

Articulating the specialism

The role of the Qualified Teacher of Deaf Children and Young People (QToD) supporting in mainstream settings

We use the term 'deaf' to refer to all types of deafness from mild to profound. This includes deafness in one ear or temporary deafness such as glue ear.

What is a QToD?

A QToD is an experienced teacher with an additional mandatory qualification (MQ) in childhood deafness who has the skills, knowledge and expertise required to provide quality support to babies, deaf children, young people and their families from 0-25 in the home and in education settings (mainstream settings and those in specialist provisions).

How do QToDs work to ensure the best outcomes for deaf CYP?

The premise of an effective QToD role is to share a depth of understanding of both the needs of deaf CYP and how to meet them. This specialist support focusses on two key outcomes as a route to social inclusion, ensuring all CYP have fair and optimised access to education and that all CYP have opportunities to develop their own agency, voice and independence. Achieving these outcomes requires inclusive practice such as:

- Family-centred practice
- Partnership working with educational professionals
- Multi-agency working with partners in health, social care and third sector organisations.
- Direct teaching

Why do deaf CYP need to be taught by QToDs?

A deaf CYP, regardless of their deafness levels, has a right to specialist input from a QToD. The needs of deaf CYP are complex and can be wide-ranging. This is also the case for CYP with a complex profile, where deafness may not be seen as their primary need. Being deaf is associated with major obstacles for CYP acquiring and developing fundamental skills. These obstacles can be reduced, or removed, if deaf CYP receive appropriate teaching input in an appropriate teaching environment. Some deaf CYP will have a statutory document outlining their needs and support needed to achieve their potential (in line with guidance as relevant to the nation in which they live) but the majority will not. QToDs are specialist professionals with experience and expertise in these areas:

- Impact of deafness on all aspects of life
- Social, emotional and mental health needs (SEMH)
- Language acquisition
- Specialist assessment
- Policy and practice – legislative frameworks
- Facilitating inclusion
- Communication
- Literacy
- Habilitation – independent living skills
- Social, sports and leisure - supporting deaf CYP to have opportunities to participate in social, sports and leisure
- Preparing for adulthood.

Where are deaf CYP taught?

Deaf CYP may be taught in a variety of settings. These include family homes, state, private and voluntary settings for children aged 0 – 5 years, mainstream settings (primary and secondary), specialist/enhanced provisions attached to mainstream schools, special schools for deaf CYP, local authority funded trust and free schools, other special schools, post 16 provisions, university. They may also work with children who are electively home educated or in health settings. A QToD may be working directly with deaf CYP in any of these settings.

What are the statutory requirements? – both for deaf children and the QtoD

Deaf children have a right^[1] to specialist input from a QToD from identification. QToDs are crucial in effectively delivering governments' commitments to supporting deaf children and upholding their rights under legislation, policy and the international conventions. This includes ensuring deaf children's rights under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child including Article 23 (support for disabled children), Article 28 (right to education) and Article 30 (minority language rights, including BSL/ISL) are upheld in the teaching of deaf children. QToDs also central to ensuring that deaf children's rights under Article 24 of the UN Convention on the Rights of People with a Disability (UNCRPD), which commits governments to recognise the right of persons with disabilities to education, are realised.

Teachers employed as ToDs who do not already hold the mandatory qualification (MQ) in childhood deafness are required to gain the qualification within a specified period of time^{[2] [3]}.

Health Authorities have a duty to inform local authorities (LAs) when deaf children are identified. LAs contact the deaf child's family to offer support. Specialist input may be identified as part of a statutory document. The various governments of the UK have long recognised the need for the mandatory training, and this dates back to the early 1900s.

Other supporting information

Further information and guidance can be found at the following websites:

1. [NDCS website](#)
2. [BATOD website](#) - Training as a QToD

Statutory

1. [England - Special Educational Needs and Disability \(SEND\) Code of Practice, Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014 Section 32 Children and Families Act 2014](#)
2. [Scottish Government - Additional Support for Learning Act Code of Practice](#)
3. [Special Education Needs Code of Practice - Northern Ireland](#)
4. [Additional Learning Needs Code of practice for Wales](#)

Supplementary information

Access supplementary information about how QToDs work via this [link](#).

^[1] NDCS Website: [Knowing Your Rights](#). Accessed 10th June 2024

^[2] [Scottish Government Guidelines](#) (2007). Accessed 10th June 2024

^[3] [UK Government Guidelines for England and Wales](#). Accessed 10th June 2024

Created - June 2022

Last updated - June 2024

Review date - June 2025