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MAGAZINE

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Transition

From your editor

All children experience apprehension and worry at key points of transition in their lives. This applies even more so to deaf children where the concerns can be compounded by linguistic and other factors. Transition was the theme of the annual conference held in March in Leeds this year. It covered a wide range of aspects of this important topic – transition from pre-school to school, childhood to adolescence, primary to secondary school, children's services to adult services and, much more specific to our field, transition from one language approach to another and transition issues for cochlear implant users. All these topics were covered in the keynote address and workshops and appear in this edition of the Magazine – some as fully fledged articles, others as summaries and yet another as the impression of a colleague who attended one of the workshops.



Please remember to send me feedback about the Magazine. I am always interested in suggestions for change and proposed new features for the future.

Finally, if you have a question which would be of interest to the readership and which could be tackled by Ted Moore, our Consultant, please contact me as I hope this will become a feature in future Magazines.

Future issues of the Magazine will focus on:
September 2007 Keeping children safe
November 2007 Deaf children with English as an additional language

In 2008 themes will include:
Cochlear implants
Every Deaf Child Matters

Paul A. Simpson

Magazine editor

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Cover Picture

Young people from the Life and Deaf Project whose poetry explores, among other areas, issues related to the transition to adult life. Read more about the project in the March 2007 Magazine on page 4.

Need to contact BATOD about other matters?

Talk to National Secretary Paul Simpson
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In the driving seat

Alison Weaver provides a progress report on some of BATOD's long-term goals

This Magazine contains many articles relating to the successful national conference in March. I must thank again all those who contributed to the conference – members of NEC who worked so hard to ensure the event went off smoothly, Simon Blake, the keynote speaker, the many workshop providers and the exhibitors and conference sponsors. Finally, I must thank all those who attended and provided such positive evaluations of the day.

It is not easy to attend a conference on a weekend when we have so many other demands on our time. BATOD organisers are frequently asking whether a weekday conference would be better – or would too many teachers be unable to attend? The excellent turn-out for this event and the large number of North Region members who attended a special meeting at the end of the conference was further evidence of teachers' and support workers' commitment to their work by turning out on a Saturday. However, if you have any thoughts on this, please let us know.

When I became President in March 2006, I reflected on the challenges that face Teachers of the Deaf as a profession and identified a range of priorities for the year ahead, including succession planning, charitable status and the future of the survey. A year on, I was pleased to be able to report at the conference that we have made progress in many of these areas and have plans for further action in the coming months.

As many of you will be aware, one of my first roles as President was to secure a new and sustainable process for the production of the BATOD Magazine. Ann Underwood has now stepped down as Magazine Editor after many years in the role. With Ann's support we have established new ways of working, which should enable us to maintain the high standard of the Magazine to which we have become accustomed under Ann's editorship. The conference gave us the opportunity to show our appreciation publicly for the tremendous work she has done in this role.

Other areas for succession planning include the role of the National Treasurer and the Consultant. In order to support the Treasurer and make sure that all is in order for a smooth transition to a new treasurer in the future, we have arranged for a professional bookkeeper to maintain the accounts. The Consultant plays a key part in the work of the Association. Ted Moore has been very busy this year, leading responses to government publications and focusing particularly on areas relating to terms and conditions. He has spent many hours providing advice and support to individual members who have raised concerns. A priority for 2007 will be to consider how we can ensure that the vital work of the Consultant can be sustained in the long term.

Another crucial area of work in which we need to develop long-term plans is that around the modification of language for exams and reasonable adjustments for deaf pupils. Regular readers of the Magazine and website will be aware of the persistent lobbying of Paul Simpson in this area. We must also recognise here the huge contribution of Jenny Baxter. Jenny left the NEC in March. For many years she was Assistant Secretary. She has also taken the lead in developing training and resources for teachers wishing to modify materials and in linking with a range of exam boards. Jenny will continue to support us as we plan for the future, but I must take this opportunity to thank her also for all she has done.

The work around charitable status continues. We are now going ahead with an application for charitable status for the 'BATOD Foundation'. This will be an arm of the Association which will enable us to apply for funding for a range of activities which may be deemed 'charitable' without jeopardising the core work of the Association – to support Teachers of the Deaf.

And finally, there is the work of the survey. After much discussion we have agreed to radically review the current survey. Feedback from consultation suggests that members still agree that effective data collection is essential – despite the low number of returns in recent years. We hope this year to develop a survey model that will provide us with the data we need much more easily than at present.

To close, I would like to reiterate my thanks to all of you who have continued to support the work of the Association. Please maintain this support and let us know how you and your colleagues would like to see the work of the Association develop.

Alison

Managing change

Simon Blake offers advice on the key aspects of supporting children and young people through transition



Simon Blake

The dictionary defines 'transition' as the change from one state or phase of life to another, or a change in circumstances. Transitions occur throughout our life, and all children and young people face many transitions as they move from dependence to

independence; from childhood through puberty and adolescence to adulthood; and from immaturity to maturity. In addition, some children and young people experience critical events and transitions as a result of, for example, bereavement, divorce or separation of parents, and separation from parents and family as they are taken into local authority care.

Times of transitions bring with them an opportunity to reflect on our learning, to be proud of our achievements, to jettison attributes we no longer want, and to be hopeful about the future. Enabling this to happen requires children and young people to learn about and develop the skills to manage change, and we must ensure that those who need particular and additional support can receive it in a way that is relevant and accessible.

Emotional health, well-being and resilience

The key to moving through the expected and unexpected transitions children and young people face is for them to have the best emotional health and sense of well-being they can, and to develop emotional resilience. As surely as they need good food for physical health, children and young people need sustenance for their emotional health. Bird and Gerlach (2005) describe emotional health and well-being as: 'the subjective capacity and state of mind that supports us to feel good about how we are and confident to deal with present and future circumstances. It is influenced by our emotional development and how resilient and resourceful we feel ourselves to be.'

For them, children or young people with 'good enough' emotional health and well-being have:

- a secure sense of who they are, although this changes over time and develops as they grow
- a sense of being able to be themselves, which is accompanied by aliveness, vitality and energy
- a sense of self-worth that sustains them in the face of setbacks
- a belief in their own ability to influence things and make changes

- an ability to identify, ask for and move towards the things they need
- an ability to recognise, care about and take responsibility for the impact of their behaviour on others
- a willingness and ability to do things with others and/or alone
- a capacity to respect the need for appropriate boundaries for self and others
- a sense of belonging and connection to a few significant people
- a capacity to tolerate uncertainty and respond creatively and with integrity to the challenges life brings
- a way of making sense of their experience to sustain them through life's challenges.

These last three qualities are particularly important during periods of change, as they allow children and young people to manage their risk-taking from a position of strength. With the flexibility, awareness and support that are implied in these qualities, most young people will be able to deal with events and situations as they arise and carry the lessons learned from them into the future.

Support through transitions

The diverse range of transitions faced by children and young people includes:

- starting or moving school
- puberty
- bereavement
- parents splitting up
- illness (their own or a parent's or sibling's)
- changing friendship groups
- entry to, or leaving, a pupil referral unit
- moving through child health services into adult services
- coming out as gay or lesbian
- leaving home.

Young people and children will need help and support from peers and adults to successfully make the transition to the next stage in their life. The nature and timing and giver of the support will vary depending on the individual's needs and circumstances.

Unsuccessful or incomplete transitions

Unsuccessful or incomplete transitions generally lead to poor outcomes for children and young people. For example, a lack of academic continuity during the transition from primary to secondary school, coupled with anxiety about being separated from friends in a

new school, can lead to a drop in academic progress and self-esteem. Low self-esteem in turn can demotivate children or leave them vulnerable to being bullied or not trying.

Not getting the necessary support through difficult transitions also leaves a child vulnerable to learning unhealthy responses to events and situations. Conversely, if a child experiences positive, supportive relationships, then they learn to respond in a similar way, with their responses becoming habitual or 'hardwired' into the brain (Bird and Gerlach 2005).

'Successful' transitions can lead to a positive sense of identity (including gender and cultural identity) and emotionally healthy and resilient children, young people and adults.

Emotional resilience

Adults cannot always help a young person to go through a transition smoothly, but they can help to ensure that the young person has the skills needed to build the emotional resilience to get him/herself through it.

Some groups of children and young people are likely to be much more vulnerable and may need tailored support at critical moments and key transition points. These groups include: refugees and asylum seekers, looked-after children, those with disabilities or chronic illness, young carers and young lesbians and gay men.

Key skills for managing transition

Some of the key skills, qualities and experiences which children and young people need to build their emotional resilience are to:

- manage risk-taking and cope with the outcomes
- have optimism and a sense of possibility
- be self-aware and able to learn and develop from experience
- celebrate success
- be able to ask for help
- take care of oneself
- develop empathy
- manage loss.

Just as children learn different skills from supervised play and free play, children and young people need both to be able to take risks with and without supervision – as appropriate – and learn from the consequences.

There are times when it is important that children and young people are able to work through the risk they are about to take on their own, and find ways of managing that risk and then coping with the outcome. By doing this without adult intervention,

children can learn directly from their own experience – mistakes included. In turn this builds self-confidence and emotional resilience as children learn to manage both their successes and 'failures' and pick up the pieces and try again undaunted, if necessary (*Healthy Care Training Manual 2005*).

Successful risk-taking will create a sense of optimism and possibility as well as a sense of achievement for the goal attained. While failure can be more difficult to come to terms with, it is vitally important that children are allowed to experience and learn from it. Increased self-awareness of their capabilities and responses to events can come from the things that don't work, as well as from the things that do work. Adults can always help young people to find ways to celebrate their successes, as the young people develop their key skills.

'Not intervening' should not be confused with not supporting or encouraging a child in what they are doing as they try to work out the best way to tackle their next challenge. Learning when and how to ask for help – for adult or peer intervention – is an intrinsic part of risk-taking too. If help is wanted, it is important that children and young people are made aware of who is the best person to ask, and have the skills to know how to ask for what they need.

Taking care of oneself and not taking dangerous and inappropriate risks go with the territory of good levels of self-esteem and optimism. It is when children and young people feel hopeless or frightened and isolated that they are most likely to take risks harmful to themselves and others.

Children who encounter a lack of sympathy, and are in situations that undermine their emotional health and well-being, are less likely to be able to empathise with another's problem or situation and respond appropriately. For example, a child who can empathise with another is less likely to bully because they can understand – and are aware of – how awful it feels to be bullied. A child that is unable to take care of him/herself emotionally is going to be less able to take care of another.

Everybody faces loss at some point and managing loss is a necessary part of life. Whatever the loss – the death of a close relative or moving from nursery school to primary school – children and young people need to know how to deal with the feelings that arise from it and how to move on.

Developing the skills and qualities needed for life's challenges is a necessary journey that we all need to make throughout our lives. Some of those challenges we can be supported in preparing for, others are unexpected and therefore must be managed as they happen. Children and young people can be supported

in many practical ways as they make their own way in the world, and all those who work with them need to understand their needs and how they can help to meet them.

Ten principles for supporting effective transitions

In times of transition there is a need for information, emotional support, practical help and resources. An individual worker's role will vary in ensuring this can be put in place, depending on circumstances and the nature of the transition. Below are ten principles to help you think about how best to support children and young people through their transitions.

It may be helpful to look at these principles in the light of the following questions:

- What critical moments or transitions might the children or young people you are working with face?
- What help or support would be useful to them at different stages?
- Are there any 'special' circumstances facing them? For example, are they looked after, do they have a disability or have they suffered a bereavement?
- What training or support do you need to help them?

1 Identify key changes, critical moments and transition points for children and young people, including those most children will experience, such as moving school and those that some children will experience, such as family break-up or bereavement, and ensure that the relevant people are aware of the impact of change and the importance of support through transition.

2 Ensure that mainstream work with children and young people builds life skills, including emotional resilience and empathy, and emphasises the importance of asking for help and support when they are needed.

3 Develop curriculum and project work that focuses on transitions and helps children and young people to understand the range of transitions they will experience as they move from puberty through adolescence and into adulthood.

4 Prepare children and young people for leaving school or leaving care well in advance, providing an opportunity to reflect on successes and challenges and celebrate their work together.

5 Identify individuals who may need particular support through transitions. Identify the support mechanisms and agencies that are available for the child and their family. Work in partnership to provide this support where possible.

6 Involve children and young people in providing support to their peers as part of everyday friendships and relationships. This can be developed as peer support.

7 Involve and support parents and carers in transitions work so that they can celebrate the transitions and provide understanding and support.

8 Encourage optimism and work with the excitement and opportunities, as well as the fears and anxieties caused by change and transitions.

9 If the behaviour of a child or young person changes, encourage them to acknowledge it and talk about it. Are there issues relating to transition and change that are causing difficulties and what can be done to address these?

10 Provide consistent responses to critical moments and events in children and young people's lives, such as when they are bullied, bereaved or experiencing parental divorce or separation. Ensure that the child is at the heart of deciding what support and help they need. Discuss with a child when they are happy for their peers and others to know and understand what has happened, and who they would like to tell them.

Simon Blake is the Chief Executive of Brook. He was previously the Assistant Director of Children's Development at the National Children's Bureau.

BATOD Association Magazine

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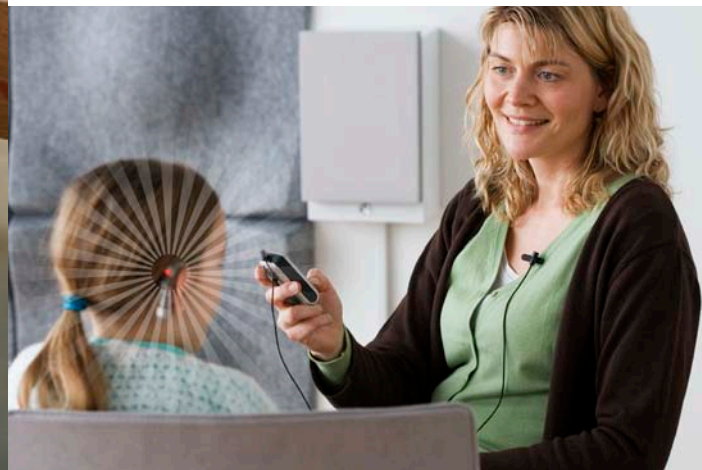


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Developing language

From BSL to BSL and Cued Speech, to BSL, Cued Speech and spoken English and on to full literacy and full bilingualism – Sarah Collinson tells Will's story



Sometimes, just one chance comment can utterly change the course of a person's life. That is what happened in the case of our seven year-old son, Will, when he was little over a year old and had recently been diagnosed as profoundly deaf. The comment was from another mother of two older, profoundly deaf boys, advising me that it would be worth everything in the world to Will if we could help him to gain age-appropriate understanding of English by the time he reached school age. This, she said, would give him the foundation that he would need for his development and learning, especially his literacy, for the rest of his life. She had achieved this for her children, who have virtually no hearing, so there was no reason why we shouldn't be able to achieve it for Will, despite his having no aided hearing at all.

This conversation marked a major milestone in our understanding of the nature of the struggle ahead of us. After our initial preoccupation with worries about his hearing and speech, we realised, for the first time, that the most crucial thing for Will at that point was his language development. He needed a full language for thought, as well as communication, and he needed the conceptual skills associated with a full language to be able to learn and develop on a par with hearing children.

If developing language and communication, rather than speech and communication, was our primary challenge, then what language was Will to learn and how? At that point we were doing what we could to begin using some BSL at home, but with no one to help with evening childcare, my husband and I couldn't both attend the local signing course and, in any case, one lesson a week in a beginner's language course hardly seemed adequate given the urgency of Will's needs.

Despite our success in getting some rudimentary signing going in those early months, the most momentous transition for Will came when we started to use Cued Speech with him at home, alongside BSL. We recognised that he still needed the BSL to communicate; however, our own signing skills were so poor and improving so slowly, it was obvious that if he was to access a full and grammatical language from us at home in his early years (when he needed it), his first language had to be English. And since he couldn't hear a single sound of English at that stage, the only option for him to acquire it was through Cued Speech. Luckily for us, Cued Speech can be learnt extremely rapidly if you are willing and able to put the practice in and get on and use it (much like typing). Within a few months, Will had a receptive vocabulary of over 50 words in (Cued) English, alongside his expanding BSL vocabulary, and he was switching automatically between languages, using BSL as his primary expressive language and English as his first receptive language. The ease with which he took to both languages made us hopeful that, if we could find a way to keep both languages going over the longer term, it might be possible for Will to eventually become fully fluent in both languages, and thus truly bilingual. That remains our aim.

The second most significant transition for Will has been his shift from purely visual communication to predominantly aural/oral communication since his cochlear implant, which he received five years ago when he was two-and-a-half. His chances of benefiting a great deal from an implant had looked slim due to the nature of his hearing loss – a highly unusual combination of auditory neuropathy and thin (or, on his left side, virtually absent) auditory nerves. It is clear that he doesn't get as much useful hearing from the implant as would be expected in a more straightforward case. Yet, despite this, he has managed an extraordinary transition from a child who was totally dependent on visual communication to one who is almost entirely reliant on spoken English for all communication at home and at school. Given the comparatively poor quality of his hearing with the implant, we are convinced that a crucial factor enabling this transition must have been his early understanding of Cued English, which, as we continued to use it after his implant, provided him with a supporting 'scaffold' to help him make sense of the new speech sounds that he was hearing and relate them directly to the language that he already knew.

By the time Will was ready to start school, he had attained an age-appropriate level in his

comprehension of English, albeit with various gaps and delays. Of course, he had a more significant delay in his own expressive spoken English due to the limited time that he had had his implant and the imperfect hearing that he has with it. We weren't unduly concerned by this, since we remained confident that his speech would, over time, begin to catch up with his comprehension. As predicted by my friend all those years earlier, the fact that Will had good knowledge of spoken English by that stage made his transition from nursery to school considerably less stressful and difficult than it might otherwise have been. Having tried extended specialist and mainstream placements during his nursery years, it was clear to us that the most appropriate place for him would be in a very small mainstream school with full-time, one-to-one communication support in Cued Speech. English was to be his first language for education, since this was his first language at home, and consolidation and development of his use of spoken English and early literacy were to take precedence during his first two years at school.

With outstanding support from his communication support worker and other staff at his village school, Will quickly began to catch up with his hearing peers across all areas of the curriculum and in his social and communication skills more generally.

His spoken language is now more or less age-appropriate across most areas of English vocabulary, grammar and syntax. His speech is fully intelligible to people who know him well, enabling, for example, easy communication in spoken English with his younger brothers. And, five years on from the implant, he no longer relies on Cued Speech to access spoken English, at least in a quiet environment – as long as people speak clearly and he can lip-read.

A momentous transition for Will came about as he began to be introduced to phonics alongside his hearing peers in the classroom. Much to our amazement, he not only coped with phonics, but seemed to take to it more quickly and easily than many of the other children in his year group. Perhaps, we wondered, similar pathways in a child's brain are as important for reading text as for 'reading' Cued Speech? Since Cued Speech is a phonics-based system, it is, perhaps, not surprising that four years of previous exposure to Cued Speech helped him get to grips with early phonics-based reading skills at school. The ease with which he mastered phonics, combined with his knowledge of English language, has made Will's rapid transition to literacy a joy to be involved with. He is now in Year 2, and his reading age, measured alongside his hearing peers in a recent standardised test conducted by his class teachers when he was six years old, came out



as equivalent to nine-and-a-half years. His ability to read and write is already opening so many doors for him in his wider learning and development. He accesses a great deal at school now through his reading, and this, we hope, will help him in his transition to Key Stage 2 next year. He reads constantly all kinds of books at home; he is able to surf the Internet independently to find sites and information about all manner of things that he is interested in; and he now reads all the subtitles when watching TV because he doesn't want to miss a single thing. He fully expects to access and be included in everything these days, and he is very assertive in making sure that that happens.

The next important transition that we hope is achievable for Will is for him to attain full bilingualism in (spoken and written) English and BSL. By this we mean complete fluency in both languages. Our intention had always been to try to support Will's language acquisition by sequencing the input according to his changing needs. Before his implant, he depended on BSL for all his expressive language. Following his implant, we put less emphasis on BSL while consolidating his use and understanding of English. Now that his spoken English is well established, it feels like the right time to begin putting more emphasis on his BSL again. We had always hoped that he could learn BSL by using it with deaf people who use sign as their first language. Our local peripatetic service has organised for Will to be visited regularly at home by a deaf member of their staff, and she is now teaching BSL to all of us. Will is enjoying it a great deal. He is confident using it, building on the BSL he already knows, and likes practising it at school and teaching it to his hearing peers in the playground.

Overall, perhaps the most important transition for Will has been from a baby who seemed to us severely disadvantaged and disabled to, today, a confident, happy and well-adjusted boy who has every advantage that could be expected of a kid of his age, with everything to look forward to. It took years of extremely hard work on his part and ours to get to this point, but every bit of it was worth it.

Switching communication modes

Dee Dyar provides a summary of her conference workshop where she explored methods for assessing and monitoring the communication skills of young children

1 Assessment issues and considerations

As part of their continuing professional development, Teachers of the Deaf and fellow professionals need constantly to reflect on their traditional support programmes and review their expectations and communication goals for pre-school and school-aged deaf children. As a speech and language therapist in a large multidisciplinary team, I am frequently asked for advice on how to assess the communication skills of extremely young deaf children, how to monitor the progress of deaf children from multilingual backgrounds (including sign-bilingual) in a linguistically equitable way and to share information on the range of communication outcomes observed during the first few years after a diagnosis of deafness has been made.

Recommended components of an initial communication assessment	
Non-linguistic level	Linguistic level
Free play characteristics	Input characteristics: child-directed speech
Sensory modality dominance (vision, audition + vision, audition)	Effectiveness of child's spontaneous interaction and communication strategies
Attention skills development	Voice characteristics (prosody)
Motor co-ordination capabilities – especially vocal motor co-ordination skills	Speech production: articulation, phonology, connected speech intelligibility
Spontaneous interaction strategies	Other factors that may impact on the rate of communication skills development

Deaf children who present with a suspected or confirmed diagnosis of developmental delay or additional disabilities such as auditory neuropathy, autistic spectrum disorder, learning difficulties, dual sensory or other progressive disabilities may require a longer period of observation. It is also useful to look at the emergence of laterality dominance with reference to developmental milestones, and the sometimes neglected aspects of the child's personality and learning strategies with adults and both deaf and hearing peers.

Individual members of the sensory support service may contribute important professional insights in different ways and at different stages of the family support process before and after hearing aids have been fitted or cochlear implantation takes place. For this reason, good interdisciplinary teamwork between audiologists, Teachers of the Deaf, speech and language therapists, deaf co-workers and learning support assistants is essential.

The primary purposes of carrying out a baseline communication assessment are:

- to describe a child's current communication skills and ongoing linguistic needs, ideally in a language-specific way
- to investigate and identify conditions or factors that may impact on the child's ability to learn how to use and benefit from hearing aids or cochlear implants
- to identify and prioritise short-term communication goals in a developmentally appropriate and linguistically principled manner.

2 Ways of monitoring a child's rate of linguistic progress – in a language-specific way during the pre-school years

The Profile of Actual Linguistic Skills (PALS) (Dyar and Nikolopoulos 2003, *Monitoring progress: the role and remit of a speech & language therapist*) enables the user to 'profile' rather than 'test' a deaf child's linguistic effectiveness under five inter-related linguistic levels. As a criterion-referenced assessment procedure PALS has now been translated into more than a dozen languages and is used by cochlear implant programme professionals who support extremely young or older low verbal deaf children.

The PALS profile has been found to be a positive way of providing feedback to the parents and support professionals of deaf children with complex linguistic or learning needs. More recently, it has been used

Profile of Actual Linguistic Skills (PALS)				
1	Everyday communication skills	Preverbal	Transitional	Functional Language
1.1	Use of spoken language patterns for communication	*		
1.2	Range of communicative intentions	*		
1.3	Response to verbal communication from others	*		
1.4	Effectiveness of communication	*		
1.5	Socio-linguistic variation	*		
2	Receptive skills			
2.1	Use of hearing	*		
2.2	Use of situation cues	*		
2.3	Listening and lip-reading	*		
2.4	Listening without lip-reading	*		
2.5	Ability to carry out performance assessment measures	*		
3	Expressive skills			
3.1	Use of non-verbal strategies	*		
3.2	Use of spoken language to communicate	*		
3.3	Level of spontaneous spoken language (lexicon)	*		
3.4	Level of syntax and morphology	*		
3.5	Ability to carry out performance assessment measures	*		
4	Voice skills			
4.1	Use of voice	*		
4.2	Phonetic level voice features	*		
4.3	Elicited voice features	*		
4.4	Phonological level voice features (connected speech)	*		
4.5	Ability to carry out performance assessment measures	*		
5	Speech skills			
5.1	Use of spontaneous speech	*		
5.2	Speech sound repertoire	*		
5.3	Phonological system	*		
5.4	Speech intelligibility	*		
5.5	Ability to carry out performance assessment measures	*		

to monitor the rate of linguistic progress during the decision-making phase for cochlear implantation in children who have some auditory benefit from hearing aids.

3 How video-based assessment techniques can be used to complement standardised tests when evaluating the effectiveness of deaf children's spontaneous communication skills: the potential role of storytelling

The Story Narratives Assessment Procedure (known as SNAP Dragons) is a video-based storytelling assessment procedure (Starczewski H and Lloyd-Richmond H, *Deafness and Education International*, 1 (3), 1999). It enables the user to monitor and describe the emergence of a deaf child's storytelling skills from a multi-modality or cross-linguistic perspective, including the transition (or lack of it) from sign to spoken language-based narratives.

The tables below illustrate how the SNAP Dragons storytelling assessment procedure is an exceptionally inclusive approach when supporting deaf children from sign-bilingual backgrounds and their families.

SNAP: narrative rating record form		
Narrative rating	Story grammar skills	Story/narrative behaviour
1	Pre-analysis	Child not ready to respond to the task
2	Pre-analysis	Child is happy to look at a book while the adult tells the story
3	Child labels or comments on pictures	Child needs prompting or 'scaffolding' to retell the story
4	Child uses one or two SNAP story grammar categories (not a complete episode)	Child continues to need some prompting (but to a lesser extent than children functioning at Stage 3)
5	One complete episode (initiating event + action + consequence)	Child retells story spontaneously. No prompting required. May include a 'verbatim' style
6	One complete episode + a second nearly complete episode (eg two out of three mandatory SNAP story grammar features)	Verbatim style may persist (ie child tells a 'safe' story with emphasis on the most salient features of the adult's story)
7	Two complete episodes	Confident storytelling (emergence of unsolicited expansions of ideas/themes within the story)
8	More than two complete episodes. Internal responses used increasingly to show reasoning of characters	Confident and creative storytelling

SNAP story grammar analysis record form		
Category	Description	Example (From Snowy Day story. (1 of 14 SNAP Dragon stories)
Setting	Introductory information about the characters, time and place of the story	Sam and Sally say 'Hurray, it's snowing today'
Initiating event	Something happens to the characters	Oh no! Daddy's car is covered in snow
Action	Characters' action in response to the initiating event	Come on, let's dig the car out
Consequence	The outcome (what happens as a result) of these actions	Daddy goes to work now
Internal response	Thoughts or feelings of the characters. These can occur at any point in the story	Daddy was cold. Sally and Sam were excited because of the snow

Based on cross-linguistic childhood storytelling research, story grammar analysis must have three key components: an initiating event, an action and a consequence, before rating a hearing or deaf child as a coherent storyteller capable of using 'episodes'. The next table illustrates how the authors of the SNAP Dragons assessment procedure have extended the traditional developmental milestones of storytelling to cater for deaf children with low linguistic ability in sign or spoken languages. The six categories of transcription codes extend from:

- speech only to speech + sign
- lip pattern only to lip pattern + sign
- vocalisation only to vocalisation + sign
- gesture only to sign only
- pointing
- BSL.

The SNAP Dragons inter-rater reliability was high: Spearman Rank correlation coefficient 0.97 with high statistical significance <0.0001 (a 'rater' is a professional colleague who has independently 'rated' the materials).

Storytelling is fun! SNAP Dragons can be used to document a wide range of language and communication skills, from deaf children with very limited language to competent storytellers whose preferred mode of communication is speech.

Storytelling is rewarding for parents as well as children – whatever their language, social or educational background. It enables support professionals to involve parents, grandparents and siblings in the deaf child's assessment and review process. The benefits of establishing good storytelling skills in the pre-school years become self-evident when children start learning how to read.

Workshop conclusions

Teachers of the Deaf and fellow professionals should collect language and speech outcomes in a systematic yet jargon-free way. They should endeavour to ensure that selected assessment measures are as evidence-based and validated as possible when supporting deaf children who are not ready to attempt standardised tests.

By involving parents and families 'actively' in the assessment and progress monitoring process when supporting deaf children from sign and spoken language backgrounds, Teachers of the Deaf and other professionals are establishing a good foundation for individual education plan discussions about the transitions between sign and spoken languages during the pre-school, primary and secondary school years.

Dee Dyar is the Speech and Language Therapy Co-ordinator for the Nottingham Cochlear Implant Programme.

Taking the lead

At our national conference, Nicky Ereaut and Alison Holmans led a workshop which looked at the role of the lead professional with particular relevance to transition in the early years for hearing-impaired children

The role of the lead professional/keyworker has been increasingly explored and defined as a result of the Every Child Matters agenda. The ECM recommendation in 2004 was that, 'Children known to more than one specialist agency should have a single named professional to take the lead on their case and be responsible for ensuring a coherent package of services to meet the individual child's needs.'

There are many definitions and interpretations of the lead professional/keyworker role, depending on the context. These share key underlying principles and common functions. The DfES (2006) defines the lead professional's functions as:

- acting as a single contact point for the child or family, whom they can trust and who can engage them in making choices, navigating their way through the system and making changes.
- co-ordinating the delivery of actions agreed by the practitioners involved.
- reducing overlap and inconsistency in the services received.

The keyworker's responsibilities are similar but it is considered to be a more in-depth role compared to that of the lead professional.

The workshop

The aim of the workshop was to look at these functions within the context of early years support and specifically transition for hearing-impaired children and their families. The workshop explored relationships between the child, family, professionals (including lead professional) using an early years transition scenario. Discussion led to a consideration of how a 'Team Around the Child' (TAC) approach would support the situation.

In a TAC approach key practitioners assume a responsibility to collaborate very closely with each other, regardless of which agency employs them. The lead professional facilitates this process. Parents have a central role in their TAC and their expertise is acknowledged.

In Oxfordshire the early years lead professional role was piloted in MAISEY (Multi-Agency Integrated Support in the Early Years). All new referrals where more than one specialist agency was involved came in to a MAISEY group of local professionals working with a particular child and family. At these meetings a non-designated lead professional was identified, based on both casework priorities and resources available. However, the families involved were not

part of the MAISEY meetings and were not engaged in conversations about who their lead professional would be. Teachers of the Deaf continued to be able to take referrals directly to allow for immediate support to be provided to families on confirmation of a hearing loss. Casework was still taken to the MAISEY meeting to ensure that for children with complex needs an appropriate agency was taking the lead.

The MAISEY pilots have been completed and the early years approach is now one of TAC, with families fully involved. This is happening alongside the introduction of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) and the movement of professionals to work within 13 identified localities across Oxfordshire.

Early years transitions

The workshop went on to look in greater depth at the lead professional functions during early years transitions – before transition, during transition and post placement. Lead professional functions were highlighted that relate to skills in the following areas:

- Providing information/support to access information.
- Identifying and addressing the needs of the whole family.
- Co-ordinating support from across the agencies involved.
- Supporting the child and family if more specialist assessments are needed.
- Giving practical help.
- Providing emotional support.
- Helping with advocacy and facilitating others.

Information-sharing occurs in many different ways. Families need information about the choices of placement available. They may gain considerably from meeting other parents to share experiences. Regular opportunities for visiting topics that link to transition can be provided through pre-school family support groups. Local and national voluntary groups also provide information-sharing activities, weekends and summer 'schools'. The more information that can be provided, the more likely families are to be able to make an informed choice. Often the lead professional facilitates the family in making the first visit to the local support group and encourages the family to look at events on offer more widely.

Visits to look at possible placements are helpful. These need to be planned and supported – often a lead professional role. Guidance on what to look for on a visit can enable families to ask the questions that will help them determine the most appropriate placement for their child. Preparatory contact with the

placement to give them some background to the child's needs and how these can be met helps the placement staff to relate positively to the child and family during a visit. The lead professional will have information to share with other agencies involved with the child and family (subject to the data-sharing protocols in place).

After a visit the lead professional may help the family to consider the pros and cons of a placement. For each family there will be a range of factors to think about, such as siblings/friends already at a particular placement, distance to travel and need for special transport, experience of the school in meeting the needs of a deaf child, access issues and the general feel of a setting (did it seem welcoming and inclusive?).

Once a placement has been decided on by the family, information-sharing is needed between the family and agencies involved (current TAC) and the new setting. There are useful Early Support tools available for this process. The Monitoring Protocol for Deaf Babies and Children is a developmental record that is held by the family. Professionals and family contribute to keeping the record up to date and the summary sheets provide helpful information for the new setting. Family Plans that document the family's priorities for their child should show how the TAC has been working together to support these priorities. As the child moves towards a transition the Family Plan will often reflect some of the priorities that need to be addressed.

Transition visits are usually put in place and, where possible, the SENCO or another professional from the placement will attend the Family Plan review prior to the transition. Relevant documentation is shared. Again, the lead professional will usually facilitate this.

Any work that is needed in relation to building adaptations and the processes around applications for this will be supported by the lead professional, as will

planning for INSET and appointment/training of support workers within the placement. Home-placement links are considered and ways of establishing these are agreed with families.

Once the child has started at the setting the lead professional role may pass to a member there (often the SENCO). However, overlap may be needed or in some cases it may be decided that the lead professional role will continue as previously. If it is more appropriate for someone else to take the lead, then a planned handover should take place. The lead professional role may include planning and co-ordinating the support from the outside agencies involved. A continued TAC approach requires the arrangement of future dates for professionals to meet with the family and other agencies who may be involved. The Family Plan may continue or, depending on the needs of the child, alternative ways of recording priorities and how needs will be met may be used, such as provision mapping or the setting up of an IEP. A lead professional will continue to co-ordinate the individual programme for the child and family.

As locality working develops, the lead professional role may extend from its current focus around educational needs to be more about the whole family situation. It should encompass plans for support for the family that may take account of the needs of more than one child as well as a range of family circumstances that will influence outcomes for the child. A good lead professional will already be bringing a whole family focus to the setting, thinking outside the boundaries of their own profession in doing so.

There is information about the lead professional role at www.earlysupport.org.uk/

Nicky Ereaut is the Specialist Team Manager and Alison Holmans is a Team Leader with the Hearing Support Service in Oxfordshire.

Transition milestones

Sue Archbold's workshop at the national conference looked at the different transition phases for children with cochlear implants and highlighted four key milestones

Diagnosis

The time of diagnosis is the first and most important transition point: parents not only receive the diagnosis, but many professionals and modern technologies enter their lives. Parents experience a range of conflicting feelings on receiving the diagnosis of deafness and there are some worrying quotes from surgeons about cochlear implants such as: 'Now that we can cure deafness...' Unless parents have time to begin a transition at that time, the positive benefits the modern technologies can give may never be realised.

The process of giving information is vital, and other parents have a part to play in this. Too much information, too early, can reinforce feelings of inadequacy and confusion parents have at this time.

It is important to remember that at times of transition, when emotions are high, cognition tends to be low – is this the right time to be making a life-changing decision?' However, we do know that early implantation is more effective than later implantation



Sue Archbold

and therefore we must ensure that parents not only have time, but do have information, and are supported in the early development of good communication skills which are vital, whatever their choices.

Transition to school

Significantly more children with cochlear implants are now going to mainstream schools when compared with those with hearing aids, and significantly fewer to schools for the deaf.

Close liaison with the cochlear implant centre at the point of transition to school is vital – knowing how the technology works, who has the spares and who will do the daily check. Where a mainstream school is concerned, key issues need to be addressed, such as the levels of support offered, acoustic conditions and flexibility of placement, support and communication mode over time. Evidence shows us that progress after implantation in terms of speech perception and production takes place over years, not months, and that communication mode and appropriate placement change too; educators need to monitor progress in order to respond to these changes.

Points to look out for when transition to school takes place also include the counter-intuitive statement that implants may appear to work too well! Speech intelligibility is not the same as linguistic ability and some teachers underestimate the degree of support still required to access the curriculum and language. The majority of deaf children, implanted under the age of three, will develop wholly intelligible speech, and mainstream teachers may assume that they understand everything in the classroom. We already know the effect of moderate, unilateral hearing loss on educational progress, and similar concerns very much apply in this case too.

Also, some children do not do as well as predicted. This may be because up to 40% of deaf children have another, sometimes undiagnosed, difficulty which was not known before implantation. It may become apparent that there is a learning or cognitive difficulty in addition to deafness, and questions then arise as to how best to educate these children.

Transition to secondary school

This brings its own challenges. The child may have done well at primary stage, whereas at secondary school many aspects of the situation are different: the curriculum and language are more demanding (requiring skills in inference, reasoning and complex grammatical structures); there may be poor acoustics and frequent changes of teacher. Anecdotal evidence tells us that some children who were in mainstream in primary school are moving to special schools at secondary level. Also, it is interesting to note that a Scottish study has shown that there is no evidence of the migration of children with implants to mainstream, especially at secondary level.

Research has shown that some children are still struggling with reading at secondary school level, even after an excellent start earlier on in their school career – as language levels become more complex, what is functionally a moderate, unilateral hearing loss will take effect. The Ear Foundation is currently researching the support needed by young people with implants at secondary level.

Parents of young children make the decision for implantation – at secondary level young people are likely to be questioning the decision and coming to terms with the technology they wear. In a study just completed at The Ear Foundation, young people said that they were comfortable with their parents' decision, and now were ready to own it themselves. At this stage, they must come to terms with the fact that they may need a further operation, and there are other issues, such as understanding the technology that they wear inside their heads, that are part of this important transition time for them. Interestingly they appear to see themselves more flexibly than in the past: 'I am deaf, but I can hear with my implant', was a common response.

There are many teenagers now making another transition – that of hearing-aid user to implant user, as they make the decision to have an implant for themselves.

Transition to further education

Challenges at this stage of transition include managing the technology, medical and surgical implications and how support will be provided when its provision is much less clear-cut than at school level. Students have to become independent adults with implants, and the technology of implantation has other implications when compared with that of hearing aids. Above all, the goal is to secure the future of these students with lifelong functioning cochlear implants.

Finally, at all points of transition it is important to be aware that needs may change because use of audition will change, choice of communication mode may change and appropriate management and placement may change over time. Educational services need to respond to these changes, and to see the opportunities which implants are bringing the majority of profoundly deaf children today.

See www.earfoundation.org.uk for information on research being carried out at The Ear Foundation into some of these areas. Many thanks to those who help with these studies. At this time, as NICE is reviewing the provision of implantation in the UK, it is important that family, child and education research is carried out to report on the needs of the growing numbers of children with implants, and their families.

Sue Archbold is Education Co-ordinator with The Ear Foundation, Nottingham

Getting it right from the start

Theresa Robinson, Sue Carroll and Janet Guest describe how special Transition Days in Shropshire have helped to prepare young people for secondary school



Transition to secondary school is a challenging time for all young people and especially for those with a hearing loss. The inclusion policy has seen more and more young people with a hearing loss being supported in their local school by a peripatetic Teacher of the Deaf; in fact there has been a 96% decrease in out-of-county placements in the last 20 years in Shropshire.

Due to the rural nature of Shropshire, many of these young people do not have contact with other hearing-aid wearers in school, although several do meet at social events.

Transition protocols continue to be developed in order to foster seamless support and a smooth transition for young people as they move from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 3. An important part of this process is a Transition Day offered to all pupils in Year 6 who wear hearing aids and who will be attending a Telford & Wrekin or Shropshire secondary school. The Year 7 pupils are invited back to share their experiences and to consolidate the skills they acquired the previous year.

The purpose of the day is for the Year 6 pupils to have an opportunity to develop the language of the secondary school, to advance their understanding and ability to explain their hearing loss to others and to gain more confidence and independence with the audiological equipment they use. It is hoped that by the time these young people transfer into adult audiological services at the end of Year 11 they will



have mastered the skills and knowledge necessary to manage their equipment independently and to access the services they need to support this.

The Transition Day is held during the summer term at a centrally located secondary school, and young people are offered local authority approved transport if necessary. The cost of the day is subsidised by the Shropshire Deaf Children's Society (SDCS).

A typical programme looks like this:

- 9.00–9.10: Pupils arrive and make name badges.
- 9.10–9.40: Introductions.
- 9.40–10.00: Label picture of ear and watch a DVD on how sound travels through the ear.
- 10.00–10.20: Draw own audiogram (personal thresholds from PTA supplied) and write brief description of hearing loss, including degree of hearing loss and stating which is the better ear.
- 10.30–10.45: Completion of Independence questionnaire – the aim of this is to foster independent evaluation of their skills and to get young people thinking about the style of support which will be most beneficial to them.
- 10.45–11.00: Break.
- 11.00–12.00:
 - 1 Revision of how to retube and clean moulds. Young people are given liquid soap for cleaning their moulds.
 - 2 Labelling hearing devices.
 - 3 Radio aids – identify parts of a radio aid from a list and explain their function.
 - 4 Vibrating alarm clock demonstration.
- 12.00–12.45: Lunch.
- 12.45–1.20: Ewing Foundation Radio Aid DVD: *Getting It Right!* – young people have to spot the mistakes. What should you do if the teacher is using unhelpful teaching strategies?
- 1.20–1.35: Making friends/joining-in scenarios.
- 1.35–1.50: Timetable puzzle with partners.
- 1.50–2.10: Questionnaire on future social events. Information about the activity day in July.
- 2.10–2.50: Quiz games, bingo, etc. Pupils are issued with pencil cases containing appropriate equipment for secondary school.
- 2.50: Parents/taxis pick up.

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We have now held four such days and around 50 pupils have participated. Generally, pupils with a severe or profound hearing loss choose to attend the day without any further encouragement. An extra phone call is made to families of pupils who do not initially respond to the invitation. This usually results in an overall take up of about 60% of those invited. The response of pupils to the day has been very positive and those who attend in Year 6 almost always return in Year 7. There is a high correlation between those pupils who attend the Transition Day and those who attend social events.

We organise one or two group social events each year. These have included bowling, participation in Shropshire Deaf Children's Society events, an outdoor pursuits' day and a weekend at a PGL Activity Centre. For many of the young people we work with this is the first time they have experienced activities such as abseiling, mountain-boarding and kayaking. A few young people are reluctant to participate in water sports which involve removal of their hearing aids, but with the encouragement of the older children they manage to do so with confidence. All these events have been subsidised by the SDCS and other charitable organisations.

In 2006 a questionnaire was completed by the families of young people in Key Stage 3 and it was generally felt that young people were more confident about using their equipment, had greater self-esteem and self-advocacy skills and had benefited greatly from the various transition events offered to them.

Theresa Robinson, Sue Carroll and Janet Guest are peripatetic Teachers of the Deaf in Telford & Wrekin and Shropshire.

Preparation for secondary school

At the national conference, Isabel Gibson attended a workshop focusing on primary–secondary transfer

Bill Wilson led morning and afternoon workshops, both very well attended, on the important transfer phase between primary and secondary school. He concentrated on transition from the point of view of the school, child and parents who all need to be involved in the decisions and processes from quite early on. In his own provision, the initial planning begins as early as Year 4 so that by the time the child is in Year 6 there should be a smooth transition.

Problems can occur if there is no agreement as to which is the best provision, and this might result in a tribunal. If this is the case then the tribunal should be around October time so that the child is not unsettled or confused by the process and unsure as to where they are moving on to. This can compromise the process of preparing the child for the transition.

Bill encouraged discussion on whether the process of transition was always the same depending on whether a child was moving from a mainstream to specialist setting or vice versa, or a similar setting, for example, mainstream to mainstream. There were some

interesting comments. It was also pointed out that a child with a statement is in a better position to have a smoother transition because the annual review mechanism provides an opportunity to get the right things in place, such as the level of support.

Bill was keen to stress that the process must be child-centred and showed us a very attractive transition booklet to help pupils move schools. The text was simple, with colour photographs of the new school the child was to attend. The booklet identified who their teachers and peers would be and contained pictorial practical information on where they have lunch and their taxi pick-up point for home!

The overall message was that a child needs to be confident, happy and look forward to a greater measure of independence that transition will bring, and we need to work together to ensure that this happens.

Isabel Gibson is Assistant Headteacher at St John's School for Deaf Children, Boston Spa.

It's magic!

One company in north east Scotland has been using magic to prepare children for a smooth transition to secondary school – and it seems to work!

The transition from primary to secondary school has long been recognised as something of a stumbling block for many school pupils, and one that is often associated with a dip in performance. Recent figures have revealed that as many as 40% of pupils fail to make satisfactory progress in maths or English during their first year at secondary school. Common worries include a lack of confidence, a greater amount of homework and the challenges involved in navigating a bigger school and having more teachers.

A number of initiatives have been launched in recent years in an attempt to tackle key transition difficulties. These include transition days in which primary pupils visit their future secondary school and are introduced to teachers and older pupils, induction days, when pupils from different feeder primary schools are brought together and partake in various activities to get to know each other better, and collaborative teaching, in which primary and secondary teachers observe each other's teaching styles to aid the pupils' transition. One particularly successful route to a smoother transition, however, at least in schools in the north east of Scotland, has been found to lie in magic.

Jeff, of Fifth Dimension, a corporate communications and entertainment company, has seven years' experience in conducting team-building and problem-solving activities around the realm of magic in primary and secondary schools throughout the north east of Scotland.

'We have found that magic seems to work extremely well in the school setting,' says Jeff. 'Magical presentations capture the attention, often one of the hardest parts of the job! Once pupils are focused they are far more responsive to any other messages that you might want to communicate, which, in the case of transfer from primary to secondary school, centre on confidence-building, time management, organisational skills and problem-solving, to name a few.'

Jeff explains some of the most effective methods that the Fifth Dimension team has employed during its time giving pre-secondary transition sessions in schools.

Teaching self-confidence

Magical presentations are ideal for showing pupils how things that may initially seem impossible are in fact easy when you know what to do. This is an

important message in terms of reminding pupils that essays or projects that might at first seem a mammoth task are actually quite achievable when you break them down into manageable chunks. Retaining this message gives pupils a belief in themselves and a confidence which will ensure that they won't fall at the first hurdle.

Teaching time-management and organisational skills

Faced with a bigger school, more subjects and different teachers, pupils have a lot to take on board all at once, so it is helpful to highlight the importance of being organised. Role-play exercises work well, where pupils take on the role of a research and development team, for example, given the task of designing a new product.

To prepare them for secondary school, an awareness of time management is also key, so presenting pupils with an exercise in which an initial task has additional tasks added to it is good practice for this. To complete the exercise successfully, pupils have to take into account a number of factors, such as multi-tasking, time management, monitoring and evaluation.

Teaching teamwork

Enabling first-year secondary pupils to get to know each other in a fun environment is another way of helping to smooth the transition process. Action-packed, fast-paced activities that require creative thinking are a good way of injecting a bit of fun into 11- and 12-year-old introductions. Setting tasks which encourage and stimulate a creative response in a limited amount of time will improve teamwork and build relationships, both within the teams and across team boundaries.

Teaching motivation

In the first few months of secondary school, pupils are often reported to lack the motivation and enthusiasm to learn that may be there more naturally at a younger age. To inspire motivation, it is important to remind pupils exactly what motivation can bring in terms of achievements, and to stress the importance of investing in the future now, as opposed to tomorrow, next week or even next year. One of the sessions aims to do just that and ends with a teacher's head being chopped off, so it's always a popular one!

The Fifth Dimension team has also worked with children with behavioural difficulties and low attention levels. Jeff explains that while it can be

tough at first, within 15 minutes or so even the more challenging pupils really get involved. 'It's a very rewarding experience,' Jeff adds. 'When you engage a disinterested teenager in teamwork, simply through the use of a magical effect, you do feel as though you're achieving something.'

Bill Duncan, Ivor Smith and Jeff Burns of Fifth Dimension have more than 50 years' collective

experience as professional entertainers and magicians and use Magically Enhanced Training™ to ensure that messages are remembered long after an event has finished.

For further information about Fifth Dimension's innovative approach call 01224 706755 or 07764 793897, email info@fifthdimension.biz or visit www.fifthdimension.biz/

From childhood to adolescence

Wendy Eadsforth explains how the Royal School for Deaf Children in Margate prepares young people for transition to further education and adult life

RSDC Margate is a non-maintained residential special school meeting the needs of severely and profoundly deaf pupils. We cater for pupils with multi-sensory impairment, emotional, behavioural and communication difficulties and those with a range of learning difficulties, including many autistic pupils. We provide a seamless educational experience for young people aged 4–16 and beyond at Westgate College. Our pupils, many of whom have found education difficult in other settings, receive the highest standards of care 24 hours a day.

After initial contact is made with RSDC Margate by either parents or local authorities, an information pack comprising a prospectus, a history of the school booklet and the latest newsletter is sent to a prospective parent to inform them of our educational, residential and medical facilities. Parents are encouraged to visit the school informally to see if they feel this would be a suitable placement for their son or daughter. Pupils can enter RSDCM at any stage between the ages of 4 and 16.

During the informal visit the young person is observed in a variety of settings and a report is then written by our specialists and teachers. If it is felt that RSDCM can meet their needs, an offer of placement is made to parents and/or the local authority (LA). Once placement is agreed and funding is in place a NASS contract is sent to the LA and parents are informed of a start date.

Parents are encouraged to bring their child to school and ensure that they are settled in both class and residence. Most of our pupils are out-of-county placements and parents are encouraged to telephone the residence for daily or weekly contact. A home-school book is used to involve parents in the day-to-day life of RSDC Margate.

Year 6 sees the transfer into secondary education. Pupil progress is tracked via individual education

plans, individual curriculum plans and annual reviews. This information is used when deciding on the suitability of class placement for each individual.

Year 9 is when the Connexions Service becomes involved with the young person and a transition plan is written at the annual review to ascertain the needs and resources for future placement post-16. RSDCM has a careers co-ordinator based at both school and college to ensure that pupils know the options available to them and to ensure a smooth transition to further education/adult placement.

RSDCM has a further education department, Westgate College for Deaf People, and most of our young people transfer to this facility. Westgate College has links with several sector colleges and all young people are supported by skilled staff who are fluent BSL signers.

We also have our own farm and many of our pupils and students use this for work experience and to gain an NVQ in Animal Care.

After college we provide a Community Adult Learning Programme (CALP). This course is funded by Social Services and provides supported living accommodation, allowing individuals to make choices and become as independent as possible as they integrate into the local community.

Each young person follows a daily living routine that is developed to interest, challenge and extend skills already established. Content is negotiated with each young person as their interests and abilities develop.

The decision for this placement is made at the last annual review at Westgate College and transition is supported by college staff.

Wendy Eadsforth is Head of the Royal School for Deaf Children in Margate.

Using Connexions

Gordon Kerr outlines the work of Connexions

We provide a universal service in England for everyone aged 13–19 and for disabled people aged 13–24. Many Connexions Personal Advisers (PAs) are careers specialists and some of those specialise with disabled people.

It is universal but targeted – more support is aimed at those who need it. Those who need it are defined as those who will need extra help to move to a positive outcome at 16+. This includes those with disabilities and special educational needs, but also those underachieving, not attending, with behaviour problems, and so on. The plan is to move everyone into employment, education or training after school through advice, guidance and placing support. This can be extended to the removal of other barriers, such as homelessness or drugs.

Careers support is offered in conjunction with schools – all students from Year 7 must have Careers Education and Guidance (CEG) programmes. Targeted support to some people may mean less for others.

How to contact Connexions

All schools have a Connexions PA – some have more than one. With information from the school, the PA will identify the targeted group and begin working with them from Year 9 onwards. Also, the teacher or the parents can contact the PA in school, or through the Connexions Centre, to arrange appointments.

After leaving school, contact can be made through the Connexions Centre. PAs have obligations to follow up and find all school leavers. All young people who are not placed are encouraged to maintain contact with Connexions to look for employment, education or training. A placing service – similar to Jobcentre Plus – is offered post-school.

Most areas have several outlying Connexions Access Points where some support can be offered or referral made to the Connexions Centre. People should contact the Connexions Centre directly if there are any problems. Signing support can be provided if needed.

Transition planning and the role of Connexions

For those with statements (and some others) schools will have annual reviews. From Year 9 this must include the transition plan which should be reviewed every year thereafter. Connexions must be invited to the Year 9 review and must attend. This is both to pass on advice and guidance and to gather information to determine future support needs. After the review, the school will put the transition plan together, including a written report by the PA which will be forward-looking towards post-16 options.

Connexions should attend the review in Year 11 or sixth form. The PA should also be invited to all other reviews and attend where appropriate. However, support will not only be offered through reviews. From Year 9 onwards there should be several individual guidance interviews, with appropriate referrals and placing support provided. PAs will liaise with school staff, ToDs, parents, Social Services etc.

Options at 16

1 Staying at school 16–17/18/19.

2 Local college – range of academic and vocational courses plus programmes for those with learning difficulties. Statements do not apply to colleges but they can offer additional teaching and non-teaching support as well as communicators and BSL if needed. Applications have to be made early so that support can be put in place.

3 Residential college – places such as Doncaster may be funded if local provision is not adequate to meet the educational needs of the learner. The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) may decide to fund on educational – not social – grounds.

4 Work Based Learning (WBL) – this used to be called Youth Training. Names used now are Apprenticeships and an introductory programme called Entry to Employment. A paid apprenticeship working towards NVQ 2 or 3 is an excellent way to get into work. There is limited availability of programmes below NVQ 2. Once again, communicating and signing support will be provided.

5 Employment – young people are encouraged to aim at employment with training (such as apprenticeships). Vacancies are notified by employers to Connexions who will display them in the office and possibly on the website. PAs will actively look for which vacancies will suit young people on their caseload.

Extra support for deaf people: Jobcentre Plus through Access to Work can fund communicators and signers to help deaf people in the workplace. At 18+ they can use Jobcentre Plus – Disability Employment Advisers (DEAs) also help people to gain jobs. Employers may not always be aware of support that can be funded through Access to Work.

6 Doing nothing – an option favoured by a tiny majority of young people. This often happens to those with disjointed personal lives. Some families may not encourage employment if disability benefits are threatened.

Gordon Kerr works for the Leeds Connexions Centre.

On to adulthood

Paul Manthorpe and Kath McDermott explain how ToDs in Oxfordshire prepare their students for the transition to adulthood

Before we can talk about 'transition to adulthood', we first need to define what we mean by the phrase. We describe it as 'acquiring the information and skills to live a more independent life after full-time education'. This process often involves leaving a relatively supportive education system for the world of adult living, which typically does not provide the same services and support.

In order to provide the best support for our students, we start by looking at how to prepare them for this change. It is not simply our role, but needs liaison between all the informal and formal support agencies surrounding the student – parents/carers/family as well as Education/Social Services/Health/Connexions.

Despite developments, are our students getting all the help to which they are entitled? Do people involved find out information by chance or is there a planned and organised system to ensure that the information is accessible? There is an increasing recognition of the need to improve both the planning and support and to co-ordinate this support across a wide range of agencies. The legal requirement is that all young people over the age of 14 with a statement of SEN must have a transition plan – but how often is this referred to other than as an afterthought at the annual review? Too often the transition plan only looks at where the student will go for their post-16 placement and is seen purely as an education priority – is there a difference between the intention of inter-agency working expressed at government and policy level and the actual experiences of young deaf people and their families?

We need to look at the difficulties in transition planning:

- How effective is the liaison between different agencies and professionals?
- To what degree are young people 'really' involved in planning for their future – who makes the choices?
- Is information regarding choices and possibilities, easily accessible and comprehensive (for the young person, parents/carers and professionals)?
- Are expectations of students/parents always realistic?
- Is there sufficient time to cover all the necessary issues?
- Are there enough courses available (especially at Foundation level)?
- Should the course relate to the students' level of language or ability?
- Are there sufficient places available for apprenticeships?
- How consistent is the availability and quality of funding, provision of equipment and support post-16 geographically?

At our initial meetings with representatives from Audiology, Social Services and Connexions we have to clarify not only each agency's actual roles in the process but also their perceived role and responsibilities. It is important that each student has information about the different agencies that is written in an accessible and straightforward way that they can use, without support, to access those agencies and their services. This is given in a file to each student. The file contains not only this, but is also used to store other useful information – examples of how to write a letter of application, a CV, information about leisure, transport, and so on. Each agency has written a short section which is put into individual students' files.

We have also researched information that we feel will prepare young people for their transition. We have found *Steps to Independence – A Suffolk Toolkit for Deaf Students*. It is ideal for our purposes and the kind people in Suffolk (No Limits, www.nolimits.org.uk) have been positive about our use of it.

'The content is not a curriculum but questions to act as pointers as to the sort of information it would be useful for the young person to know when they have left school. Thus the different sections could be gone through with different people at different times, such as parents, social workers, teachers, health professionals, Connexions etc. Each pupil should have a file each which is theirs to fill in, own and keep,' says Kate Fieldhouse, Project Manager at No Limits.

Our future goals to improve the process in Oxfordshire are to:

- hold Secondary Days, where our students come together to do activities – providing suitable opportunities for students to meet the other agencies, put names to faces, and find out what they do as a precursor to the information in the transition file
- build up a bank of resources that all people involved and agencies can use to prepare the young person for independent living
- ensure that students and their families are fully involved in the transition process – developing the 'voice of the child' within the initial planning and its subsequent implementation.

This is still a work in progress and as such will need to be reviewed and amended as necessary. However, it is a start and we hope it will improve the transition to adulthood for our students.

Paul Manthorpe and Kath McDermott are ToDs who work for the Oxfordshire Hearing Support Service.

Changing teams

A workshop at the national conference explored the issues surrounding the transition from children's to adult services. Bernie White and Julie Appleton report

Young people with complex needs experience key transition points when their needs are considered.

These include:

- Post-16 transition
- End of statement transition
- End of further education transition
- Transition from children's team to adult's team (Social Services).

Services that support transition include:

- Connexions
- Social Services, including transition social worker
- Advocacy services
- Schools
- LA workers
- Sensory support team and other specialist services.

During the transition from children's to adult's teams, the transition social worker plays a vital role. Their role includes:

- bridging the move between teams
- attending reviews before, during and after the transition at 18
- requesting information from all relevant parties – the young person, family, current services, including school/college
- making an assessment of need to produce a transition plan
- working in collaboration with the LA, further education and Connexions.

Some of the issues that arise for students with complex needs at times of transition include:

- different entitlements to services, including respite care and access to therapies
- which team is involved? ALDT/sensory team?
- appropriate services
- transport
- out-of-county placements.

Here is an example of a timeline for application to specialist day/residential colleges for 16+

- At the Year 9/Year 10 review there should be an identification of potential post-16 options.
- Research into specific residential colleges should take place if relevant.
- Spring/Summer of Year 10 is the optimum time for visits to residential colleges.
- In September/October of Year 11 details of potential LSC applicants are forwarded by PAs to an initial meeting with LSC, LA social services.
- In September/October Year 11 the application evidence-gathering process starts.
- Completion of application portfolio.

- Application portfolio is forwarded to the local LA representative a minimum of two weeks prior to the panel meeting.
- From January onwards panel meetings take place to determine funding decisions. LSC, LA, Connexions management should be present as well as the relevant PA. Representatives from other agencies may participate where appropriate (not usually family).

Similar timelines are relevant when applying for local general further education colleges at 16+, specialist day/residential colleges at 18/19 and local general further education colleges at 18/19.

For day specialist placements the application must include the need for access to specialist support, including teaching, therapy, specialist care, equipment, environment, and so on.

For residential placements the application must include the above and refer to the importance of the extended curriculum for the learner – daily living skills, social activities, communication.

Assessment to support transition

- Connexions assessment Section 140 is completed by the PA in liaison with the school – there is a requirement in the Learning and Skills Act 2000 to reflect the education and training needs of a young person with learning difficulties/disabilities and the provision required to meet those needs.
- Assessment of need – Social Services makes a contribution to the overall assessment.

There are different ways that the Teacher of the Deaf can support this process.

- Contributing to the transition plan, describing entitlement to an appropriate curriculum, careers education, life skills, work experience, skills for life.
- Working with Connexions PA to complete Section 140.
- Supporting the learner in preparing/attending an interview with their Connexions PA (including informal interview using Progress File).
- Contributing to the person-centred plan for the transition meeting.
- Supporting the learner in contributing to the meeting.

Here are some ideas to consider when ToDs are preparing for a transition meeting:

- *PowerPoint* presentation of images.
- Video clips, communicating ideas about preferences at home/education/leisure/work

- and highlights and lowlights of their course.
- Progress files, records of achievement.
- Person-centred plan (via careers education programme, tutorials, etc).

Person-centred planning (PCP) is a tool that keeps the focus on the person and not on the service. It is primarily a Social Services model, but can be applied to the work of any agency including education. For reviews, PCP has the following benefits:

- Includes the person themselves.
- Includes people who are paid to support the person.
- Includes family.
- Structures the planning process.
- Makes sure that everyone knows their place.

Bernie White and Julie Appleton work at the Royal School for the Deaf and Communication Disorders in Cheadle Hulme.

A good START

At the national conference, Ian Robinson and Sara Cross ran a workshop about their team of support workers for deaf school leavers and deaf adults

Deaf START (then known as the Total Communication Unit) was set up in 1986 at the Leeds Centre for the Deaf and Blind People, Centenary House, and in 1993 moved to Elmete Hall to be alongside the DAHISS (Deaf and Hearing-Impaired Support Service), which is a pre-16 deaf education specialist service. This helped to ensure a smooth transition for deaf learners. Both services have a bilingual deaf education philosophy.

Deaf START (Support Training and Resources Team) works to provide a service to deaf school leavers and deaf adults returning to education or training, Sign Language and deaf awareness teaching.

Educational interpreter/communication support worker posts were initially created as temporary ten-month contracts to ensure that the income generated would be sufficient to cover salaries and costs, and because the ongoing demand was not known. Income is generated by charges to colleges (which reclaim funds from the Learning and Skills Council), to higher education students in receipt of Disabled Students Allowance, and to various other bodies such as employers.

Deaf START is currently working in 17 colleges, one university and a number of training centres and is supporting around 50 students in Leeds over the age of 16 years. The support is provided for BSL users as well as for deaf and hard-of-hearing learners.

Support is provided in the form of: communication support worker (CSW), educational interpreter (EI), educational support worker (ESW), English support tutor (EST), note-taker, administrator, technical aids and deaf awareness training. Support is also offered to students with additional needs such as autism, dyslexia, Usher syndrome and mental health difficulties.

In addition to offering deaf awareness training to the hearing people in the college, hearing awareness training is provided for the deaf students, which greatly increases their smooth inclusion.

Students are offered a wealth of other information to support them in the wide number of choices they have to make. This includes information on issues such as booking interpreters, making complaints and compliments, independence skills, time management, personal organisation, meeting deadlines, study and negotiation skills and rights and responsibilities. The key aim of the work is to empower the deaf student to participate fully in the setting in which they are studying.

Further information is available from Deaf START, Blenheim Centre, Crowther Place, Leeds LS26 2ST
Tel: 0113 395 1094 (voice), 0113 395 1064 (minicom).
Email: educ.deafstart@educationleeds.co.uk.

Ian Robinson is Co-ordinator and Sara Cross is Education Liaison Officer/Interpreter for Deaf START.



Fédération Européenne des Associations de Professeurs de Déficiants Auditifs
The European Federation of Associations of Teachers of the Deaf
Europäische Föderation von Hörgeschädigtenpädagogerverbänden



20th Congress

Johann-Peter-Schäfer-Schule, Friedberg, Germany

19th - 21st October 2007

Cochlear Implantation: changing deaf education?

The main aim of a FEAPDA congress is to give participants from different European countries the opportunity to share their knowledge and their daily concerns on a given topic. Keynote lectures and country presentations are designed to act as a stimulus to further discussion.

Detailed information (keynote speakers, other contributors, accommodation) as well as how to book a place at the congress is available: email: wisnet@vatterschule.de.

<p>Social Programme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Friday evening Saturday evening Sunday 	<p>Official drinks provided by the local authority</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dinner in a restaurant Visit to Frankfurt
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English is the official language of the Congress. Simultaneous interpretation will be in German and in French. Each national organisation is responsible for its own sign language interpretation where necessary.

Further details in the next Magazine but add it to your diary NOW!
Sponsorship from BATOD may be available for this conference.





Friedberg in der Wetterau is a town near Frankfurt am Main (about 30 km north of Frankfurt) and has about 29 000 inhabitants.

Becta supports inclusion

As Becta works to formalise its inclusion and SEN strategy, Chris Stevens explains what this will mean for Teachers of the Deaf



Chris Stevens

The last 18 months have been an exciting and challenging time for Becta. The organisation has moved from being a government agency supporting the development and delivery of ICT and e-learning for schools and the learning and skills sector, to an agency that directly supports government in the leadership and co-ordination of the e-strategy.

The e-strategy sets out to enable 'each individual to maximise their potential through the personalisation of their learning and development'. Technology is a key element in this personalisation and nowhere more so than in the opportunities it offers to learners with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities.

So what will this mean in terms of the support Becta will offer to Teachers of the Deaf? The important change in Becta's role lies in its new remit to co-ordinate the e-strategy. A major part of this has involved Becta formalising its own inclusion and SEN strategy, which has two strands. The first is to work towards embedding the concept of 'all learners' into everything that Becta does. Each programme of work will be developed to ensure that activities and outcomes are inclusive of all learners. In addition, Becta is maintaining in-house expert knowledge of SEN and ICT, specifically knowledge of assistive technologies, to ensure its programmes, projects, partners and stakeholders have access to emerging evidence and advice.

Part of the action in this new strategy has been to refocus the SEN and Inclusion team and deploy them across the organisation to assist in the drive to embed inclusion and SEN in all Becta's work. Curiously, in having a 'nuclear' SEN and Inclusion team at Becta, we were following the practice of many local authorities and organisations, and much good work was done by a tightly focused team with expertise in using ICT to support special needs and disabilities. However, this separation of the team from much of our work meant that the aim of embedding 'all learners' into Becta's output was not achievable. By basing experts in special needs and inclusion within all our major programmes of work, our expertise is being spread much more widely and to greater effect.

Reorganising the structure of the SEN and Inclusion team means that Becta is better able to reflect government policy and the delivery of the e-strategy.

How has this helped?

Not only have the benefits of having a dedicated nuclear team been retained but there is also evidence of:

- heightened awareness of SEN and inclusion across Becta
- more structured approaches to inclusion in all Becta's planning
- growing impact of inclusive practice both internally and in Becta's work with partners.

Is it working?

We are making significant steps in implementing our inclusion strategy. Overall, it is providing a more structured approach and directly involving an increasing number of people.

There may be less opportunity to produce detailed advice on specific use of technology for identified groups, but through our relationship with partners such as LAs, other government agencies, professional bodies and intermediaries, we can take the messages practitioners give us about ICT and learners and work with the appropriate partner in delivering the support that is needed. This could be training, guidance and advice as well as recommendations to the Government on measures required to address specific issues and needs.

In the future, Becta will be more instrumental in ensuring practitioners get the support they need from the organisations or agencies best placed to provide it. Where Becta is best or uniquely placed to write any guidance or support, it will do exactly that.

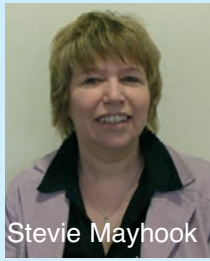
The SEN and Inclusion team at Becta has always had good links with Teachers of the Deaf, and the ToD forum, supported by Becta, shares information relevant to its members. This flow of information and the engagement of people working with deaf learners will continue to be vital to keeping the organisation informed of needs in the field.

The new Inclusion Expert Reference Group which Becta has convened is tasked to reflect views across education on ICT and inclusion. Should specific issues arise for deaf learners then it has the capacity to draw together focus groups of experts which can make recommendations to Becta on ways forward. In this way the expertise of practitioners will always have routes to influence the work of this organisation.

Chris Stevens is the Head of the Inclusion, Learning and Teaching Directorate at Becta.

In a nutshell

Stevie Mayhook describes life with The Ewing Foundation



Stevie Mayhook

I have to confess that before I began working for The Ewing Foundation what I knew about the organisation could be summed up in three words: small, 'oral' and respected. Now, I'm asked to write 800 words on the subject and find myself wondering how I can possibly condense everything we do into such a brief account.

The work undertaken by the four technicians and three consultants is very varied and is constantly changing, so it's fortunate that between us we have a wide range of skills, experience and qualifications. The strapline on our publicity materials reads 'Supporting professionals: inclusion and achievement for deaf children through listening and speaking' and that, in a nutshell, is what we do through (among other things):

- observation and evaluation of current classroom and audiological practice
- input to courses for ToDs in training
- mentoring ToDs who are newly qualified or working in isolated situations
- delivering Early Support training programmes
- assessing room acoustics and advising on technological and strategic solutions
- planning and delivering bespoke in-service training sessions
- demonstrating the effective use of audiological technology in different situations
- assessing children's language and communication development
- checking and repairing equipment
- training professionals in fault-finding and problem-solving skills
- providing impartial information about resources and technological developments
- helping professionals draft policies to comply with current requirements.

During my first few months with The Ewing Foundation I visited several areas in my 'patch' and there are still more to be seen – a consequence of working for a small organisation is that we all do a lot of travelling! It's fascinating to see the different settings and structures in which people work, and in observing practice in one setting I increase my own repertoire of strategies to share with others. Similarly, I have gained enormously from shadowing my colleagues and collaborating with them – and like to think that I, in turn, have influenced their working practices.

One of the questions I have most frequently been asked about my work is 'what do you offer that we

don't get from our local support service?' I have to stress that we are in no way trying to supplant or undermine the support provided by sensory support teams, and only visit schools by invitation. What we offer is additional time and knowledge to support and supplement their work and contribute to the development of their services.

Our work is increasing all the time in both quantity and variety: recently the consultants became approved trainers for some of the Early Support training programmes; a new DVD is planned to look at deaf children's literacy, and increasingly we are being asked to help schools and services create or update policy documents. We have established the Con Powell Memorial Scholarship to encourage practitioners to undertake small-scale research projects and we support and collaborate with several other organisations on a number of projects.

In order to fulfil such a wide remit, it is essential that we remain up to date in our own knowledge of technology and classroom practice, so we attend as many relevant conferences, training sessions and meetings as possible.

Eighteen months on, my original opinion of The Ewing Foundation is largely unchanged, but now I understand the extent of its work and realise the level of appreciation of those it supports. I love the opportunities my role presents and the knowledge that no two days are going to be the same.

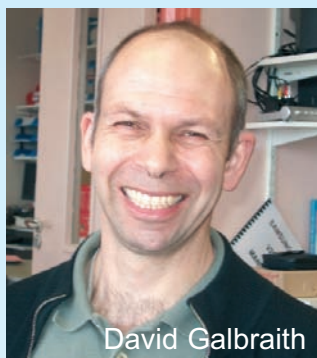
To find out more about The Ewing Foundation and how we may be able to support your work, visit our website www.ewing-foundation.org.uk or contact a team member in your region:

- Stevie Mayhook, Education Consultant, South West and Central England and Wales – steviem@ewing-foundation.org.uk
- Paul Harris, Technician, South West and Wales – paulh@ewing-foundation.org.uk
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Stevie Mayhook is an Education Consultant with The Ewing Foundation.

Career moves

While a professional footballer's contract still eludes him, David Galbraith makes the most of his role as a peripatetic Teacher of the Deaf



David Galbraith

I am severely deaf and have been since birth, although the cause is unknown. All my early education was spent in schools for the deaf and so it wasn't until I got to university that I received any formal education alongside my hearing peers.

However, through sport I regularly competed against students and teams from the local schools. I attended Mary Hare and received a wonderful education and generally had a happy and successful time there. I didn't find the transition from a nurtured school environment to university at all difficult and made the adjustment quite smoothly.

I have been a Teacher of the Deaf now for 20 years, having qualified in 1987 through the BATOD route. Prior to that I gained a BSc degree in Physical Education/Education at Bangor University and then obtained my teaching certificate at Carnegie College in Leeds. All this was a sort of poor substitute for not becoming a professional footballer and was the nearest I could get to a career in sport.

When I left school with three A-levels I drifted around in a few dead-end jobs that served their purpose of alerting me away from careers of unchallenging mediocrity. Somehow I managed to get into Bangor University, mainly on the strength of my practical sports skills, and from that moment on I matured and progressed through the usual academic routes into teaching – but still clinging on to the dream of that elusive football contract!

My probationary teaching year as a fully fledged PE teacher was spent in a small north Yorkshire town, but I didn't enjoy this very much and began to wonder if I was cut out for teaching, a feeling most probationary teachers probably go through. However, fate intervened and the headmaster at Mary Hare, Ken Pearce, had been tracking my career and offered me the vacant PE master's job at my old school. I had reservations about going back to a comfort zone but accepted it, thinking that I'd move on again within three to five years. Well, I stayed there for 15 very happy and rewarding years, broken only by an exchange year spent teaching in Australia, which was another unique experience. You do not take your discipline with you when you start in a new school,

so it's like being a probationer again, which is quite disconcerting when you have had some teaching experience.

I became a PE teacher because of my love for sport and an ability to break up sports movements and skills into teachable and achievable bits. It was also a natural progression from my first degree. I had no preconceptions about being a role model of any sort. I just wanted to give the students a passion and enthusiasm for sport and games and I saw sport as a critical means for young hearing-impaired children to raise their self-esteem by competing on level terms against their hearing peers in local individual and team competitions. We had some great successes at individual and team levels. I suppose the fact that I played sport competitively for local clubs might have impacted upon some of the students.

Having finally arrived back at Mary Hare armed with a degree, a teaching certificate and one year's teaching experience, I embarked on the two-year BATOD course to qualify as a Teacher of the Deaf. One of my course supervisors was Gareth Holsgrove who had been one of my teachers and housemasters at Mary Hare when I was a pupil there. Since he was happy to pass me I can only assume that my behaviour as a schoolboy had been reasonably good!

In 2001 I decided that I could no longer give the level of commitment to after-school sport and clubs and also felt that I needed a new challenge in my work. As a family we relocated to Shropshire and I was fortunate to be offered a job as a peripatetic teacher working for the Sensory Inclusion Service based in Telford, serving hearing-impaired children in Shropshire as well as the borough of Telford & Wrekin. This was a radical departure for me. No more tracksuits, no more cross-country runs on frosty December mornings, followed by hot showers, all of which I still greatly miss. However, this is a challenging job, for which a multitude of skills is required, one of which is tactful diplomacy. I am responsible for managing a caseload of students with varying degrees of hearing impairment, linguistic skills and needs from the primary sector through to the further education sector.

In this particular job I do think that the fact that I wear hearing aids that are clearly visible does soften the impact of wearing aids for some of our more sensitive hearing-aid wearers and possibly does raise awareness of hearing impairment in schools generally. I spend time in class with many of my students and

also time out of class to check aid functioning and to talk through issues related to work or emotional concerns. My experience is that once professional colleagues have met me and established that communication is easy and straightforward, they can see that my hearing impairment doesn't affect any aspect of my work.

I enjoy my work and appreciate not being tied to school bells like a Pavlovian dog. Driving in and around Shropshire is very easy and pleasant, as congestion is non-existent so there are no frustrations there.

Although I act in an advisory and support role, it can be disappointing when advice is either ignored or forgotten and this is where the skill of diplomacy comes in to play if I am to get behavioural changes and ultimately better results for the pupils in my care. On a typical day I will try to visit up to four students, usually in different schools, whose needs will all be quite varied. We have quite detailed reporting formats and so a little time is spent compiling reports and ensuring that these are appropriate and accurate. We often carry out linguistic tests that need to be

analysed and written into reports, as well as conducting annual reviews for statemented children.

Although I'm part of a large and supportive team, we don't see each other frequently and often I may not have very much social interaction with other adults in a working day. This is sometimes an isolating aspect of the peripatetic role. Having said that, there are days when you are glad to be in your car driving away with only your own thoughts for company (and Five Live sports commentary on the radio!).

I do hope the Government will look at ways of encouraging more young graduates to enter the profession of Teacher of the Deaf. We do need young fresh teachers that bring inspiration and enthusiasm to the field, otherwise not only will the shortage of qualified teachers continue to be a problem, but we will not have the pool of young and inspirational teachers that our hearing-impaired youngsters need and deserve.

David Galbraith is a peripatetic Teacher of the Deaf for the Sensory Inclusion Service in Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin.

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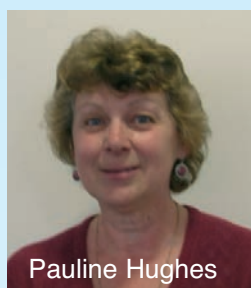
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The human factor

Pauline Hughes stresses the essential ingredients of a good listening environment in school



Pauline Hughes

Ergonomics4schools is a special interest group of the Ergonomics Society, Chaired by Dr Mike Tainsh. In December 2006, the group held a second conference on Access and Integration in Schools, at the University of Coventry.

The audience was a mix of LA officers, architects, planners, teachers and therapists. The programme was also mixed, with Lorna Williams (of NDCS) and me talking on issues for deaf children. Other presentations included: 'Back Pain in School Children – Will They Be Fit for Work?' and 'Development of a European Standard for School Furniture'.

Lorna opened our section with an overview of NDCS's 'Deaf Friendly Schools' project, together with 'Deaf Friendly Nurseries and Pre-schools' and 'Deaf Friendly Teaching'. My presentation followed, on 'Classroom Acoustics and Deaf Pupils: the Human Factor'.



For deaf pupils, section 6 of *Building Bulletin 93* sets the standard for the acoustic environment in schools. In principle this means that the great majority of

deaf pupils should be able to access mainstream education alongside their hearing peers. However, if staff and pupils ignore the 'human factor' the benefit to deaf pupils can be completely negated.

The correct use of amplification equipment, effective seating and sight lines, together with appropriate teaching strategies and behaviour management, are all essential to enable deaf pupils to access the curriculum and social life of the school.

My point was to emphasise that compliance with *Building Bulletin 93*, while great news for deaf children, is not the entire answer to creating a good listening environment in the classroom. The way the classroom is used is critical, and the teacher's strategies are key to this. Mainstream staff need on-going support and advice from Teachers of the



Deaf, and they must ensure that they are implementing best practice.

The 'Room for Improvement' section of *Getting It Right!*, The Ewing

Foundation's DVD about effective use of personal FM systems, provided the illustration for my talk. This allowed the audience to see 'Mr Hyde' (as opposed to 'Dr Jekyll'), a mainstream teacher deliberately 'getting it wrong', and spot the mistakes for themselves. While they watched the short excerpt, they made notes about the teacher's and deaf pupil's positions in the room, the use of equipment, sight lines and lighting, the deaf pupil's

understanding of other children's contributions, and the teacher's talking and questioning strategies.

Judging by their reactions they were left with a clear understanding of



how difficult life can be for a deaf child when these issues aren't addressed.

It is obviously important that groups such as Ergonomics4schools are aware of the issues of access for deaf pupils. The more that planners and architects know about them, the more likely they are to 'get it right' at the beginning, leaving us to then ensure that we address the 'human factor'.

Further information

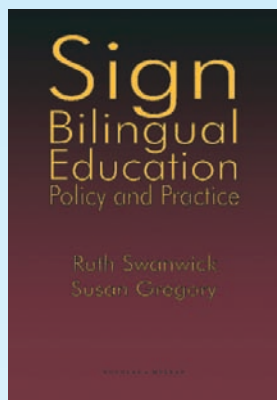
- The Ergonomics Society: Ergonomics4schools SIG at www.ergonomics4schools.com/
- *Building Bulletin 93*: downloadable on www.teachernet.gov.uk/
- NDCS: Lorna Williams, Development Manager for Education, Health and Social Care at lorna.williams@ndcs.org.uk
- The Ewing Foundation's *Getting It Right!*, from Graham Hamilton at grahamh@ewing-foundation.org.uk.

Pauline Hughes is CEO at The Ewing Foundation.

Sign bilingual update

A new version of a well-known publication on sign bilingualism has just been completed, as Ruth Swanwick and Susan Gregory report

Many of you will remember that in 1998 the document *Sign Bilingualism – a Model* was published. It was developed by Miranda Pickersgill and Susan Gregory with the support of LASER, and many schools, services, universities and individuals contributed to and endorsed this original publication. It has been used largely as a policy reference document for sign bilingual education since that time.



The model of sign bilingual education as presented in the 1998 document has evolved over the last ten years as practice has developed and the educational context has changed. We have seen a number of significant and diverse changes in deaf education, such as developments in sign language teaching and research and a steady increase in the number of profoundly deaf children with cochlear implants. These, among other developments, have prompted a revision of the original document. We are pleased to say that this is now complete and the updated document entitled *Sign Bilingual Education: Policy and Practice* is ready for publication.

This new document sets out to describe the current status of sign bilingual education. It is not intended as an academic publication, but rather a working document looking at sign bilingual education as it is practised. It differs from the last document in that it now draws on practice both in the UK and internationally, whereas the previous document was largely aspirational and written at a time when sign bilingual education was only beginning. This document also looks at UK research into sign bilingual education.

As with the previous document, we anticipate it being used as a policy reference document for sign bilingual schools and services. It starts with a statement of current understanding of sign bilingual principles. This will be a stand-alone page which can be photocopied if required.

Because changes in education practice are critical to an understanding of the way in which sign bilingual education has developed, the first section explores its current context.

The document sets out key policy statements, and section two looks at how these are realised in

practice. Section three further explores this topic by providing a series of case studies of contexts in which sign bilingual education is developing. Schools and services were invited to describe their settings, current issues and developments. While the section may not be comprehensive, it does provide a good overview of practice in the UK at the current time. Section four provides a summary of UK research into sign language as it relates to sign bilingual education, provided by the researchers themselves.

Clearly sign bilingual education has been developing not just in the UK but throughout the world and we wanted the document to reflect this. We contacted a number of educators around the world and some were able to send us details of developments in their own countries, which are included in section five. The Appendix discusses in greater detail some of the more complex concepts raised in the document and provides some definitions. Finally, there is a list of resources: publications, websites, relevant journals, Deaf studies centres and organisations.

While the document was developed by us, the work was facilitated by a much larger group of people through two meetings and email circulation of drafts of various parts for comment. Contributions were also invited for some sections. Feedback came from individuals and from local groups convened to discuss various points. Thus many people have contributed to the development of the document and we are grateful for all this input.

The completed document was sent to members of the group and other relevant organisations and interested parties for endorsement, and a list of those who have endorsed it is given at the end.

The final document is now in the process of publication (with a BSL version). We look forward to seeing it in print by the time you read this article, so please contact Forest Books for your copy (www.forestbooks.com).

Ruth Swanwick trains Teachers of the Deaf at the University of Leeds and Dr Susan Gregory is a Consultant Educational Psychologist who is well known for her research work with deaf children and their families.

Let's go to Leeds!

If you're looking to take an MA in Deaf Education (ToD qualification) Ruth Swanwick and Sarah Cassandro put forward several good reasons why you should study at the University of Leeds

The University of Leeds, School of Education offers flexible routes to qualifications in deaf education through the provision of an MA in Deaf Education, which may be taken with or without the mandatory Teacher of the Deaf qualification.

The MA in Deaf Education (ToD) will interest deaf and hearing teachers wishing to gain the mandatory Training and Development Agency (TDA) approved ToD qualification. The MA in Deaf Education (without ToD) is aimed at Teachers of the Deaf who wish to further their professional development but who do not require the mandatory ToD qualification. Both these MA routes are offered on a part-time basis over 24 months.

High expectations of students

The aim of the course is to provide teachers with the essential and specialist knowledge, skills and experience needed to work across the full range of educational settings which a Teacher of the Deaf is likely to encounter. The course content addresses the fundamental issues of language development, communication, achievement and good practice in the education of deaf children, applied across the different age ranges and settings. Participants are expected to gain a high level of expert knowledge and understanding and also to develop professional relationships and relevant intellectual abilities, such as self-reflection and critical analysis. These are considered to be essential professional qualities.

A focus on language, identity and the whole child

The programme prepares teachers to understand and respond to the diverse and complex linguistic and social needs of all deaf children, whatever their level of hearing loss or preferred language. This requires insight into ways in which each child sees him or herself in relation to their deaf and hearing worlds. Also fundamental to the course is an understanding that the establishment of effective communication as a basis for cognitive development and access to the curriculum must be an educational priority for all deaf children. This entails the recognition of the importance of BSL as a language and the central role of deaf adults in the education of deaf children.

The course focuses on the importance of developing age-appropriate language, whether this is signed or spoken. This requires individual children's residual hearing and auditory potential to be carefully evaluated and regularly reappraised in relation to the communicative and educational demands facing them. At the same time, the deaf child's facility or potential

facility with visual-gestural language is considered a strength rather than a weakness. This entails the acceptance and, where appropriate, the promotion and further development of skills in BSL, the language of the deaf community.

Distance and face-to-face learning opportunities

This course is delivered by distance learning which is taught through a combination of written materials (study packs) and face-to-face day schools and tutorials. Each module is introduced at a day school or a residential at the university and includes a regional tutorial. Relevant research papers, recent chapters and discussion articles are required reading throughout the modules. Assessment for each taught module is through written assignments and there is also a required portfolio of practical professional skills (audiology, BSL and teaching) for the ToD route. There are no formal examinations.

A comprehensive programme content

There are four compulsory modules of 30 credits:

- Educational audiology
- Learning and teaching in Deaf Education
- The context of Deaf Education
- Deafness and development.

There is also a critical research study (60 credits) and, for the ToD qualification only, the professional skills portfolio consists of practical skills in British Sign Language, educational audiology and teaching (30 credits). The following elements are also compulsory:

- One study day per week over two years
- Between four and eight weeks' teaching practice during the final summer semester (according to individual experience)
- Four day schools over the two years
- One residential (three days).

Students feel challenged and empowered

'I am a profoundly deaf teacher currently in my second and final year of the course. My experience has been extremely fruitful. I am not particularly academic and was worried initially that this course was too advanced for me. The course leader and my regional tutor have always been on hand to offer me advice and support. It has been a tremendous learning curve but I am now more aware of the needs of the deaf children I teach. I have been able to combine theoretical learning and my experiences of being involved in the deaf community in such a way that it impacts on my practice with the deaf pupils at school. Interpreter support was organised during the day schools and the residential weekend so that I had 100% access to the

lectures (very unusual!). The diversity of people and backgrounds (both deaf and hearing) on this course is something I have needed to experience to expand my thought processes and teaching strategies.'

For further details contact: Student Admissions Office, School of Education, University of Leeds, Leeds LS2

9JT. Tel: 0113 343 4550. Fax: 0113 343 4541.
Email: courses@education.leeds.ac.uk or
r.a.swanwick@education.leeds.ac.uk

Ruth Swanwick is the course leader at the University of Leeds and Sarah Cassandro is a final year student and works at Jubilee Primary School in Lambeth.

Under discussion

New diplomas and chartered status for teachers were on the agenda at the GTC Specialist Subject Associations Meetings. Lucy Leith was there to report back to BATOD



Lucy Leith

New diplomas

There is a new range of qualifications for 14–19-year-olds that is intended to widen the opportunities for young people, giving them greater choice and enabling them to personalise their learning.

These specialised diplomas combine general education with applied learning. The aim is to bring educators and employers together in the development and delivery of the courses so that students are better prepared for life and work. The diplomas will be available by September 2010 in 14 areas of learning at Levels 1, 2 and 3. A Foundation Learning Tier will be available at entry level and Level 1 to recognise the achievement of those young people with learning difficulties or disabilities for whom reaching this level is a major achievement in itself.

Schools, colleges and other providers have been through a Gateway process to assess their readiness to deliver the first phase of these diplomas. The list of successful schools and colleges was published in March 2007. In Autumn 2007, awarding bodies will approve providers or provider partnerships, and from September 2008, five diplomas will be offered – in IT, health and social care, engineering, creative and media, construction and the built environment – in the schools and colleges that have been approved. Within each LA, local consortia are working together under the 14–19 Strategy to ensure that there will not be duplication of diplomas by adjacent providers. This may require students to travel in order to access their choice, and therefore schools and colleges are also working together through consortia arrangements in some LAs in order to address travel arrangements within the funding delegated for 14–19 provision.

How will deaf students benefit? The introduction of these diplomas will widen the opportunities and learning routes available to all students. The QCA has stated that they may accommodate special or

particular needs, for example, additional English; that a proportion of diplomas can be made up of units set at higher or lower levels, and that optional units will improve choice and promote personalised learning. Detailed information about the content of the specialist diplomas is available on the DfES website: www.dfes.gov.uk/14-19/

Chartered status for teachers

The TDA and a number of subject associations are currently exploring the possibility of chartered status for teachers following the success of the Association for Science Education (ASE) in 2004 in receiving a Royal Charter to make the award of Chartered Science Teacher (CSciTeach) in partnership with the Science Council. It is intended that the professional expertise and status of teachers would be recognised in line with other professions which have chartered designations, such as chartered scientists, chartered engineers and chartered mathematicians.

There is considerable support from subject associations for making clear links between chartered teacher schemes (or fellowships) and the standards for classroom teachers at post-threshold level, as these schemes are awarded for experience, excellence, and commitment to CPD.

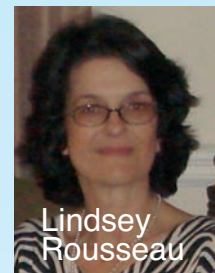
If chartered status can be awarded for professional expertise in a subject specialism then why not have a chartered status or fellowship for experienced, excellent Teachers of the Deaf?

While in principle, recognition of our profession at this level would be a great development in raising our status, there are several problems, not least of which is the time it takes to obtain a Royal Charter, and the number of other subject or specialist associations wishing to obtain a limited number of Charters. However, BATOD will continue to attend meetings at the GTC and consider any developments in this area as opportunities are published by the TDA.

Lucy Leith is Headteacher of Knightsfield School, Welwyn Garden City in Hertfordshire.

Strong partnerships

Lindsey Rousseau explores the work of the Regional Partnerships, focusing in particular on SERSEN's activities



In 2003 I wrote an article for BATOD about the SEN Regional Partnerships and their next steps, looking forward to the future of 2006. We now find ourselves in 2007 and the Regional Partnerships (no longer SEN) are still here, with a slightly changed agenda and an unknown future beyond 2008. In that way we mirror many of the schools and services you represent – change and uncertainty in the way we work, but still contributing to the education and development of children and young people as effectively as we are able.

Background of Regional Centres of Expertise

In 2006, following rigorous evaluation by NFER, ministers agreed that the Regional Partnerships should continue to be funded for a further two years, until March 2008. At that time the remit for the partnerships widened to include issues affecting vulnerable children, and links with the Government Offices (away from DfES policy teams) increased.

This widened remit took the partnership's work further away from low incidence disability. However, the publication of the *Low Incidence SEN Audit* (Peter Gray and his team) in March 2006, and the recommendations from that for Regional Centres of Expertise (RCE), focused attention back as bids for development of RCEs were sought through the partnerships, for submission to DfES in August 2006. As I am sure you will be aware from the *Low Incidence* report, low incidence includes aspects of autism spectrum disorders (ASD) and behaviour, emotional and social development (BESD) and there is less emphasis upon some sensory impaired activities.

Each of the nine Regional Partnerships has at least one RCE. An RCE has to have strategic vision for an aspect of low incidence disability in the region. There has to be monitored evidence of impact and it has to explicitly address the issue of sustainability of work beyond March 2008 – all this for a maximum of £50K per RCE!

Regional Partnership activities 2007–08

The DfES has been so encouraged by the early emergent good and innovative practice from the Regional Centres of Expertise that ministers agreed again to change the way the Regional Partnerships work and are funded for 2007–08.

The broad remit for the Regional Partnerships is to promote inclusion and positive outcomes for

children with SEN and/or disabilities and looked-after children through voluntary collaborative effort. Core funding is to be provided to enhance strategic capacity to commission, plan and improve service delivery for children with priority and low incidence needs, including children who are looked after. Part of the use of that core funding is for each partnership to be a 'national lead' on at least two areas of policy. The SCRIP/SERSEN partnership (now amalgamated to cover the 19 LAs of the Government Office South East) has national lead for sensory impairment, support services and developing partnerships with the independent and non-maintained special schools sector.

In addition to the core, extra funding will be made available to each region to commission, develop and deliver specific programmes and initiatives to improve outcomes for children and young people in priority and low incidence groups.

The partnerships are expected to build on the work of the RCEs started in 2006, which is securing better outcomes for children in priority and low incidence groups, with at least one proposal focusing on the needs of children and young people with ASD and/or BESD. It is encouraging that programmes and initiatives may be at a regional, cross-regional or sub-regional basis and we are no longer restricted by regional boundaries.

These innovation bids were submitted to DfES in February 2007 as part of the Strategic and Action Plans for the Regional Partnerships 2007–08.

Details of all Regional Partnership activities can be found through the Teachernet website www.teachernet.gov.uk/sen/

SCRIP/SERSEN and sensory impairment

The South East Regional Partnership (SERSEN) has an active SI Providers Task Group which has been meeting since the beginning of the partnerships in 2000. This group has gone from strength to strength, thanks to the energy and enthusiasm of its members. There are representatives from most schools and services in the South East, some London boroughs, and colleagues from regional and national voluntary agencies. We hope that we represent the interests of HI, VI and MSI colleagues nationally and we do not avoid opportunities to tackle tough

topics for BATOD and other SI groups. You may be aware of the work we have undertaken this year (for BATOD and SENDIST) on guidelines for professional conduct at tribunals, the development of a glossary of SI terms to help parents and other agency staff, and the training of teachers of deaf children with additional specific language and learning difficulties.

Currently we have an MSI RCE, jointly with SENSE, and we are developing 'hands-on' training for staff working with C&YP with MSI. The six-day taught course proved so popular that the 12 places were fully booked and a waiting list established within 24 hours of opening the booking. We have submitted an innovation bid to further the work and develop a training course for delivery in other regions.

The other SCRIP/SERSEN activities and innovation bids submitted to DfES to support HI developments which may be of interest to members of BATOD are:

- Identifying training for specialist support staff across special and mainstream settings and development of regional standards for LA

support services and outreach from special schools. This work would draw from existing work carried out by Ofsted, SERSEN, the North East and the South West Regional Partnerships, together with data from the DfES consultation.

- Developing provision management across SI services and schools.
- Investigating tools to monitor and evaluate the impact of specialist interventions (in schools and services) to identify the value-added factor of effective support on young people and their families.
- Development of national standards for heads of HI/VI services.

There is national interest across the Regional Partnerships about the work of HI schools and services, and the close links I have with BATOD and the heads of services groups continue to ensure that we can work together to have a positive impact upon Government Offices and DfES regarding developments for deaf children and young people and their families.

Lindsey Rousseau is the leader of SERSEN

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Barriers to qualification

Recent changes in the levels of qualification required to become lecturers in FE have raised some concerns for deaf trainees, as Mary Ensor explains

At the City Lit Centre for Deaf Education and Learning Support we train deaf people to teach BSL or IT. Most of this year's cohort of trainees and graduates are working as teachers already, many teaching BSL in a range of educational situations across the country.

We use the FE teacher training courses accredited by City & Guilds. These are very practical and designed primarily for existing teachers. They are:

C & G 7302 Introductory course – equivalent to A-level standard of work in terms of the level of thinking skills required. This is a ten-day introductory course – students don't need to be teaching already.

C & G 7407 Level 1 – a ten-day course, equivalent to undergraduate level study in terms of thinking skills to be demonstrated. Trainees need to have a teaching job for at least 20 hours across the year (although at the City Lit Centre we can offer two students unpaid teaching practice). The course consists of eight units covering initial assessment, planning, materials, methods, assessment, support, self-reflection and professional values. Most of the assignments are 1,000 words in length and need to demonstrate skills such as reading for new information, structuring an argument, application of theories and reflection. Some assignments can be presented on video but no student has done this yet as the work required to plan a formal BSL presentation seems equivalent to writing it!

C & G 7407 Level 2 – this is a 24-day course, also equivalent to undergraduate level of study. Trainees need to have a teaching job for at least 40 hours across the year. This course is more in-depth than Level 1. Assignments are 2,000 words in length and more evidence of self-study and background research is required. Students also have to produce a research essay of 2,500 words about their teaching subject, its place in current educational developments and its particular issues.

There are also specialist modules that make up our BSL teacher training course and FHE training course, comprising Planning for BSL Level 1 and 2, Materials workshops, BSL linguistics and Teaching deaf people in FHE.

Level of support

We have two interpreters and an electronic note-taker, and courses are taught by an experienced

ToD currently studying Level 3 BSL, and deaf tutors. One-to-one support is offered as people require it, and online marking is available – often suitable for the students who live further away.

Teaching approaches

We present new ideas with short, informal presentations laced with question and answer, pair and group work. Theorists' work is presented using *PowerPoint*, with plenty of visuals. We explain the theory in basic terms and then ask the students for practical examples. We find that the deaf students really love the theorists and by the C & G 7407 Level 2 course students are doing their own presentations. Language frameworks are provided for some assignments. Essential vocabulary is reinforced with a variety of exercises. Students are given required reading, and structured homework is handed in weekly.

Advantages of the course for deaf people

Many of our deaf students are thrilled to be offered a chance to study at this level with full support and in a group of peers. A few years ago, the students consisted of people in their 40s and 50s who had left school with no qualifications. Their employers in offices, shops and factories considered them to be excellent staff and they had been asked to do deaf awareness or other teaching, so had gradually found their identity as teachers. In this year's cohort there are more young people who have already been offered jobs as BSL tutors in the school sector. There are currently five or six of them wanting to do a PGCE.

The courses give the deaf trainees the qualifications they need for jobs in further education. The training also seems to suit deaf people working in schools as it provides a thorough grounding in teaching their own subject, although our emphasis is on how to teach adults rather than children. The conversations in class often mention teaching children and, if they wish, students can do presentations on relevant theorists for the younger age, such as Vygotsky. We accept deaf people with potential. Often deaf people with the most classical, beautiful, clear BSL do not have core qualifications at Level 2. Our courses are practical and lead to a career. After doing our suite of courses students are ready in principle to do the PGCE in FE – in fact, the highest level of our course can stand as the first year of a PGCE. One deaf school has offered to pay for one of our graduates to do a PGCE.

Interviewing

We check applicants' thinking skills and ability to write complex sentences, show reflection and read for information. We also test their level of IT and numeracy, as well as posing the usual teacher trainee questions.

Marking

We mark for ideas, structure, evidence of self-reflection and ability to apply theories to a personal situation, rather than marking for perfect grammar.

As ToDs we realise the importance of having a variety of staff – LSAs, CSWs, ToDs – who are well qualified in BSL to work with our deaf pupils. The students we train are the future BSL teachers, so it is in our interest to make sure that their training is at a high level.

The future

The LLUK, which is aiming to raise the level of qualification of teachers in FE to that of school teachers, has recently announced the levels of minimum core subjects teachers must attain on leaving the diploma course. They expect teachers to have Level 2 Literacy, Language and Numeracy.

There are two new levels of qualification:

Certificate level – roughly equivalent to our three courses above. There is no minimum core requirement for this course. This is for part-time teachers who will not be expected to do much independent work creating materials or assessing or writing courses.

Diploma level – probably equivalent to PGCE. Level 2 minimum core is required on exit of training. Teacher trainees need to aim to achieve diploma level when they first register. They are expected to achieve it within five years of registering. This is the cause of our main concern. We estimate that seven students from our current cohort will be prevented from graduating from the full diploma course because of this raised threshold.

Action to raise level of minimum core levels of deaf trainees

Students are offered courses on the minimum core here at our centre. We have English and maths courses for adults running every day and every evening. We may offer some courses specifically for teacher trainees.

Message to the LLUK

I would like to alert the LLUK to the fact that this group of teachers will want to gain full teacher training certification. I emailed LLUK during the creation of the new standards but got no response. My MP Lynne Featherstone has also written to the

Government about this problem and is willing to pursue it further. I would like to make LLUK aware of the various factors that could prevent some deaf people from achieving the minimum core at Level 2. Perhaps if deaf teachers had Level 4 in their own specialist subject BSL and Level 4 IT skills this could be overlooked. Perhaps if we provided evidence of their work in minimum core subjects and showed that they had reached a plateau of learning, this would help.

I agree that it is important for teachers to have high levels of minimum core skills themselves and to be able to develop these skills in their own students and recognise barriers that the students may have in these areas. However, I think deaf students are very good at understanding other people's barriers to learning and can offer very sensitive support.

I look forward to your response with ideas about how we can overcome this problem. Contact me at mary.ensor@citylit.ac.uk.

Mary Ensor is the tutor co-ordinator for teacher training at the City Lit Centre for Deaf Education and Learning Support.

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Work in progress

Damian Barry highlights the aims of Hearing Concern

I became Chief Executive of Hearing Concern in January 2005. At the time, the organisation was in need of a new impetus to revitalise its excellent record in serving deaf and hard-of-hearing people over many years.

My background has always been in the charity sector. I was born partially deaf and I began with working for Friends for the Young Deaf, an organisation helping young deaf and hard-of-hearing (hoh) people to become inclusive members of society. I worked overseas for a period as director of training programmes at the New Zealand Deaf Association. Then, back in the UK I spent three years with the George Eliot NHS Trust introducing Disability Discrimination Act compliance, followed by a further three years as a community fundraiser with the Red Cross in Northern Ireland. Later, I became a Director for London and the South East at the British Deaf Association.

When I joined Hearing Concern I established two aims. First, to raise the profile of the organisation, which I think we've partly achieved; secondly, to focus our resources on delivering practical services to real hoh people in the community who use speech as their main means of communication. It was evident that the number of people with acquired hearing loss – particularly older people – was growing, but the facilities they received from statutory health services were becoming proportionately overstretched.

As many of us know, waiting lists to receive digital hearing aids have become unacceptably long. One of the reasons is the extra attention patients need to programme these new hearing aids. But simply supplying a hearing aid isn't an instant answer to hearing loss. People need to learn and be encouraged to adapt to the environment they now face.

Over the years, Hearing Concern has learnt many practical approaches to managing hearing loss, thanks to our members, our volunteers, our qualified trainers and the clients we meet every day. We believe passionately, and it is certainly my personal belief, that there is 'life after deaf' as the saying goes. The services we provide aim to help people with all degrees of hearing loss to restore their sense of independence and control, so that they can get on with their lives.

Our Hearing Advisory Service (HAS) has been meeting the practical needs of hard-of-hearing

people for many years. Our hearing advisors are trained volunteers who hold drop-in sessions at local venues, or sometimes alongside audiology departments at local NHS hospitals, and deliver simple hearing-aid maintenance and advice. Clients can get batteries changed and moulds retubed, but they can also get the guidance they often need to make the most of their hearing aid, as well as advice on home equipment such as adapted telephones, alarms and audio devices.

Both Social Services and the NHS are aware of the value our hearing advisors bring and I have been determined to expand their reach in the community by training more volunteers and establishing more venues where they can help more hard-of-hearing people. The problem is always funding, but I believe government and the NHS are increasingly recognising the importance of supporting the third sector in delivering care.

Perhaps the innovation I brought to Hearing Concern of which I'm most proud, however, is the introduction of resource centres. At HC resource



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centres, hard-of-hearing people can meet and not just receive information and advice, but participate in activities that help boost confidence and social integration.

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Hearing Concern's Hearing Advisory Service and its resource centres both deliver practical community services to people in need. But I must also mention our national helpdesk, which is available for anyone to contact by telephone, email or letter. This is a first-class information service for anyone who needs advice about managing hearing loss. We help people understand the different types of hearing loss, how to go about getting a hearing aid,

the assistive products that are available and where from, and we advise people on their rights for reasonable assistance at work, college and in the market place. I'm proud to say that our helpdesk has also just won a BT and Telephone Helplines Association Award for the imaginative introduction of our SMS text message service for hoh and deaf people.

Above all, Hearing Concern remains a representative organisation, championing rights and facilities to enable full participation in society – not only for our members but for all hard-of-hearing and deaf people. We have campaigned for the reduction of NHS audiology waiting times, affordable lip-reading classes and greater consideration for hoh people by broadcasters. To the members of BATOD, I would say that although Hearing Concern concentrates on those in the hoh and deaf community who communicate with speech, both our organisations are focused on improving the lives of deaf and hoh people and I am always willing to work with those who share our aims. At Hearing Concern, I intend to continue to work to introduce better care, facilities and recognition for hoh and deaf people by every legitimate means – and to continue to enjoy doing it!

Damian Barry is Chief Executive of Hearing Concern.

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 include: Jenny Baxter, Emma Kelty, Jane Last, Ted Moore, Jen Nicholson and Paul Simpson.

date	external participants	purpose of meeting	venue
February 2007			
27	QCA	Secondary Inclusion and Diversity Conf	London
March 2007			
7	UNISON	Contact meeting	London
8	Edexcel, NATED, CACDP	CSWs' qualification	London
12	Edexcel	Examination issues	London
13	NAHT	Discussion of pay policy	London
15	UKCOD	Board Meeting	London
19	DRC	DDA and examinations	London
24	FEAPDA	Committee meeting	Friedberg, Germany
28	Deafax	Product launch	London
30	QCA	Oral communicators pilot	London
April 2007			
4	SERSEN	Tribunal guidelines	London
18	UKCoD	Deaf Awareness Week event	London
25	GTC	Disabled Teachers Taskforce	London
May 2007			
11	Deafax	Seminar	Reading
17	PAIG	Conference	Sheffield

Please inform the Secretary, 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.

A comprehensive list of meetings that BATOD has attended recently, is now published on the BATOD website along with the Calendar which is found at the back of the Magazine. Follow 'Calendar' and 'Coming Events' then 'Representing you'.

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Sensory support

Mary Bowles discusses the role of the learning support assistant in services for sensory impaired pupils

The learning support assistant (LSA) has long been a key member of staff in resource bases for pupils with hearing impairment across the county, fulfilling a very important support role both in class and outside it. The inclusion of LSAs within a central sensory service is a relatively new phenomenon. Certainly here in West Sussex it is only in recent years that we have introduced LSAs on to our team.

The role of the LSAs on the Sensory Support Team has developed over the six years they have been with us. These posts were initially created to work mainly with pupils who had a visual impairment and were in mainstream and maintained special schools. Just over a year ago we decided to focus one of the LSA roles on hearing impairment and were able to recruit to a vacant post to do this. So, it's still early days for us but we feel that there are many ways in which this role will enhance the work of the service.

It is worth describing the more established role of the LSA working with schools where there are pupils with visual impairment. This model has evolved into the type of support model we want to replicate with HI. First, the post is not exclusively VI, the work includes support for hearing-impaired and visually impaired pupils who are learning to touch-type. We have several educationally blind pupils in maintained schools and our LSAs work alongside the schools' teaching assistants (TAs), training them in Braille and tactile modification and in using a range of supportive technical equipment. Their time is spent mostly with adults rather than pupils. If supporting in class then they are modelling support strategies for the teacher or teaching assistant. We have been encouraged by the positive and confident response of schools as their own staff develop the skills needed to support the pupils.

Our fundamental principle is that we want to build schools' capacity to include pupils with sensory impairment. If we keep this aim clearly in view then the role should develop along the right lines.

Before looking at what we do, it may be helpful to say that there are certain things that our LSA will not do: she will not go in to school and support in class in place of the TA employed by the school; she will not take the pupil out of class and work with them in isolation; nor will she prepare a modified curriculum in isolation. It would be all too easy for the LSA to fall into the role of school TA, supporting in class and providing good access

for the one lesson that she is there. As with the advisory teachers, we need to think how best to use our time to influence curriculum access for the pupil for the rest of the week when we are not there.

Initially the advisory teacher of hearing-impaired (ATOHI) identifies an area of work for the LSA. This may be with an early years child or with a pupil in school. The LSA for HI role is developing, but it has been important to establish a very clear set of ground rules – for the LSA, the schools and the ATOHI on the team. The school must be clear of the role and we find that time spent at the start with all involved, including the SENCO and the class teacher, will pay off in the long run. The school may have preconceived ideas of how the LSA will work, based on the deployment of their own TAs, and it is vital that the ATOHI directs the planned intervention.

I asked the ATOHIs on my team to give me a description of the LSA's role and relationship with schools. These are some of the key messages they gave me:

- The LSA always works in partnership with, never in place of, the ATOHI.
- There must be a negotiation of how the LSA will be used within school.
- There must be a clear focus for intervention with expected outcomes.
- Fundamentally it is a training role: sharing good and effective practice with school TAs.
- The LSA always models the support role for the school TA.
- It is for a fixed period of time, ranging from one week to one term.
- Clarity of role is essential, as it is open to misuse or misunderstanding.
- School staff must be given the confidence, skills and knowledge to support and include pupils.
- It is important to avoid dependency of the school or the pupil on the LSA.
- Schools mustn't feel that when the LSA withdraws we are taking something away from them.
- There must be frequent feedback and review with the ATOHI.
- It is important to evaluate the success of the intervention.

There is a clear role for the LSA in early years and this is an area we want to develop on the Sensory Support Team. For now the focus is on the LSA role in schools and, of course, this has included activities that might have been carried out by a

Reviewers wanted
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qualified Teacher of the Deaf. We are very careful not to use the LSA in place of the teacher, but as an additional resource which enhances the work of the ATOHI and service delivery.

The list of functions is growing and includes supporting and monitoring the use of the hearing aids and FM systems, checking aids, troubleshooting, delivering spare parts, collecting items for repair, alerting the ATOHI to problems. The LSA is often in a good position to influence practice in school, modelling good support strategies and encouraging TAs to implement the ATOHI's advice. She is able to improve the listening and the linguistic environment for the deaf pupil, selecting quiet areas for concentrated work, advising on seating to maximise lip-reading, cueing a pupil in to those speaking, allowing response time, creating opportunities for the pupil to imitate and lead conversation, rehearsing vocabulary, checking that instructions are concise and clear, and so on.

In Key Stages 3 and 4 it is often impossible for the ATOHI to get to all of the subject lessons to observe how the deaf pupil is accessing the lesson. The LSA can spend half a week trailing just one pupil and then is able to present a clear picture to the school and the ATOHI. She is on hand to check access to TV, videos and computer programs.

The LSA is able to feed back information about the pupil's emotional well-being and may be better placed than the ATOHI to observe whether the deaf pupil is feeling isolated among hearing peers, whether the hearing aids/FM system are in fact worn or whether she/he is too self-conscious.

What I haven't mentioned yet is the training and experience needed to give the essential knowledge to provide effective support. Much will be learnt through observation and experience, but a comprehensive programme of continuous professional development is required. The teachers on the Sensory Support Team have been more than ready to share their knowledge and to provide guidance, as they have discovered how valuable the LSA is in facilitating better inclusion for the deaf pupils on their caseloads.

It may seem a tall order to find someone who is prepared to undertake so much training, who can be flexible and ready to adapt, who can be sensitive to people and situations, and who is quietly assertive. Luckily we have found these people in West Sussex and when we advertise posts we have been inundated with excellent applications, even finding ourselves in the unusual position of having to shortlist – in my experience a rare event in recruitment to sensory services.

Mary Bowles is Head of Sensory Support, Children and Young People's Services, West Sussex.

BATOD Mary Grace Wilkins Travelling Scholarship **BATOD**



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BATOD Mary Grace Wilkins Travelling Scholarship **BATOD**

What went on at NEC on 11 March 2007

After a successful conference the previous day, the March NEC meeting took place at the Marriott Hotel in Leeds. Alison Weaver started the meeting by **welcoming** the newly elected Mary Fortune, the re-elected Peter Preston and the new regional representative Alison Veal from the South, and Sue Frazer and Annie Maxted, representing the North and South West Regions.

Communication at the meeting was greatly enhanced by the presence of BSL interpreters and a brand new FrontRow To Go soundfield system lent to us by PC Werth.

In discussion of the matters arising from the last meeting we were able to announce that proposed **guidelines for conduct at tribunals** were now ready for consultation and were on our website in a new section entitled 'Consulting You', where all such consultations will now take place. Constituent regions and nations of BATOD will also be able to use this facility for their own more local consultations.

We discussed a variety of aspects of our work which may be suitable for **funding bids** if we acquire charitable status – the application is currently being made. This included supporting deaf children for whom English is an additional language, expanding the Blue Skies website and working to support CSWs and TAs.

The meeting heard the latest news about **reasonable adjustments** for examinations – certificate indications are to continue and the QCA has announced that oral communicators are to be reintroduced, although there is no clear timescale yet for this.

Alison's **presidential report** ranged over a wide range of topics and included hearty thanks to all involved with the conference – in particular to Ann Underwood, the principal organiser. She also put on record her thanks to Chris Payton and Stuart Whyte, who have resigned as representatives from their regions. She welcomed the fact that a meeting at the end of the conference has reignited the North Region, which now has a fully operating committee – you can read more about this on page 43. Alison spoke also of the forthcoming meeting to be held in Birmingham to look into the future of the survey and data collection, welcoming the strong support from the NDCS whose Deputy Chief Executive Sean Moran will be attending.

A wholesale re-examination of the roles and responsibilities of the various post-holders in BATOD, such as publications manager, archivist and commissioning editor, has taken place and will be put to the NEC for approval at the next meeting in June.

The **Secretary** and Magazine editor asked that all members of NEC and readers of this article should put forward any ideas for new features in the Magazine such as 'Ask the Consultant' – questions of interest to the whole readership which could be answered by Ted Moore.

In his **Consultant's report**, Ted listed some of the many activities he has been involved with since the last meeting at the end of 2006: work to produce guidelines for collaborative working with speech and language therapists continues; a workshop for the teaching placement supervision of ToDs in training has been set up to take place in March in Manchester; a new policy document about the sign bilingual approach has been produced and welcomed by BATOD although, as with all specific approaches, the Association doesn't specifically endorse it (more information about this is on page 29 of this Magazine). Ted is also working on quality standards for ToDs. He described the recent positive meeting with UNISON (also detailed on page 47); and spoke of a forthcoming meeting with NAHT to look at our draft pay policy for unattached teachers. Finally, he referred to the recent Audit Commission report about out-of-authority schools, explaining that the average cost mentioned in the article was misleading as far as schools for the deaf are concerned, where the fees are much lower – this is because the average is increased by high fees charged by the staff-intensive schools for children with behavioural difficulties and autism. Gary Anderson told us about the work being done by SERSEN in which blocks of places in out-of-county provision were being purchased, enabling financial planning to take place.

We were pleased to hear from the **Treasurer** that the finances were in good shape despite recent falls in numbers of members – an issue which two of our committees will be looking into.

We then reviewed the **reports from regions and nations** of BATOD, once again showing the extent of work going on throughout the UK. Northern Ireland had a successful conference looking at 'value-addedness' of Teachers of the Deaf – a subject national BATOD is keen to explore as it is often needed in discussions with the Government and other bodies. BATOD Scotland had mixed news to report – while strong moves were being made by Moray House course leader Rachel O'Neill, there was growing concern about a recent document which suggested that a qualification to teach deaf children could be drawn up by separate LAs and no longer be at diploma standard. This would mean that each qualification could be different, the rigour of a university course would be lost and the mobility of

the qualification would be in serious question. A joint meeting is to take place soon with VI teachers, and Paul and Ted offered their support in making an appropriate joint response from Scotland and the UK at large. The NDCS is also being involved.

The wide range of work of the various **standing committees** was then reviewed and much time was spent considering an appropriate response to the current investigation into cochlear implants by NICE, being led by the **Audiology Committee**. It was felt that BATOD should put in a strong response supporting the continuing provision of cochlear implants which will highlight the undoubted advantages to deaf children that they have brought. Liz Beadle was welcomed as Chair of the Audiology Committee following on from the excellent work of Stuart Whyte.

The **Professional Development Committee** has been looking into the development of some modules for the NPQH for leaders of specialist services – either generic or HI/VI – as the current qualification can only be accessed from schools. If this matter is not resolved there will be few heads of service in the future as they are required to have the qualification and it is undesirable to have to study for it while beginning such a job. The committee is also looking into e-learning, which ties in with the current discussions taking place with the senior trainer of Teachers of the Deaf in the USA, Professor Harold Johnson.

The **Educational Issues Committee** reported that the development of a course for TAs and CSWs is progressing well and that the role of BATOD in the discussions has encouraged Edexcel to consider it very seriously.

Paul pointed out that there is soon to be a page on the BATOD website devoted to **research** – information about what is going on and where – and also the opportunity for people to suggest areas of deaf education where they would like research to be done.

After lunch, **committees** met and each fed back to a plenary session one key point from their discussions: Educational Issues suggested that determining the impact of a ToD and value-addedness in general would be a good conference theme, Audiology proposed the co-option of a new member and is working on producing updated audiology refreshers. Membership and Finance suggested a special offer for members who enrol another colleague – they would receive a reduced subscription themselves (more about this later in this Magazine) and Professional Development gave a flavour of the very positive evaluations from the previous day's conference.

Having started early the meeting finished at 2pm and members made their way back to all parts of the UK, ready for another busy week supporting deaf children and working for BATOD.

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Northern lights

Good news from BATOD's North Region

Late last year a small group of volunteers met with Ann Underwood (President-Elect) and Bev McCracken (National Treasurer) to attempt to reinvigorate the North Region. In January a questionnaire was sent out to all North Region members via the Magazine mailing. Ten people responded and as a result three more positive volunteers were contacted. One was able to join a telephone conference call to discuss the special General Meeting planning for 10 March.

After the very successful BATOD conference on transition, over 30 North Region members attended the meeting in the Leeds Marriott Hotel. Bev McCracken opened the meeting and outlined the current situation. He introduced Elaine Rayner, Mary Fortune and Trish Cope, who have volunteered to act as Region officers until later in the year when an AGM has been arranged. Elaine will be the Region Chairperson, Mary the Treasurer and Trish the Secretary. Thanks were expressed to the previous committee and especially to Chris Payton who sent his formal

resignation from the North committee and as the North representative to NEC. Chris has handed the North Region paperwork to Trish Cope. It was agreed that Sue Frazer would attend the NEC meeting on Sunday 11 March and Penny Rowbottom or Trish Cope offered their services for future meetings. This will be discussed by the committee.

All present were asked to fill in the questionnaire and hand it to the new committee before they left. They were also asked to take copies and ask colleagues to complete and return them as well. A copy of the questionnaire is available on the BATOD website in the North Region folder, and North Region members are encouraged to complete and return it. The new committee hopes to use the information to plan how the North Region will service the needs of its members. It is intended that further news about the progress of the new committee will be available on the BATOD website (The Association > About BATOD > BATOD Regions > BATOD North).



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A comfortable retirement?

Ted Moore explains some of the complexities of the State Pension



Ted Moore

I thought, somewhat foolishly, that this would be an easy topic to summarise for the Magazine. I had the illusion that getting a State Pension (SP), on top of my teacher's pension, would be straightforward, and that I would be able to

live a life of luxury, bearing in mind the bus pass, cheap haircuts and reduced subscriptions to many sporting activities. Not so!

Having now researched the area to a degree, the main finding is that the whole matter is complex and really needs to be examined on an individual basis. But having said that, here are some facts and pointers.

1 State Pension rates usually increase each year in April. Please bear in mind that there will be some changes to the regulations and amounts payable in April 2007 and that what is presented below needs to be checked out after this date.

2 The SP is based on the records held by The Pension Service (part of the Department for Work and Pensions) of an individual's National Insurance (NI) contributions during his/her working life.

3 The SP is paid to people who have reached pension age (60 for women, 65 for men) and fulfil the National Insurance contributions' conditions.

4 However, Parliament has decided to equalise pension age at 65 for both men and women. The change will be phased in between 2010 and 2020 but will not affect anyone born before 6 April 1950.

5 Now we come to the complex bit! The following are some of the questions that will be asked of you when you are making your claim:

- Are you married?
- Are you a civil partner?
- Are you divorced or has your civil partnership been dissolved?
- Are you widowed or are you a surviving civil partner?
- Do you intend to work past SP age?
- Would you want to defer claiming your SP so that you can get extra SP when you do retire?
- Have you been able to pay full NI contributions for at least ten years?

6 What does this mean in practice? At the basic level this means that the full (ie you have fulfilled the contribution conditions) weekly rates from 10 April 2007 are:

- Single person £87.30
- Wife on husband's contributions £52.35
- Married couple on husband's contributions £139.65.

However, your pension depends on the number of qualifying years – those years where full NI contributions were made. So a woman with a working life of 44 years will need 39 qualifying years for a full pension and a man with a working life of 49 years will need 44 qualifying years. There is a sliding scale which displays the percentage of full pension you can receive depending on the number of years of contributions.

A further example is that in my own case, my wife (who is over 60) has not paid the necessary contributions, so only receives 10p a week! However, this is offset by the fact that some time ago she took out a policy in which she made Additional Voluntary Contributions (AVCs).

You don't have to claim your SP as soon as you reach pension age. If you wish, you can put off claiming it and get a higher weekly amount or the option of a one-off taxable lump sum payment instead.

For more information you can visit The Pension Service's website: www.thepensionsservice.gov.uk/

You can also contact the Retirement Pension Forecasting Team on 0845 3000 168 if you have concerns over what you are entitled to. Nevertheless, The Pension Service should automatically send you a claim form four months before you reach State Pension age. If you haven't received this form three months before your birthday, you can call The Pension Service on 0845 6060 265.

So, if you hoped retirement was going to be straightforward, make sure you get your finances in order! Do you really want that world cruise or just a trip to Warmington-on-Sea in a charabanc?

Ted Moore is the BATOD Consultant.

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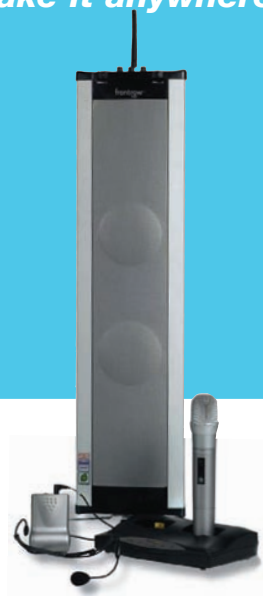
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Representing you – UNISON

On 7 March BATOD met with UNISON to discuss a range of topics

Context: To make contact with UNISON to discuss issues of mutual interest, especially those specific to TA/CSW members of BATOD.

Present: Bruni de la Motte (UNISON Education Department); Ted Moore, Paul Simpson (BATOD).

Background: UNISON represents a large range of workers originally from the public sector, including teaching assistants, nurses, local government workers and now many in private industry too. It does not have an official presence in independent schools but does have members working there. Currently there is an important working group trying to achieve national conditions of service and pay scales – this group includes the DfES and local government employers as well as UNISON. At the moment all is determined locally and there are huge geographical discrepancies; career progression is necessary and the role of qualifications for CSWs and TAs, such as the one under discussion with Edexcel, CACDP and NATED, would fit in well with that.

Other viewpoints on which we were in agreement:

- There needs to be recognition of the specialist

knowledge and expertise of those CSWs/TAs working with children with SEN.

- It is wasteful for CSWs/TAs not to continue to be able to use their skills once an individual child has moved on – peripatetic CSWs/TAs would make more sense.
- There should be a pool of qualified CSWs/TAs.
- HLTAs seem only to be satisfying one of the 31 criteria – that of covering a whole class; working with children with SEN and managing other TAs should also be recognised in this way.
- There should be national standards for CSWs/TAs – the TDA is addressing this. Those working with SEN should be at level 3 of the National Standards.
- There should be access to staff development and training, and funding for this.
- Contracts should not be limited to term time only but should cover the whole year – otherwise the net effect is an even lower salary.
- Better career structure would improve recruitment and retention of CSWs/TAs.
- Performance management can only be introduced if increments and progression are available, although CSWs/TAs are entitled to supportive appraisal.

Representing you – FLSE

Paul Simpson reports to NEC on a meeting of the Steering Group of the Federation of Leaders in Special Education (FLSE), London, 30 November 2006

In February 2006, the DfES awarded start-up funding of £150,000 to the National Association of EBD Schools (NAES) to head a steering group of organisations to develop a Federation of Leaders in Special Education. It hopes to become a voice for leaders in special education, with a direct conduit to the DfES. The group has had several initial meetings, and BATOD member Peter Plant, of the Sign Bilingual Consortium, suggested that BATOD should participate.

Summary of the main points of the meeting

- There was a prolonged discussion about whether the federation was for special schools or, as I raised on several occasions, other practitioners in the field who are not in special schools such as heads of sensory impaired services. It was agreed that all such leaders should be included, even though the draft press release referred only to special schools. This was subsequently changed. The group had been concerned that the federation should consist of practitioners not LEA officers, but accepted that heads of service were indeed practitioners.
- The logo would appear on publicity at conferences, etc, and a website would be set up – not to provide

comprehensive information but a description of the federation and the fact that it was in its early stages of development.

- The representatives on the steering group came from each of the nine regions in addition to other colleagues from bodies such as the Sign Bilingual Consortium, BATOD, NASS and the Autistic Society.
- Much discussion centred around making the federation financially self-supporting; a project manager, once appointed, would oversee the search for funding for specific projects from the Government and other sources which could provide the necessary infrastructure funding to maintain the organisation. It may be possible to bid for some regional partnership funding.
- It was noted with incredulity that the DfES itself does not keep a database of special schools.

Recommendations for BATOD

- Raise awareness of the development and purpose of this body.
- Attend meetings to ensure that the interests of all leaders in the education of deaf children and young people are taken into account.

ICT News



Welcome to this edition of ICT News. If you would like to contribute anything to these pages, please contact Sharon Pointeer at ICTNewspage@batod.org.uk

As usual I went to Crufts this year. Advertised as the biggest and best dog show in the world, it was huge, occupying five of the NEC's enormous halls. Now I know you are wondering what that has to do with ICT, but even the doggie world is embracing new technology in ways we would not have imagined a few years ago. The applications of ICT range from microchips embedded under your dog's skin to aid identification should he stray, through to virtual dogs for those people who do not have the time or environment for the real thing. The vast majority of sales stands also urged their customers to visit their website in order to make further purchases after the show. The biggest stands were for the dog food manufacturers, all of whom claimed to have the healthiest product for your canine companion's dinner. Many of these companies have websites which not only extol the virtues of their particular brand, but also have educational content to encourage responsible dog ownership.

All the main assistance dog charities were present at the show and it was nice to see Hearing Dog Molly win the 'Friends for Life' prize. Hearing Dogs for Deaf People is currently researching into placing hearing dogs with families which have deaf children. Initially I imagined the chaos of having two or three pupils in a class with their own hearing dog, but these dogs do not go to school with their young recipients, instead carrying out their duties in the home. More details about the Team Hearing Dogs scheme can be found on the Hearing Dog website at www.hearingdogs.org.uk/

Studies both here and abroad have shown that dog ownership has a beneficial effect on both adults and children. The World Animal Day website has details on its teachers' pages of a study done in the USA where dogs were used with SEN pupils, improvements in behaviour and attention being the main effects. This has also been the case at a school in Derbyshire where a dog has been working with disruptive pupils. Information about 'Henry, king of the classroom' can be found by searching on the BBC news website. World Animal Day this year is on 4 October 2007 and the website gives details of how to get involved and shows activities from previous years. The kids' zone has jokes, interactive puzzles and a range of activity ideas

for pupils, at different levels – worth a look if you are doing a project on animals. Also on the website is a resources section which has a downloadable pack showing how to get involved. Visit www.worldanimalday.org.uk/

Resources

If you are not convinced about live animals in your classroom, but would like pupils to experience looking after a pet, what about investing in a cyber pet? Cyber pets come in a variety of types and styles, with a physical 'creature' or a virtual animal living on your computer or games machine.

At Crufts, Nintendo was showcasing its *Nintendogs*, a video game for the handheld Nintendo DS. The user can select from a variety of dog breeds – I wanted the poodle – and has to look after their chosen puppy to help it mature into a well-trained, obedient pet. You can even take up dog agility. The player accumulates points as they progress successfully through the game and can use these to purchase more puppies. However, only three are allowed to live in the house at one time, so no puppy farming. Apparently, more than seven million copies of this game have been sold worldwide and it has won awards, including the PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals) Best Animal-Friendly Video Game. The game itself costs about £30, but requires the games console which costs about £100. See www.nintendogs.com/



Remote control robotic pets can be used to teach pupils the elements of control programming, rather than responsible pet ownership. Look out for Robopet, a rather ant-like robot dog, Roboraptor, a vicious looking robot dinosaur and Roboreptile, an equally vicious dragon thing, all from the makers of Robosapien. The rather cuter i-Cybie does a similar range of tricks as the Robopet, reacts to his environment and the attentions of his owner. He uses voice-recognition technology, so can respond to commands such as sit, down, and so on, just like a real dog. See www.wowwee.com and www.i-cybie.com/

Most of these electronic toys look like the robots they are; however, if you want something more realistic then the ultimate cyber pet has to be Gupi, the electronic guinea pig. From a distance he looks just like the real thing, being furry and somewhat rotund. Gupi comes complete with a charging station in the form of an electronic carrot, which he will also follow. This cyber pet can move around freely, has a number of sensors to stop it bumping into things, uses its light sensor to know when it is dark and responds to being stroked. It is available in a number of different versions, but if you want to buy one look out for Gupi III, as this has a longer battery life, a proper three-pin mains charger and more features than the earlier versions. He (or she) makes 30 different sounds and will 'talk' to other Gupis if he meets them. The more attention he gets the happier he will be, much like a Tamagotchi, but far more interesting and cuddly. If you don't want to be cleaning out the classroom pet, this one could be for you. Gupi III can be purchased online for around £39, although if you search you might find a special offer – I found one on the paramountzone.com site with £10 discount. 3lib.ukonline.co.uk/gupi (note that there is no www at the start of this website address).

Watch out nearer Christmas for Pleo, from the inventor of the Furby, Ugobe's Caleb Chung. Pre-release reviews claim that this cuddly baby dinosaur is going to be the must-have toy of the year. The price tag is, however, going to be steep, with early estimates at around the £200 mark. The robot pet is modelled on a one-week-old Camarasaurus from the Jurassic period and is going to be extremely realistic in both its movements and in its ability to learn about and interact with its environment and owner, due to the number of sensors and processors embedded within it. Ugobe is aiming this gismo at geeks, parents who want to wow older children, and teachers who want to demonstrate how dinosaurs lived. While the final market may be rather optimistic, it sounds like a great excuse to get one for school! Go to www.ugobe.com/

Websites worth a visit

Pet Health Council

If you are considering getting a pet or doing a project on pets with pupils, this site contains lots of useful information and leaflets which can be downloaded as pdf files. While rather too wordy for many hearing-impaired pupils, some of the materials may be a good starting point:

www.pethealthcouncil.co.uk/

Cats Protection League

For those of you who are feeling rather left out because you are a cat person rather than a dog person, this website is for you. The learning resources available have been revamped to more effectively support teaching of English, maths, PSHE, science and citizenship, while educating pupils about responsible cat ownership. There are primary and secondary packs, as well as a *Primary Science* CD-ROM and *Business Challenge* CD-ROM for secondary schools. Any of these resources can be ordered by email or telephone or the primary and secondary packs can be downloaded as pdf files from the website. There is a kids' zone with games, quizzes and information about cats and their care: www.cats.org.uk/



Countryside Access

This is a great website, especially as it has an Aardman Animations Creature Comforts movie in the Countryside Code section, complete with script. There is a comprehensive learning resource centre containing activities related to the countryside code for primary, secondary and voluntary groups. These can be downloaded or ordered on CD-ROM. There are grids showing how the activities relate to the National Curriculum for Key Stages 2 and 3, as well as a risk assessment sheet for a trip to a country park, paper-based activities such as word searches, and some excellent photo packs: www.countrysideaccess.gov.uk/



Title Mapping the Way
Author SERSEN (DASLLD Working Group)
Published 2006
Publisher Ransom Publishing
Price Free download from the SERSEN website www.sersen.uk.net/dassld

Reviewer Gill Feetham, Consultant Teacher of the Deaf, Nottinghamshire

The aim of the guide is to offer teachers working with deaf children some background guidance to assist with children who have or appear to have additional language and literacy difficulties above and beyond those caused by their deafness.

Everyone working in this area knows that there is a significant (if small) group of children who are deaf, who are often, but not always, in mainstream schools and who also have other needs. Their lack of progress in literacy is often perceived by mainstream teachers and teaching assistants as a consequence of their deafness. The challenge for a peripatetic ToD who does not work in a generic team is to diagnose the other areas of difficulty, communicate this to the school (and sometimes to parents) and then offer an appropriate programme. Downloading *Mapping the Way* will help.

Content evaluation

The volume is divided into seven sections and has seven supporting appendices. The introduction, aimed at ToDs and mainstream teachers, has a useful diagram which could prompt a comprehensive observation of the way in which a child learns. This does not offer an exhaustive observation schedule, but could nonetheless start a useful dialogue with a class teacher or TA working with a deaf child. The following section entitled 'Where does my child fit?' clearly focuses on specific areas of language that may help to pinpoint with greater accuracy the specific areas of difficulty. The next two sections, 'What works for my child?' and 'Where do I go now?', allow the focus to shift to a child's learning strengths and therefore offer opportunities to begin to build a programme of support strategies that may help a specific pupil.

Review

The following section, 'How do you learn?', provides some interesting case studies and also lists a whole range of suggestions for the TA and ToD to either follow or consider. The title is a little misleading. It is not about how a pupil learns but about how their specific learning needs can be met in the classroom, and would be a useful discussion or checklist tool for a ToD working with a TA or mainstream teacher.

The section aimed specifically at mainstream teachers, 'Information for mainstream teachers', could be used as a prompt for discussion or training or as a post-training aide-memoire, but I think it would have little impact if offered alone. The final section, 'Early years', offers a guide to good practice if any other needs are suspected at this early age. This might be particularly useful for any ToDs working in the private and voluntary sectors with nursery nurses who require some additional strategies and ideas for this group of children. The appendices offer some more concrete examples of specific types of work undertaken in the classroom and also give clear definitions of other types of SEN that may cause difficulties. They may therefore be useful for training purposes.

This resource could be particularly useful for a newly qualified ToD with limited experience of deaf pupils with additional needs. It may also be useful for experienced ToDs who could use it as an observational and training 'checklist'. Certainly none of the information is new, but it has been brought together in one resource and this has a number of positive features.

Mapping the Way is clearly sectioned, well presented and has some good ideas, but is not exhaustive and I need to offer a word of caution here. Clearly there will be a small group of deaf pupils in any local authority who have additional difficulties with literacy that are not directly connected to their hearing loss and for whom progress is slower than expected. However, there may be within this group a number of pupils who have more severe and complex literacy difficulties and require input from other specialist teachers. If any ToD is in the fortunate position to work within a generic service then I would urge them to seek the advice of their colleagues who may be more expert in this particular field.

☺☺☺☺☹	Quality
☺☺☺☺☺	Value for money
☺☺☺☹☹	Educational usefulness
☺☺☺☺☹	Overall

This and that...

Email news to this-n-that@batod.org.uk



NDCS

Deaf-friendly football

A project designed to make football more accessible to deaf children has been launched by the National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS) and the Football Foundation. The NDCS Deaf Friendly Football Project will enable every deaf child in England access to the nation's great game over the course of the next three years.

At your fingertips

The University of Bristol's Centre for Deaf Studies has launched the world's first sign language dictionary available from a mobile phone. Mobilesign.org is a video dictionary with over 5,000 British Sign Language signs and it serves as a mobile accessory to people who work with deaf people, have deaf customers or just want to learn to sign. There is also help for parents, with signs included that are specific to children, such as 'Father Christmas', 'potty' and 'naughty'. The interface is extremely simple and is especially designed for mobile phone displays.

The service is provided completely free and users of Signstation, the Centre's sign language resource web, will be alerted to the new service. To try out Mobile Sign, point your browser or set your mobile phone address page to www.mobilesign.org and type in a word or check the alphabetic listing. Users will need a mobile, on any network, which has a video player or a 3G phone.

Well done!

Congratulations to Heathlands School in St Albans for an 'Outstanding' report from Ofsted.

Don't forget, if you wish to share any such news with the Magazine readers please let us know.

New sites

Donaldson's College, Scotland's national school for pupils who are deaf or have speech and language difficulties, has launched a new website containing full information on all of the services, care and education it provides. More information can be found by visiting www.donaldsons-coll.edin.sch.uk/

The National Deaf Children's Society has launched its new website, which will allow users to have access to a range of information quickly and easily. It has become more interactive and has lots of new features. Why not take a look? Visit www.ndcs.org.uk/



For the record

Pauline Hughes, former President of BATOD, is keen to stress the importance of BATOD printing obituaries and recording the history of deaf education. Ann Underwood, the website manager, suggests that, in addition to obituaries in the Magazine, there could also be a relevant section on the website.

Pauline has undertaken to prepare this part of the website. She would very much welcome relevant information and memories. Please send them by email as attachments, which will be readily transferable to the website. All suggestions are welcome. Her email address is: paulineh@ewing-foundation.org.uk.



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AGM	Annual General Meeting	MA	Master of Arts
ALDT	Adult Learning Disabilities Team	MAISEY	Multi-Agency Integrated Support in the Early Years
A-level	Advanced level		
ASD	Autism Spectrum Disorders	MP	Member of Parliament
ASE	Association for Science Education	MSI	Multi-Sensory Impaired
ATOHI	Advisory Teacher of the Hearing-Impaired	NAES	National Association of EBD Schools
AVCs	Additional Voluntary Contributions	NAHT	National Association of Head Teachers
BAHA	Bone Anchored Hearing Aid	NASS	National Association of Independent Schools and Non-Maintained Special Schools
BATOD	British Association of Teachers of the Deaf		
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation	NATED	National Association for Tertiary Education for Deaf people
Becta	British Educational Communications and Technology Agency	NCSL	National College for School Leadership
BESD	Behaviour, Emotional and Social Development	NDCS	National Deaf Children's Society
BSc	Bachelor of Science	NEC	National Executive Council or National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham
BSL	British Sign Language		
BT	British Telecom	NFER	National Foundation for Educational Research
CACDP	Council for the Advancement of Communication with Deaf People	NHS	National Health Service
		NI	National Insurance
CAF	Common Assessment Framework	NICE	National Institute for Clinical Excellence
CALP	Community Adult Learning Programme	NPQH	National Professional Qualification for Headship
CD-ROM	Compact Disk Read Only Memory	NVQ	National Vocational Qualification
CEG	Careers Education and Guidance	Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education
CEO	Chief Executive Officer	PA	Personal Adviser
C & G	City and Guilds	PAIG	Paediatric Audiology Interest Group
CPD	Continuing Professional Development	PALS	Profile of Actual Linguistic Skills
CsciTeach	Chartered Science Teacher	PC	Personal Computer
CSW	Communication Support Worker	PCP	Person-Centred Planning
CV	Curriculum Vitae	Pdf	portable document format (for Acrobat Reader)
C&YP	Children and Young People	PE	Physical Education
DAHISS	Deaf and Hearing Impaired Support Service	PETA	People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals
DASLLD	Deafness and Additional Specific Language and Literacy Difficulties	PGCE	Post-Graduate Certificate in Education
		PGL	Peter Gordon Lawrence – Activity Holidays
DEA	Disability Employment Advisers	PR	Public Relations
DELTA	Deaf Education Through Listening and Talking	PTA	Pure Tone Audiometry
DfES	Department for Education and Skills	QCA	Qualifications and Curriculum Authority
DRC	Disability Rights Commission	RCE	Regional Centres of Expertise
DVD	Digital Versatile Disk	RPF	Renewed Primary Framework
ECM	Every Child Matters	PSHE	Personal, Social and Health Education
EI	Educational Interpreter	RSDCM	Royal School for Deaf Children Margate
ES	Early Support	SAT	Standard Assessment Test (Task)
EST	English Support Tutor	SCRIP	South Central Regional Inclusion Partnership
ESW	Educational Support Worker	SDCS	Shropshire Deaf Children's Society
FE	Further Education	SEN	Special Educational Needs
FEAPDA	Federation Européenne d'Associations de Professeurs de Déficiants Auditifs (European Federation of Associations of Teachers of the Deaf)	SENCO	Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator
		SENDIST	Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal
FHE	Further and Higher Education	SENSE	Organisation for children and adults who are deafblind or have associated difficulties
FLSE	Federation of Leaders in Special Education	SERSEN	South East Regional Partnership
FM	Frequency Modulation (radio)	SI	Sensory Impaired
GTC	General Teaching Council	SNAP	Story Narratives Assessment Procedure
HAS	Hearing Advisory Service	SP	State Pension
HC	Hearing Concern	START	Support Training and Resources Team
HI	Hearing Impaired	TA	Teaching Assistant
HLTA	Higher Level Teaching Assistant	TAC	Team Around the Child
hoh	hard of hearing	TDA	Training and Development Agency for Schools
ICT	Information and Communication Technology	ToD	Teacher of the Deaf
IEP	Individual Education Plan	UK	United Kingdom
INSET	In-Service Education and Training	UKCoD	United Kingdom Council on Deafness
IT	Information Technology	UNISON	A trade union for public sector workers
LA	Local Authority	USA	United States of America
LASER	Language of Sign as an Educational Resource	VI	Visually Impaired
LLUK	Lifelong Learning UK	WBL	Work Based Learning
LSA	Learning Support Assistant		
LSC	Learning and Skills Council		

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

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Members are reminded that membership of the Association is only open to individuals. There is no category for Service or School membership.

We are aware that some members have their subscription paid for them and that some have their mailing to their work address, but please remember, only the named individual is the member and no other person at that address can claim any benefits of membership.

This subscription can be claimed against income tax. You do not normally need a receipt for this; just put it on your income tax form. A list of previous subscription details can be found on the BATOD website. Follow: The Association, BATOD membership, back-subscriptions information.

Full membership is open to those teachers who have successfully completed training as a Teacher of the Deaf. As a Full member you will receive the Association Journal 'Deafness & Education International' four times a year and the Association Magazine, five times a year. You will have a discounted admission to any BATOD run event and you will be entitled to vote at any meetings called.

Associate membership is open to anyone else who is interested in the education of deaf pupils: teachers, speech & language therapists, those in training as a Teacher of the Deaf, parents, social workers, etc. Associate members have the same privileges as full members except they have no voting rights.

Special membership is open to those working with deaf pupils in a support position, LSAs, CSWs, TAs, etc. As a Special member you will receive the Association Magazine five times a year and be entitled to members' rates at events, but you will have no voting rights.

Members may seek **Retired status** on retiring from paid employment. If members return to work it is at their discretion to inform the Membership Secretary of their changed circumstances.

For those retired members who no longer wish to receive the Journal there is a concession to pay a reduced subscription. Please contact the Membership Secretary.

Current Full and Associate members who are entitled to a reduced subscription 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.

Members with a change in circumstance or personal details should inform the Membership Secretary as soon as possible.

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.

Only the named individual is the member and no other person at that address can claim any benefits of membership.

Any enquiries should be made to:

email: membership@batod.org.uk
BATOD Membership Secretary
 112 Deas Avenue, Dingwall, Ross-shire IV15 9RJ

All members are reminded that the Membership Secretary MUST be notified of any change of address to ensure that labels are changed and Magazines and Journals reach the new address.

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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
May 23	BATOD Midland	Twilight meeting – Developing deaf education overseas – teaching in Bangladesh & Sierra Leone (Cochleas, chillies and cockroaches)	Solihull HI Resource Base Cardiff International Arena
24–25	TSL Education Ltd	Wales Education 2007	
June 5 6 7 6–8 9 9 12–13 14 15 16 20 19–20 21–22 23 26 27 27 29–30	The Ear Foundation The Ear Foundation The Ear Foundation City University, London NDCS The Ear Foundation The Ear Foundation Frank Barnes School The Ear Foundation BATOD NEC BATOD Midland The Ear Foundation The Ear Foundation Oak Lodge School The Ear Foundation Department of Educational Studies, Oxford University NDCS BATOD NEC Steering Group	NEAP: Overview of Nottingham Early Assessment Package Small Talk Story Time: a gateway to literacy BSL Production Test Training Course NDCS Family Fun Day and exhibition Pre-implant information day The Reynell Developmental Language Scales (RDLS) v3 Open Day New Frontiers in Deaf-Blindness Association Business Committee meeting TAIT Video Analysis SNAP Dragons: Story and Narratives Assessment Procedure Emotions – a curriculum for secondary schools Behaviour Management: Teens 3rd Oxford Conference on Deafness, Literacy & Mathematics Creating resilient children and resilient families – the role of family support Association Business	The Ear Foundation, Nottingham The Ear Foundation, Nottingham The Ear Foundation, Nottingham City University, London Sandown Park Racecourse The Ear Foundation, Nottingham The Ear Foundation, Nottingham Camden, London The Royal Society of Medicine, London Paragon Hotel, Birmingham School of Education, Birmingham The Ear Foundation, Nottingham The Ear Foundation, Nottingham Oak Lodge School The Ear Foundation, Nottingham Oxford College Inmarsat, London EC1 Nasen HQ, Tamworth
July 2 10 10 12 12–14 23–27 24–27 27–31	BATOD Wales Conference Mary Hare Training Services, Ewing Foundation, DELTA, The Elizabeth Foundation and other A G Bell affiliates The Ear Foundation Deafworks Cochlear Europe Ltd Cued Speech Association UK DELTA DELTA	Assessment Developing a Listening Ear – an International Conference Time to Reflect Deaf Awareness for Hearing staff 1st International Symposium of bone conduction and osseointegration Foundation, Improvers, Advanced, Children's Course, French Cuers' Course – residential with creche Preschool and Primary Summer School Preschool Summer School	Vale Hotel, Vale of Glamorgan Arlington Arts Centre, Mary Hare The Ear Foundation, Nottingham Deafworks, Clerkenwell, EC1Y 8PX Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada Exeter Lancaster Winchester
September 14–15 29	BATOD NEC Steering Group BATOD NEC	Association Business Association Business	Paragon Hotel, Birmingham Paragon Hotel, Birmingham
October 6 10 16 18 17–18 19–21	BATOD Midland Doncaster College and School for the Deaf Mary Hare Training Services, SERSEN and The Ewing Foundation Deafworks Cochlear Europe Ltd FEAPDA	Audiology Open Day DASLLD Deaf Children with additional specific language and literacy difficulties Deaf Awareness for Hearing staff Baha course for audiologists Cochlear Implants	Dudley Leger Way, Doncaster Mary Hare School Deafworks, Clerkenwell, EC1Y 8PX Weybridge, Surrey Friedberg
November 2–3 9	BATOD NEC Steering Group BATOD South	Association Business Thinking Skills	Edinburgh The Resource Centre, Holloway, London

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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South West

Chairperson: post vacant
Secretary: post vacant
Treasurer: post vacant

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Submissions to the Journal

'**Deafness and Education International**' should be sent to:

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Birmingham B15 2TT

email DEIeditor@batod.org.uk

...as should Association information and general queries.

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

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