updating and development. The resource has been developed by the Ear Foundation and the National Deaf Children's Society and is available online at [www.ndcs.org.uk/assessments](http://www.ndcs.org.uk/assessments)

We are grateful to the National Sensory Impairment Partnership (NatSIP) for their support for this resource and to the Department for Education for its funding for this. NatSIP holds a contract with the Department for Education (DfE) in England for provision of specialist information, advice, support and training to improve the outcomes for children and young people with sensory impairments.





# App way to learn!

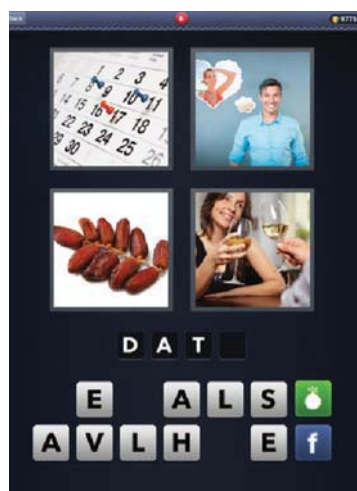
Maggie Owens was inspired by an iPhone app to develop a way to engage her deaf students that encourages a wider understanding of language as well as numbers

In the past, I could spend long hours creating what I thought was a fabulous, colourful and educational Mathematics display for the Mathematics notice board only to see students walk right by the board, totally oblivious to all my hard work! Today, I am pleased to say that I often take great pride in watching a group of students and sometimes staff gathering around the Mathematics noticeboard discussing a Mathematics challenge!

How did I do it? Well, the inspiration came from the new app craze: 'Four Pictures & One Word,' which is a free app that I downloaded onto my iPhone. (but be warned – it is great fun and very addictive!). This game is like a combination of Pictionary and Hangman. It displays four pictures and each of these pictures has one word in common and the task is to guess what the word?



For example, you could have pictures of (i) Calendar **date** (ii) dream **date** (iii) fruit **date** and (iv) couple on a **date**. What do these pictures have in common? One word that has four letters D – A – T – E. As you can see, the answer can be very obvious, but other word challenges will leave you scratching your head in confusion!



## Example 1

For the Mathematics noticeboard, I designed my own version of the 'Four pictures and one word,' in a mathematical context, like this example.

- (i) Nice Juicy Beef
- (ii) David Cameron
- (iii) Prime Numbers 2,3,5,7,11,13...
- (iv) Suspects in a line up

The word has five letters. Can you guess and define this word in a Mathematical context?

\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_ , \_\_\_\_ , \_\_\_\_ , \_\_\_\_.

Yes, the answer is **Prime**.

- (i) **Prime** cut of beef
- (ii) **Prime** Minister of England
- (iii) **Prime** Numbers 2,3,5,7,11,13....
- (iv) **Prime** suspect

A student successfully guessed the word Prime but added, 'What has a picture of beef got to do with the word prime?!' This was an opportunity for her to learn that one can order a prime cut of meat meaning a nice succulent and juicy piece of meat!

This resource can be adapted for any subject and can be used in a cross-curricular way. Sometimes, I would reveal one letter to help those who are still struggling to guess what the word is. The students love to stop me in the corridor or in the lunchroom to tell me that they know the answer to the puzzle.

As Teachers of the Deaf, we are aware of the typical characteristics of deaf students which include a limited vocabulary and a restricted understanding of the range of meanings of words, which have multiple meanings. Many deaf students have difficulty in comprehending critical mathematical language and have difficulties in understanding mathematical vocabulary, especially those with multiple meanings, for example difference and volume.

*Difference – What's the difference between my hair and her hair?*

*Difference – What's the difference between 10 and 7?*

*Volume – Volume of books*

*Volume – Turn up the volume on the radio*

*Volume – The amount of space something takes up.*



In my eleven years of teaching, I consider 'Four Pictures and One Word' one of the best resources for deaf students. Students discuss each picture and come up with fantastic suggestions. This resource is very useful in helping the students to understand the new word in a mathematical context. It promotes their literacy skills by helping them to understand the new word in a variety of contexts and by expanding their vocabulary bank – as with the example of the student learning the different contexts in which 'prime' can be used.

Teachers of the Deaf need to draw specific language objectives from the curriculum and students' interest as sources to create a language programme in a conversational context and which can be integrated into the curriculum. This resource offers teachers excellent opportunities to highlight and reinforce language understanding within natural conversation. I write up the definitions of each picture in their context, and the students record these in their Mathematics Language Notebook, enhancing and reinforcing their language acquisition.

With the current focus at national level on the 'Literacy and Numeracy Strategy for Learning and Life 2011 – 2020' this resource provides wonderful material for teaching new keywords, for introducing a fun and educational starter activity to the lesson, or for ending the lesson with an interesting and fun plenary.

Now back to my iPhone to find inspiration for the next teaching tool!

**OTHER EXAMPLES**

**Example 2**

Our Christmas 'Four Pictures and One Word' encourages cross-curricular learning as the students discuss the 'Work Triangle' in Home Economics.



**Example 3**

Our Spiral 'Four Pictures and One Word' encourages cross-curricular learning as the students discuss tornadoes in Geography.



Maggie Owens is a qualified Teacher of the Deaf and is passionate about teaching mathematics in St. Mary's School for Deaf Girls (she is a past pupil of the school). She has recently completed an MA in Deaf Education entitled 'How to enhance deaf children's problem solving and critical thinking skills in Mathematics'.

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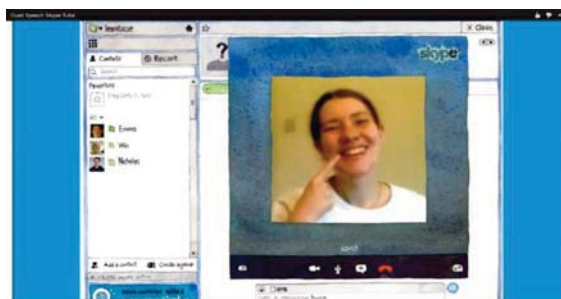
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# Helping deaf children enjoy music

Deaf children can enjoy music in many ways, says **Bryony Parkes**, Inclusive Activities Officer at the National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS)

Involving deaf children in music and singing classes can help them feel more confident, learn a new skill and explore the world around them. Sadly, as many Teachers of the Deaf know, too many deaf children are denied the opportunity to fully participate in music and develop their skills, be it singing, DJ-ing or playing a musical instrument, which may leave them feeling isolated and excluded.

NDCS has published a new music resource for music teachers and other mainstream practitioners to help encourage the inclusion of deaf children in music activities. How to make music activities accessible for deaf children and young people, the first guide of its kind, aims to show music teachers and professionals that children with hearing loss can enjoy music as well as other children.

## Raising awareness, challenging attitudes

Parents have reported that their deaf children often miss out on taking part in music or singing classes because music teachers do not know how to address the needs of a deaf child, and often have low expectations of what they can achieve.

The resource highlights the importance of communication and the fact that many deaf children have residual hearing; with the support of hearing aids and cochlear implants they can hear music being played. It illustrates how deaf children can experience music in many different ways – some can play a musical instrument through watching their teachers carefully, or some can feel the vibrations through their feet when playing drums, for example. It also shows music teachers and mainstream practitioners how they can open up the world of music to deaf children by following simple steps.

## Practical help

How to make your music activities accessible for deaf children and young people includes practical tips on how to adapt music activities for deaf children in different community settings, such as instrumental lessons, music groups for the early years, music technology workshops and orchestras.

Some of the tips suggested for mainstream practitioners include checking communication needs, relaying instructions while facing your student, practising in a room without any background noise and so on.

## How you can help?

This guidance illustrates that deafness should not be a barrier to enjoying music and seeks to increase expectations of what deaf children can achieve. We hope that mainstream teachers will use this resource to ensure participation and enable deaf children to enjoy music. NDCS would welcome support from Teachers of the Deaf

in sharing and disseminating this guide to music teachers and professionals, such as instrumental teachers who are contracted in from council music services and workshop leaders in after-school clubs, and encouraging them to use it in their practice.

## Other resources

Music and the Deaf also have resources available to support curriculum-based teaching at [www.matd.org.uk](http://www.matd.org.uk).

NDCS runs a deaf-friendly programme, Me2, which works with arts and leisure organisations across the UK to make them accessible to deaf children and young people. How to make music activities accessible for deaf children and young people is part of the NDCS's series of 'Making arts activities deaf-friendly'. To access the resource go to [www.ndcs.org.uk/music](http://www.ndcs.org.uk/music) or call the NDCS Freephone helpline on 0808 800 8880.

*Bryony Parkes is the Inclusive Activities Officer at the National Deaf Children's Society.*

## Matilda's story

Matilda, aged 14, is deaf in one ear and wears a hearing aid. She is an alto saxophonist who plays in orchestras and bands. She attended the World Saxophone Congress in Portugal in 2011.

'I started playing piano when I was seven and saxophone when I was eight. I was interested in the saxophone as it seemed cool and different to what children my age would play. It made me stand out. Since then I have completed all of the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music Jazz grades and I am now working towards my conventional Grade 6. I play in senior and junior bands, a senior orchestra, jazz ensemble and saxophone orchestra.

'I love music because I find it a great way to relax. I like to tell a story and convey emotions through my music. I have a private teacher who is understanding of my needs and makes sure I always face him with the ear I have hearing in. He tries his best to help me tackle any challenges I face, such as aural tests and tuning my saxophone.

'I don't let deafness hold me back and I hope to go to university to train to be a music teacher in the future.'





# See what you say!

Stevie Mayhook has been looking at an online live remote captioning system from Australia which instantly translates the words of the teacher into text on the student's laptop or iPad

In the middle of 2012 I received an email from Alex Jones in Sydney, introducing himself as the Co-Founder and Brand Ambassador of Ai-Media saying that his colleague was in the UK and was keen to meet to discuss live captioning in schools. A trial had been run in Victoria, leading to its growing adoption in other Australian states and they were looking to undertake a similar evaluation in the UK context. Intriguing!

Ai-Media is a social enterprise, founded in Australia in 2003 by Alex Jones and Tony Abrahams, its CEO. Their mission statement is *'The End of Disability: while impairment is a fact of life, disability is not'*. Ai-Live is an online captioning platform they have developed whereby accurate, real-time speech-to-text is made available to individuals or groups of pupils. The teacher's voice is relayed to a remote captioner who 're-speaks' the lesson content, including appropriate punctuation, into speech recognition software trained to their voice. The only classroom equipment required is a mobile phone or small microphone for the teacher, and an internet-enabled device (such as a laptop or iPad) on which the pupil(s) can read the captions. Alternatively, the captions can be displayed on the interactive whiteboard, providing access to the whole class: in effect, providing subtitles for the lesson. A transcript of the content is available following the lesson which can be used for revision, post-tutoring or to allow families to help with homework.

Although I was familiar with electronic notetakers in FE and palantypists at conferences, I knew nothing about remote captioning for schools at that time. However, Tony's initial explanation and demonstration made it clear that there was huge potential for the system both to support deaf learners and to create a more inclusive learning environment for a range of students. As we know, deaf learners benefit from visual cues, reinforcement of technical language and good models of natural spoken and formal written English, so I became really excited about the prospect of this technology to improve their access the curriculum.

It was attractive for many

reasons. It reduces the need for note-takers in class and provides an accurate record of what has been said. The transcripts can be edited to remove irrelevant content, and help deepen a pupil's understanding of lesson content. The teacher has control and can ask for 'captions off' when they are working with individuals. The booking system is simple and captioners need only be booked for relevant lessons, for example where new language and concepts are being introduced. The system is easy to administer and requires no more setting up or management than working with a pupil's personal FM system, and is equally compatible with other classroom technology.

There were more meetings, with various organisations becoming involved. Two things were clear: schools and services were keen to trial the service, and funding was needed to run a pilot scheme in the UK.

In March 2013, I was invited to visit Ai-Media offices in Sydney and to see Ai-Live in action in Melbourne. This was a great opportunity to see behind the scenes and appreciate the ongoing research and development of Ai-Live, the commitment and interest of captioners in delivering the best service possible and the range of expertise involved. I met with the University of Melbourne research team who had evaluated the pilot; staff of the Victoria Deaf Education Institute who had managed the technical aspects, and saw live captioning in action at a mainstream secondary school with a resource base supporting 28 deaf learners. Seeing the different ways the captioning was being used by students in class was really useful; it was clear that it



was a flexible tool that could be adapted according to the class composition, topic or teaching style.

Upon my return to the UK, a consortium was established, working under the title of 'Project Tapestry', to apply for funding for a UK pilot and getting expressions of interest from schools to take part in the pilot. As Ai-live has the potential to support a wider range of learners, we were joined by the Autism Consultant, Eileen Hopkins, who has been very proactive in getting other specialists in her field involved. Ai-Media now has a London office, with Beth Abbott, Founder of Bee Communications as its General Manager and an in-house team of trained captioners, ready to deliver their service.

The Education Endowment Foundation has funded the piloting of Ai-Live as a professional development tool in primary schools, which is being undertaken by Nesta. Project Tapestry, at the time of writing, is applying to suitable funding bodies for support in trialling and evaluating the system in secondary schools with deaf, autistic and other disadvantaged learners – watch this space!

For more information about the use of Ai-Live in schools, go to <https://ai-live.com/OBP/Home/Videos#1>

*Stevie Mayhook is an Educational Consultant with the Ewing Foundation.*

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# Why ToDs matter – Jake’s story

**Jake Beck** has been profoundly deaf from an early age. He and his mother Emma Beck talk about the different ways that ToDs have helped the whole family

I have had a Teacher of the Deaf since I was born but I can't recall the earlier ones. Mrs A, who was with me through primary school, is the one I can remember making a real difference.

She helped me especially when I was worried or had concerns with my equipment or schoolwork. This still happens now I am in secondary school. Sometimes the Teacher of the Deaf will help me understand my homework or guide me to learn for tests that I am worried about. I've always struggled in my languages but my ToD helps me to become better at what I struggle with. I must admit that it is because of the support from my ToD that I now have a grade which is the same as my hearing friends in French and German. I couldn't manage without my ToD as I then wouldn't have anyone to help me and check if I have missed anything. I'm glad I have a ToD to make sure the school understands my radio aid and soundfield systems and how they help me. Before I moved on to secondary school Mrs A encouraged me to write a presentation on how the radio aid helps me. Now teachers will use the transmitter well when I hand it over.

Mrs A had high standards and she made me push myself to achieve the best of things. She wouldn't accept just anything. I had to be as good or if not better than my classmates and if she knew I could do it she made me work hard. This made me very proud as I had done it myself. Without Mrs A pushing me I wouldn't be where I am now and I am very grateful that she was there.

*Jake Beck*

## 'Why the Teacher of the Deaf Matters to My Family' – Jake and Reubin's Mother

I am a parent of two profoundly deaf boys, who were diagnosed from an early age; three weeks old for one son and nine months old for the second. A Teacher of the Deaf has always been in our lives; they are a very important figure not only for us parents, but for the boys as well as the school.

Their knowledge and support in guiding things so they go smoothly along is very valid. I have always tried my hardest to work in partnership with our Teachers of the Deaf. In this way

we are a team that supports each other. The school gets good support as the Teachers of the Deaf are actually good classroom teachers as well. The boys see everyone working together and therefore work as hard as the rest of the class. The radio aids are used well because the school understands they need these to access what is happening. I have a profound hearing loss as well and when the boys were young the Teacher of the Deaf would keep me informed through the 'home school book' so I could support what was going on in the classroom. The Teacher of the Deaf has always allowed us as a family to have the radio aids at home. These were especially helpful when the boys were out with me on their bikes. Now they use them for their sporting activities.

What has also been important for me was being able to ask any questions, knowing the ToD would give their professional opinion and also provide a well informed choice of options, then allow me to make the choice which I felt was the best fit for our family. I felt included and empowered and listened to.

My sons have also built up working relationships with their ToD; I could see that when this relationship was strong, they could share their concerns and emotions and this has helped them both to have confidence to do

their best. I am sure that is why they have both done so well and hold their own in their mainstream classes equally and sometimes better than many of their classmates. Trust is a huge part of this whole process, and the boys will often go first to their Teacher of the Deaf when school issues arise ensuring the situation is resolved as quickly as possible.

## For all aspiring Teachers of the Deaf please note:

The ToD's role with the child, family and school is a very important factor in the child's education. You hold the child's educational potential in your hands. Support, guide and inspire young minds in knowing that they can reach their dreams and aspirations. You can make a difference. I know this as you have done so for my boys.

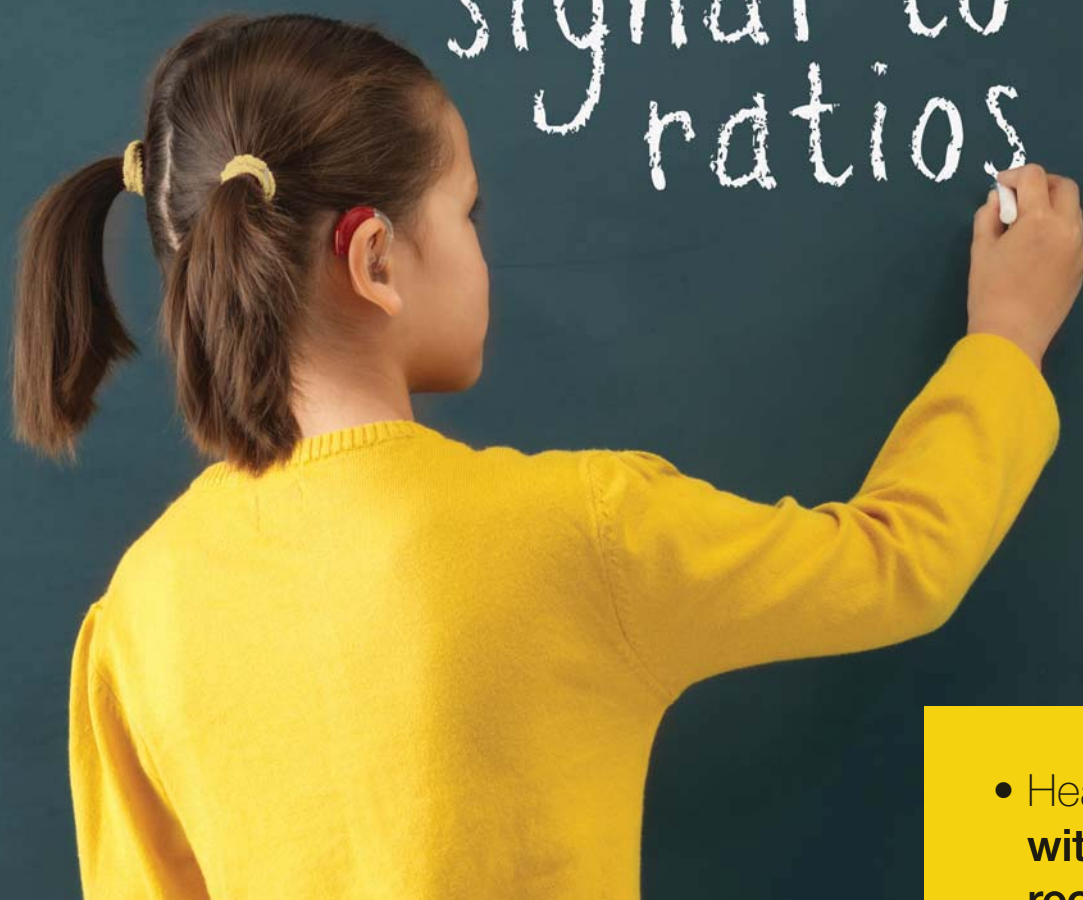
*Emma Beck*



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# Count the dots

Zarina Naeem looks at the SII based method for calculating the Articulation Index – a counselling tool for audiologists

In the NHS, there has been a move away from the patriarchal model of healthcare to a patient-centred approach and has affected all healthcare professionals, including audiologists. This change emphasises shared decision making and good patient experience (Equity and Excellence in the NHS, 2010). It has brought with it the need for appropriate content counselling, and a search for methods and tools that will enable the transfer of clinical audiological test results to the patients/carers in a way which is meaningful to them and in a language which they can understand. Describing the audiogram using the categories of hearing loss (mild, moderate, severe) is confusing and abstract to patients and carers and does not translate easily into how it will affect them in everyday life.

The Articulation Index (AI) is a tool used to predict the proportion of the average speech signal that is audible to a patient with a specific hearing loss. The SII (Speech Intelligibility Index) based method for calculating the AI (Killion and Mueller, 2010) serves to bridge the gap between the technical description and the significance and impact of the hearing loss to the audibility of speech in everyday life. It is based on the underlying principle that speech intelligibility is related to the amount of speech cues that are heard by the listener. Its practicality and ease of use comes from the use of 100 dots to represent the long term average speech spectrum (between 250Hz to 8000Hz

for conversational speech at 60dB SPL) superimposed on the audiogram in dBHL (figure 1). The density of the dots (based on the latest ANSI standard R2007 S3.5-1997 - SII importance function for nonsense syllables) represents the importance of each frequency band in speech recognition, accounting for the greater density of dots at 2000Hz.

The hearing threshold levels in dBHL can be then be plotted on the audiogram. By counting the number of dots above the threshold and across the frequency range gives an estimate of the percentage of the available audible speech cues. Dividing this figure by 100 gives the AI score in quiet surroundings. This is illustrated in figure 2 for a mild to moderate high frequency sloping hearing loss where the shaded portion highlights the dots that are inaudible and the unshaded portion shows the dots that are audible. With this hearing loss the AI score will be 0.28 and 28% of speech cues will be audible (or 72% will be inaudible) and usable for this person in quiet with this hearing loss. The AI can range from 0 (0% of speech cues are audible) to 1.0 (100% of speech cues are audible).

In using the AI scores with patients and carers it is important they do not confuse audibility with intelligibility. It shows how much they can hear and not how much they can understand. Hearing loss interacts with other factors to determine intelligibility and these include background noise

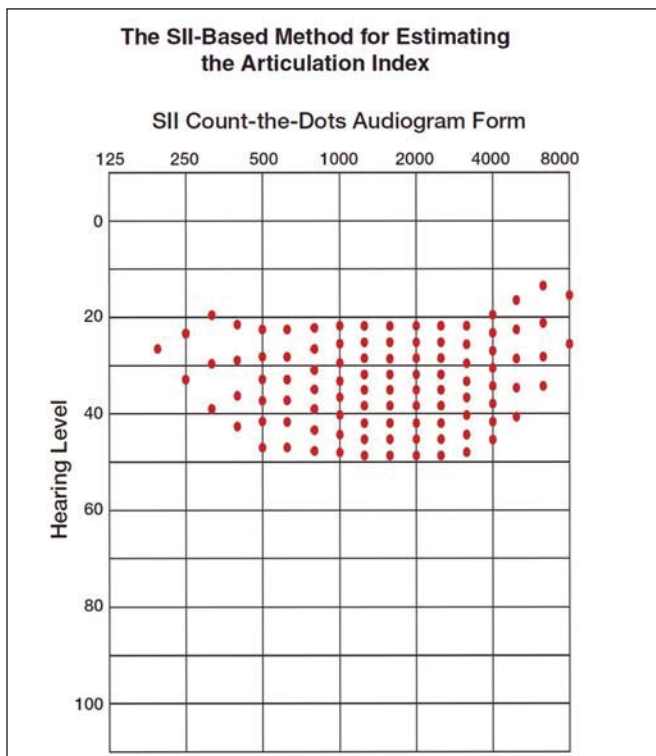


Figure 1

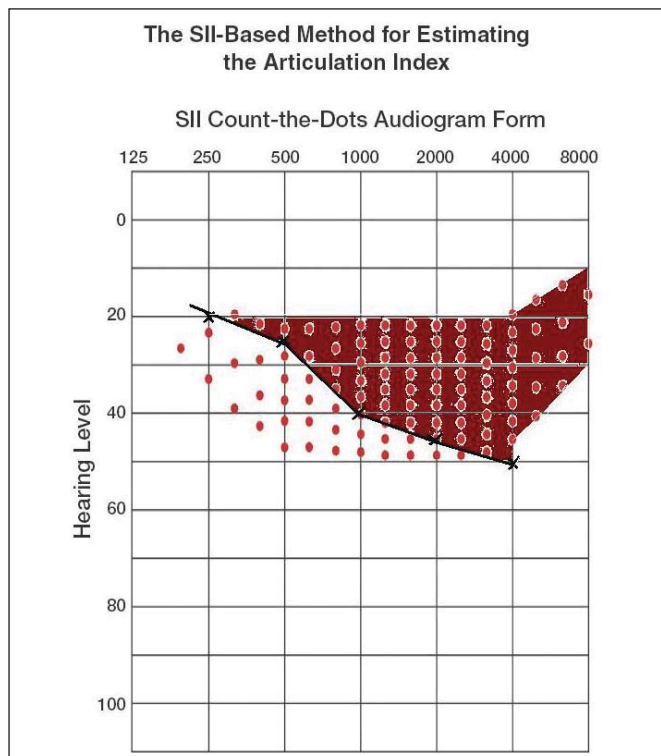


Figure 2



levels, the type of speech materials, cognitive ability and age. The approximate relationship between the AI and intelligibility (Killion and Mueller, 2010) shows that an AI score of 0.3 results in 37% intelligibility for NU6 words but is sufficient to hear 90% of sentences due to the brains remarkable ability to fill in the gaps.

For children it is also important to counsel carers about the impact of a hearing loss on the reception of soft speech and incidental learning and its importance in speech and language development. To enable an approximate calculation of the AI for soft speech the audiogram for the 60dB SPL speech level was modified by shifting the dynamic range of speech upwards on the audiogram by 10 dB to represent soft speech at 50dB SPL (Figure 3). The hearing threshold levels are plotted on this audiogram and the AI calculated as above.

The AI based on this modified audiogram is used purely for counselling purposes to demonstrate the effect of distance on audibility. The speech spectrum for soft, average and loud speech is slightly different and modifying it in this way perhaps an oversimplification but, '--- for patient counselling, a couple of dots here and there is no big deal.' (Gus Mueller. Personal communication). '--- many people not getting the concept of the dots are making mistakes of 50 dots or more. How do I know? You will see audiograms in use in clinics that have an overlay of the 'average speech banana' going from 40 to 70 dB HL'. (Mueller et al. 2014 pg. 82).

The method has important clinical applications in patient education and counselling and successfully tackles two questions frequently asked by patients and carers 'What is the percentage of hearing loss?' and 'How much speech can he/she hear?'. Diagnosis of a mild, moderate, severe hearing loss becomes more meaningful and also more

memorable when it is supplemented by an explanation in terms of the percentage of speech that is audible during average and soft conversation. It also makes it easier for patients/carers to convey this information to significant others who are not present at the appointment. This way of explaining the audiogram is useful for permanent sensorineural as well as temporary conductive hearing losses.

In this climate of multi-agency involvement it also serves a purpose in educating other professionals and referral sources involved with the patient with a hearing loss. Describing the audibility deficit for conversational and soft speech in terms of a percentage should improve understanding and also help in their communication with the patient during their appointments.

Although computerised programs and some probe microphone measurement equipment provide calculations for the AI, this pen and paper method when carried out in front of the patient provides a powerful visual image of the proportion of the speech signal obscured by the hearing loss and the impact on speech audibility. I have found this to be beneficial in non-compliant teenage patients as well as carers. Furthermore, it does not require any technology, takes one minute and, therefore, can be calculated at the patient's home, in school and at the end of appointments.

In summary, this clinically friendly, easy to use, method for estimating the AI can be an important counselling tool for professionals in audiology when explaining the significance of hearing thresholds in the perception and understanding of speech. Equipped with a better understanding patients will be able to take greater ownership of their hearing loss and be in a better position to make informed choices, thereby, improving their overall patient experience.

A detailed discussion of the background, basic principles and calculation of the AI (Amlani et al 2002; Hornsby, 2004) as well as other uses of this method (Mueller et al. 2014) is found elsewhere.

Zarina Naeem works as a paediatric audiologist within the Central Manchester University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.

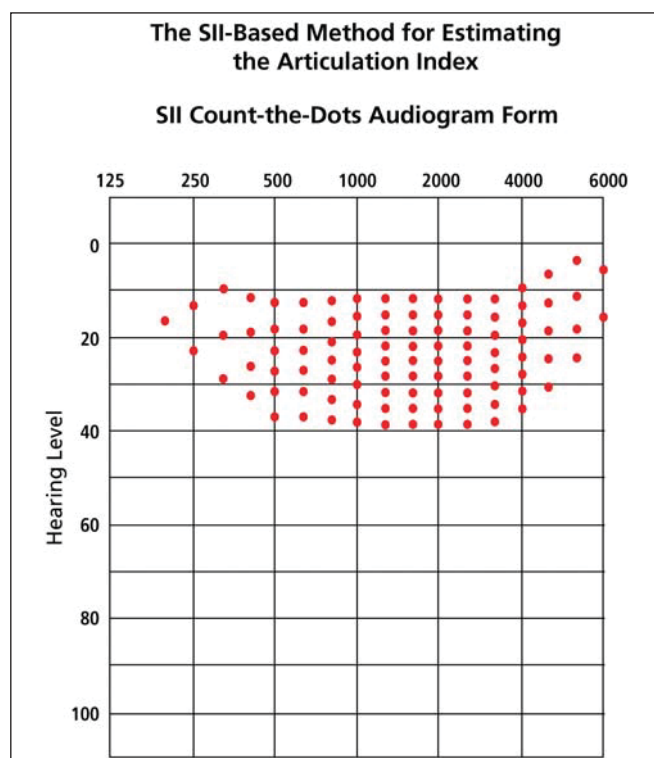


Figure 3

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# Listen and Talk as One

Anita Grover describes a significant new initiative from Auditory Verbal<sup>UK</sup>, Chear and Phonak that is helping many more deaf children to listen, speak and achieve

When children have optimal access to sound and parents have the skills to support their child's listening and spoken language in their everyday lives, the results are significant. Thanks to a new initiative from Auditory Verbal<sup>UK</sup>, Chear and Phonak, many more children will benefit from paediatric audiologists and listening and spoken language specialists being located in the same centre in London. The Listen and Talk as One initiative is supported by Phonak.

Through the initiative, the teams from Chear and Auditory Verbal<sup>UK</sup> work together to achieve the very best outcomes for babies and young children. They harness their collective skills and experience and work together with families and other professionals to understand exactly what each child is able to hear and how to maximise their access to speech sounds and develop their listening and spoken language skills so they can realise their full potential. By collaborating on research, training and innovation, this new partnership has much to offer professionals working in the field of hearing impairment.

## How Listen and Talk as One is helping Josh

Josh, aged four, was born eight weeks early, leaving him with hearing loss in both ears and visual impairment.

With a diagnosis of Auditory Neuropathy Spectrum Disorder, it is especially important that his hearing levels are regularly monitored.

In the first assessment at Auditory Verbal<sup>UK</sup>, his expressive and receptive language was equivalent to a child a year younger; his audiological assessment at Chear showed that he was struggling to hear the 'sh' and 'ss' sounds which carry so much important information for speech.

After a hearing aid adjustment and a year of auditory verbal therapy sessions at Auditory Verbal<sup>UK</sup>, with clear communication goals, he is able to hold a conversation at the dinner table, tell a simple story and talk on the telephone. Chear has enabled him to get maximum access to sounds so that in his Auditory Verbal<sup>UK</sup> sessions he can use his audition skills to the best of his ability.





and collaborating on research. Teachers of the Deaf from across the UK have recently embarked on the 'Working through audition' training package run by Auditory Verbal<sup>UK</sup> and have identified areas where their practice can be significantly enhanced and better outcomes can be achieved for the children that they work with. For more information about the training available see [www.avuk.org/course-training/](http://www.avuk.org/course-training/) We will feature more on the experiences of Teachers of the Deaf on that programme in our next edition.

*Anita Grover is the Chief Executive of Auditory Verbal<sup>UK</sup>.*

Josh's AV therapist is able to feed back listening, language and speech results to Chear so that his hearing aids can be adjusted in collaboration with his local team. He loves coming to learn through 'play' and his mother is delighted that she can save time by visiting professionals at the same London location.

**See how the Listen and Talk as One initiative has helped Grace and her family**

Grace had her first hearing aids at the age of three months after ABR testing showed a severe to profound loss.

Therapists from Auditory Verbal<sup>UK</sup> carried out a preschool language assessment (PLS4 UK) showing her receptive communication skills at eight months were equivalent to a child half her age. Her parents were concerned that she kept removing her aids and was startled by loud sounds. Chear audiologists and therapists from Auditory Verbal<sup>UK</sup> worked together to establish exactly what she was hearing and to work on her receptive and expressive language skills so she could be part of the auditory world around her.

Each session is diagnostic and the team developed a much clearer picture of her hearing loss and how much her aids could help her. Two years after her first appointment, her parents are equipped with the skills to develop her spoken language and Grace has scores within normal limits for her chronological age.

**Sharing skills with Teachers of the Deaf**

The Listen and Talk as One partners are sharing expertise through training programmes, conferences and events

For more information on Listen and Talk as One – see [www.listenandtalkasone.co.uk](http://www.listenandtalkasone.co.uk)

Dr Josephine Marriage, Chear: [josephine@chears.co.uk](mailto:josephine@chears.co.uk)

Anita Grover, Auditory Verbal<sup>UK</sup>: [anita@avuk.org](mailto:anita@avuk.org)

Chris Cartwright, Phonak: [chris.cartwright@phonak.com](mailto:chris.cartwright@phonak.com)





## ANSD research

Hannah Cooper talks about her studies which aim to improve diagnosis and treatment of auditory neuropathy spectrum disorder as well as investigating what happens in the brains of children with this condition

I am a Clinical Scientist in audiology and a NIHR doctoral research fellow at the UCL Institute of Child Health. My PhD project is investigating brain structures of children with auditory neuropathy spectrum disorder (ANSD) using MRI scanning together with audiology testing. The results of the study will provide new information about ANSD in order to inform both families and professionals and help to direct and improve services for patients in the future.

The study is currently recruiting and is open to children with ANSD age eight and over, without a cochlear implant, who are able to perform conventional audiology testing and lie still in an MRI scanner for 35 minutes. Please do get in touch if you know of anyone who would be interested in taking part.

This research is important as the causes of ANSD and the best way to manage it are not well studied. Children taking part in the project will have a full range of testing in order to better understand how ANSD affects them. The results of the study will be used to gain a greater understanding of the problems faced by children with ANSD so that parents and professionals can be better guided in how to manage their difficulties.

People with ANSD have a range of functional hearing abilities from normal hearing detection thresholds with minor difficulties hearing speech in the presence of background noise to no functional hearing or access to speech. Audiological management of infants and children with ANSD is challenging as developmental consequences of the diagnosis cannot be predicted by the auditory test results obtained in infants. A period of uncertainty always follows diagnosis in young children, resulting in distress for families and difficulties for professionals. Even when behavioural hearing testing is obtained, the results cannot be used to predict speech discrimination ability. There is a gap in the knowledge and a genuine need to increase understanding in order to guide families and professionals.

ANSD is diagnosed when a particular pattern of auditory test results is seen – present otoacoustic emissions or cochlear microphonic, and absent or very abnormal ABR. Risk factors include prematurity, jaundice and family history. It is estimated that one in ten children with bilateral permanent hearing loss have ANSD [1].

Imaging of children with ANSD using conventional MRI scanning shows that up to two thirds of them have abnormalities [2]. A recently developed MRI method known as diffusion MRI is able to look more closely at

the structures of the brain and examine connections between different parts of the brain (Figure 1). Several studies have used diffusion MRI to look at auditory problems. One study has shown that brain connections are different in children who have a good outcome following cochlear implantation compared to those with a poor outcome [3]. Differences have also been seen in people who have tinnitus [4, 5].



White matter pathways in the human brain visualised using diffusion MRI. Image courtesy of Jamie Kawadler, UCL Institute of Child Health.

The study at the UCL Institute of Child Health uses diffusion MRI together with genetics testing and hearing testing in order to thoroughly characterise ANSD. These tests will be compared to the diffusion MRI results to see whether there is a connection between brain structure and ability to hear. This will provide new information about ANSD in order to inform families and professionals and help to improve services for patients in the future.

Please do not hesitate to get in contact if you would like to know more about the study or if you know anyone who would like to take part. My email address is: [hannah.cooper.12@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:hannah.cooper.12@ucl.ac.uk)

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# BabyBeats

by Advanced Bionics

*A musical journey of sound, music, and voice  
helping little ones learn to listen and communicate*

Children should begin developing communication skills during the very first year of their lives. For families with children experiencing hearing loss, Baby Beats by Advanced Bionics is a motivating, fun program to foster listening and communication development in natural settings, both before and after using hearing aids or receiving cochlear implants.

The Baby Beats Early Intervention Pack contains:

- Baby Beats Parent Guide
- Baby Beats Music CD
- Instruments
  - Ocean Drum for Infants*
  - Maracas for Toddlers*
- Transportation and Animal Picture Cards
- Duck
- Baby Beats Travel Bag



If you are a professional working with babies with hearing loss and would like to learn more about this important resource, email us at [spp.uk@advancedbionics.com](mailto:spp.uk@advancedbionics.com)



## BATOD North conference

Trish Cope reports on the speakers and workshops which were enjoyed by all those who went to the Deighton Centre in November for the annual study day

BATOD North held its annual study day on Thursday 14th November at the Deighton Centre in Huddersfield. It proved to be another successful event with over fifty people attending. The venue has proved to be central to the region, easy to locate and with sufficient space for us. However this year parking proved slightly difficult for the later arrivals and there was the usual queue for lunch! Because of the comments on evaluation forms and also because the Deighton Centre may close before our next study day, we will probably be looking for an alternative venue for next year. So, if anyone knows of any venues with a good range of rooms and plenty of parking and easy access, please let your committee know.

Topics are chosen on the basis of ideas from the previous year's evaluation forms as well as the issues that are current in schools and services. With such rapid changes in technological provision, both amplification technology and information and communication technology, there is much that Teachers of the Deaf need to keep up-to-date on and the overwhelmingly positive comments on evaluation forms confirmed both the need for this and that the quality of the day ensured that it was extremely helpful to those attending.

### Wendy McCracken 'Effective Use of FM'

We were delighted to welcome Wendy McCracken as our keynote speaker. Wendy is Professor in Education of the Deaf at Manchester University and is not only the only Professor in Education of the Deaf in the UK but also the first female to hold this post!

The title of Wendy's talk was 'Effective use of FM' and she began by giving a short overview of the recent study undertaken on the use of FM systems in schools. As well as looking at the listening environments in schools attended by deaf children, the study also looked at how FM systems are used and their effectiveness. The study included the views of parents and children as well as professionals.

Wendy explained the areas the study covered and gave examples of how the research was undertaken. The research was undertaken in mainstream settings and although it was a small survey, it did identify several areas of concern.

Reverberation times in classrooms were explained and examples given to illustrate what an important factor this is in classroom design and how it can affect access for deaf children. It is critical for deaf children that reverberation times are lessened – and there are ways of improving this, which were discussed – but this sadly

does not seem to be a consideration for new-build schools or for the Government. Reverberation time was an issue in all the schools surveyed. How noise levels during lessons were measured was also explained as well as the importance of the FM system in overcoming this. Deaf children need the signal to be + 15dB.

Dual task listening was explained – this was a part of the study looking at performance in noise and in quiet and in noise with FM. This showed how hard deaf children have to work and what a problem divided attention is for them. They need to be working cognitively on the task in hand, listening and looking and are often distracted by a busy and active classroom. Deaf children go home exhausted!

However the main focus of Wendy's talk was on the use of FM systems in mainstream classrooms.

Some of the findings of this were shared

- Often teachers were wearing the transmitter when they were not leading the lesson. FM systems need to be used more effectively. In the sample, only 37% used FM effectively, 43% delivered the signal to everyone all of the time and 20% didn't use the transmitter at all!
- The mute button was rarely used when needed – it was described as a 'nightmare!' Wearing the transmitter, only four teachers out of the sample remembered to use the mute button – even after INSET.
- Questionnaires – such as PEACH and LIFE – are useful to monitor when, how and why FM is beneficial.
- Pupils know when and where the FM system is useful and should be involved in the decision-making and management of the system. They are all too often given all the responsibility for managing the FM system without having a choice or their views being consulted.
- Deaf children agreed there were benefits, but identified issues with classroom management, the mute facility and the responsibility – they hated giving the transmitter to the teachers. They would prefer to hand it over as they walk into the classroom with the teacher standing at the door. The children wanted to be listened to – there are times when they don't need FM and they were best placed to identify them!
- Parents were often surprised to hear how useful FM systems could be at home and wished they could have access to them. Most parents did not understand FM and did not realise the benefits.

However only a few pupils took the system home despite its obvious advantages in overcoming the problems of background noise and distance. Pupils want inter-connectivity and need access to sound all waking hours because learning takes place all the time – when shopping, at the park, playing outside etc... IT GIVES THEM ACCESS TO FUN!

Wendy concluded by emphasising how important it is that we listen to both parents and children and respect the opinions of children on how we use FM systems in schools. It was a stimulating and informative presentation.

## Delegates then had a choice of three workshops for the final morning session

**Paul Harris, Ewing Foundation:**

### *Digital systems – latest developments*

Paul briefly described some of the changes that have happened amongst firms manufacturing radio systems along with some of the other factors that are driving changes to the provision of radio aids including:

- Funding issues
- Much better informed parents who access information on-line
- An ethos of personal choice
- High expectations of the technology.

Teachers of the Deaf need to be very well informed themselves with a high level of understanding so that they can hold discussions with all the groups involved and not be too easily swayed in their decisions by either manufacturers, parents or other professionals.

Paul then described the increased complexity of current and emerging systems.

Above all, the complexity of choice and interface means that there is a need for improved communication between health and education services with both sides jointly responsible for ensuring that amplification provision is effective.

**Joyce Sewell-Rutter, Ewing Foundation:**  
***Technological Resources for Deaf Pupils with ASD***

Joyce is a Teacher of the Deaf with many years experience in the field. She has worked for over 10 years with the Ewing Foundation and currently also works on a part-time basis for the Burwood Park Foundation, working with hearing-impaired children with additional needs. She has a particular interest in using the iPad as a tool to engage deaf children on the Autistic Spectrum with speaking, listening and learning and her work is very highly regarded – hence the interest in this workshop from practising Teachers of the Deaf – especially those working with deaf children with complex needs.

Joyce was happy for the PowerPoint presentation of her workshop to be circulated to BATOD members. She was also keen for practising Teachers of the Deaf to join the BATOD Special Interest Group, with which she is

involved: 'Deafness and Autistic Spectrum Conditions' through the BATOD website.

Deaf children with ASD require very careful preparation when there are changes of hearing aids/new mapping of CI and research involving this group of deaf children is limited. Improved communication may be evidenced in very small steps, such as improved listening, turn-taking, joint attention and initiation of something to share – use of the iPad may support this.

**Richard Vaughan, Connevans: *Getting Connected***

Richard explained very clearly, with words of caution when needed, how to connect personal amplification systems to a variety of additional inputs including:

- radio systems to multi-media systems and interactive whiteboards in the classroom
- using radio systems and soundfield systems together
- televisions; Richard explained how previous connections worked, the reasons for change as well as what connections should currently be used
- other audio systems such as keyboards and laptops.

There were useful demonstrations of how connections worked along with examples of leads etc that those attending could examine and handle.

## In the afternoon there was again a choice of three workshops

**Michael Ritson and Michele Eaton, Tameside Sensory Service: *iPads – tips, tricks and initial setup***

Michael's workshop aim was to demystify technology and to show us what he has used in his team. He first described how to set up an iPad. He gave out a very clear set up sheet with simple steps. This was very easy to follow and he took the fear out of the technology.

He demonstrated how to use certain apps. He was enthusiastic about an app called TeamViewer. This allows the iPad to display the identical content to the teacher's SmartBoard/WhiteBoard and allows a student to sit anywhere in the classroom and follow the board in a lesson. He handed out a very comprehensive set-up sheet for accessing this app. He demonstrated a variety of other apps in the workshop, for example: TV Meeting, Dragon Dictation, and SayText. He also demonstrated how the Amazon Kindle can be utilised in the classroom.

Michael was a very easy to follow workshop presenter as he used real language. Clearly he has a genuine passion for the technology and the children he works with.

I do not own nor have I ever used an iPad, but I now feel confident to begin my iPad journey. I have now been introduced to the world of the iPad and apps and I am excited at how much was available and how easy it all is to use.

Michael's advice is to try a few apps and see how they go; it's easy to get overwhelmed with the amount of

apps available. Michele (the Teacher of the Deaf) has forwarded some apps that she has found very useful in her work. Some of her recommended apps for ToDs are:

Flashcard Creator 2012, Logicly, Match it up, Memory King, mushroom maths, myfirstapp.com, Phonics Hero, Photo touch concept, Sort It Out, Things that go together, What's different and Wheels on the bus.

The workshop was an excellent starter for banishing fear and getting us all excited about what is available out in app-land. Looking at Michael's initial aims for his workshop I would say that his targets were achieved and

the job was well done! We all left feeling excited and wanting to use and explore more technology in our day to day work.

**Mark Varley, St John's School, Boston Spa: *Speech development through technology***

Mark manages the specialist speech and language therapy services at St. John's School. He explained that this session would focus on speech development through the use of iPad technology: a field he had developed through using apps in school.

Mark emphasised some golden rules to follow when starting out using apps:

- Start simple
- Organise your apps into folders
- Take time to get to know the app and how it works
- Adapt them for your pupils.

Mark's workshop was very accessible and he was able to answer questions from the audience which ranged from people who had not actually handled an iPad to those using them on a regular basis.

Mark demonstrated some of the apps he thought were useful and showed how he has adapted them for individual pupils. We were amazed with the simple techniques he showed us: producing 'screengrabs', making sequences and developing expressive language using apps such as 'My Playhouse'.

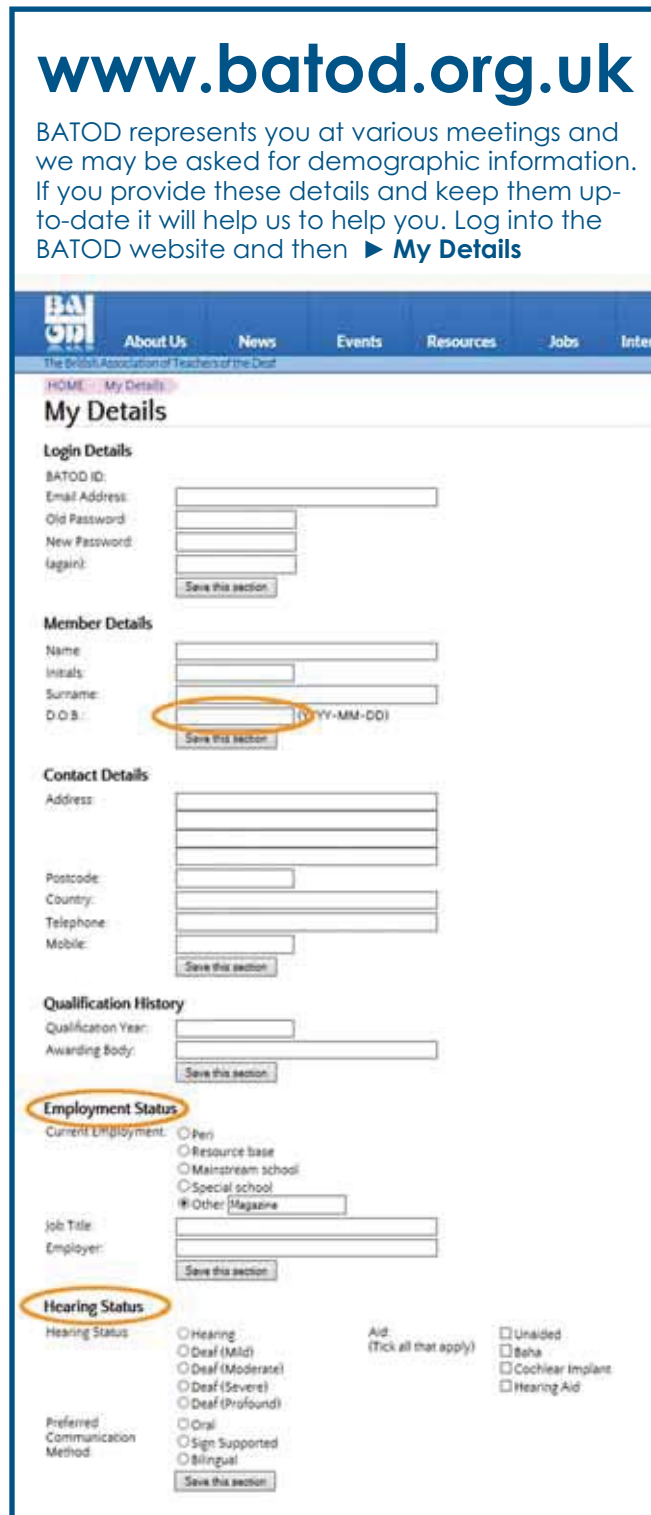
Mark gave us confidence to use apps and demonstrated that they can support the development of receptive and expressive language.

He suggested that it was a good idea to ensure an 'iPad policy' was developed prior to using devices and that an 'iPad surgery' was essential in order for colleagues to share their own knowledge and experience using apps.

**Paul Harris, Ewing Foundation: *Amplification technology: Successful set-up***

Ensuring that all amplification equipment is working as it should be is a vital part of the role of Teachers of the Deaf and this workshop emphasised the need for this along with regular routine testing of all personal amplification systems. Paul led a discussion about this and demonstrated how all modern hearing instruments can be regularly tested using hearing aid analysers to ensure optimum performance with reference to some of the regular problems likely to be encountered. Routine monitoring of cochlear implants was also covered as well as other personal amplification systems so that Teachers of the Deaf and teaching assistants ensure that they are working effectively. Participants also developed a greater understanding of successfully setting up a range of hearing aids, cochlear implants etc with additional equipment.

*Trish Cope is an educational consultant with the Ewing Foundation and a member of the BATOD North Region committee.*







# History of deaf education to be on BATOD website

Susan Gregory looks at deaf education over the past 50 years and the proposed section on the BATOD website which will provide a new resource

The past fifty years have been a period of significant changes in the education of deaf pupil including how and where deaf pupils are educated, the expectations of pupil achievements, the role of teachers and other professionals and the use of technology.

Fifty years ago, deaf children were described as deaf or partially hearing and most were educated in schools for the deaf. The diagnosis of deafness was considered to be early if it was before two years of age, hearing aids were large and cumbersome and many profoundly deaf children had body-worn aids. Signing was forbidden in schools and many educationalists saw the use of signs as detrimental to education and learning. Expectations of deaf pupils were generally low.

In the twenty-first century the picture is very different. The reason for the changes are many and various: changes in society's views of deaf and disabled people, advances in technology, particularly digital hearing aids and FM systems, advances in medicine such as early diagnosis and cochlear implants, changes in the education system as a whole, inclusion, literacy and numeracy policies, SATs and changes in our understanding of language and language development. And this list could be much longer.

BATOD is proposing to develop a section on its website to provide an account of this period and document these changes. Why, people might ask, should anyone be interested in a history of deaf education, and surely there is enough to do without thinking about this? One answer is that such a history does not currently exist. But it is also because such an account informs our understanding of the present, the debates and controversies and the strong feelings that still exist about a number of issues. A website will make an account of this period available for teachers who want to teach deaf studies or just be better informed, for pupils who want to learn about their history and heritage, and for academics who for many reasons might want to study this topic, and for future generations.

Why a website? Firstly because one of the first places many people go to for information is their computer and the internet, not the library or bookshelf. Also a website rather than a book allows users to move about easily between topics to find out what they want to know. It can be updated, and can be consulted easily.

But there is a further reason. In talking to people about this period it is clear that what is significant can differ from person to person. For some it might be the first

child they saw with an implant or the issues for deaf and hearing people working together in a classroom, or thinking about how best to work with a family with a very young baby. As well as providing a factual account of this period we hope that, by having a part of it devoted to personal accounts, web pages will allow us to include some individual experiences and thus provide a far richer picture.

The mechanics and structure of the history section are still under discussion, but broadly we hope to introduce two or three topics in each issue of the magazine in preparation for putting them on the website. Possible topics could be 'mainstream education and deaf pupils', 'the impact of cochlear implantation on the education of deaf pupils' or 'the changing role of sign language in the education of deaf pupils'.

On the website, each topic will include an account of the history of that topic including relevant dates and important publications. There will also be a section for personal accounts and that is where Teachers of the Deaf will be involved, but also parents, past pupils, and the many other professionals involved in some way in the education of deaf pupils. At the moment we are suggesting that personal contributions could be anything between 200 and 1000 words.

You could start thinking about it now; is there anything you personally would like to write about? Do you know anyone who has an interesting story to tell? Would you like to be involved with developing the web pages in some way? Have you any general reactions to the idea? If so let us know at [deafhistory@batod.org.uk](mailto:deafhistory@batod.org.uk)

*Susan Gregory is a former Reader in Deaf Education at the University of Birmingham.*



**Interested in helping  
– but not on NEC?**

**Have you skills in graphics, design or publishing?**

**Could you help to organise conferences, exhibitions and CPD opportunities?**

The Publications Manager needs your help, please offer your expertise:

Contact [publications@BATOD.org.uk](mailto:publications@BATOD.org.uk)

# Audiology updates

This page features innovations and discussions of what is happening in real-world educational audiology and gives readers the opportunity to highlight issues that they encounter in the workplace

## Update:

After a recent training session on testbox procedures, an attendee emailed to say they were having problems using the firmware software package with the Phonak personal hearing system.

If Successware is installed properly there should not be a problem. Assuming the receiver is of a type that can be programmed (which an original MLX cannot), the problem may be due to a fault or not being positioned correctly in the toaster. Three things can be tried:

- 1 Check the USB symbol is in the top right hand corner of the Successware opening page. If it shows 'HiPro' instead, close the program, connect the toaster and re-open it.
- 2 With the receiver connected to a hearing aid (with a good battery fitted, and switched on), click on the magnifying glass symbol ('Identify the device'). It should read how the receiver is currently programmed: If it doesn't, then it will not program either.
- 3 Listen to the complete system (h/a+rx+tx) and try to synthesize the channels (how you do this will depend upon which transmitter you are using). If the receiver will not be synchronised by an appropriate transmitter, it will not be able to be programmed in the toaster. Make sure that the transmitter is ok beforehand because, under certain fault conditions, a tx may not be able to synchronise receivers.

## A reader asked:

How can we increase families' understanding of how good audiological management supports their children's learning and inclusion? We are a primary school resource base in a very 'mixed' area in terms of affluence and ethnicity. We have tried coffee mornings, but it tends to be the same few parents who attend, and it is hard to know how effective written information is.

## You say:

- Why don't they attend? No crèche available? Inconvenient timing/venue? No staff who speak relevant languages? Could you target small groups with common needs/goals?
- Could you meet families outside school? Home visits (with an interpreter where necessary) are time- and labour-intensive, but can break the ice and members of the extended family can be involved. Or groups may prefer meeting in one another's homes (less daunting than a school).
- Liaise with the audiology clinic to arrange several pupils' appointments on the same day and host a drop-in coffee morning at the clinic.
- Make the content practical and relevant: simulate children's experiences by issuing earplugs and talking in background noise whilst moving around; provide stetoclips, hearing aids and FM systems so they can appreciate the benefits.

- Have families who are conscientious technology users describe the impact on their child's language and achievements; invite deaf adults to share their experiences – many of 'your' parents will have never met a deaf person.
- Stress the message that 'If a child is using technology for only four hours a day, it will take six years for the child to hear what a typically hearing child hears in one year.' (Jane Madell)

## The experts\* say:

If children attending a resource base live some distance from the school and are transported in taxis, families miss out on 'school gates culture' and may find it difficult to visit the school during the day.

Could the children take the lead? You could help them produce a booklet (a nice cross-curricular activity!) about the different personal hearing instruments and environmental aids used in the school. Captioned photographs could explain how good audiological management helps them access the curriculum and social activities. You might include results of speech perception tests with/without radio aids in noise/quiet to demonstrate their effectiveness (graphs and numbers may be more accessible than detailed reports). They could discuss their booklets with their families at home. The next step would be to link this to National Deaf Awareness Week, with the children hosting an open day with displays, activities and refreshments. Hopefully, this will create a relaxed atmosphere in which the families feel able to develop a mutual support network on their own terms.

Some settings organise an awards afternoon/evening and have a guest speaker to talk about using technology at home, including the importance of hearing aid maintenance etc.

You could include information and demonstrations during parents' evenings/annual reviews. Time is usually tight, but this is a great opportunity to stress the impact technology can have on their children's attainments. Parents often travel a long way for a short meeting, so this could make the journey more worthwhile.

## A reader asks:

What is the best solution when you have one child in a classroom using FM and the whole class is watching and listening to something via the whiteboard? We have been told that the 'splitter' is not very effective. We want the whole class to be able to hear the audio at the same time as it is being transmitted to the FM child ie we do not want to eliminate sound for the whole class.

If you can suggest a solution, or would like to pose a question for our readers and experts, please contact Stevie Mayhook: [steviem@ewing-foundation.org.uk](mailto:steviem@ewing-foundation.org.uk)

\* Information provided by members of the Ewing Foundation: [www.ewing-foundation.org.uk](http://www.ewing-foundation.org.uk)

# Reviews



## Sign 4 Learning initiative – two titles reviewed:

### Sign Feelings and Behaviour – learning at your fingertips

DVD, training book, stories, songs games etc. for use in classroom settings and at home

### Sign Stories – learning at your fingertips

DVD, books: 'The Gingerbread Man', 'Goldilocks and the three bears' and A3 Colour poster

Authors:	Sue Thomas and Katja O'Neill
Published	2012/2013
Publisher	Luton Borough Council and Sign2learn <a href="http://www.sign4learning.co.uk">www.sign4learning.co.uk</a>
Reviewer	Margaret Haufe, Peripatetic ToD, Chartered Teacher, Moray Sensory Education Service
General	A3 colour poster – graphics Cath Smith Let's Sign Series

These resources are part of a new initiative in language development for children aged 3-7 years. As stated by *Sign 4 Learning*, 'This programme was primarily developed for hearing children whose vocabulary was below their age related expectations. It uses sign, combined with the spoken word, to give the children a kinaesthetic 'hook' to help them remember and recall the word.' There are DVDs, training books and sign posters that support the vocabulary used in the resources. The A3 posters are colourful and attractive although more useful in assisting adults and older children remember signs as I feel that they are too 'busy' for three year olds to access on their own.

The *Sign Feelings & Behaviour* resource presents vocabulary that is practical, supporting children in talking about a wide range of feelings and exploring the difference between feelings and behaviour. The six stories in the training book centre around two characters Max and Millie. Children will identify easily with these characters and recognise the

familiar settings of the stories as the characters are encouraged 'to make good choices'. Yet, individual teachers could easily adapt and expand these stories, activities and characters to appeal to pupils in their own environment and draw them into a suitable setting for their own stories.

The *Sign Stories* books – '*The Gingerbread Man*' and '*Goldilocks and the three bears*' demonstrate how favourite, well-known storybooks make use of the repetition of language and signs to encourage young children to participate in the shared experience of storytelling and develop their own storytelling skills.

It is important to note that the *Sign 4 Learning* books and DVDs are training resources for adults, provided to guide teachers and support staff in presenting the stories and materials to young hearing children. Overall, the materials are easy to use, well set out and have practical suggestions to use with children in the stated age group such as adapting the words of familiar songs in activities and simple games.

I feel that these resources are important in the way they promote ideas of language development. They have a useful place in a mainstream class where all the children will be able to access them quickly and easily. The stories DVDs demonstrate to the teacher/support staff all the signs required as well as giving examples of the materials used with a class. Whilst the demonstrations of signs and presentations of stories were appropriate, I felt that the materials were not shown to their best advantage. In contrast, the interview with the class teacher and all the filmed stories in the *Sign Feelings & Behaviour* were a joy to watch. It was beautiful to see how the teacher used the personal experiences offered by the children to enhance the learning experience for all.

These flexible resources open up exciting opportunities. However, although they use sign, this is not to be



confused with 'teaching sign'. As the authors state, 'The signs used in this resource are based on British Sign Language (BSL). Signing lends itself perfectly to be a multisensory learning tool for vocabulary'. These resources are for **hearing** children of all abilities in mainstream schools but in using sign this way they are accessible to children who use BSL. An additional advantage of using sign in the classroom is that it promotes an awareness of BSL/sign when used elsewhere.

This resource is a learning tool used for the specific purpose of developing language in storytelling such as learning keywords, sequencing ideas and sentence construction at a basic level. It helps provide a framework for storytelling. It also encourages children to recognise and talk about their feelings and behaviour through accepted vocabulary. In my opinion, this up-to-date approach will adapt well to meet the language demands and varied behavioural issues encountered in many busy mainstream classes.

### The Savvy Student's Guide to Online Learning

Authors: Kristen Sosulski & Ted Bongiovanni  
Publication: 2013  
Publisher: Routledge  
ISBN: 978-0-415-65598-9  
Price: £19.99  
Pages: 121 (including bibliography and references)  
Reviewer: Stevie Mayhook, Education Consultant, Ewing Foundation

This is not a deaf-specific publication, but it is a surprisingly engaging book, ideal for anyone contemplating enrolment on an online course or who has started one and is floundering. In nine short chapters it endeavours to de-mystify the processes involved in a variety of online learning packages and thoroughly prepare students for the experience. Although written in an American context, its messages are universally applicable. Each chapter has a clear introduction stating what will be covered and ends with 'takeaways' – handy tips and reminders relating to its key points. With so many professional qualifications being offered as online courses and many elements of traditional university courses being delivered in this way, the appearance of this slim volume seems remarkably apposite.

I was drawn to the book because I recently enrolled for a free online course on a subject in which I was very interested. I had already decided that I wouldn't put in for the optional accreditation and merely wanted to access the resources but, in fact, I failed to do even that after the second week. So I was curious to find out where I had gone wrong. (Admittedly, I only signed up having been unable to find an appropriate 'real course' at any local college.)

Building on the reader's experience of being an 'on-site' classroom learner, the first couple of chapters highlight the differences and challenges presented by online learning. The authors stress the importance of preparation, including the relative merits of different types of hardware. It is made clear that online learning is not just about accessing lectures and resources via a computer; the learner needs to be prepared to be an active participant in online discussions, to establish a profile accessible to other students, take part in live discussions using video and audio conferencing, work

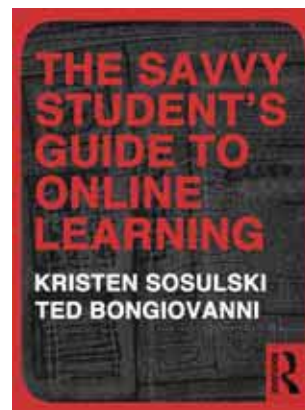
both independently and collaboratively and liaise with tutors and submit assignments by agreed deadlines. Whilst much of this will come easily to those already used to having a Facebook/Twitter/LinkedIn/blogging presence, it may be daunting to anyone who has assiduously avoided creating a web-presence whether due to a lack of technical knowhow or concerns about privacy.

Chapters 3 and 4 are reassuring and explain how to take part in these important aspects (participation may be monitored and contribute to final grades). There are tips on creating your professional and academic online presence, sharing your work with others and explanations of protocols and netiquette. What is clear is that online learning is not a haven for the student who would ordinarily sit at the back of the class and avoid participation in discussions!

The next three chapters demonstrate how to get the most from, and be an effective contributor to, an online course. Further explanations, examples and support are provided in the linked website.

The final two chapters consider how to be a reflective learner, provide feedback to fellow students and lecturers and keep in touch when the course is over. Appendix A provides a quiz for potential students to assess their readiness for such a step and Appendix B provides some practical tips on what to do when technology fails.

This book will be really useful to anyone who is being 'encouraged' to undertake this type of training, or planning to self-fund their own professional development, and so would be a useful addition to any staffroom library. Not only will it prepare and support potential online students, it will help their line managers appreciate that this is not a soft option and is as rigorous and demanding (if not more so) as a traditional on-site course. Given that many university courses will deliver at least some elements in this way, it would also be a good resource to work through with sixth-formers or FE students in planning progression routes.



## Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders – Interdisciplinary Perspectives

Editors Barry Carpenter, Carolyn Blackburn and Jo Edgerton

Publication: 2014

Publisher: Routledge

ISBN: 978-0-415-67016-6

Reviewer Corinda M. Carnelley, Peripatetic Teacher of the Deaf, London Borough of Croydon.

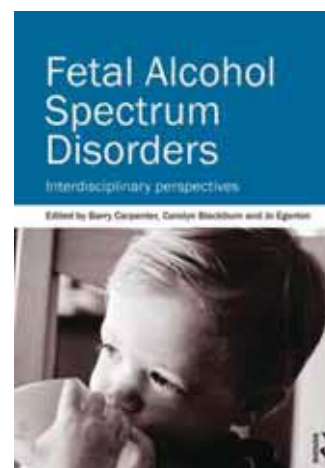
This is a serious tome. It is not for the fainthearted. However, having taught several children with FASDs, I felt it was worth further investigation and I was not wrong.

Whilst the effect of alcohol on a developing foetus varies considerably (mainly) depending on the age of development when the damage takes place, there are general difficulties common to all children who have the disorder and this book covers many areas in great detail.

The book is divided into five parts. Part one is an introduction and overview which lays good foundations for what is to come. It gives statistics (should you be a statistical sort of a person) on women's alcohol consumption in the UK and the possible reasons for social changes in behaviour. Part two is mainly written by families about their lives with children with FASDs. The entire age-range is covered, from pre-school to transition to adulthood as well as a variety of settings from adopted children in families to children in care.

The third section covers education – and there are several very powerful accounts from parents about the educational challenges faced by children with FASDs, as well as some extremely practical advice about the communication needs of this group. The fourth section is concerned with interdisciplinary perspectives – the wide ranging damage caused by an excess of alcohol on a developing foetus usually means that more than one professional discipline will be involved with the child – and the final section covers the international perspective.

As I said, this book is not an easy or a fast read although it is well laid out and does not fall into the trap of so many similar books of having pages and pages of densely typed script. It is interesting reading and it is easy to dip in and out. If all you want is the basics of FASDs and some handy hints and tips, this is not for you. However, if you are truly interested in the subject, and would like some ideas backed up with solid research for dealing with what seems to be becoming a more widespread challenge for Teachers of the Deaf, buy yourself a copy.



## Special Needs in the Early Years

Authors: Sue Roffey and John Parry

Publication: 2014

Publisher: Routledge

ISBN: 978-0-415-50476-8

Reviewer: Corinda M. Carnelley, Teacher of the Deaf, London Borough of Croydon

This is a slim volume, packed full of information about how early years practitioners can work effectively with other professionals and parents to help identify and meet a range of special educational needs. Yes, we all know that in an ideal world we would all have time for joined up working but we also know that, in the real world, this is often limited to a hasty email or a game of telephone message catch-up.

Topics covered include

- Early identification (not such an issue where deafness is concerned)
- Effective communication with parents and carers
- An exploration of the legal context
- How to implement joint planning for identified needs
- Consideration of the issues affecting collaboration.

There are case studies, checklists, suggestions for good practice and illustrations throughout which make

the book easy to read, or easy to access for just one topic. There were several points at which I thought, "Well, I didn't know that!" or "Crikey, I had assumed something very different." So there is something new for everyone, even though it is not a long and weighty book.

Early years practitioners need to know the formal and legal frameworks within which they are working and this is covered in some detail. Equally important are the actual practices that enable these processes to take place smoothly and effectively. It is not just about the relationships between parents and professionals but also about the relationships between diverse groups of professionals. The main focus of the book is the promotion of effective communication and collaboration to ensure that a child's needs are met in the early years.

An easy read, but a most informative one. I recommend this book to anyone working with early years.





## ICT News

Louie Ruck has been looking at e-reading, the best way for deaf children to access e-books and how they can boost literacy and word skills

Sharon Pointeer has been writing the ICT news pages for more years than she would probably care for me to mention! She has worked tirelessly to ensure that the ToD profession is kept up to speed on computer and communication developments, whether it be updating us on specific software that will empower our pupils or tackling the serious issues of internet stalking and data protection. Either way, Sharon has been invaluable in keeping our profession informed, and as such, I have some rather large shoes to fill, but I will endeavour to do my best. I start this column in a literacy focused issue. There is a wealth of software available to support literacy development. However, I have chosen to take a look at the hardware available that can support our pupils.

As literacy is a key concern of ToDs, the IT available to support literacy development is also of interest. Outside of the world of computers, reading is of course one of the primary activities encouraged to improve literacy skills. Enter the realm of the e-reader and the electronic book. E-books are becoming increasingly popular, and while personally I prefer an actual book to read, the ease and portability of e-books is making reading more popular than ever. The Kindle by Amazon, was one of the original e-readers; however, there is a wide range now available and several are marketing themselves at younger audiences, especially when you consider the very reasonably priced versions.

However a word of caution. With the success of the iPad by Apple, tablets are out-favouring the simple e-reader. Tablets are not single function and have internet access, downloadable apps and even productivity suites (eg word processing and spreadsheets). Hence there is a distinct difference between e-readers and tablets. Therefore supervision when children are using tablets is essential to prevent them accessing unsuitable content or making purchases, although an increasing number of manufacturers are including parental controls within the settings. Let this not detract from the point. Children are increasingly techno-savvy, and if using electronic devices such as e-readers or tablets increases children's desire to read, then we should be encouraging it. With most children's books available as e-editions, there is a wealth of titles available for children to read and with the e-editions often being cheaper than their physical counterparts, reading could not be more affordable.

Of course reading is only one side of the coin, writing

is just as important. This is where the tablets may well have the edge as their access to productivity suites enables them to offer limited support to writing development. Most tablets have the ability to write and create documents which is great for the older, more able pupils, who may want to word process their work – albeit that using a tablet can be somewhat more cumbersome for writing prose than using a computer and is possibly not as effective in supporting creative thinking. But for younger pupils there are a number of apps which encourage handwriting through tracing letters and words. This can be of huge benefit to those younger pupils who are just learning to write and form their letters and can be more engaging than their paper equivalents.

### On the market

Currently e-readers are led by Amazon's Kindle. The basic Kindle retails at £69 with more current and advanced models retailing for £159. The Kindle Fire (from £119) is a tablet, so be warned if you are thinking of avoiding the whole tablet functionality. Other e-readers available include those by Kobo (from £59.99) and the Nook by Barnes and Noble (black and white from £29).

The tablet market is also thriving with most tech brands offering a tablet in one form or another. The iPad and iPad mini are among the most attractive and possibly most versatile and have a large range of apps available for writing, but these are closely followed by the Android tablets. I recently purchased the Tesco Hudl and am delighted with it. The e-reader software is preinstalled and easy to use, and, as it runs the full Android Jellybean operating system, gives direct access to the PlayStore to download apps such as 'ABC 123 read write practise' – a simple game which gives auditory and visual feedback on letter and number formation. There are many other games and apps available on the Playstore, ranging from free to £4.99. So next time your pupils complain that they don't like reading, ask them if they have a Kindle or an iPad, and if not, get them to put it on their Christmas list!

*Next time I will be reporting on BETT 2014. This will be my first time visiting the show, and I'm looking forward to seeing what software is available to support deaf pupils and how seriously software companies are taking accessibility issues.*

# How BATOD represents you

A round-up of just some of the meetings attended on members' behalf

## Notes from a meeting of the Communication Trust

Tuesday 5th November 2013 at the NVCO, London

**Context** This body meets around 6 times a year and is a coalition of nearly 50 voluntary and community organisations with expertise in speech, language and communication. The Trust harnesses their collective expertise to support the children's workforce and commissioners to meet the speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) of all children and young people, particularly those with SLCN.

**Present** ACE, Symbol, The Makaton Charity, Language for Learning, Elklan CIC, Better Communication CIC, Achievement for All, Communication Trust, CENMAC, NAPLIC, British Stammering Association, I CAN, Kids Co, AVUK, Cued Speech, Commtap, Council for Disabled Children, BATOD, Whitehouse representative

The main aim of today's meeting was to divide into 5 groups to look in detail at aspects of the draft Code of Practice.

### Updates from the Trust

#### 1. Programme board

- Strategy 2013 – 2020 is available as a booklet. 4 areas of work- these have been updated and RAG rated.
- Talk of the Town – this is now well under way
- No Pens Day – resounding success this year with over 2,500 schools taking part.
- The new Communication Commitment website is up and running for schools to sign up to put communication at the heart of education <http://www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk/commitment>

#### 2. Communication Council

- The Council is looking at targeting Service Commissioners.
- Progression Tools will go live for sale in the online shop at the end of November – members are urged to promote them
- Platform 3 – a new platform for the delivery of level 3 award – there have been expressions of interest from approved centres
- The Communication Commitment

This project to support schools to become a Communication Friendly School by developing a whole-school approach to communication is now live and already schools have begun to sign up to it.

### Summary of the main points of the meeting:

#### Draft Code of Practice – update on reforms

The representative from Whitehouse gave a brief update on the progress on the Legislation which is now before the House of Lords for consideration – currently up to Clause 49.

The timescale will be

- Debate on what the Bill needs to achieve
- Then it will go to report
- Then to 3rd reading just before Christmas
- Aims to be out by April 2014

### Regulations and the Code of Practice

Concerns raised about the Code of Practice have been reflected in positive changes.

The Task Group is continuing to work with Paul Maynard MP and members of the House of Lords

Comments from the Working Groups today will be collated and go into the Consultation Response, which will be submitted 13th December.

### Roundtable discussions

The meeting then split into 5 themed groups to look in detail at aspects of the draft Code of Practice.

1. A family centred system and resolving disputes (*Chapters 3, 9, 7 and clauses 49, 51, 52 and 54*)
2. Working together across education, health and care (*Chapter 4*)
3. The Local Offer (*Chapter 5, clause 30*)
4. Implications for schools, early years, colleges and other providers (*Chapter 6, clauses 62 and 65*)
5. Assessments and EHC plans (*Chapter 7, Clauses 36, 37, 44 and 45*)

### Overall questions considered

- Overall, is the guidance well structured?
- Overall, is the guidance clearly written, easy to understand and are the statutory duties clearly explained?
- Overall, does the guidance give sufficient focus on the full age range from 0 – 25 including early years and post – 16 as well as school-age children?

The responses from the discussions were recorded and will be collated into a document for consideration by Trust members before it forms the basis of TCT's submission to the consultation. Details available on the Communication Trust website.

### Action for BATOD

- Inform members
- Attend future meetings
- Look at and comment on TCT's consultation documents on the Draft Code of Practice.

*Sue Denny 5th November, 2013*

## Notes from a seminar on e-assessment

held on Tuesday 7th January 2014 at the offices of Ofqual in Coventry

**Context** RNIB had carried out some research into accessibility of e-assessment and Ofqual wished to expand this beyond VI to other candidates through a seminar. Inevitably the report and much of the discussion – but not all – focussed on accessibility for VI candidates.

**Present** AQA, BATOD, BDA (Dyslexia), BIS, CCEA, City & Guilds, Communicate-Ed, FAB, JTech Dis, IBO, Lycol, OCR, Ofqual, Pearson (Edexcel), RNIB, Welsh Government, WJEC

### Summary of the main points of the meeting:

- It was established at the beginning that the use of e-assessment by awarding bodies is not currently widespread.

### Sally Cain RNIB spoke about her research into e-assessment

- No-one has the responsibility for providing guidance; this is a concern
- There is currently growing interest in developing e-assessment
- This is not a matter of paper tests in electronic form but a different kind of assessment
- A variety of accessibility features can be used from different font sizes, colours and interactivity to the provision of signing and subtitles
- The development of HTML5 has improved functionality
- Although there are standards for accessibility for the internet and software there is nothing for e-assessment
- It is unlikely to be used for large cohorts of candidates eg core GCSEs for practical reasons
- There are currently problems caused by different types of assistive technology not being able to read e-assessment materials
- BATOD pointed out that although multiple choice questions for example were helpful to some groups the linguistic challenges they cause could penalise other groups eg those who are deaf or have dyslexia.
- I highlighted the problems experienced in Northern Ireland over the e-assessed literacy and numeracy assessments at primary level as an example of the need to learn from mistakes and experience
- I also asked what research there had been into the response of users and how had specific expertise been used in developing e-assessment. No response was forthcoming
- It should be possible to agree minimum standards despite the need for ABs to be competitive.

### Other presentations concentrated on accessibility for those with visual impairment

#### Other important points made during the meeting and presentations

- Important for accessibility to be considered not just at the beginning but at every point during assessment development
- User testing is crucial
- Extra time can be accommodated but the functionality needs to be able to permit candidates to go back as well as forward.

### Ofqual's research into e-assessment

- Ofqual is exploring the opportunities and risks; it is important to check whether validity of assessment is affected
- Ofqual needs to be able to regulate effectively
- Trying to determine what is going on and where
- Will include a literature review and interviews with key stakeholders
- Intends to report in summer 2014
- Ofqual has set up an internal working group because different arms of the organisation are concerned with different aspects: eg validity, accessibility, regulation.

### In the afternoon four questions were discussed in working groups

*Is it possible to design assessments allowing universal access or will alternatives always be needed?*

In the future it should be possible eg language modification at source for the vast majority but still some candidates will need special arrangements; timescale is an issue

*What are the main considerations for the provision of amendments to online activity as opposed to alternatives?*

Cost of making the amendments and the need to ensure comparability

*When does an alternative activity become materially different from the original?*

When the mark scheme required is different; it must not be or the assessment is different and comparability not possible

*Is guidance needed and if so in what form?*

Consensus was yes; there could be minimum standards for developers and awarding bodies but this could not cost huge amounts of non-existent money; perhaps JCQ could oversee and be involved?

### Next steps

- Awarding Bodies to take ideas back and to meet to discuss further with JCQ and FAB
- Disability groups to gather together any relevant guidance and information they already have.

### Next steps for BATOD

- Report back to NEC
- Seek advice and information from BATOD members about guidance which already exists and also gather other ideas about e-assessment and deaf candidates
- Contribute to the discussions/guidance to be developed by disability groups under leadership of RNIB.

Paul Simpson, 7th January 2014



## Notes from a meeting of Access Consultation Forum

on Thursday, 30th January 2014 at the offices of Ofqual in Coventry

**Context** This body meets termly and comprises disability groups, regulators and awarding bodies to discuss a range of issues related to access to examinations and other assessments in order to support Ofqual in its duty to ensure that disabled students and those with SEN have fair access.

**Present** AQA, BATOD, BDA (Dyslexia), CCEA (by telephone), Communicate-Ed, JCQ, NAS, OCR, Ofqual, Pearson (Edexcel) (by telephone), Welsh Government, WJEC

### Summary of the main points of the meeting:

The proposal for the **new GCSE in MFL** is to ascribe 25% of the marks to each of the four components; the access arrangements will include live voice, amplification and use of a separate room; exemption will only be allowed from one component (ie speaking or listening not both); if separate time is needed it should be applied for.

**AS and A levels** have now been decoupled; the equality impact assessment of the changes is being written currently following workshops and consultations; there were 254 responses to the equality questions; no other steps could be taken to mitigate the negative consequences of the changes – only extra time; **BATOD and CT were the only disability groups which responded to this consultation**; it will be presented to the Ofqual board at the end of March and published in April/May; there are concerns that AS will wither on the vine – this will depend to some extent on exam boards – whether they see a market; it seems that universities and independent schools are strongly supportive of AS levels; some schools will put students in for both but cost might preclude this – but AS marks won't count towards the final grade; there is concern that when all depends on final exam, personal difficulties – eg illness or bereavement will require special considerations.

JCQ and the Awarding Bodies regard **Oral Language Modifiers** as a very dangerous access arrangement; the objectives of the questions could be changed; JCQ's legal advice is that it is very risky; the cover sheets from 2013 will be analysed to see what the OLMs had done – often they just act as a reader; centres will be approached if they have high numbers; applications for OLM training are increasing; Ofqual's view is that if effective the arrangement should be maintained but properly regulated; but it does link to what goes on in the classroom – a key principle with access arrangements; the aim is to improve the language of examinations to such an extent that they are not needed. The news about Maureen's language modifiers course was well received.

There is less change in **Wales** than in England; the Wales regulator wants to keep in close contact with the other three countries; they are concerned to try to align because if there are too many differences AOs may have less interest in producing qualifications for Wales; a new body, Qualifications Wales, will start on 1 Sept 2015 working with AOs to award GQs as well as regulating; they have produced new GCSEs and A levels for first teaching from Sept 2015; this includes

two new maths GCSE qualifications – one predominantly focussing on numeracy and one involving a wider range of mathematical techniques; in English they propose separating the grades for Reading, Writing and Oracy; (40% 40% and 20%) but still producing one final grade; A2 and AS remain coupled unlike in England.

**Northern Ireland** is retaining the GCSE and A level structure but the qualifications are currently under review – there will be a statement from the minister in March.

There was no report from **Scotland**.

There was a presentation from Sandra Young, a Monitoring Officer from **Ofqual's compliance and monitoring team**. They are carrying out a thematic review of equality – this is to ensure compliance by the Awarding Organisations with Ofqual's conditions relating to equality. They will gather and evaluate information about how AOs design, develop, deliver and award qualifications in the light of equalities issues; they want to determine what good practice looks like. They will sample 50 organisations (desktop review) and will interview 16 making visits to the organisations but also to the centres. Their final report is expected in September.

The AOs are concerned that Ofqual has archived **Fair Access by Design** – they wish it to be brought back to support examiners. JCQ will write to Ofqual officially to ask to take it over – in Wales it has been updated and is still being used. It will be sent to JCQ and the AOs; the AOs pointed out that Ofqual don't actually own and didn't write it.

A colleague from the **National Autistic Society** wondered whether candidates on the autistic spectrum were considered when papers are produced and modified. Was there any research? Sue Flohr of the BDA wishes to discuss this too and stated that exam boards use some people from their organisation as well as BATOD. The AOs deny this! Ofqual suggested a three way meeting between BATOD, BDA and the NAS.

There was a discussion about issues raised by the use of **assistive software** (eg computer readers) with pdfs and e-assessment in general – RNIB and BDA are concerned that some readers won't work with some pdfs; AOs are reluctant to state which software does work because they could be accused of distorting the market. Therefore standards are being developed which software will have to satisfy.

There was a discussion about the annual **Ofqual Statistics** (available on Ofqual website) on access

# BATOD Scotland conference

Delegates at the conference appreciated a keynote speech on Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder and a choice of workshops from Eileen Calder, Carolyn McMillan and Eleanor Hutchinson

BATOD Scotland held its annual conference on Saturday 16th November 2013, in the Premier Inn at Edinburgh Park. We had 30 delegates from across Scotland, Teachers of the Deaf and educational audiologists, as well as stands from Phonak/GN Resound, NDCS Scotland and Lightspeed.

The keynote topic was Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD), and our main speaker was Eileen Calder from FASD Scotland. She spoke about the development of a foetus and the stages at which alcohol can affect different areas of that development. Delegates were made aware of the broad range of symptoms associated with different conditions under the FASD umbrella, as well as the challenges children with FASD face in their day to day lives.

In the morning we also held the AGM, which included the election of new officers. Jean McAllister continues as chair, Elaine Harris is now treasurer, Catherine Finestone took over as vice chair and Eleanor Hutchinson was elected as chair. We'd like to offer our thanks to Carol Thomson as the outgoing chair and treasurer, and we wish her luck as she continues in her role as national treasurer.

In the afternoon, delegates were given a choice of two out of three workshops. The first workshop led on from the morning's presentation and gave delegates the opportunity to learn more about individuals with FASD and ways of supporting them in the classroom. Eileen also discussed her personal experience with children with FASD and the broad range of difficulties they face.

The second workshop was led by Carolyn McMillan, Advanced Rehabilitation Advisor from Crosshouse cochlear implant team. Carolyn gave a broad overview of assessments used by the team and also discussed the variety of resources available on CI manufacturer's websites, in particular the 'Little Ears diary' on the Med-El website and the Integrated Scales of Development on the Cochlear website. Carolyn also allowed delegates to see a number of assessments that are used by the CI team, including the Infant Listening Skills (ILIP) Assessment, the assessment the Rehab Advisers use when they visit the children post-CI.

The third workshop was led by Eleanor Hutchinson, on social media and how teenagers use it. Eleanor helps to run the BATOD Facebook and Twitter accounts, and spoke about the prevalence of social media use amongst teenagers. Looking at the monthly usage statistics of sites such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, Eleanor highlighted the importance of teachers being aware of social media in order to support students who are using it for regular interaction. The workshop also discussed ways in which deaf teenagers can feel more included in the deaf or hearing communities by using social media.

The conference was a success, despite small numbers, and all of the delegates said they gained knowledge from the day. We are currently planning on holding our next conference and AGM on Saturday 22nd November, in Glasgow.

► *Access Consultation Forum – continued from previous page*

arrangements. They show a general decline. However, some of the changes recently proposed will be introduced in a couple of years and may well result in an increase to try to mitigate the effects – eg extra time. Ofqual clearly wants to reduce the number as much as possible.

Finally NDCS had raised the issue of students being allowed to use **BSL** in their responses as happens in Scotland (not for English and MFL). The logic was accepted but there needs to be further exploration not least because some of the qualifications include marks for SPaG and the Quality of Written Communication. Ofqual will follow this up.

**Action for BATOD**

- Meet with BDA and NAS about language modification
- Respond to Ofqual about use of BSL in examinations when they contact us
- Inform NEC and membership about this meeting
- Attend future meetings.

## BATOD Regional Meetings

**April**  
28 **HOSSER and BATOD East**  
Annual training day:  
guest speaker Lindsey Rousseau

**May**  
19 **BATOD East**  
Committee meeting 17.30 - 18.30 Westgate  
Primary School, Bury St Edmunds

21 **BATOD Midland**  
Twilight (16.30-19.30) Nicola D'Urso (speech  
therapist) HI and verbal dyspraxia, Andrea Baker  
trailing the new Education and Health Care Plans  
Percy Shurmer Academy, Birmingham B12 9ED

**June**  
25 **BATOD East**  
Twilight training, Bury St Edmunds

# This and that...

Email news to [this-n-that@batod.org.uk](mailto:this-n-that@batod.org.uk)

## CRIDE 2013

The 2013 (Consortium for Research Into Deaf Education) reports are now available on the website. The English survey received a 99% return so the figures can be regarded as being robust.

You can read the report by following:  
[www.batod.org.uk](http://www.batod.org.uk) ► Resources  
 ► The CRIDE survey

Don't forget to register on the website!

## A level consultation

BATOD responded to Ofqual's recent consultation on the regulatory requirements for the new A levels. The response can be found on our website by following

Resources ► Access to language and examinations ► Access arrangements for examinations ► Meetings with Ofqual and responses

## Erasmus +

The European Community's Lifelong Learning Programme, including Comenius, came to an end on December 31st 2013. However, the EC's new education and training programme, Erasmus+, which began on 1st January 2014, will provide more opportunities for schools, colleges and Local Authorities to find European partners and apply for funding for school partnerships, in-service training and job shadowing in other European countries. 2014 Erasmus+ funding application deadlines are 17th March (in-service training activities, under Key Action 1) and 30th April (partnership activities, under Key Action 2).

For more information please visit [www.erasmusplus.org.uk](http://www.erasmusplus.org.uk) where you will be able to register shortly.

## CDC materials

The Council for Disabled Children has produced a range of interesting information materials about current changes to the SEN landscape which are available from their website. They include an overview of the Bill, checklists for EHC Plans, implications for schools and FE establishments and Pathfinder information.

A summary sheet can be obtained here:  
[www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/sendreforminfosheet](http://www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/sendreforminfosheet)

## 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 included: Andrea Baker, David Couch, Sue Denny, Mary Gordon, Maureen Jefferson, Paul Simpson, Karen Taylor, Carol Thomson

Date	External participants	Purpose of meeting	Venue
<b>January</b>			
7	Ofqual	e-assessment seminar	Ofqual, Coventry
9	University of Birmingham	Course consultative committee	University of Birmingham
15	NDCS	Regular meeting	NDCS, London
16	CRIDE	Regular meeting	UCL, London
22	DfE and NCTL	Scoping meeting about the mandatory qualification	DfE, London
25	Maney Publishing	Regular meeting with BATOD Journal's publisher	NCVO, London
27	JCQ	Meeting with awarding bodies and JCQ	JCQ, London
30	Ofqual	Access Consultation Forum	Ofqual, Coventry
31	DESF	Regular meeting	AoHL, London
<b>February</b>			
4	FEAPDA	Leonardo project press conference	Luxembourg
4	Communication Trust	Regular meeting	NCVO, London
11	NatSIP	HOSS conference planning meeting	NDCS, Birmingham
12	FLSE	SEND forum	Engine Rooms, London
14	NatSIP	Reference Group	SENSE, London
17	FEAPDA	iCARE project kick-off meeting	University of Leuven

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.

## Abbreviations and acronyms used in this Magazine

A2	A level	ICT	Information and Communications Technology
AB	Awarding Body	ILIP	Infant Listening Progress Profile
ABR	Auditory Brainstem Response	INSET	In-Service Education and Training
ACE	Aiding Communication in Education	IT	Information Technology
AGM	Annual General Meeting	JCQ	Joint Council for Qualifications
ANSD	Auditory Neuropathy Spectrum Disorder	JTech DIS	Advisory service on technologies for inclusion
AO	Awarding Organisation	LI	Learning Intentions
AoHL	Action on Hearing Loss	LIFE	Listening Inventory For Education
AQA	Name of an Awarding Organisation	MA	Master of Arts (post-graduate degree)
ASD	Autistic Spectrum Disorder	M Ed	Master of Education (post-graduate degree)
AVUK	Auditory Verbal UK	MFL	Modern Foreign Language
BATOD	British Association of Teachers of the Deaf	MHPS	Mary Hare Primary School
BDA	British Dyslexia Association	MRI	Magnetic Resonance Imaging
BETT	Education technology exhibition	NAPLIC	National Association of Professionals concerned with Language Impairment in Children
BIS	Business, Innovation and Skills (Government department)		
BPVS	British Picture Vocabulary Scale	NAS	National Autistic Society
BSL	British Sign Language	NatSIP	National Sensory Impairment Partnership
CCEA	ouncil for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (N Ireland)	NCTL	National College for Teaching and Leadership
CCVC	Consonant Consonant Vowel Consonant	NCVO	National Council for Voluntary Organisations
CDC	Council for Disabled Children	NDCS	National Deaf Children's Society
CENMAC	Support service offering assistive technology	NEC	National Executive Council
CEO	Chief Executive Officer	NIHR	National Institute for Health Research
CI	Cochlear Implant	OCR	Name of an Awarding Organisation
Communicate-Ed	Company training SEN professionals	Ofqual	Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation
CRIDE	Consortium for Research In Deaf Education	ORT	Oxford Reading Tree
CS	Cued Speech	PA	Phonological Awareness
CT	Communication Trust	pdf	Portable Document Format; type of electronic file
CVC	Consonant Vowel Consonant	PEACH	Parents' Evaluation of Aural/oral performance of Children
CVCC	Consonant Vowel Consonant Consonant	PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
DfE	Department for Education	PSP	Play Station Portable
DVD	Digital Versatile Disk	RNIB	Royal National Institute of Blind People
EBI	Even Better If	rx	receiver
EC	European Community	SATs	Statutory Assessment Tests
EHC	Education, Health and Care	SENSE	National charity for people with deafblindness
ESL	English as a Second Language	SIS	Sensory Inclusion Service
ESRC	Economic and Social Research Council	SLCN	Speech Language and Communication Needs
FAB	Federation of Awarding Bodies	SNA	Special Needs Assistant
FASD	Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder	SSE	Sign Supported English
FE	Further Education	TCT	The Communication Trust
FEAPDA	Fédération Européenne d'Associations de Professeurs de Déficients Auditifs (European Federation of Associations of Teachers of the Deaf)	ToD	Teacher of the Deaf
FM	Frequency Modulation = radio	TV	Television
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education	tx	transmitter
GQ	General Qualification	UCL	University College, London
HA; h/a	Hearing Aid	UK	United Kingdom
HOSS	Heads of Sensory Services	US	United States
HOSSER	Heads of Sensory Services Eastern Region	USB	Universal Serial Bus (flash drive)
HTML	HyperText Markup Language	VCOP	Vocabulary, Connectives, Openers and Punctuation
IBO	International Baccalaureate Organisation		
ICAN	Children's Communication charity	WJEC	Welsh Awarding Organisation
iCARE	Improving Children's Auditory Rehabilitation (European project)	WWW	What Went Well

If you have found an acronym in the Magazine that isn't explained in this list, then use [www.acronymfinder.com](http://www.acronymfinder.com) to help you to work it out.

# 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'.

Type	Who	Key Benefits
<b>Full</b>	Those who hold a recognised qualification as a Teacher of the Deaf Those in training as ToDs	Association Magazine Refereed Journals (DEI) and complimentary downloads of all Journal articles Full access to Consultant Full access to members' area of website On-line resource area Discounted CPD fees Tax relief Voting rights
<b>Retired from full membership</b>	Members who have retired from paid employment may choose this category of membership	Association Magazine Refereed Journals (DEI) and complimentary downloads of all Journal articles Access to members' area of website Discounted CPD fees
<b>Associate</b>	Those not eligible to be full members (for example main school staff, SENCo, S&LT, social worker, NHS worker, parent/carer etc)	Association Magazine Refereed Journals (DEI) and complimentary downloads of all Journal articles Access to some parts of members' area of website Discounted CPD fees
<b>Special</b>	Those working with deaf pupils in a support position in the classroom eg LSAs, CSWs, TAs	Association Magazine Access to some parts of members' area of website Discounted CPD fees

- Current full members about to retire should notify the Membership Secretary of their circumstances by 30 June for the following year's membership, to enable the necessary paperwork to be completed.
- Retired members who return to paid employment should inform the Membership Secretary of their changed circumstances.
- Members with a change in circumstance or personal details should inform the Membership Secretary as soon as possible.
- Those who live outside of the UK are eligible for overseas membership. Please contact the membership secretary for details.

## Membership subscription rates – due 1 August 2013

Our financial year runs from August to July. Cheque payers will be sent a reminder about payment in June. Direct debits will be altered automatically for payments in August and beyond.

Download the form from [www.batod.org.uk](http://www.batod.org.uk) >> The Association >> BATOD membership

	Cheque	Annual Direct Debit/BACS	Quarterly Direct Debit
<b>Full members</b>	<b>£ 75.00</b>	<b>£ 70.00</b>	<b>£ 18.30</b>
<b>Full retired members</b>	<b>£ 37.50</b>	<b>£ 35.00</b>	
<b>Associate members</b>	<b>£ 75.00</b>	<b>£ 70.00</b>	<b>£ 18.30</b>
<b>Special members</b>	<b>£ 37.50</b>	<b>£ 35.00</b>	
<b>Overseas membership</b>			
including pdf copies of magazine	<b>£75 GBP</b>		
including printed copies of magazine (includes postage)		Eurozone <b>£91 GBP</b>	Rest of the world <b>£99 GBP</b>

ToDs in training will be entitled to a £20 reduction in annual membership fee when the Course Tutor countersigns the membership application form for those paying by Direct Debit (applies for up to 2 years; payable at the end of the year).

The BATOD Membership Secretary may be contacted via [membership@batod.org.uk](mailto:membership@batod.org.uk)  
The BATOD Treasurer may be contacted via [treasurer@batod.org.uk](mailto:treasurer@batod.org.uk)

# Meetings and training

# Calendar

This page is an extract from the Calendar to be found on the BATOD website. Please note that it is not exhaustive. Items noted on this Calendar may have been advertised within the Magazine or the information reported by telephone. BATOD is not necessarily the organising body.

*Please contact the organising body (column 2) for details of conferences, not the Editor of this Magazine.*

Date	Organisation	Meeting topic	Venue
<b>March</b>			
18	The Ear Foundation	Children with Cochlear Implants at Secondary School	The Ear Foundation Education Programme held at Phonak UK, Cygnet Court, Lakeside Drive, Warrington WA1 1PP
20 - 22	i2ievents group	The Education Show 2014 Educating and inspiring minds	The NEC, Birmingham, B40 1NT
26	The Ear Foundation	ANSD: Auditory Neuropathy Spectrum Disorder	The Ear Foundation Marjorie Sherman House, 83 Sherwin Road Lenton, Nottingham NG7 2FB
27	The Ear Foundation	Deaf Children with Complex Needs	The Ear Foundation, Marjorie Sherman House
28	The Ear Foundation	CMV: Cytomegalovirus	The Ear Foundation, Marjorie Sherman House
<b>April</b>			
2	The Ear Foundation	Developing Listening and Language through Primary Classroom Routines	The Ear Foundation, Marjorie Sherman House
24	The Ear Foundation	Deaf Children with Complex Needs	The Ear Foundation Education Programme at GN Resound HQ, Building A, Kirklington Business Centre, Kirklington, Oxon, OX5 3JA
25	City Lit	Watch Your Language training day	The City Literary Institute, 1-10, Keeley Street, London WC2B 4BA
28	HOSSER and BATOD East	Annual training day: guest speaker Lindsey Rousseau	Holiday Inn, Lakeview Bridge Road, Cambridge CB24 9PH
<b>May</b>			
1	The Ear Foundation	Sound to words: following babies with implants in the first year	The Ear Foundation, Marjorie Sherman House
9 - 10	BATOD Steering Group	Association Business	Hilton Garden Inn, Birmingham
9	The Ear Foundation	Why so wobbly? Balance and what you can do about it for children	Ear Foundation Education Programme at Auditory VerbalUK, 9th Floor Parker Tower, 43-49 Parker Street, WC2B 5PS
14	James Wolfe PS	Open mornings for deaf professionals	James Wolfe Primary School, Randall Place, Greenwich, London SE10 9LA
14	The Ear Foundation	Let me tell you! Story and narrative development for pre-school children	The Ear Foundation, Marjorie Sherman House
19	BATOD East	Committee meeting 17.30 - 18.30	Westgate Primary School, Bury St Edmunds
19	The Ear Foundation	Listening with the Third Ear: Counselling Skills for Audiologists Day One	The Ear Foundation, Marjorie Sherman House
20	The Ear Foundation	Children with Cochlear Implants at Secondary School	The Ear Foundation, Marjorie Sherman House
21	BATOD Midland	Twilight (16.30-19.30 ) Nicola D'Urso (speech therapist) HI and verbal dyspraxia, Andrea Baker trialling the new Education and Health Care Plans	Percy Shurmer Academy, Birmingham B12 9ED
<b>June</b>			
3	The Ear Foundation	Deaf Children at Primary School: for Teaching Assistants	The Ear Foundation, Marjorie Sherman House
3 - 5	UCL Ear Institute	Auditory Processing Disorders	UCL Ear Institute, 332 - 336 Grays Inn Road, London WC1X 8EE
5 - 7	HEAL 2014: HEaring Across the Lifespan	International Conference on Hearing	Cernobbio (Lake Como), Italy

The Calendar on the BATOD website is edited as soon as we know about meetings. Additional information about courses and registration forms may also be linked to the calendar entries.

## Officers of Nations and Regions

### BATOD contacts and Magazine Distribution

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 Secretary: Hazel Sutherland  
 Treasurer: Post vacant

Articles, information and contributions for the **Association Magazine** should be sent to:

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 Mr Paul Simpson  
 tel/fax 0845 6435181  
 email [magazine@batod.org.uk](mailto:magazine@batod.org.uk)

...as should Association information and general queries.

Advertisements for the **Association Magazine** should be sent to:

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Enquiries related to the Journal to:

Dr Linda Watson  
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## Do you know a deaf child who...

- Is struggling in their current educational environment because of issues such as: background noise, the pace of the lesson, the vocabulary used, the rate of delivery or the number of pupils in lessons?
- Has a significant language delay or disorder and requires an enriched language programme to meet their needs?
- Would benefit from weekly speech and language therapy sessions?
- Would benefit from the opportunity to optimise their listening and spoken language skills using their amplification?
- Needs constant and consistent audiological monitoring and support?
- Struggles socially at school?
- Would benefit from a deaf peer group and role models?
- Would benefit from additional adapted resources, visual aids, prompts and a good auditory environment?

## Would they therefore benefit from what Mary Hare Primary, Secondary or Sixth Form could offer them?

If you would like to discuss a specific case then please do not hesitate to contact:

**Natalie Ross**, Marketing & Pupil Recruitment Manager

Tel: 01635 244 215 Email: [n.ross@maryhare.org.uk](mailto:n.ross@maryhare.org.uk)

Post: Mary Hare School, Arlington Manor, Snelsmore Common, Newbury, RG14 3BQ

Or visit our website at [www.maryharschool.org.uk](http://www.maryharschool.org.uk)

Please be reassured that we assess all students who are interested in attending our school to make sure we can meet all of their needs before offering a place..



*Securing the future of deaf children and young people*



# Contents



## From your editor

From time to time the BATOD magazine takes literacy as its theme. Clearly literacy underpins all aspects of the work of a Teacher of the Deaf from those working with very young children who are laying

the linguistic foundations on which literacy will be built to those working in the post-16 sector where literacy is vital for access to qualifications both vocational and academic – and for life after formal education. Since the last time we considered this subject social media and tablets and apps have gained much more prominence in the lives of young people - and of their teachers – and thus literacy continues to be a vital aspect of the work of the Teacher of the Deaf. Some of these recent developments are reflected in the articles in this edition. I hope you will find them stimulating and that they might inspire you to try something different or to share with colleagues, via the magazine, something you are finding particularly effective in your work.

If you have anything to share we are always happy to include articles relevant to previous magazine themes in the general features section so don't worry if a specific edition has passed – your articles are still very welcome.

## Forthcoming topics

May	Conference edition: developing effective practice
September	Multi-disciplinary working
November	Supporting deaf children in the mainstream
January 2015	Bone anchored hearing systems

*Paul A. Simpson*

Magazine Editor

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## Need to contact BATOD about other matters?

Talk to Executive Officer Paul Simpson

email: [exec@batod.org.uk](mailto:exec@batod.org.uk)

answerphone/fax: 0845 6435181

Cover Photograph:

Thomas Battle loves learning to write – he is four years old, has been implanted for two years and attends a mainstream East Riding school.

For information on advertising rates see [www.batod.org.uk](http://www.batod.org.uk)



## Online... and up to date

Following her inauguration at the AGM earlier this month, Andrea Baker makes her first presidential contribution to the magazine

The two years I have been President Elect have flown by and here I sit feeling hugely honoured and very enthusiastic – but when I look back at the list of previous Presidents, slightly nervous. Shadowing Karen over the past two years has been a privilege. Her tenure has seen BATOD through difficult times for both the profession and the organisation and she has led with measured, calm professionalism. She hands over the baton leaving BATOD in a strong position, having guided us through some challenging financial times, and I would like to thank her on behalf of the membership for her vision and direction.

Thanks must also go to Ann Underwood who is in no small way instrumental in my present tenure. Ann has been a very active member of NEC for 27 years and we have much to thank her for. During her time she has overseen the emergence of the Magazine into the quality publication it now is, has been a driving force behind the website and a tireless organiser of Conferences, as well as serving as President. She has guided and encouraged me during my time on NEC, as well as frequently twisting my arm as only Ann can! She will be missed on NEC but I know she will always be available to give advice.

Ann always took a keen interest in membership issues and it is fitting that, as she bows out of NEC, we continue to have a solid and consistent number of members despite our concerns about the age profile of the profession. According to our latest figures we estimate that around three-quarters of ToDs are members of BATOD. This is in no small part thanks to Tina Wakefield's great work in promoting BATOD to ToDs in training around the UK. I was able to support Tina's work at the University of Birmingham in September and was heartened by the enthusiasm, knowledge and commitment of the students – all of whom saw the value of joining BATOD. As one of the fortunate generation who was sponsored through my ToD training on a full time course I am full of admiration for more recent trainees, many of whom complete the course whilst holding down a full time job and some who also fund themselves to join the profession. I'm therefore really pleased to be involved in a recent initiative which aims to provide support for this latter group of students. BATOD has been asked by the Ovingdean Hall Trust to oversee the administration of the Con Powell Scholarship. This plans to provide funding of fees for up to five students a year who would

not otherwise have access to support and will hopefully go some way towards 'filling the gap' as some of us head towards retirement.

Things move on and change, as they must. As a profession we should be used to change. Having been promised no new initiatives it is still sometimes difficult to keep abreast of the current reforms – EHC Plans, Local Offers, funding, auxiliary aids.... We are often so busy doing the day job that it is hard to find time to read and respond to consultations or fully understand the implications of proposed changes. I have always found Paul's BATOD summaries and responses invaluable in the quest to remain up to date and they are now available at the touch of a button, thanks to the website. From this, and the changes we are making to the BATOD website, came the idea for my strap line – 'Online... and up to date'.

There has been a lot of work happening behind the scenes over the last year to re-launch the BATOD website as a resource that will be increasingly useful to members, with the intention of keeping us online and up to date. Information has been organised in what we hope is a more logical and accessible way, improvements made to the Search facility, new items are flagged each time you log on and we are developing a Teaching Materials area where members can share resources and ideas that they have found useful. We will also be uploading back copies of the previous year's Magazine to the website (for members only!!) so that you can quickly find useful articles without trawling back through your bookshelves. As funding gets tighter and there are fewer opportunities to attend courses I believe this is an excellent opportunity for us to share good practice. This is very much a work in progress and its success depends on you, as members, making use of it and feeding back to us if you have suggestions about how we could improve or resources you would like to share.

As a profession we have much to be proud of and so much expertise to share for the benefit of deaf children and their families.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrea Baker". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'A'.

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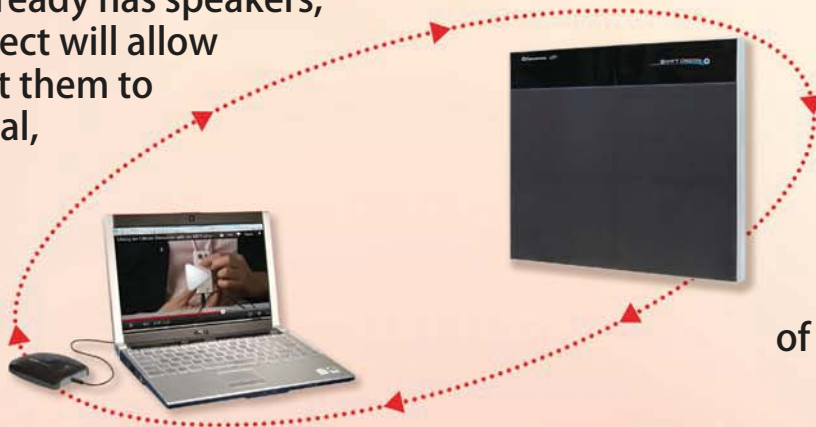
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and the hearing groups of participants. Both the deaf group and the hearing group awarded first place to 'It is fun/I enjoy it'. Second place for both groups was 'I learn how other people feel'. 9th place was 'It will help me find a job'. The bottom and therefore the least important factor for reading in both the deaf and the hearing group was 'Because I have to'.

All eight participants were asked questions at the start of the interview, including 'Have you read a book in the last four weeks?' All replied that they had and they all said 'enjoyment' was a reason why they read. In response to 'What do you enjoy reading the most?' all participants chose *Fiction* from the list. When asked 'What would you miss the most if you were not allowed to read for a month?' the responses included: *the enjoyment of reading, me time, winding down before sleep, chill time, private time, the escape, forgetting everything else, the excitement of the story, characters and going into another world.*

The responses to the question 'What was it you enjoyed about the last thing you read?' were very similar for both groups. For the hearing girls the responses included: 'Controversial issues... real issues... good characters... learn stuff... relaxing.' For the deaf girls the responses included: 'easy reading... relaxing... excitement of the plot... good writer... real people... funny... empathy with the characters.'

Performance in reading tests was not a marker for reading achievement. It seems that the desire to read and the enjoyment gained from a variety of texts is a driving force. The connection between reading, relaxation, enjoyment and pleasure is revealing given the reading and vocabulary scores for the deaf participants. Their desire and motivation seem to compensate for their lower test results.

Social networking sites feature highly as reading material alongside fiction for all eight participants. They are all reading a variety of material and choosing to read during their spare time. They are equally enthralled by the social drama unfolding on Facebook as they are by the literary plot of a novel.

Although the sample in this study is small, the responses in the survey and the interview associated with reading materials and habits appear to lead to the conclusion that the modern adolescent girl, hearing and deaf, is regularly reading a variety of texts including fiction.

It is the combination of all of the test results, interview and survey responses viewed as a whole that are important in this research; viewed together they help to address the research question. The participants are all reading a variety of age-appropriate texts. They have competence levels of reading which allow them access to adolescent texts. The desire to read and the pleasure of reading are at the heart of the motivation and success. Despite the reading age and vocabulary age scores being lower for the deaf group this does not

appear to affect their time spent reading, choice of reading material, reported enjoyment of reading and the level or challenge of the reading material chosen. Coping strategies are used to help them to read challenging texts and materials which are of interest to them; they are motivated by the goal.

The initial findings here would seem to suggest that the desire for knowledge, enjoyment, entertainment, gossip, social interaction and relaxation overrides any lower reading or vocabulary ages. Indeed life in the 21st century requires us all to read a multitude of texts for many different purposes.

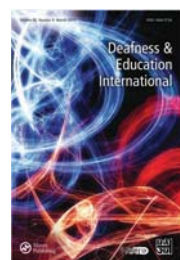
The general message that has emerged from this initial study is: ToDs worry not; the pleasure of reading is indeed present in this technological age for the deaf adolescent female reader. There is comfort indeed that their selection and choice of wide-ranging material is a reflection of the modern era in which they live.

Finally the research question can be answered simply as yes. Yes, deaf adolescent girls do read for pleasure. I hear you now ask 'What about deaf adolescent boys and reading for pleasure?' That question my dear ToD is yet to be answered. Do I have any takers?

*Lesley Smith is a Peripatetic Teacher of the Deaf for the Sensory Service in Leeds. This research was completed as part of an MEd (Sp.Ed: Hearing Impairment) at Birmingham University.*

## Deafness & Education International

Online access available for BATOD members



**Did you know that as a member of BATOD, you are entitled to free online access to *Deafness & Education International*?**

Volume 13 (2011), 4 issues a year

Editors: [Linda Watson](#) (University of Birmingham, UK) & [P Margaret Brown](#) (University of Melbourne, Australia)

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examples and then they come up with a rule for a specific grammar item. It is vital to consider the application of the two approaches for deaf pupils.

Firstly, in a deductive approach deaf pupils will find a significant challenge in understanding and talking about grammar and language if their metalinguistic skills are underdeveloped. Second, deductive teaching is a teacher-centred approach where the teacher explains or presents the new grammar first, so pupil participation and interaction may be limited; but that can be easily tackled by using examples and texts from a curriculum area students are familiar with to make them notice new grammar and see how it is used. Lastly, deductive teaching can be time-saving and teachers can be very selective about how much grammar they need to cover at a time – there are a lot of resources available for teachers who feel less comfortable with teaching grammar.

Examples and texts can also be used in an inductive approach. It gives deaf students opportunities to notice and discover new grammar and formulate rules of language that can foster the development of cognitive thinking skills leading to better memory and problem-solving skills by improved pattern-recognition and independent learning. However, inductive teaching is often more time-consuming as you do not know how long will it take for pupils to discover what you want them to discover, and professionals feel worried that it can compromise the pace of a lesson. It also takes a lot more planning from teachers who need to predict possible responses and problems that deaf pupils may face

#### WORD LEVEL

- Week: session 1: nouns, plurals, common vs. proper noun  
session 2: L-days and months, C-countries
- Week: session 1: articles a/an/th  
session 2: everyday objects
- Week: session 1: personal pronouns, demonstrative pronouns, question word  
session 2: writing-personal information
- Week: session 1: adjectives (L: size and colour, C: comparative and superlative)  
session 2: describing people: physical appearance and clothes
- Week: session 1: verbs (L: identifying and simple sentence SVO; C: subject-verb agreement)  
session 2: There is... /There are... describing places, subject and verb agreement
- Week: session 1: Present Simple (C: including questions and negations; L: 3rd person singular s/es)  
session 2: daily routine
- Week: session 1: adverbs (time, place, manner)  
session 2: daily routines and free time activities-adverbs of frequency, subject and verb agreement
- Week: session 1: Past Simple: L: -ed regular verbs/to be/to have/to do  
session 2: last holiday, last weekend, describing what happened in a book you are reading
- Week: session 1: prepositions of place (L) and direction (C)  
session 2: There is/there are/describing places

#### SENTENCE AND TEXT LEVEL –

<http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/grammar-vocabulary/grammar-snacks>

Order of clips (activity pack with transcripts and worksheets for each clip)

- Countable and uncountable nouns
- The definite article
- Personal pronouns and possessives
- Question words
- Comparative and superlative adjectives
- There is/there are and It
- The Present Simple
- Adverbs of frequency
- The verb “to be” present and past
- The Past Simple (regular and irregular)

during the lesson, and, because of these factors, the whole experience can be quite frustrating both for students and teachers.

As far as resources go, there are plenty of ESL course books, teaching guides and websites. Some of the most popular ones are: ‘*How to teach Grammar*’ by Scott Thornbury and ‘*How to teach English*’ by Jeremy Harmer, which introduce theoretical aspects of ESL methodology, and ‘*Essential Grammar in Use*’ by Raymond Murphy which has explanations and drills – a great starting point for teaching grammar – and the British Council website also offers a range of activities as well as teaching tips.

#### Challenges

It all seems common sense but when it comes to practice, some professionals feel lost and do not know where to start. A few things are crucial to achieve success in teaching English grammar: training, whole school approach, time and consistency.

All staff should be trained in ESL methodology and bilingualism to identify opportunities and barriers for deaf pupils. Time for separate grammar sessions should be allocated while students should be expected to communicate in grammatically accurate written English in all aspects of the curriculum where the written mode is used. It is crucial because deaf students are assessed on the basis of the quality of written communication in most subjects. Therefore, all professionals working with deaf pupils have to be aware what grammatical features deaf students may struggle with, and ensure that they have high expectations of deaf students to produce grammatically correct written responses even in subjects such as science, geography or citizenship. At Elmfield, staff training took place on how to support deaf pupils in learning English at the beginning of the year where writing success criteria for each pupil have been discussed and handed out as a checklist, so that all staff are actively involved in grammar monitoring across all subjects and ensure that the transfer of skills takes place. Teachers have to ‘upskill’ themselves by using available literature and resources and simply trying things out, not getting discouraged if after a few lessons students will make mistakes or will not demonstrate grammatical accuracy. It is a natural part of learning to make mistakes and it should be expected, and sometimes teaching has a ‘delayed effect’ which means that pupils will only ‘click’ how to write grammatically after a while – sometimes after years of exposure to target grammar!

*Alicja Lievaart is a secondary teacher of English and humanities at Elmfield School for Deaf Children in Bristol. She has an MA degree in applied linguistics and teaching English as a second language (ESL) obtained in Poland which together with being a non-native speaker of English gives her a unique perspective on teaching English grammar to deaf children.*

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# Improving deaf children's morphology skills

Ian Noon, Head of Policy and Research for the National Deaf Children's Society, sheds light on 'The Secrets of Words'

This article summarises the purpose of a new National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS) resource 'The Secrets of Words', developed for education professionals working to support deaf children with under-developed literacy skills by focusing on their knowledge of morphemes.

## What is 'The Secrets of Words?'

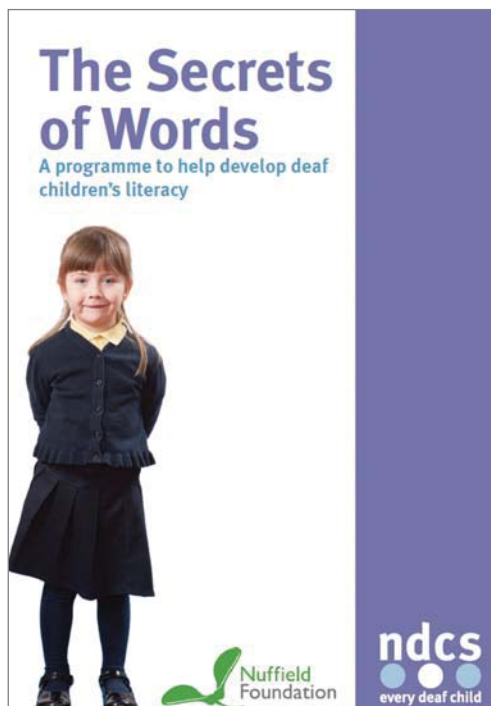
Published in 2012, the resource was produced in partnership with the University of Oxford, the Nuffield Foundation and BATOD. A dedicated website later followed. It consists of a programme of lessons, exercises and games accessible online along with an accompanying booklet explaining the background research.

The resource is aimed at primary school teachers working with deaf children and the Teachers of the Deaf and teaching assistants who support them. It is intended that the resource will be of most benefit to deaf children aged 7 to 11, particularly those who are not performing at the expected level for their age.

## Evidence-based research

It is well known that children who grasp how morphemes work can anticipate the meaning of words that they have not encountered before. For example, if they had never come across the word 'mathematician', they could have a good guess at what it means on the basis of its morphemes. Because morphemes influence sentence meaning, children's understanding of morphemes is closely related to reading comprehension.

Research carried out by Oxford University identified that the development of literacy skills for deaf children remains a challenge, even with the latest hearing technologies. Their research identified a need for a



resource to improve deaf children's understanding of morphology and so improve their literacy skills.

Existing methods of assessing hearing children's awareness of morphemes were considered inappropriate due to the oral language demands that these tasks make. Terezinha Nunes, Deborah Evans, Diana Burman and Rosanna Barros at the University therefore tested a new programme to improve deaf children's morphology skills. They found that deaf pupils using this newly created programme especially for deaf children made greater progress in spelling and reading comprehension than deaf pupils in a control group. In

doing so, this improved their spelling, reading comprehension and text writing.

The programme is in ten units which build on each other and are intended to be used in order. Although the ten units were originally designed to be taught over ten weeks, some teachers involved in the research project found that they had to move at a slower pace and were able to adapt the materials to do this.

## Impact

The finished resource 'The Secrets of Words' has proved to be one of NDCS's most popular resources for education professionals. 2,376 copies have been ordered from the NDCS Freephone Helpline. Moreover, 200 professionals have attended workshops on the resource.

The findings from various evaluations of the workshops and the resource show that the majority of teachers have learnt something new from using the resource, with nearly all saying that they believed it would be very useful or useful when working with deaf children.



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was a flexible tool that could be adapted according to the class composition, topic or teaching style.

Upon my return to the UK, a consortium was established, working under the title of 'Project Tapestry', to apply for funding for a UK pilot and getting expressions of interest from schools to take part in the pilot. As Ai-live has the potential to support a wider range of learners, we were joined by the Autism Consultant, Eileen Hopkins, who has been very proactive in getting other specialists in her field involved. Ai-Media now has a London office, with Beth Abbott, Founder of Bee Communications as its General Manager and an in-house team of trained captioners, ready to deliver their service.

The Education Endowment Foundation has funded the piloting of Ai-Live as a professional development tool in primary schools, which is being undertaken by Nesta. Project Tapestry, at the time of writing, is applying to suitable funding bodies for support in trialling and evaluating the system in secondary schools with deaf, autistic and other disadvantaged learners – watch this space!

For more information about the use of Ai-Live in schools, go to <https://ai-live.com/OBP/Home/Videos#1>

*Stevie Mayhook is an Educational Consultant with the Ewing Foundation.*

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# Count the dots

Zarina Naeem looks at the SII based method for calculating the Articulation Index – a counselling tool for audiologists

In the NHS, there has been a move away from the patriarchal model of healthcare to a patient-centred approach and has affected all healthcare professionals, including audiologists. This change emphasises shared decision making and good patient experience (Equity and Excellence in the NHS, 2010). It has brought with it the need for appropriate content counselling, and a search for methods and tools that will enable the transfer of clinical audiological test results to the patients/carers in a way which is meaningful to them and in a language which they can understand. Describing the audiogram using the categories of hearing loss (mild, moderate, severe) is confusing and abstract to patients and carers and does not translate easily into how it will affect them in everyday life.

The Articulation Index (AI) is a tool used to predict the proportion of the average speech signal that is audible to a patient with a specific hearing loss. The SII (Speech Intelligibility Index) based method for calculating the AI (Killion and Mueller, 2010) serves to bridge the gap between the technical description and the significance and impact of the hearing loss to the audibility of speech in everyday life. It is based on the underlying principle that speech intelligibility is related to the amount of speech cues that are heard by the listener. Its practicality and ease of use comes from the use of 100 dots to represent the long term average speech spectrum (between 250Hz to 8000Hz

for conversational speech at 60dB SPL) superimposed on the audiogram in dBHL (figure 1). The density of the dots (based on the latest ANSI standard R2007 S3.5-1997 - SII importance function for nonsense syllables) represents the importance of each frequency band in speech recognition, accounting for the greater density of dots at 2000Hz.

The hearing threshold levels in dBHL can be then be plotted on the audiogram. By counting the number of dots above the threshold and across the frequency range gives an estimate of the percentage of the available audible speech cues. Dividing this figure by 100 gives the AI score in quiet surroundings. This is illustrated in figure 2 for a mild to moderate high frequency sloping hearing loss where the shaded portion highlights the dots that are inaudible and the unshaded portion shows the dots that are audible. With this hearing loss the AI score will be 0.28 and 28% of speech cues will be audible (or 72% will be inaudible) and usable for this person in quiet with this hearing loss. The AI can range from 0 (0% of speech cues are audible) to 1.0 (100% of speech cues are audible).

In using the AI scores with patients and carers it is important they do not confuse audibility with intelligibility. It shows how much they can hear and not how much they can understand. Hearing loss interacts with other factors to determine intelligibility and these include background noise

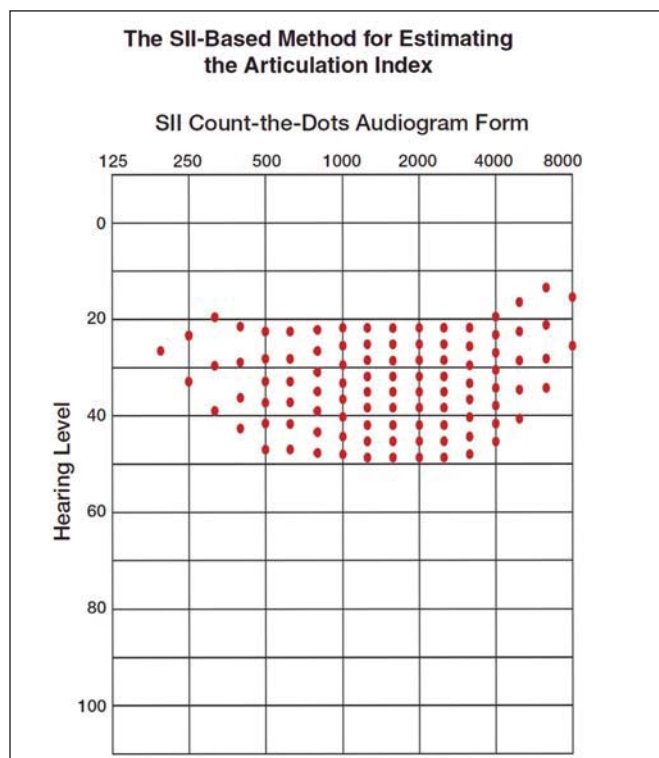


Figure 1

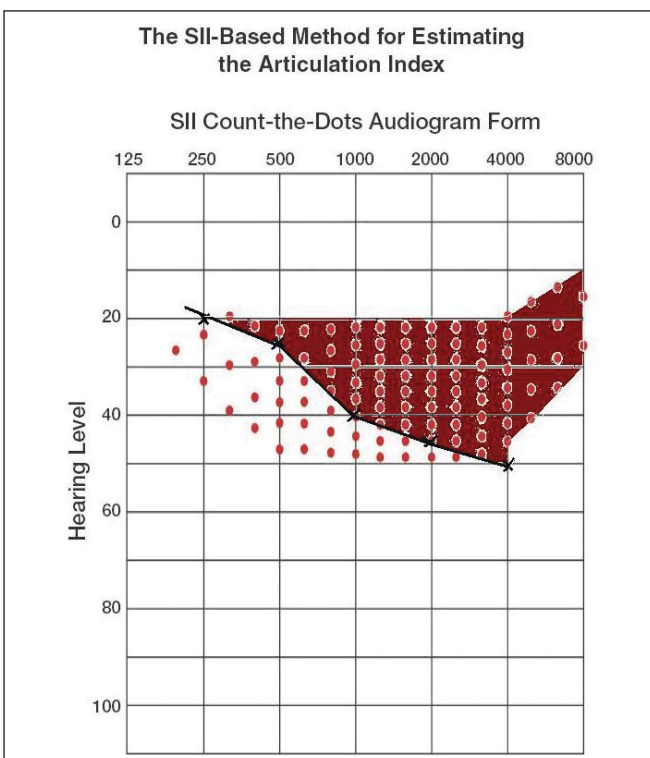


Figure 2

levels, the type of speech materials, cognitive ability and age. The approximate relationship between the AI and intelligibility (Killion and Mueller, 2010) shows that an AI score of 0.3 results in 37% intelligibility for NU6 words but is sufficient to hear 90% of sentences due to the brains remarkable ability to fill in the gaps.

For children it is also important to counsel carers about the impact of a hearing loss on the reception of soft speech and incidental learning and its importance in speech and language development. To enable an approximate calculation of the AI for soft speech the audiogram for the 60dB SPL speech level was modified by shifting the dynamic range of speech upwards on the audiogram by 10 dB to represent soft speech at 50dB SPL (Figure 3). The hearing threshold levels are plotted on this audiogram and the AI calculated as above.

The AI based on this modified audiogram is used purely for counselling purposes to demonstrate the effect of distance on audibility. The speech spectrum for soft, average and loud speech is slightly different and modifying it in this way perhaps an oversimplification but, '--- for patient counselling, a couple of dots here and there is no big deal.' (Gus Mueller. Personal communication). '--- many people not getting the concept of the dots are making mistakes of 50 dots or more. How do I know? You will see audiograms in use in clinics that have an overlay of the 'average speech banana' going from 40 to 70 dB HL'. (Mueller et al. 2014 pg. 82).

The method has important clinical applications in patient education and counselling and successfully tackles two questions frequently asked by patients and carers 'What is the percentage of hearing loss?' and 'How much speech can he/she hear?'. Diagnosis of a mild, moderate, severe hearing loss becomes more meaningful and also more

memorable when it is supplemented by an explanation in terms of the percentage of speech that is audible during average and soft conversation. It also makes it easier for patients/carers to convey this information to significant others who are not present at the appointment. This way of explaining the audiogram is useful for permanent sensorineural as well as temporary conductive hearing losses.

In this climate of multi-agency involvement it also serves a purpose in educating other professionals and referral sources involved with the patient with a hearing loss. Describing the audibility deficit for conversational and soft speech in terms of a percentage should improve understanding and also help in their communication with the patient during their appointments.

Although computerised programs and some probe microphone measurement equipment provide calculations for the AI, this pen and paper method when carried out in front of the patient provides a powerful visual image of the proportion of the speech signal obscured by the hearing loss and the impact on speech audibility. I have found this to be beneficial in non-compliant teenage patients as well as carers. Furthermore, it does not require any technology, takes one minute and, therefore, can be calculated at the patient's home, in school and at the end of appointments.

In summary, this clinically friendly, easy to use, method for estimating the AI can be an important counselling tool for professionals in audiology when explaining the significance of hearing thresholds in the perception and understanding of speech. Equipped with a better understanding patients will be able to take greater ownership of their hearing loss and be in a better position to make informed choices, thereby, improving their overall patient experience.

A detailed discussion of the background, basic principles and calculation of the AI (Amlani et al 2002; Hornsby, 2004) as well as other uses of this method (Mueller et al. 2014) is found elsewhere.

Zarina Naeem works as a paediatric audiologist within the Central Manchester University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.

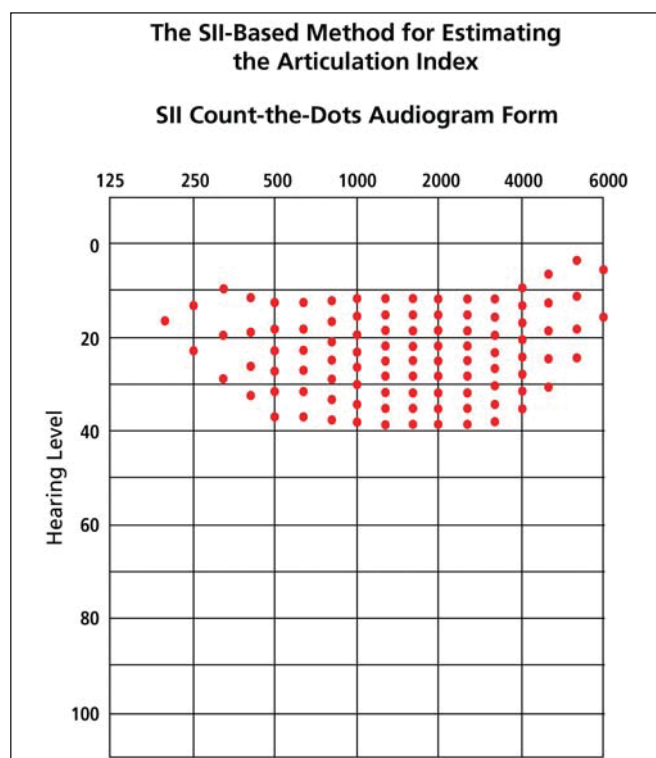


Figure 3

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<b>Associate</b>	Those not eligible to be full members (for example main school staff, SENCo, S&LT, social worker, NHS worker, parent/carer etc)	Association Magazine Refereed Journals (DEI) and complimentary downloads of all Journal articles Access to some parts of members' area of website Discounted CPD fees
<b>Special</b>	Those working with deaf pupils in a support position in the classroom eg LSAs, CSWs, TAs	Association Magazine Access to some parts of members' area of website Discounted CPD fees

- Current full members about to retire should notify the Membership Secretary of their circumstances by 30 June for the following year's membership, to enable the necessary paperwork to be completed.
- Retired members who return to paid employment should inform the Membership Secretary of their changed circumstances.
- Members with a change in circumstance or personal details should inform the Membership Secretary as soon as possible.
- Those who live outside of the UK are eligible for overseas membership. Please contact the membership secretary for details.

## Membership subscription rates – due 1 August 2013

Our financial year runs from August to July. Cheque payers will be sent a reminder about payment in June. Direct debits will be altered automatically for payments in August and beyond.

Download the form from [www.batod.org.uk](http://www.batod.org.uk) >> The Association >> BATOD membership

	Cheque	Annual Direct Debit/BACS	Quarterly Direct Debit
<b>Full members</b>	<b>£ 75.00</b>	<b>£ 70.00</b>	<b>£ 18.30</b>
<b>Full retired members</b>	<b>£ 37.50</b>	<b>£ 35.00</b>	
<b>Associate members</b>	<b>£ 75.00</b>	<b>£ 70.00</b>	<b>£ 18.30</b>
<b>Special members</b>	<b>£ 37.50</b>	<b>£ 35.00</b>	
<b>Overseas membership</b>			
including pdf copies of magazine	<b>£75 GBP</b>		
including printed copies of magazine (includes postage)		Eurozone <b>£91 GBP</b>	Rest of the world <b>£99 GBP</b>

ToDs in training will be entitled to a £20 reduction in annual membership fee when the Course Tutor countersigns the membership application form for those paying by Direct Debit (applies for up to 2 years; payable at the end of the year).

The BATOD Membership Secretary may be contacted via [membership@batod.org.uk](mailto:membership@batod.org.uk)  
The BATOD Treasurer may be contacted via [treasurer@batod.org.uk](mailto:treasurer@batod.org.uk)

# Meetings and training

# Calendar

This page is an extract from the Calendar to be found on the BATOD website. Please note that it is not exhaustive. Items noted on this Calendar may have been advertised within the Magazine or the information reported by telephone. BATOD is not necessarily the organising body.

*Please contact the organising body (column 2) for details of conferences, not the Editor of this Magazine.*

Date	Organisation	Meeting topic	Venue
<b>March</b>			
18	The Ear Foundation	Children with Cochlear Implants at Secondary School	The Ear Foundation Education Programme held at Phonak UK, Cygnet Court, Lakeside Drive, Warrington WA1 1PP
20 - 22	i2ievents group	The Education Show 2014 Educating and inspiring minds	The NEC, Birmingham, B40 1NT
26	The Ear Foundation	ANSD: Auditory Neuropathy Spectrum Disorder	The Ear Foundation Marjorie Sherman House, 83 Sherwin Road Lenton, Nottingham NG7 2FB
27	The Ear Foundation	Deaf Children with Complex Needs	The Ear Foundation, Marjorie Sherman House
28	The Ear Foundation	CMV: Cytomegalovirus	The Ear Foundation, Marjorie Sherman House
<b>April</b>			
2	The Ear Foundation	Developing Listening and Language through Primary Classroom Routines	The Ear Foundation, Marjorie Sherman House
24	The Ear Foundation	Deaf Children with Complex Needs	The Ear Foundation Education Programme at GN Resound HQ, Building A, Kirklington Business Centre, Kirklington, Oxon, OX5 3JA
25	City Lit	Watch Your Language training day	The City Literary Institute, 1-10, Keeley Street, London WC2B 4BA
28	HOSSER and BATOD East	Annual training day: guest speaker Lindsey Rousseau	Holiday Inn, Lakeview Bridge Road, Cambridge CB24 9PH
<b>May</b>			
1	The Ear Foundation	Sound to words: following babies with implants in the first year	The Ear Foundation, Marjorie Sherman House
9 - 10	BATOD Steering Group	Association Business	Hilton Garden Inn, Birmingham
9	The Ear Foundation	Why so wobbly? Balance and what you can do about it for children	Ear Foundation Education Programme at Auditory VerbalUK, 9th Floor Parker Tower, 43-49 Parker Street, WC2B 5PS
14	James Wolfe PS	Open mornings for deaf professionals	James Wolfe Primary School, Randall Place, Greenwich, London SE10 9LA
14	The Ear Foundation	Let me tell you! Story and narrative development for pre-school children	The Ear Foundation, Marjorie Sherman House
19	BATOD East	Committee meeting 17.30 - 18.30	Westgate Primary School, Bury St Edmunds
19	The Ear Foundation	Listening with the Third Ear: Counselling Skills for Audiologists Day One	The Ear Foundation, Marjorie Sherman House
20	The Ear Foundation	Children with Cochlear Implants at Secondary School	The Ear Foundation, Marjorie Sherman House
21	BATOD Midland	Twilight (16.30-19.30 ) Nicola D'Urso (speech therapist) HI and verbal dyspraxia, Andrea Baker trialling the new Education and Health Care Plans	Percy Shurmer Academy, Birmingham B12 9ED
<b>June</b>			
3	The Ear Foundation	Deaf Children at Primary School: for Teaching Assistants	The Ear Foundation, Marjorie Sherman House
3 - 5	UCL Ear Institute	Auditory Processing Disorders	UCL Ear Institute, 332 - 336 Grays Inn Road, London WC1X 8EE
5 - 7	HEAL 2014: HEaring Across the Lifespan	International Conference on Hearing	Cernobbio (Lake Como), Italy

The Calendar on the BATOD website is edited as soon as we know about meetings. Additional information about courses and registration forms may also be linked to the calendar entries.

## Officers of Nations and Regions

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...as should Association information and general queries.

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## Do you know a deaf child who...

- Is struggling in their current educational environment because of issues such as: background noise, the pace of the lesson, the vocabulary used, the rate of delivery or the number of pupils in lessons?
- Has a significant language delay or disorder and requires an enriched language programme to meet their needs?
- Would benefit from weekly speech and language therapy sessions?
- Would benefit from the opportunity to optimise their listening and spoken language skills using their amplification?
- Needs constant and consistent audiological monitoring and support?
- Struggles socially at school?
- Would benefit from a deaf peer group and role models?
- Would benefit from additional adapted resources, visual aids, prompts and a good auditory environment?

Would they therefore benefit from what Mary Hare Primary, Secondary or Sixth Form could offer them?

If you would like to discuss a specific case then please do not hesitate to contact:

**Natalie Ross**, Marketing & Pupil Recruitment Manager

Tel: 01635 244 215 Email: [n.ross@maryhare.org.uk](mailto:n.ross@maryhare.org.uk)

Post: Mary Hare School, Arlington Manor, Snelsmore Common, Newbury, RG14 3BQ

Or visit our website at [www.maryharschool.org.uk](http://www.maryharschool.org.uk)

Please be reassured that we assess all students who are interested in attending our school to make sure we can meet all of their needs before offering a place..



*Securing the future of deaf children and young people*