Consortium for Research in Deaf Education

2017 report for Northern Ireland

CRIDE report on 2016/17 survey on educational provision for deaf children in Northern Ireland

Introduction

In 2017, the Consortium for Research into Deaf Education (CRIDE) carried out its seventh annual survey on educational staffing and service provision for deaf children[1]. It covers the 2016/17 academic year[2]. This report sets out the results of the survey for Northern Ireland and is intended for heads of services, policy makers in local and central government and anyone with an interest in deaf education.

Responses were received from all 5 services in Northern Ireland, giving a response rate of 100%. CRIDE would like to take the opportunity to thank all the services for responding to the survey, despite the considerable time constraints to which many services are subject.

Summary of key findings

- There are at least 1,553 deaf children in Northern Ireland - a reported increase of 4% over the past year.
- 71% of school-aged deaf children attend mainstream schools. 2% attend mainstream schools with resource provisions, 2% attend special schools for deaf children whilst 24% attend special schools not specifically for deaf children.
- 36% of deaf children are recorded as having an additional special educational need. The most common additional need appears to be moderate learning difficulties.
- Around 8% of deaf children have at least one cochlear implant whilst 2% of deaf children have a bone conduction device.
- 3% of deaf children use an additional spoken language other than English in the home.
- 82% of severely or profoundly deaf children communicate using spoken English only in school or other education settings. 15% of severely or profoundly deaf children use sign language in some form, either on its own (1%) or alongside spoken English (13%).
- The most common post-school destinations for deaf young people are further education and higher education, with 30% taking either option.

[1] For the purpose of this survey, 'deaf children' were defined as all children and young people up to the age of 19 with sensorineural and permanent conductive deafness, using the descriptors provided by the British Society of Audiology and BATOD. We used the word 'deaf' to include all levels of deafness, from mild to profound.

[2] Reports from previous years can be found on the BATOD website at www.ndcs.org.uk (search 'survey') or on the National Deaf Children's Society website at www.ndcs.org.uk/CRIDE.

- There are at least 31.3 Teacher of the Deaf posts, of which 3% were vacant. Of the 30.3 staff working as Teachers of the Deaf, 87% held the mandatory qualification.
- The number of qualified Teachers of the Deaf in employment fell by 10% over the past year. It has fallen by 16% since the CRIDE survey started in 2011.
- 61% of peripatetic Teachers of the Deaf are over the age of 50 and thus are likely to retire in the next 10 to 15 years.
- There are at least 5.5 other specialist support staff working with deaf children in Northern Ireland.
- There are 3 resource provisions across Northern Ireland.

Interpreting the results

Services were asked to give figures for the position as of 31st January 2017.

The survey acknowledges that services and children do not always fit into the boxes or options provided. Services were able to leave comments or clarify where needed throughout the survey.

It is clear that many services still report difficulties in extracting data about deaf children in their area and there remain inconsistencies in how different questions are completed throughout the survey. The response rates to individual questions sometimes vary. **Therefore, the results should continue to be used with caution.** Any notable differences between the findings from this survey and those from previous years have been highlighted in the report. In 2016, after five years of conducting the survey and carrying out a substantial review, CRIDE made a number of significant changes to the questions. Caution is also needed due to differences in response rates to individual questions and potential mistakes in data provision between surveys.

Please note that all percentages have been rounded up or down to the nearest whole number. Please also note that where the number of deaf children for any category is fewer than 5, '<5' appears. In some cases, the total has been rounded up or down, as indicated by an asterisk. This is to avoid any risk of individual children being identified. In some cases, this means that totals in individual tables will not always generate the same sum total.

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PART 1: Deaf children in Northern Ireland

How many deaf children are there?

In 2017, services were asked to give details of deaf children living in the geographical area which they covered[3].

When giving figures for numbers of deaf children belonging, services were first asked to give an overall figure and then asked to provide a breakdown by level of deafness, age and educational setting.

Furthermore, 2 services later gave a figure for the number of children being supported by the service that was the same as the number belonging in the area. CRIDE continues to be concerned that some services may only be providing figures for children belonging that they actively support – i.e. children who do not receive support are not being recorded as they are unknown to the service.

Based on responses from the 5 services across Northern Ireland, **the total number of deaf children in Northern Ireland is 1,553**. This is up from 1,497 in 2015/16, an increase of 4%.

The smallest number of children living in the area reported by a service was 188 deaf children. The largest number reported was 491 deaf children. The average number of deaf children belonging in each service was 311.

The following table compares the total number of deaf children living in Northern Ireland with figures from previous years. As set out in the introduction, comparisons with earlier reports should be made with caution due to differences in the quality of the responses and response rates between the surveys.

Table 1: Number of deaf children reported, over successive years

	Number of children reported
CRIDE 2017	1,553
CRIDE 2016	1,497
CRIDE 2015	1,332
CRIDE 2014	1,574
CRIDE 2013	1,481
CRIDE 2012	1,249
CRIDE 2011	1,238

[3] The definition for this question was given as: "How many deaf children live in the geographical area covered by your service? The answer should include: All children who have a unilateral or bilateral sensori-neural or permanent conductive deafness, at all levels from mild to profound, using BSA/BATOD descriptors. Children with temporary deafness **should not be included** in your response to this question. We use the term permanent conductive deafness to include those children with a syndrome known to include permanent conductive deafness, microtia/atresia, middle ear malformation, or those who have had middle ear surgery such as mastoidectomy. It also includes those children with glue ear who are not expected to 'grow out' of the condition before the age of 10 years, such as those born with a cleft palate, Down's syndrome, cystic fibrosis, or primary ciliary dyskinesia. Under temporary conductive deafness, we include those children with glue ear who may have been fitted with hearing aids as an alternative to grommet surgery but who are expected to 'grow out' of the condition before the age of 10 years. All deaf children, regardless of whether they receive support from the service. Local authorities are subject to a legal duty to collect this information (in Q40 and 41, we ask about the number of children on your caseload). Children who attend education provision outside of your area but who normally live in your area.

What the survey tells us about the population of deaf children in Northern Ireland

The tables below provide breakdowns by age, level of deafness, and education setting.

Table 2: Number of children living in the area, by age

Age group	**Number of deaf children reported**	**Percentage of total**
Early years/pre-school	207	13%
Primary-aged	703	45%
Secondary-aged	570	37%
Post-16 up to the age of 19	73	5%
Total	1,553	

Looking at the number of reported 'post-16' deaf young people, two services do not report having any deaf young people in this category while two other services report only a very small number in this cohort.

Table 3: Number of children living in the area, by level of deafness

Level of deafness	**Number of deaf children reported**	**Percentage of total (where known)**
Unilateral	297	19%
Mild	477	31%
Moderate	459	30%
Severe	128	8%
Profound	165	11%
Total (excluding 'not known')	1,526	
Not known	27	
Total (including 'not known')	1,553	

Table 4: Number of children, living in the area, by educational setting

Type of educational provision		**Number of deaf children**	**Percentage of total (where known)**
In education authority region (EAR)	Supported only at home – pre-school children	135	9%
	Early years setting – pre-school children	70	5%
	Supported at home – of school age and home educated	<5	0%
	Mainstream state-funded schools	919	59%
	Mainstream independent (non-state-funded) schools (for example, Eton)	<5	0%
	Resource provision in mainstream schools	29	2%
	Special schools for deaf pupils (whether state funded or non-maintained)	23	1%
	Other special schools, not specifically for deaf children (whether state funded or non-maintained)	300	19%
	All other post-16 provision (**not** including school sixth form colleges)	0	0%
Out of education authority region	Early years setting – pre-school children	<5	0%
	Mainstream state-funded schools	35	2%
	Mainstream independent (non-state-funded) schools	5	0%
	Resource provision in mainstream schools	<5	0%
	Special schools for deaf pupils (whether state funded or non-maintained)	10	1%
	Other special school, not specifically for deaf children (whether state funded or non-maintained)	18	1%
	All other post-16 provision (**not** including school sixth form colleges)	0	0%
Other	NEET (Not in education, employment or in training) (post-16 only)	0	0%
	Other (e.g. Pupil referral units)	0	0%
Total (excluding 'not known')		1,555*	
Not known		0	
Total (including 'not known')		1,555*	

Table 5: Breakdown of types of educational provision, by whether in or out of home Education Authority region

Type of educational provision	**Number of deaf children**	**Percentage of total**
In education authority region	1,480*	95%
Out of home education authority region	75*	5%
Total (not including 'other')	1,555*	

Table 6: Breakdown of types of educational provision

Type of educational provision (regardless of whether in or out of local authority)	Number of deaf children	Percentage of total	Percentage of total school-aged children (i.e. excluding pre-school children and young people post-16)
Supported only at home - pre-school children	135	9%	
Early years setting - pre-school children	72	5%	
Supported at home - of school age and home educated	<5	0%	0%
Mainstream provision (including state-funded and independent schools)	961	62%	71%
Mainstream provision: resource provision	33	2%	2%
Special schools for deaf pupils	33	2%	2%
Other special schools, not specifically for deaf children	318	20%	24%
All other post-16 provision (not including school sixth forms)	0	0%	
Other (e.g. Pupil referral units, NEET)	0	0%	
Total	1,555*		
Total (excluding pre-school children and other post-16 provision and 'other')	1,345*		

Incidence of Auditory Neuropathy Spectrum Disorder (ANSD)

Three services gave a figure in response to a question on how many deaf children had ANSD in their area. Based on these responses, there are 9 deaf children in Northern Ireland with ANSD, 1% of all deaf children.

Due to newborn hearing screening protocols, ANSD is only reliably diagnosed in babies following test procedures undertaken in those who have spent time in Neonatal Intensive Care Units (NICU) and is not diagnosed following the screen used in the 'well baby' population. Universal newborn hearing screening has been in place across the UK since 2006. Figures provided through the newborn hearing screening programme indicate that around 1 in 10 congenitally deaf children have ANSD. This suggests therefore some under-reporting by services. This is probably due to under-identification of ANSD in older deaf children – those who did not receive newborn screening because they were born before the roll-out of universal screening in 2006, those 'well babies' who passed screening and were identified later, and those with acquired/progressive deafness who have not been tested for ANSD.

Incidence of additional special educational needs (SEN)

Three services were able to tell us how many deaf children had an additional SEN; they reported that the number of deaf children with an additional SEN is 552. This is 36% of the total of deaf children. Given that two services did not provide any data for this question, this is a relatively high proportion with additional special educational needs, compared to other parts of the UK, and much higher than the 20% reported in 2015.

Services were asked to give a breakdown by type of additional SEN. Services were asked to break down this figure by type of SEN, using the classification set out in DENI guidance for schools[4]. Only two services were able to provide a breakdown. One service indicated that there were 166 children with additional needs but did not identify what those needs while two services stated that it was difficult to provide accurate information on additional SEN, as service staff were not always made aware of the additional needs of children.

Table 7: Number of deaf children with an additional SEN, by type of SEN

	Number of deaf children with an additional SEN	**Percentage of deaf children with an additional SEN (where type of additional SEN known)**	**Percentage of all deaf children**
Dyslexia/SpLD (DYL)	<5	1%	1%
Dyscalculia (DYC)	0	0%	0%
Dyspraxia/DCD	0	0%	0%
Mild Learning Difficulties (MILD)	5	1%	1%
Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD)	176	32%	46%
Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD)	119	22%	31%
Profound & Multiple Learning Difficulties (PMLD)	8	1%	2%
Social, Emotional and Behavioural (SEBD)	0	0%	0%
ADD/ADHD (ADD)	8	1%	2%
Speech and Language Difficulties (SL)	6	1%	2%
Autism (AUT)	6	1%	2%
Aspergers (ASP)	5	1%	1%
Blind (BL) or Partially sighted (PS)	<5	0%	0%
Multi-sensory impairment (MSI)	<5	0%	0%
Physical (e.g. Cerebral Palsy (CP), Spina bifida and/or hydrocephalus (SBH), Muscular dystrophy (MD) or Significant accidental injury (SAI))	8	1%	2%
Medical Conditions/Syndromes (e.g. Epilepsy (EPIL), Asthma (ASTH), Diabetes (DIAB), Anaphylaxis (ANXS), Down (DOWN), Mental Health Issues (MHI), etc.)	39	7%	10%
Other	<5	0%	0%
Total	386		
Not known	166		
Total including those reported “not known”	552		

The figures suggest that the most common additional SEN is moderate learning difficulty, followed by severe learning difficulty and speech.

Separately, research[5] from 1996 suggested that 40% of deaf children have another “clinical or developmental problem”. However, this research uses a wide definition of additional “problems” (including, for example, eczema and cerebral palsy) whereas SEN is normally understood to refer to where children have a learning difficulty or disability, which calls for special educational provision to be made for

[4] www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/recording-children-special-educational-needs-guidance-schools

[5] Fortnum, H. Davies, A. (1997) Epidemiology of permanent childhood hearing impairment in Trent Region, 1985-1993 *British Journal of Audiology*, 1997, 31, 409-446

them. The definition of learning difficulty or disability includes where children have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of the same in age in schools within the local authority area. Again, the figures are therefore not directly comparable with those from CRIDE.

Deaf children with cochlear implants and bone conduction hearing devices

Services reported that 127 children (8% of deaf children) have at least one cochlear implant, up slightly from 7% when this question was asked in 2015. However, it should be noted that only four services provided this information in 2015, whereas all 5 services provided information in 2017.

Services also reported that 25 children (2% of deaf children) have a bone conduction device. This is the same as when the question was asked in 2015. Again, it should be noted that only four services provided this information in 2015, whereas all 5 services provided information in 2017.

Additional languages

Services were asked to provide the number of deaf children living in the area that are known to have English as an additional spoken language at home. All five services provided an answer to this question, reporting that there were 50 children known to have English as an additional spoken language (3% of the total deaf children reported).

Services were then asked to provide a breakdown of the total number of children who have a **severe or profound bilateral hearing loss**, living in the area, according to which languages are mainly used at school/other education setting. Previously, we have asked about children with any level of hearing loss. As we were keen to get a better sense of the use of sign language in children with severe or profound hearing loss, the question was narrowed in the 2017 survey.

Table 8: Number of severely/profoundly deaf children, by languages mainly used at school/other educational setting

Language	**Total**	**Percentage of responses (where known)**
Spoken English	238	82%
British Sign Language	<5	1%
Spoken English together with signed support	39	13%
Other combination	9	3%
Total known	289	
Not known	4	
Total including not known	295*	

Deaf young people post-16

Services were asked how many deaf young people left school at the end of the 2015/16 academic year. All five services responded to this question, reporting 66 deaf young people as having left school. This figure is lower than the number that we might expect to be leaving school. For example, we saw earlier that there are 570 secondary-aged deaf children, suggesting there are around 114 in each year. It is of concern that there appears to be a number of young people about whom services are not aware whether they have left school or not.

We also asked how many of those deaf young people had a transition plan that was informed by a Teacher of the Deaf. Only two services stated that there were young people who had a transition plan informed by a Teacher of the Deaf, amounting to 24 young people (36% of the deaf young people who were reported as having left school). Services were then asked to provide a breakdown of the destinations of the deaf young people who had left school.

Table 9: Post-school destinations

Post-school destination	**Number of young people**	**Percentage (where known)**
Further education (college)	9	30%
Higher education (university or higher education course at college)	9	30%
Training/apprenticeship	6	20%
Employment	<5	7%
Not in education, employment or training	<5	3%
Other	<5	10%
Total	30	
Unknown	<5	
Data not held	<5	
Total (including where unknown or data not held)	37	

We asked services if they support deaf young people in further education or other post-school destinations. Services were able to select all options that described their support. 60% of services stated they had no involvement which is higher than the 40% that stated no involvement the 2015 survey. 40% of services stated "Other"; in both cases the service provides information on the young person's hearing loss to the new setting as requested, and further advice can be requested from the setting.

Number of deaf children on services' caseloads

Earlier, this report looked at the number of deaf children who were known to live in the geographical area covered by the services. CRIDE also asked about deaf children on services' caseloads.

By asking about children on caseload, CRIDE means children who receive some form of support more than once a year. This definition changed from the question asked in 2016, when we asked about children receiving support at least once a year so we might expect a change in the data based on this wording change. Examples of support included direct teaching, visits to the family or school, liaison with the family, school and teachers, providing hearing aid checks, etc. Services were also able to include children

supported by the service but who do not live in the same geographical area for that service. Children with temporary deafness are also included in this question.

Based on responses from all five services, survey responses indicate that at least 1,205 deaf children with permanent or temporary deafness were on services' caseloads. The smallest number of children on a caseload was 49 and the largest was 509. The average was 241 children. This appears to be a reduction from 1,625 children on caseloads in 2016, but we are aware that some services may have underreported, and the change in wording of the question makes direct comparison to 2016 data difficult.

CRIDE asked services how many of the children on their caseloads had a temporary conductive hearing loss. Two services reported there were 52 children with temporary conductive deafness supported by their service. The other three services reported that there were no children with a temporary conductive hearing loss on their caseloads.

Assuming the figures are broadly comparable, if there are 1,553 permanently deaf children living in Northern Ireland and 1,205 on services' caseloads with permanent deafness, there are at least 150 deaf children who are not being supported by the service more than once a year. In other words, the figures suggest that 78% of permanently deaf children receive support from their local service. It does not automatically follow that 22% of permanently deaf children are not receiving any support at all; many may be receiving support once a year from a service or elsewhere from, for example, special schools for deaf children or resource provisions not managed by the service.

How do CRIDE's 2017 figures compare to School Census figures?

Because of the differences in how data have been collected, the different definitions used and the different numbers of areas data have been collected from, CRIDE recommends the following figures be used as a basis for further debate and analysis, rather than to reach firm conclusions.

School Census figures for 2016/17 identify 1,063 deaf children within the education system. Of these, 764 had a mild or moderate hearing loss and 299 had a severe or profound hearing loss. This represents an increase of just 2 from 2015/16 when the corresponding figure was 1,061 deaf children. The CRIDE survey has identified 1,553 deaf children, which suggests that the School Census is capturing fewer than 70% of deaf children identified by CRIDE. This may be due to the School Census only being likely to record whether a child is deaf when the deafness is the primary need and when they have been identified on the SEN spectrum.

Separately, the School Census reports that 498 have a statement. This equates to roughly half (47%) of the deaf children identified by the School Census and around 32% of those identified by CRIDE.

PART 2: Teachers of the Deaf and other specialist staff

The survey asked how many Teachers of the Deaf are working in different settings, including those in a peripatetic role and/or working in resource provisions. Figures are expressed as Full Time Equivalent (fte) posts; a 0.5 Teacher of the Deaf fte post could, for example, indicate that a person spent half of the standard 'working week' as a Teacher of the Deaf. For the first time, CRIDE also specifically and separately asked about Teachers of the Deaf who work mainly in a special school or college not specifically for deaf children or young people. However, as services in Northern Ireland did not identify any Teachers of the Deaf who fell into this category, figures will still be directly comparable from previous years.

In total, there are at least 26.3 FTE fully qualified Teachers of the Deaf in employment in Northern Ireland.

There are at least 30.3[6] teachers working as Teachers of the Deaf in Northern Ireland. 87% of these posts are occupied by a fully qualified Teacher of the Deaf with the remaining posts occupied by teachers in training (13%).

At the time the survey was completed, there was 1.0 FTE vacant post. If the vacant post is added to the total number of Teachers of the Deaf in employment, this would indicate there are at least 31.3 FTE Teacher of the Deaf posts, of which 3% are vacant. There were no reported vacancies in 2016.

It should also be noted that the below figures do not include Teachers of the Deaf in special schools, auditory implant centres, charities or any other settings.

The table below provides a breakdown by type of setting. It indicates that Teachers of the Deaf working in resource provisions are much more likely to be unqualified but in training for the post.

[6] It should be noted that when services were asked to give a breakdown of how many Teachers of the Deaf were employed by the setting they worked in, this generated a sum of 30.3. However, when services were asked in more detail about the number of Teachers of the Deaf employed by their level of qualification, a slightly lower figure of 30.1 was reported, giving a difference of 0.2 Teachers of the Deaf.

Table 10: Number of Teachers of the Deaf in employment overall

	Working mainly as a peripatetic Teacher of the Deaf (Total and percent)	**Working mainly in a resource provision (Total and percent)**	**Working mainly in a special school or college not specifically for deaf children or young people (Total and percent)**	**Working flexibly as a peripatetic Teacher of the Deaf, in a resource provision and/or in a special school or college not specifically for deaf children or young people (Total and percent)**	**Teacher of the Deaf posts overall (Total and percent)**
Teachers of the Deaf with the mandatory qualification	25.3 (97%)	4.0 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	29.3 (97%)
Teachers in training for the mandatory qualification within 3 years	0.8 (3%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0.8 (3%)
Qualified teachers without the mandatory qualification and not in training	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Total	26.1 (100%)	4 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	30.1

The following table looks at changes in the number of qualified Teachers of the Deaf in employment and posts over successive years.

Table 11: Changes in numbers of Teachers of the Deaf from year to year

	2010/11	**2011/12**	**2012/13**	**2013/14**	**2014/15**	**2015/16**	**2016/17**
Teachers of the Deaf with the mandatory qualification in employment	34.9	29.6	30	28.6	30.6	32.6	29.3
Number of teachers working as Teachers of the Deaf in employment	37.3	34.2	35	32.6	34.4	33.4	30.1
Number of vacant posts	1.3	0	0	0	0	0	1
Number of Teacher of the Deaf posts (including vacancies)	38.6	34.2	35	32.6	34.4	33.4	31.1

Table 12: Percentage change in numbers of Teachers of the Deaf

	Percentage change over past 6 years (between 2010/11 and 2016/17)	**Percentage change over past year (between 2015/16 and 2016/17)**
Teachers of the Deaf with the mandatory qualification in employment	-16%	-10%
Number of teachers working as Teachers of the Deaf in employment	-19%	-10%
Number of vacant posts	-23%	-
Number of Teacher of the Deaf posts (including vacancies)	-19%	-7%

CRIDE examined how many services had seen a change in the number of Teachers of the Deaf in the past year and found that all five services had seen a decrease.

CRIDE asked if services had experienced difficulties in recruiting Teachers of the Deaf to both permanent posts or for supply cover over the past 12 months. In both cases, no services reported difficulties in recruiting for a permanent post and one service reported no difficulties, with 4 services stating that this question was not applicable to them.

CRIDE also asked how many Teachers of the Deaf had an additional qualification in early years support. Overall, there were 2.8 Teachers of the Deaf with this qualification, amounting to 9% of the total of Teachers of the Deaf posts. All of the Teachers of the Deaf with this qualification work in a peripatetic role.

Services were also asked how many Teachers of the Deaf held an additional specialist qualification as an educational audiologist. Overall there were 2 Teachers of the Deaf with this qualification, amounting to 7% of the total of Teachers of the Deaf posts. All of the Teachers of the Deaf with this qualification work in a peripatetic role.

Age profile of peripatetic Teachers of the Deaf

Services were asked about the age profile of Teachers of the Deaf. This was in response to continuing concerns that the number of newly recruited Teachers of the Deaf is significantly lower than the number of Teachers of the Deaf retiring from the profession. If true, this could potentially lead to a 'capacity crunch' where there are insufficient numbers of Teachers of the Deaf to meet the needs of future deaf children.

The following table indicates that 61% of peripatetic Teachers of the Deaf are over the age of 50 and hence, likely to retire in the next 10 to 15 years.

Table 14: Age profile of peripatetic Teachers of the Deaf

	Number of peripatetic teachers	**Percentage of total**
Aged 49 or under	11.6	39%
Aged between 50 and 59	9.4	32%
Aged between 60 and 64	7.2	24%
Aged 65 or over	1.2	4%
Total	29.4	

Peripatetic Teachers of the Deaf caseloads

This section looks at the theoretical caseloads of each visiting Teacher of the Deaf by looking at the number of deaf children living in an area who are not already in specialist provision (regardless of whether they are receiving support or not). There are a range of views on both the usefulness of this and how best to calculate this ratio. Points to consider include:

- Areas that are large or rural may, by necessity, have more visiting Teachers of the Deaf than areas that are small and urban because of the need to allow for travel time.
- Areas in which there is a specialist unit or special school may have fewer visiting Teachers of the Deaf because it has been assessed that deaf children with most need are already in specialist provision.
- Services that are better able to reliably record and identify how many deaf children, including those over 16, are in their area may appear to have heavier caseloads than services which have only given a figure for the number of deaf children they 'know' about.
- The theoretical caseload does not tell us about the outcomes achieved by deaf children in the area.

In simple terms and for consistency across all parts of the UK, CRIDE calculates the theoretical caseloads by dividing the number of permanently deaf children living in any given area and in non-specialist provision[7] by the number of visiting Teachers of the Deaf who are qualified or in training for the mandatory qualification[8]. This will include some deaf children in some areas who are not being actively supported by the service. However, to exclude these children could produce a perverse incentive to improve the figures by reducing support. In addition, even where a service is simply monitoring a deaf child, this still requires time and effort from the visiting Teacher of the Deaf. Responses were excluded where there were gaps in either the number of Teachers of the Deaf or numbers of deaf children living in the area.

The CRIDE survey results show that each visiting (peripatetic) Teacher of the Deaf has a theoretical average caseload of 54 deaf children. The highest caseload found was 72 in one area.

Other specialist staff

The survey responses suggest that there are 5.5 FTE other specialist staff in total, all of whom were reported as working in resource provisions. 5.0 of these are Teaching assistants/Classroom assistants, and 0.5 are speech and language therapists. No specialist staff were reported as working in the peripatetic services, or flexibly between peripatetic services and resource provisions.

[7] This includes deaf children reported as being: supported at home (e.g. home educated or pre-school), in early years settings, in mainstream state funded schools, in mainstream independent schools, other special schools (i.e. those for disabled children more generally) or in post-16 provision. This excludes deaf children reported as being in mainstream schools with resource provision or special schools for deaf children.
[8] This excludes any teachers who are working as Teachers of the Deaf but who are not qualified nor in training.

PART 3: Support provided

Number of resource provisions

Services were asked about the number of resource provisions (whether in mainstream or special schools) in their area. Two services had a resource provision for primary aged children in their area, and one service had a resource provision for secondary aged children, giving a total of three resource provisions in three different services overall. This is the same number of resource provisions reported in 2016.

Eligibility criteria/frameworks

Services were asked if there had been any changes to their support allocation between the 2015/16 and 2016/17 academic years. Two services (40%) reported that there had been changes and three (60%) reported that there had been no changes. Where changes had been made, in both cases it was due to staff numbers decreasing, resulting in increased caseloads for staff.

CRIDE also asked how services determine the level of support. The majority of services in Northern Ireland continue to use locally developed criteria, but this year one service reported that they use the National Sensory Impairment Partnership (NatSIP) eligibility framework (formerly known as eligibility criteria) as a vehicle to help determine what support deaf children receive. In 2016 all five services reported that they used locally developed criteria.

Quality standards

Services were asked to report which quality standards they used to review service development. Services were able to tick more than one option.

Table 15: Use of quality standards to reflect on the service provided or to look at service development

	Number of services	**Percentage of services**
NatSIP: Quality Standards for Sensory Support Services in England (2016)	2	40%
Department for Children, Schools and Families (now Department for Education): Quality Standards for Special Educational Needs (SEN) Support and Outreach Services (2008)	2	40%
Newborn Hearing Screening Programme Quality Standards	2	40%
NatSIP Quality Improvement Support Pack (2016)	2	40%
Department of Health: Deafblind People: Guidance for local authorities (2014)	0	0%
Other standards	0	0%

PART 4: Background and methodology

CRIDE is a consortium bringing together a range of organisations and individuals with a common interest in improving the educational outcomes achieved by deaf children through research. At the time the survey was sent out, representatives included: the British Association of Teachers of the Deaf (BATOD), City, University of London, the Ear Foundation, the Ewing Foundation, the National Deaf Children's Society, the National Sensory Impairment Partnership (NatSIP), the former head of Frank Barnes School for Deaf Children, Mary Hare School, the specialist education service for deaf children in Kent and Norfolk, University of Edinburgh, University of Leeds and UCL.

The survey was designed and created by members of CRIDE. The CRIDE survey alternates between a full and a shorter survey from year to year. In 2017, a full survey was issued.

The survey was sent to the Education Authority to disseminate to services in Northern Ireland in February 2017. The survey was sent by National Deaf Children's Society staff on behalf of CRIDE. Services were able to respond by completing a Word document of the survey.

Analysis of the results using Excel and drafting of this report was largely completed by the National Deaf Children's Society, with guidance and clearance from members of CRIDE.

CRIDE would like to thank all services for taking the time to complete this survey and for their valuable comments and feedback, which will be used to inform the design of future surveys. The results from this survey will be used for research purposes, to influence government policy and to campaign to protect funding and services for deaf children.

If you have any feedback or questions on the results, please contact cride@ndcs.org.uk.

Annex: Information by education authority region

This table sets out some individual data from services. Services were asked to provide figures for the number of children and Teachers of the Deaf as of 31 January 2017.

Please note that 'No answer' indicates that no response to the relevant question was received whereas 'n/a' indicates that a response was not applicable (in most cases in the table below this is because the service does not have resource provisions).

References to Teachers of the Deaf should be taken to include those who hold the mandatory qualification or who are in training.

Table 16: Data by Education Authority region

	Number of permanently deaf children living in the geographical area covered by your service	**Number of children with permanent or temporary deafness on the caseload for your service**	**Number of children with temporary deafness on the caseload for your service**	**Teachers of the Deaf in the specialist peripatetic service**	**Teachers of the Deaf in resource provisions**	**Teachers of the Deaf mainly in a special school or college not specifically for deaf children or young people**	**Teachers of the Deaf working flexibly**
Armagh Office, Southern Region	285	285	29	4	0	0	0
Ballymena Office, NE Region	491	509	0	9.3	1	0	0
Belfast Office, Education Authority NI	235	41	0	4.2	1	0	0
Dundonald Office, South Eastern Region	354	182	0	6	2	0	0
Omagh Office, Western Region	188	188	23	2.8	0	0	0