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National Deaf Children's Society

Summer 2018
Issue 49



families

Preparing Jemima for school

“...we've tried to put as much as possible into place, so she isn't fazed by the transition.”





This is a warm, friendly school where young people are cared for exceptionally well. They enjoy each other's company, show exemplary behaviour and have trusting relationships with staff. They engage in a wide range of activities within the school and local community, such as swimming and cricket.

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and games that they can use. All residential pupils and students have the use of the school gym, the floodlit ball court and the all-weather floodlit football pitch under staff supervision.

Care staff support all age groups to make the most of facilities in Brighton, and regular outings to the park, beach, cinema, bowling and to eat out are planned and organised with pupils.

Save the date: Bike Ride and Summer Fete at Hamilton Lodge

23rd June 2018

Our summer fete is open to all and school tours are available. It will be held on our on-site playing fields in Brighton between 11am -4pm. There are refreshments and lots of free fun activities for all ages and abilities.

The Bike Ride finish line is at our Summer Fete – it is a long but lovely bike ride through the Surrey and Sussex countryside. To book or for more details on the bike ride please email fundraising@hamiltonlsc.co.uk.



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My deafness didn't stop me...

... becoming a musician and inventor



Myles



MYLES DE BASTION (33), WHO IS PROFOUNDLY DEAF, TURNED HIS PASSION FOR MUSIC INTO A SUCCESSFUL CAREER.

"I've been musical for as long as I can remember," Myles says. "When I was younger I was lucky to have a small window of sound when using hearing aids. I experimented with the cello, piano, trumpet, drums and saxophone before settling on the guitar aged 14. I was also drawn to the tactile and visual elements of music, for example the feeling of pressing down the keys on a grand piano."

After graduating with a degree in computer animation, Myles moved to America and joined a band. However his hearing loss was progressive and he began to miss musical cues and struggle in changing acoustic environments. "An idea came to me,"

When I was younger I was lucky to have a small window of sound when using hearing aids.

Myles explains. "What if I could create a lighting system that would visualise sound for me?"

With the help of other artists, Myles began by creating a seat to plug his guitar into which would light up and vibrate in response to his performance. Eventually he invented a sound-to-light system which he called

the Audiolux. This device creates an engaging multi-sensory experience and makes sound accessible through light.

Myles, who used speech growing up, also became more interested in the Deaf community and learnt American Sign Language (ASL) which is now his primary means of communication.

"In 2013 I realised I wanted to merge my passion for music and Deaf culture and founded a non-profit called CymaSpace," he says. "The mission of CymaSpace is to facilitate arts and cultural events that are inclusive of the deaf." 

 **To find out more about options for deaf young people post-16, visit www.ndcs.org.uk/leavingschool.**

Discover a journey of sound, music, and voice helping your little one learn to listen and communicate



Talking and singing is a natural way to bond with your baby and to develop their communication. But if you've recently learned that your baby has a hearing loss you might be unsure how to do that.

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The National Deaf Children's Society depends almost entirely on generous support from individuals and organisations. **The public is responsible for 95% of our income**, and without this we wouldn't be able to support families of deaf children and young people. See pages 44–45 for more information on supporting our work.

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Ryan's story
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**Meet our new
Young People's
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first weekend
together
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Ellie's story
how she's
thrived in the
world of work
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Hello



In this issue we're focusing on starting school. If your child is starting school for the first time in September then read Jemima's story on page 12 to find out how her parents are preparing her to start. There's plenty you can do to ease your child's transition to secondary school too and Amy shares her son Ryan's success story on page 16.

But there's a summer to enjoy first and we have advice on using technology for summer sports on page 30. Or if you're looking for a childminder to help care for your child then read our interview with childminder Tracy on page 27.

Problems sleeping can be common for deaf children, especially when out of routine. Parents offer tips on how to deal with this on page 22.

Happy summer and, as always, we'd love to hear feedback on this issue at magazine@ndcs.org.uk.

Karen

Karen Harlow, Editor
✉ magazine@ndcs.org.uk

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STORIES



Yesenia gains her independence

Yesenia (16) from Colombia was identified as deafblind at an early age. Growing up, she didn't go to school and her mother Marlen looked after her at home. Then Marlen found Colegio Filadelfia para Sordos, a partner of our international arm, Deaf Child Worldwide, and they both learnt Colombian Sign Language there.

The relationship between Yesenia and Marlen began to improve and Marlen's husband and younger daughter also learnt and used sign language at home. Yesenia learnt to communicate and improved her social and academic skills, and the family realised that she could become independent and have the same rights as others.

Marlen also became an active member of a parent group and shared her experiences with other parent groups and educational institutes across the country. The whole family are very grateful for Deaf Child Worldwide and Colegio Filadelfia para Sordos's support to transform their lives.

Deaf Child Worldwide gives vital support in East Africa, Latin America and South Asia, focusing on communities where the need is greatest. Working with partner organisations, we ensure that deaf children and young people are fully included in their family, education and community life. Find out more at www.deafchildworldwide.org.



Could our Development Grant help you?

Our Development Grant helped Millie Boo (11) with buying a radio aid which she could use while horse riding.

"Millie Boo took up horse riding as a form of equine therapy to help with core strength and balance," explains her dad Steven. "She now competes in events and in 2016 won the RDA Scottish Dressage Championships. Millie Boo has a radio aid at school but wasn't able to bring it home. Having her own radio aid has been a fantastic help, she can now hear her coach in the arena when riding. Competitions are much more enjoyable and interactive for her; it makes a huge difference to her life."

We're able to offer our Development Grant to deaf young people to help them pay towards the development of their skills. If you're 11–25 years old, you can apply now. Visit www.ndcs.org.uk/grants for more information.

Stay in touch with what's happening in Northern Ireland

We have a new Facebook page for families and local deaf children's societies in Northern Ireland. It's somewhere to ask us questions, seek more information, tell us your news and discuss issues surrounding deaf children and young people.

Follow or like our page www.facebook.com/NDCSNIreland and you will be the first to find out about all our events and training, including our new Communication is Fun and Family Sign Language sessions.

We'd also love you to share your news and events; we can't wait to hear from you!



Our new Borrow to Buy scheme

We're excited to announce that we've partnered with Phonak and have launched our new Borrow to Buy scheme. You're now able to borrow the latest Roger products from us, including radio aids and soundfield systems, and start using them within days of applying.

You can try the product for up to 90 days and then either buy it if you like it or return it to us if you don't.

Please visit www.ndcs.org.uk/technology for more information, or email us at technology@ndcs.org.uk.



Could you volunteer as a community support presenter?

We need volunteer presenters to support our Roadshow and Community Fundraising teams. As a community support volunteer, you'll help us to reach out to different communities and raise awareness of the work we do to support deaf children and their families. In this role you'll be volunteering in a variety of settings in your local area including schools, clubs, places of worship, Scout groups and other community groups. Most Roadshow visits and Community Fundraising events take place during school hours with occasional volunteering during evenings and weekends.

As a volunteer presenter supporting the Roadshow team, you will:

- deliver presentations in school assemblies and classrooms
- deliver presentations and support the Roadshow team on the Roadshow bus.

As a volunteer presenter supporting fundraising events such as talks, concerts and group meetings, you will:

- give short presentations about the National Deaf Children's Society or about your own experience of deafness (where appropriate)
- engage and inspire these groups to support us.

We'll support you throughout, giving you training in presentation skills, providing you with all the information you need and discussing each opportunity with you. We'll also reimburse expenses for volunteering.

If you're over 18, can volunteer during school hours and enjoy presenting to groups, email volunteer@ndcs.org.uk to request an application pack for either role.

Comment

Being safe online

The internet is a fantastic place and for most of us it's made life easier, quicker and opened our eyes to a world of exciting possibilities. For deaf children and young people, social media can also help them meet and communicate with others.

However while the internet has lots of benefits, we also need to make sure deaf children and young people are safe and supported when they go online as, unfortunately, they can sometimes be more at risk than their hearing peers. We know that they can be more willing to share information online, are more likely to be bullied and are often seen as vulnerable which can make them a target. Deaf children can also miss out on informal learning, such as playground talk about internet use, and may have lower literacy levels than other children their age. This means they might need extra help to use the internet safely, especially as information about privacy and safety features can be difficult to understand.

If you're worried about your child online, there are some simple things you can do. Start by talking to them and showing an interest in their friends and relationships online and offline. You can talk to them about what healthy friendships look like and ask them how they feel about their own friendships. You should also make sure they know where the reporting functions are on sites they use, how to block someone and how to keep their personal information private.

Please do have a look at www.ndcs.org.uk/esafety for more tips and ideas and let us know if you think there's anything more we can do to support you in this area.

Susan

Susan Daniels OBE
Chief Executive



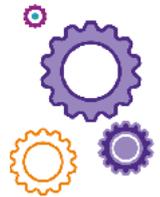
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SUPERSTARS



We found out Adalaide was profoundly deaf in both ears at seven weeks old. Within an hour we received a phone call from Heather Campbell who was to be our Teacher of the Deaf for four years. Straight away we had someone to express our worries, questions and concerns to. Heather soon became someone we treated as family. She was our rock and she'll always have a special place in our hearts.



Heather with Adalaide

– Alison, mum to Adalaide (5) who is profoundly deaf.



Martha

My daughter Martha's Teacher of the Deaf, Fran Sheratte, has gone above and beyond to help support us as a family. She

supports Martha at school and has attended audiology appointments, run training for school staff and helped Martha give sign language lessons to children at school.

– Tracy, mum to Martha (9) who is severely deaf.

Every day friends, family members and professionals go the extra mile to make sure deafness isn't a barrier to children enjoying life. Read on to find out about some of these superstars.

I'd like to thank Lottie Taylor, Teacher of the Deaf – Southwark, for her incredible support for my daughter Asher. She's been a rock to us, and my daughter would not be where she is today without her.



Asher

– Antoinette, mum to Asher (18) who is moderately to severely deaf.



Daya and Jasmine

My mum, or 'Nani', is grandmother to Anaya (4), Jasmine (1) and Daya (1). Jasmine is profoundly deaf and has several complex needs. At 11 months her

twin sister was diagnosed with stage 4 metastatic cancer. Mum has made huge sacrifices and taught herself British Sign Language aged 68. Most importantly she's looked after Jasmine's complex needs while we've been attending chemotherapy. She's not going to let anything get in the way of Jasmine's future. She's our superstar.

– Pamela, mum to Jasmine (1) who is profoundly deaf.

Julie Daynes, my daughter's Teacher of the Deaf at Sittingbourne Community College, leads an amazing support team. She got us referred to deaf Child and Adult Mental Health Services (CAMHS), which made a huge difference. It's not often someone makes a noticeable difference but she is much more than a teacher – she's our family guru too.



Megan

– Michele, mum to Megan (15) who is profoundly deaf.

My daughter Ellie was diagnosed with sensorineural hearing loss at birth and wears hearing aids. I want to thank Ellie's Teacher of the Deaf, Dawn Bevington, who has accompanied us back and forth to our many audiology appointments and is always willing to help.



Ellie

– Helen, mum to Ellie (7) who is moderately deaf.

→ NEXT ISSUE: Who is the superstar in your child's life? Has a friend or family member gone above and beyond for them? Or has their Teacher of the Deaf or audiologist given them exceptional support? Nominate someone you'd like to say a big thank you to by emailing magazine@ndcs.org.uk.

Comparing siblings is easy to do



“ But when Nancy surpasses our expectations for her hearing, I am on a high!

Raising Nancy:

the ups and downs of parenting a deaf child



Jess and her husband Matt are parents to Alice (6) and twins Nancy and Connie (4). Nancy is profoundly deaf and was fitted with cochlear implants at 20 months.

CONNIE AND NANCY ARE IDENTICAL, SO IT'S REALLY TEMPTING TO COMPARE THEM ALTHOUGH I KNOW WE SHOULDN'T! Connie is taller but Nancy has bigger feet. Connie could hear from birth whereas Nancy heard nothing until she had her cochlear implants aged two. But I do catch myself using Connie as a benchmark. Her speech and listening are far more developed than Nancy's. My hopes are often dashed when Nancy hasn't heard that we're off to the park and is still in the lounge playing Lego, while Connie waits at the front door with her wellies on. But when Nancy surpasses our expectations for her hearing, I'm on a high! Recently she coped magnificently in different listening environments, far better than her twin, which made me think more carefully about our hopes for her.

I had waited a long time to take Nancy to the theatre because I thought she wouldn't hear what was going on. But at nearly four-and-a-half I thought it was time; everybody else's kids were doing it and I didn't want Nancy to miss out. It was a performance of *The Ugly Duckling* and I took both Connie and Nancy. Mummy duck came sauntering onto the stage wearing a yellow shower cap. No duck costume in sight! How was Nancy supposed to know what was going on? But she sat watching, spellbound. She didn't even blink when a witch came on – she was so engaged with the performance. But Connie lost it; she was frightened and bawling her eyes out. She hid in the footwell of the seats. Nancy stayed mesmerised and at the end, when the Ugly Duckling opened

up her white umbrella and skipped away, with her face full of delight she shouted "Flying!" Connie hadn't even noticed the swan but Nancy totally got it, clapped enthusiastically and said, "I love it Mummy!" I don't know whether she understood the story but I needn't have worried. Nancy enjoyed the show because it was a visual masterpiece and that really taps into her strengths.

Last weekend Nancy and Connie were christened at our local church which, like most, has dreadful acoustics. We'd had a practice the day before so Nancy knew what was coming. Sometimes, as long as we pre-warn her about what's about to happen, it's easier for her to understand and therefore not get upset. I took off Nancy's implant processors and she didn't panic, but laughed as the water sloshed all over her face. When the vicar boomed, "Come and get your candles," she turned to me and squealed, "Candle," proud that she'd heard what was said, but Connie was all confused and yelled "Kangaroos?" which made us split our sides laughing. This time Nancy had been the one to hear everything correctly and from a microphone too!

Here's to more moments when Nancy achieves things on her own terms, and less of those comparisons with her twin! 📌

➔ For more information on accessible theatre shows for deaf children see www.ndcs.org.uk/theatre and for more information on cinemas showing subtitled films see www.ndcs.org.uk/cinema.



Missing out and fitting in...

SOMETIMES I FIND MYSELF JOLTED WITH SUDDEN ANXIETY when Molly mentions something she has missed or misunderstood during the school day. Even now I still expect her to follow everything and be as informed about what's going on as the next kid. Of course, it's not like that. She misses out in a hundred ways a day. Sometimes the repercussions are small and a quick word with her friend sorts it out. Sometimes the repercussions are big and she is told off by a frustrated teacher who thinks she is wilfully ignoring and not listening (the irony is toe-curling). Sometimes the repercussions are huge and she totally misses out on some vital piece of information leading her to go to the wrong place, miss the event or be left alone when the others have all charged off somewhere unknown.

All this can give me sleepless nights. Just how much is she missing? How will she manage? Is she forever going to be struggling with a world half-heard? But for Molly this isn't what worries her most. This causes frustration, sure, and often even tears, but the thing that really worries her is the issue of friendships.

Molly is 11 now and the hormones are really starting to kick in. More than ever she's acutely aware of wanting to fit in, but she feels different. And she is. Deaf kids are relatively rare. There are around 50,000 deaf kids in the UK out of a child population of more than 11 million. That means your deaf child, if educated in the mainstream system and not at a specialist deaf school, is likely to be the only deaf child in the school.

Molly looks different; she has two great hearing aids sticking out of her ears and she still hates it when people stare. Deep down she's different too. Molly is very observant both literally, in the detail she notices with her eyes, but also emotionally and mentally. She's scanning her environment all the time for clues as to what's going on. She notices things the other kids are oblivious of and this can give her a sort of knowing beyond her years. She has a deeper understanding of psychology and motivation than

“ She misses out in a hundred ways a day.

her peers. Other kids can find this disconcerting.

I try to help Molly. I say that we are all unique, bringing our particular gifts to the world. I say everyone's body is different – different abilities, shapes and sizes – and that what matters is our heart and spirit within. I say that everyone has their challenges and difficulties in life, we just can't always see them, and that people often try to hide those difficulties from others. I say that she has a wonderful view of the world.

But she doesn't really care about all that. At the moment, all she wants is to be the same as others, whatever that means... **i**

→ For more information about deaf young people and Deaf identity have a look at the section on www.buzz.org.uk.

Raising Molly:
navigating between
the deaf and
hearing worlds

Lara and her husband Henry are parents to Conrad (13), Molly (11) and Faye (7). Molly is moderately deaf and Faye has intermittent glue ear.





Early planning for a flying start

With their daughter Jemima, who is moderately deaf, going to school in September, James and Julie have been putting in preparation at home to give her the best start.

JAMES PLACES TWO GLASSES OF JUICE ON THE TABLE WHERE HIS DAUGHTERS ARE BENT OVER THEIR HOMEWORK, their identical school bags beside them. Jemima (4) looks over at Jessica (6) carefully writing out a sentence in an exercise book, then turns back to her own book and covers the page in big swooping curls.

She sits back smiling; happy with her work. Jemima can't write, she's not even started school yet, but James and Julie have encouraged her to get into the routine to help prepare her for a smooth transition when she joins her sister at mainstream primary in September. It's one of a number of measures they've put into place to help give her a head start. "We want her to be as familiar as possible with the idea of school so she won't be fazed; it will all fall into place for her," explains Julie.

Jemima was born with a sensorineural hearing loss caused by cytomegalovirus (CMV), a virus that can cause complications during pregnancy, but she wasn't diagnosed until nearly three years old, by which time she faced a challenge with speech and language. "It was quite a shock, we weren't prepared to be told 'she has moderate hearing loss,'" says James. "You don't know or understand what's in that world until it faces you. When she was given hearing aids we could see it made a big difference to her; it was very emotional for us.



Jemima's story
how her family are preparing her for school

“Jemima's 'speech age' at three was that of somebody much younger than herself.”

“She’ll be so used to it all by the time she starts.”

“Her Teacher of the Deaf (ToD) said Jemima’s ‘speech age’ at three was that of somebody much younger than herself. She gave us lots of ideas and information about how we could help her develop speech.”

James and Julie realised there was a lot of work to do to prepare Jemima for school. They went on one of our Starting School: Education Rights and Responsibilities weekends, and also to one of our technology weekends. “It was very useful and Jemima loved seeing other children with ‘hearing aids’ as she calls her hearing aids,” says James. “The weekend empowered us and made us better equipped to have a discussion with teachers about the support she needed.”

When Jessica started school, they moved Jemima to the school nursery from her private one with the support of the ToD. “It’s much more like school as it’s structured, with rules and set times for break, so it’ll be less of a culture change when Jemima starts school and she’ll be resilient,” says Julie. “And she already attends school breakfast and after-school clubs with Jessica while we’re at work so she’s even more familiar with the school.”

James and Julie have been building a relationship with the school way in advance of Jemima’s September start. They’ve had a meeting with the headteacher, set up by the ToD, about Jemima’s needs and the resources available to support her. Deaf awareness training is also being arranged for school staff by the ToD.

“The school has a very positive ethos around deafness, as they’ve had deaf pupils before, although this can cause some problems as the previous deaf pupils were profoundly deaf, so their needs were different,” says James. “The school were very supportive and suggested signing to Jemima – we had to explain she doesn’t use sign language and try to give them a more nuanced understanding of her needs.”

Jemima currently gets weekly visits at nursery from her ToD. She helped

get Jemima a radio aid with the school, which has meant she doesn’t have to be at the front and can sit with her friends. She’s still a long way behind her peers with her speech, which is a concern for James and Julie. So far she’s had just one speech and language therapy assessment and the couple are hoping she’ll get regular sessions. “She babbles away with complete confidence, unaware that no-one can understand,” says James.

“It does worry us – being unable to communicate effectively, as well as not being able to hear properly, means school will be a challenge for her. That’s why we’ve tried to put as much as possible into place, so she isn’t fazed by the transition.”

Jemima’s deafness has fluctuated from moderate to severe in the last year but James and Julie are hoping that with technology – her hearing aids and a radio aid, which they hope she’ll be able to take to school with her – she’ll be able to hear and her speech will progress.

“We’re lucky she has an older sister already at the school – I think this will be one of the things that helps her the most,” says James. “But I’d say to any parent it’s important to visit the school, talk to teachers, rehearse the whole routine, the morning walk, the homework, everything. It’s about managing the transition.

“She’ll be so used to it all by the time she starts. We try to build her confidence and encourage her to be positive and open about her deafness. We’re confident she’ll manage well and be resilient. She’s very strong-willed, and we think her character – mischievous, confident and sociable – will help see her through.” 

 **For more advice and tips and to download our free guide *Starting Primary School* see www.ndcs.org.uk/startingprimary.**

To find out more about our weekend events for families go to www.ndcs.org.uk/events.

Your new summer checklist for the early years

Join a local deaf children’s society

Local deaf children’s societies are a great way for families with deaf children to meet. They run a number of social events and activities in their local areas, such as day trips, parties and coffee mornings, and there are over 100 across the UK. The summer holidays are the perfect time to join and meet others in a fun and informal setting. Find out more at www.ndcs.org.uk/localgroups.

Learn about your local offer

Local offers in England are a good way of finding out about accessible activities near you. Our factsheet tells you more about where you can locate your local offer and what information your local authority should be providing you with. Download it at www.ndcs.org.uk/localofferfactsheet.

Going on holiday?

If you’re planning on travelling abroad this summer, don’t forget to check if you need travel insurance cover for any hearing technology your child wears. If your child has cochlear implants, you can contact your implant centre or provider in advance to find out about their travel spares or a replacement service. You may also be able to get your cochlear implant provider to write an official letter explaining why your child may not be able to go through the body scanners in the airport.





Putting the attendance record straight

When William (7), who is severely deaf, needed time off school after an operation, mum Hannah had to instigate a change in school policy so his attendance record wasn't affected.



William's story
why mum Hannah challenged his attendance record

AS HANNAH READ THROUGH THE LETTER, she was surprised to learn William's school attendance was now at 92%. The week he was absent to recover from a second operation for his bone-anchored hearing aid (BAHA), a type of bone conduction hearing implant, had counted against his record. When only a week later she received the headteacher's newsletter saying that children with 100% attendance would be entered into a prize draw, she immediately felt it wasn't fair that William would be excluded from this.

"William has the perfect attitude to learning and attendance," Hannah says. "He's never late, follows up on learning at home and is engaged in class." So, when Hannah saw the headteacher outside school, she took the opportunity to express her frustrations. "She was really nice, but explained they had Ofsted targets to meet," says Hannah. She was left with the promise that the headteacher would bring it up at the governors' meeting.

After everything William had been through with two operations, Hannah couldn't face telling him that he was now being penalised for having time off school. "It would be so demotivating for someone who loves school," she says.

Hannah, William and younger brother Nicholas (3) are British but lived in Sweden until October last year. "When William was two days old, one of the midwives told me they wanted the genetic specialist to look at him," remembers Hannah. "While I was waiting, I did my own research and worked out he probably had Treacher Collins syndrome and one of the symptoms of that is hearing loss."

Treacher Collins syndrome is a genetic disorder affecting the growth and development of bones and tissues in the face, including the ears, eyes, cheekbones and chin. For William it caused microtia (underdevelopment of the ears) and atresia (absence of the ear canal).

It would be so demotivating for someone who loves school.

I was really pleased – I was prepared for more of a fight.

“It wasn’t till he was three months old that we finally got the right type of hearing test done,” explains Hannah. “I then found out for sure that he had a severe conductive hearing loss and he got BAHAs on a softband.” Conventional hearing aids weren’t suitable because of William’s microtia and atresia, whereas BAHAs sit on the bone behind the ear and send sound vibrations directly to the inner ear through the skull bone, bypassing the absent ear canal.

When children are around four years old, they can have surgery to implant abutment screws into the skull bone which jut out through the skin for the BAHAs to attach to. “The doctor in Sweden who fitted William’s abutments was working on a trial for new semi-implantable bone conduction implants,” says Hannah. “I wanted William to be part of that trial, but it kept getting delayed so we decided not to wait and went ahead with the surgery for the existing BAHA system last May when he was six.”

William’s surgery was quick and he recovered well. But because the bone has to knit around the implanted abutments before the BAHAs can be attached, he had to continue with the softband for three months. Unfortunately, this initially gave him headaches because there was a slight swelling at the operation site and he had to wear the band differently.

In August William began using the BAHAs on the abutments and took to them really well, so it was very bad luck that in September his brother Nicholas knocked him badly and dislodged one of the abutments from his skull bone. “By then he absolutely would not wear the softband,” remembers Hannah. “So he only had one hearing aid for four months until he could have a further operation, which was a bit stressful. It was hard for him to tell where sounds were coming from; I really noticed the change.”

In December, after the family had moved back to the UK, William had

the operation. Fortunately he’d had a sleeper (extra) screw fitted during the first procedure which the bone had already knitted around so this was straightforward.

Although William prefers the abutments to the softband, he has sometimes felt it’s unfair that he’s had to have operations that Nicholas hasn’t. Therefore Hannah felt very strongly that he shouldn’t be penalised for missing school. Luckily, the outcome of the governors’ meeting was positive and they agreed to change the rules. “Now, anyone who gets 97% attendance and above will go into the prize draw,” explains Hannah. “But if you have any absences due to a medical condition or medical appointment, you can ask the school for that not to be counted against the child’s attendance record. I was really pleased – I was prepared for more of a fight.”

Hannah’s had plenty of experience advocating for William – making sure he gets the very best services and opportunities. “I’ve done a lot of research,” she says. “We are the experts and we’ve had to be very clear about what we wanted and what was best for him.” She’s also found hearing about the experiences of other parents really helpful. “Don’t just rely on medical professionals to know all of your options,” she advises. “Use social media – there are fantastic community groups.”

Hannah’s constant struggle to give William the best chances has really paid off. “He loves school and learning, is a self-confident boy and is doing really well,” says Hannah. “He’ll no doubt achieve whatever he sets his mind to, and currently, that’s to become a vet.” 

 **To find out more about missing school for medical appointments, visit www.ndcs.org.uk/absence.**

For more information on bone conduction hearing implants go to www.ndcs.org.uk/bchi.

Your new summer checklist for the primary years

Flying with glue ear

If you’re going abroad on holiday this year and your child has glue ear, you might be worried about them flying. We have advice on this and ways you can help to make flying more comfortable for them, but make sure you visit your GP beforehand if you’re still having concerns about taking your child on an aeroplane. www.ndcs.org.uk/glueear

Making activities deaf-friendly

During the summer holidays your child may attend sports, arts or leisure activities. We have information that you can pass on to the club or organisation to make sure they’re fully including your child. www.ndcs.org.uk/deaf-friendly

Communicating in the car

The summer holidays can mean long car journeys to visit relatives or perhaps the seaside. Communicating in the car can be difficult for deaf children, especially if they’re trying to interact with someone in the front seat and so can’t see that person’s face, lip patterns, gestures or signs. We have tips for improving communication in the car and lots of suggestions for technology such as loop systems, radio aids and streamers that could help. www.ndcs.org.uk/communicatingincar





Taking secondary school in his stride

Amy was worried about her son Ryan's transition to high school, but planning and preparation have helped make it a brilliant success.



Ryan's story
how he settled in to secondary school

“We were scared he'd struggle, a small fish in a big pond.”

AMY HEARD THE FRONT DOOR SHUT and her son Ryan (13) appeared in the kitchen, grinning and waving a piece of paper. “He'd been given five merits in one day for working hard and getting the maths questions right,” says Amy. “He was so pleased.”

Ryan was doing so well at secondary school and it was a relief for Amy and his dad Robert – they'd worried about him moving up. “We were scared he'd struggle, a small fish in a big pond,” says Amy. “But in the end it was me who was anxious, Ryan didn't bat an eyelid!” That's thanks to a raft of strategies they put in place to help smooth the transition.

Diagnosed as profoundly deaf at 18 months old, Ryan had a cochlear implant at two-and-a-half. A second implant at age six really helped focus his listening skills and improved his speech. Ryan attended a mainstream primary school with a hearing-impaired (HI) unit. He became friends with five deaf children in the year above but when they left for secondary school he was the only deaf pupil.

Aged nine, Ryan was diagnosed as mild to moderately autistic. “Like many deaf children, he's a very visual learner and the diagnosis opened up opportunities for visual learning for him and acceptance of strategies to support his learning needs,” says Amy.

Ryan was eager to go to secondary school. “He's always been in a race to grow up,” says Amy. “He's tall and strong for his age; that's important to him, it's like a replacement for being unable to hear. He was impatient to get to year 6, to be allowed a mobile phone and residential trips, and the limo ride at the end-of-year disco – milestones that made

“ Ryan has a big opinion, certainly when it comes to things that affect him!

him feel he fitted in.” So the move to a mainstream high school with a HI unit couldn’t come soon enough, but careful preparation helped things go smoothly.

Amy visited the school and met all of his teachers to make sure they were aware of his needs. Ryan’s Teacher of the Deaf (ToD) put together a portfolio of his work to send ahead of him and the secondary school ToD visited Ryan to get to know him. Ryan went on an induction day at the school with his class, which helped familiarise them with orientation. He also made other visits on his own six times over three months, including a fun day with the year 8s and 9s.

In July Ryan’s high school ToD organised an outing to an outdoor centre for Ryan and other deaf children, where they went on boats and did an outward bound course. It proved a good team building day and a great confidence booster.

Before the September transition, she arranged for Ryan to do evening sessions of English and maths with other deaf children, and more sessions after term started. Through speech and language therapy Ryan practised social situations he might come across, for example ‘What would you say to someone if you were lost?’ They also looked at things like safety in science labs and what to do when getting lunch, including using a biometric thumb print system.

“It all helped Ryan’s confidence,” says Amy. “The school gave him a booklet about the HI unit. It has two classrooms and soundproof ‘pods’ for sessions with support workers and to sit exams. His ToD organised deaf awareness training and a radio aid for Ryan. And he was happy to be reunited with his deaf friends from primary.”

Ryan’s just finished his second year and Amy is thrilled with his progress. “He’s really thrived. I get a weekly report from his ToD about what he’s been doing and any issues. There’s very open communication,” says Amy.

“Ryan finds homework difficult but the school is supportive. They

recognise that he thrives on ongoing support so he attends homework club twice a week, which reduces stress at home. He’s started going to science club too; it’s helped his integration with his peers as it’s all fun experiments.”

“He hasn’t got a massive group of friends. He’s still quite isolated from his peers and tends to stick to deaf children from the HI unit. At lunch and breaktimes he can’t cope; it’s too much but they can take hearing friends to the unit, and he’s invited a few. It’s a real hub of activity.”

The successful transition has helped Ryan hit his teens confident and sociable. He’s a talented swimmer, competing in his local borough squad and is the under-14 champion in four strokes in the GB Deaf Swimming Club. “Swimming boosts his self-esteem and puts him on a level-pegging with his peers; in the water you wouldn’t know he was deaf,” says Amy. “He’s also got a hearing dog, Harris, which has helped him make friends. Another child at school has a hearing dog and they meet up.

“He’ll talk to anyone about Harris, about swimming, about how tall and strong he is – though the minute the conversation switches to last night’s TV, or skateboarding, he’s lost.”

But his confidence is growing all the time. When Ryan announced his choices for his GCSE options Amy couldn’t help chuckling. “He chose maths!” she says. “Maths is compulsory, but he was determined it’d be his choice! Ryan has a big opinion, certainly when it comes to things that affect him! He’ll find GCSEs tough, might have to retake some or do a parallel year. But he’s excelled at maths the last two years, and he chose B-Tech Sport and Photography – he’s very visual and has a good eye so I’m sure he’ll do well.” 

 **For more information and to download our free guide Starting Secondary School see www.ndcs.org.uk/startingsecondary.**



Your new summer checklist for the secondary years



Videos of deaf teenagers

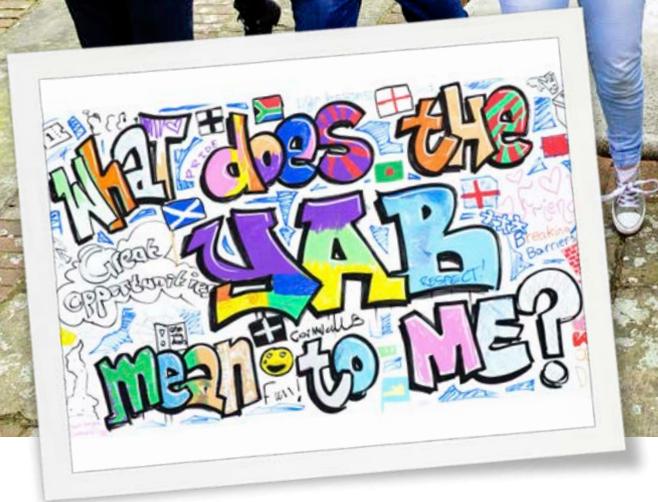
We’ve got lots of inspiring videos on our YouTube channel from deaf teenagers. Some of our deaf vloggers talk about issues that affect them every day and there’s also videos about the world of work, travelling and university. Your child might find it useful to watch how others are overcoming any barriers they face. Visit www.youtube.com/ndcswebteam and search ‘Videos for deaf teenagers’.

Bullying

Most deaf children enjoy their time at school but deaf children can be more susceptible to bullying than their hearing peers. Bullying can take many forms and can happen at school or other places such as sports groups and after-school activities. It’s important to know how to support your child if they’re being bullied and how to work with the school or activity to make sure the bullying is dealt with effectively. We have information to help at www.ndcs.org.uk/bullyingguides.

Going to the cinema

Watching and chatting about films is often a big part of a child’s life growing up. It shouldn’t be any different for deaf children so we’ve worked with the Cinemas Association to make sure subtitled films are available during weekend children’s club screenings at Cineworld, Vue and Odeon. Find out more at www.ndcs.org.uk/cinema.



“I didn’t need to try so hard to fit in”

Members of our new Young People’s Advisory Board (YAB) share their experiences of their first residential weekend together, travelling, being away from home and meeting other deaf young people who want to make a difference.

During their first residential weekend (‘resi’) the YAB members got to know one another through games and sharing their experiences, thoughts and feelings on being a deaf young person today.

Each YAB gets to choose a campaign they feel passionately about, and following discussions about areas of life that need improving, they vote on their own campaign. This year’s YAB picked improving careers advice for deaf young people.



FRANCESCA (15), SEVERELY DEAF

I had an amazing time – I finally felt like I didn’t need to try so hard to fit in because everybody is trying to involve everybody, which is really nice for a change!

I liked the speech-to-text in real time; it was really helpful in filling in the bits I missed with lip-reading. It was a bit weird because I only have experience of living in a hearing world, so to meet loads of deaf people was incredible and did make me feel that I had a place in the Deaf community, and that I had a Deaf identity, especially when we chose/showed our sign names!



LUCY (15), PROFOUNDLY DEAF

I found travelling to the residential scary as I usually travel with my mum – I was most nervous about not being able to hear the tannoy at the airport.

On the first morning I could see other people with hearing aids and implants but was too worried to talk to them. The second morning was great; we all sat together chatting. I had met other deaf people before but at the weekend it was really different because there were lots of people with implants who were the same age as me. I wasn’t the only one.



**SARAH (16),
MODERATELY
DEAF**

The coolest thing about the weekend was meeting lots of people and making new friends so quickly. It was great being able to talk about problems that not many people can understand.

The activities were relaxed and fun; the leaders were a lot more deaf aware than teachers at my school. There was less background noise and the palantypist was very useful because I could understand what was being said a lot easier! I learnt that deaf people communicate in many different ways and that there is no wrong way to communicate!



**ADAM (15),
MODERATELY
DEAF**

The first time meeting everyone was nice and easy as we all got on so well – I felt like I had known these people all my life.

For me, meeting other deaf children from around the UK was amazing because it's all of us coming together to help create a better future for our generation and to raise more awareness of the deaf world.

The different methods of communication used throughout the weekend were amazing. It didn't matter if you only knew a little British Sign Language, or were fluent, we all helped each other grow in confidence.

**Your new summer
checklist
for deaf
young
people
aged 15-18**



Technology for music

You can try out a wide range of products for free using our Technology Test Drive service. Why not try the iLoop+? It plugs into your child's phone, they put the loop around their neck, switch their hearing devices to the T-setting and then they can listen to music or make phone calls. Find out more at www.ndcs.org.uk/techformusic.

An inspiring YouTube channel

If you're stuck inside on a rainy day over the summer holidays there are lots of useful videos for your child to watch on YouTube. Vlogger Rikki Poynter makes videos about deaf awareness, accessibility, mental health, and lots more. If your child is looking for videos about life as a deaf young person or more information about Deaf culture, Rikki has hundreds to watch. www.youtube.com/rikkipoynter

My Life, My Health

Everyone has to visit the doctor sometimes but lots of deaf young people struggle with going along on their own and have to take a parent with them. We have information to help your child book their own appointment and feel ready to visit the doctor on their own. Visit www.buzz.org.uk/mylifemyhealth.



**ZAIN (14),
PROFOUNDLY
DEAF**

Being a deaf young Muslim of Bengali and Pakistani heritage, I believe challenges are an opportunity for me to show resilience and to strive towards being the best I can be. This drove me to want to join the YAB to make a difference in other deaf people's lives.

When I first arrived I was slightly nervous about meeting other deaf people and how we'd communicate, but I had a good time and we all communicated efficiently.



**MOLLY (15),
PROFOUNDLY
DEAF**

When I arrived in London I was really nervous. I was excited to have my own hotel room as I want to be more independent. The only problem was I forgot my Sonic Alert alarm clock so I didn't wake up on time!

I found it hard to watch everyone's lips as they were talking really quickly; by the end of the first afternoon I was really tired. On the second day people realised I was finding it hard so spoke much slower. I hope the YAB members who don't sign will learn so we can sign together. I really enjoyed giving people sign names.

WHAT IS THE YAB?

- The YAB was introduced in 2011 to make sure that deaf young people are directly involved in shaping our services.
- The current YAB is made up of 19 deaf young people aged 13-16 with different levels of deafness and a range of communication preferences.
- Members were appointed in December 2017 and will be in post until January 2020.
- A key part of the YAB's role is to raise awareness about what's important to deaf young people today by leading on a campaign of their choice.
- They will have six residential weekends to get to know each other, explore ideas around deaf identity, learn new skills, build confidence and independence and develop their campaign.

Find out more about the YAB and what they're getting up to at www.buzz.org.uk.

Our Technology Test Drive loans out equipment for free that can help deaf young people travel and stay away from home with confidence. www.ndcs.org.uk/techdrive



Workplace wonder

Working together with her colleagues, Ellie (21) is happier than ever in her office job.



Ellie's story
how she's thrived in the world of work

STANDING IN FRONT OF HER COLLEAGUES DELIVERING DEAF AWARENESS TIPS,

Ellie was confident that she'd found a workplace she'd feel at home in. As someone who enjoys being creative, working in marketing at a health club and spa is perfect for her.

But it hasn't been straightforward for Ellie, who is profoundly deaf, wears hearing aids and communicates using speech and lip-reading. Both her and her mum Lindsay put her success down to hard work throughout her school years.

"We never found out why Ellie was born deaf," Lindsay explains. "There was a day when she was eight months old and I dropped some saucepans and she didn't flinch. We took her for hearing tests and she had her first hearing aids at 10 months old."

"It was hard work and determination all the way through my school years," Ellie, who went to mainstream schools, says. "I was catching up with school work every weekend. I got really tired lip-reading at school and had a lot of concentration fatigue."

But the hard work paid off for Ellie; she studied German, Textiles and Media at A-level. "My school wanted me to go to university but I found studying at school challenging so didn't feel it was right for me. I thought I'd get a job with a view to training through an apprenticeship instead."

Ellie first started work as a marketing apprentice but didn't complete the apprenticeship because the office wasn't very accessible. "I tried to educate my colleagues," Ellie explains. "But they didn't understand that I needed support. They thought 'You're old enough, you can do it by yourself.'"

Don't let your deafness hold you back, try and be confident and show them what you can do.

They let me do deaf awareness training for my colleagues.

Ellie could have challenged the apprenticeship managers to make reasonable adjustments for her, under the Equality Act 2010, but with support from her family, she decided to leave and find a new job. Since then, she's given a talk at her old school explaining that sometimes one opportunity might not work out but it's not the end of the world, you just need to find a different route.

"When I started at the health club and spa I work at now, my confidence was quite low," Ellie says. "But they asked me how they could make things right in the office. They let me do deaf awareness training for my colleagues. I explained they needed to stand in front of me when they speak, always get my attention first and speak normally, not in raised or exaggerated voices.

"One thing I found particularly difficult was being unable to use the phone. Now if someone calls for me, my colleagues know to tell them to email me. Little things like that have made a big difference."

In her role, Ellie designs posters, works on marketing campaigns and social media and enjoys having the freedom to be creative. "The social side of work is good too; my colleagues are good at involving me in chats," Ellie says. "It's a small office so there isn't too much noise. I'm quite lucky, there are only three people in most of my meetings. If there were more, I'd probably use my radio aid."

One thing that Ellie has found challenging in the past is applying for jobs. "Some people say you have to put deafness on your CV but I don't really agree with that," Ellie says. "I told my current manager I was deaf in my interview and they were fine with it. I think they were more impressed with my portfolio."

"It isn't easy," adds Lindsay. "But Ellie had a long interview with a disability advisor at the job centre and she said that you don't need to put deafness on your application."

Ellie works part-time in marketing and spends the rest of her time running a successful blog. "I love writing blogs about being deaf and all the obstacles we overcome. I like

to flaunt my hearing aids like fashion accessories. I hope deaf people will see them and it will inspire them.

"I've had so many great opportunities because of my blog. I got sent to Texas for the Good Vibrations Music Festival. It was brilliant; they had vibrating backpacks, live captions for the music and coordinating light shows; you could really relax and enjoy it. I've also been to the House of Commons for a hearing loss event and was an Olympic torchbearer!"

Ellie's blog's motto is 'deaf people can achieve anything they dream of, given the right support' and she is committed to inspiring others to work towards their own dreams. "If other deaf young people are worried about working in an office, I'd say don't let your deafness stop you from doing anything. Don't think about why you can't do it, just give it a go and see what happens," Ellie says. "I might not be able to answer the phone but I can always write an email. Employers like to see you being proactive and coming up with a solution. Try and be confident and show them what you can do."

"I'm so proud of Ellie," Lindsay adds. "She's come so far and worked so hard. It's not been easy but now she inspires people and she's a great role model. Nothing ever stands in her way." 

You can find Ellie's blog at www.deafieblogger.com.*

*Please note we promote blogs that we think might be of interest to our readers but the opinions expressed in them are not necessarily our own.

 **To find out more about support at work, including Access to Work (funding for support in the workplace) and information on the Equality Act 2010, see www.ndcs.org.uk/employment.**

To find out how technology can help in the workplace visit www.ndcs.org.uk/technologyatwork.



Your new summer checklist for deaf young people aged 19-25

Planning to go to a festival?

Lots of young people will be planning to visit a festival this summer and it can be just as enjoyable if you're a deaf young person. The *Huffington Post* lists what you can expect from most festivals including a free ticket for a carer, special viewing platforms and even British Sign Language interpreters or induction loops. They've also got tips to read before you go. Go to www.huffingtonpost.co.uk and search 'going to a music festival if you're deaf.'



Gap year opportunities

VoluntEars arranges overseas volunteering trips for deaf people of all ages. Their trips have the support of an experienced BSL communicator and allow you to visit places such as Ghana, Nepal and Sri Lanka with the potential to work at their partner deaf specialist schools. Visit www.voluntears.info for more information.

Personal Independence Payment (PIP)

PIP replaces Disability Living Allowance (DLA) for adults and young people aged 16 or over who have difficulties with daily living or getting around. PIP isn't affected by any other money your child may have and can be claimed whether or not they're working or studying. To find out more visit www.ndcs.org.uk/PIP.



How do I... help my child sleep?

Sleeping problems are common in deaf children. Here, parents offer their advice on how they help their child to get a good night's sleep.



“**Something else which helps is having some light in the room.**”

➔ For more tips on sleep visit www.ndcs.org.uk/sleep.

To find out more about hearing dogs go to www.hearingdogs.org.uk.

Vicki is mum to James (17), who is profoundly deaf and wears a cochlear implant and a hearing aid, and Damian (14), who is severely deaf and wears hearing aids.

When they were small, both of our boys were worried about sleeping. We'd try to get them to sleep in the back of the car but they wouldn't sit there in the dark as they couldn't see us. It was particularly hard work with James, our eldest, as we didn't realise initially that it was his hearing that was causing the issue.

It might be difficult to do but we adopted the approach of a book and a cuddle in bed until they fell asleep. Then we reduced it to a cuddle and a book and I'd sit on the bed until they fell asleep. Then it became

a cuddle, a book and I sat on a chair in the bedroom until they fell asleep and then finally the last move was to sit outside the room.

They both had a light in their rooms so they could see us if necessary. They have both now said it helped them realise they were in their rooms when they woke up and they didn't feel as disorientated as they would have had they been in the dark and not able to hear or see anything.



Janis is mum to Martha (6), who is severely deaf and wears hearing aids.

Sleeping through the night is an ongoing struggle for us with Martha; some weeks we have more success than others. One of the things that's helped is making Martha's bed really cosy and warm. She has a crescent moon shaped pillow which cocoons her and her favourite soft toy perfectly. We also make sure she's tucked in well as feeling cold will wake her.

Something else which helps is having some light in the room.

Understandably Martha finds waking up and not being able to hear or see anything disturbing, so we make sure she always has enough light to orientate herself. She has a Gro-Clock by her bed; this casts a reassuring blue light, with a moon face on the clock, throughout the night. At 6am the moon turns into a yellow sun and after that Martha knows she can come in to our bed for a cuddle and a snooze.

When Martha's sleeping deteriorates, we find a reward chart helps get things back on track. She earns a star every

night she stays in bed until the sun shows on her clock. When she's got around 20 stars, she gets a small toy or one of the My Little Pony or Peppa Pig magazines she loves.



Andi is mum to Emma (6), who is severely deaf and wears a hearing aid.

It's really important to keep an eye on the stories they're reading or things they're watching. Emma's imagination is wild; we found out even My Little Pony could be scary at times, so now we're very careful and make sure to explain to her what's real and what isn't.

We stick to a routine every day; bath time, story time, cuddles and then sleep. We bought a Mum and Me Baby Sleep Tight Balm which we apply every night; in Emma's mind this is a magical cream which helps her sleep.

We requested support from Emma's school, Teacher of the Deaf, family and friends and you wouldn't believe how things began to change. It also really helped to explain to Emma that mummy and daddy needed to sleep too. We told her how much we love her but at the same time we were just exhausted. I also explained how important sleeping is for brain development – she wants to be a doctor so she needs a fresh brain every day to absorb new knowledge!



Fay is mum to Ellis-Marie (11), who is severely deaf and wears hearing aids.

Ellis-Marie was a very happy baby whose deafness never bothered her but about age three we started having major sleeping issues. She would scream when it was bedtime as she was scared to be alone, even with a nightlight on. She would refuse to remove her aids and constantly wet the bed.

I saw a TV interview about hearing dogs when Ellis was six and thought it was a fantastic idea, just what we needed. I applied for one but realised it would take a while as the dogs were only just being trained. So instead I decided to look for a small breed which was easy to care for and self-train. We found a Lhasa Apso puppy from a local breeder and called her Teacup.

As soon as Ellis saw her, there was instant love and she's Ellis's best friend. From the start she slept in Ellis's room and we encouraged her to take her aids out as the puppy was scared of the buzzing noise they occasionally made. It took a bit longer to stop her waking up during the night but knowing Teacup was by her side in bed was eventually her security blanket. Getting a dog is the best thing I've ever done!



→ JOIN OUR FAMILY PANEL

Next time in *Families* magazine: **How do I... help my child with their homework?**

If you have any tips, advice or suggestions to share, get in touch at **magazine @ndcs.org.uk**.

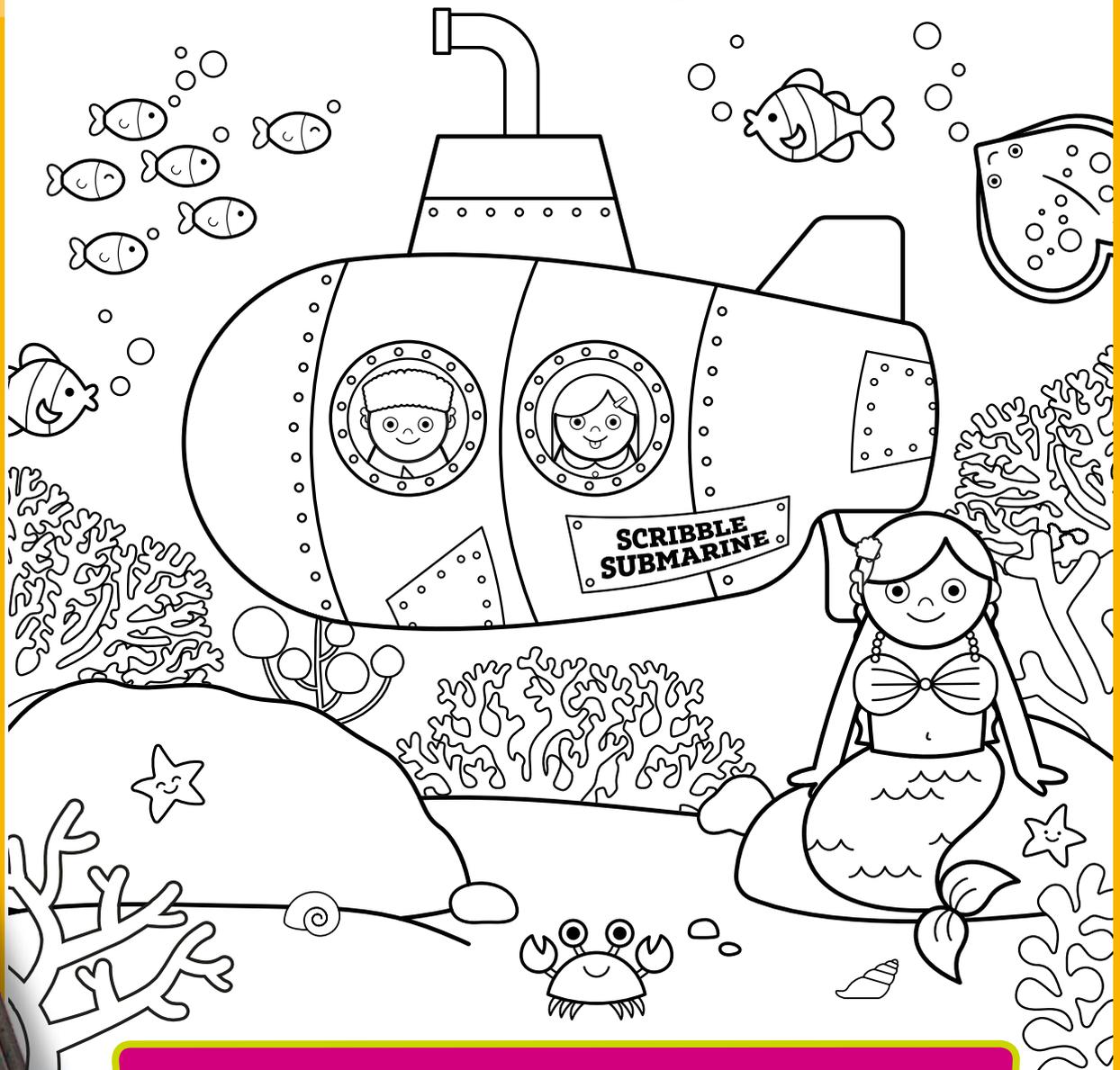


Tear out these pages, give them to your

Welcome to Scribble Club, our activity section for deaf children just like you.



Colour in



Wow, there's lots going on underwater! The Scribble Club children have gone right to the bottom of the ocean in their submarine and found a mermaid with a very special shell cochlear implant! Colour in the picture and see what else you can spot.



ur child and let their **creativity** run wild!

Spot the difference



Take a close look at these two pictures of children trying out exciting technology on our Roadshow bus – can you tell what's changed in the second one? There are five differences. How many can you find?



If you want to arrange a Roadshow visit for your school, go to www.ndcs.org.uk/roadshow. We welcome requests from young people and families and we can then speak to your school to arrange a date to visit.



British
Sign
Language

Small
Classes

Speech
and
Language
Therapy

Teachers
of the
Deaf

Residential
and Day
Places
Available

Outstanding
Children's
Home



Doncaster School for the Deaf

Established 1829

Leger Way, Doncaster DN2 6AY

jgoodman@ddt-deaf.org.uk | www.deaf-school.org.uk

01302 386733



Tracy

ask the expert

“Ask lots of questions – any good childminder will be more than happy to answer them.”

Each issue a different professional shares their expert advice and gives information to help you support your child. This time Tracy Stobie, an Ofsted registered childminder, who cares for children with her husband, shares her insights.

What's your experience of caring for deaf children and what do you enjoy most about it?

I've worked with one deaf child since he was nine months old – he's now almost four. He wears hearing aids in both ears. I also care for five other children, all under four. I feel like I'm really making a difference, not only to the deaf child and their family but to the other children who learn to have such a positive view of deafness.

How can parents check that a childminder is good?

Look at Ofsted reports – all registered childminders in England are inspected by Ofsted (CSSIW in Wales, Care Inspectorate in Scotland, Health and Social Care Trusts in Northern Ireland) – to make sure they meet the childcare standards set by the Government. To register, childminders must attend training, including paediatric first aid. Every childminder (and assistants) needs a DBS check (Disclosure in Scotland or Access NI: Criminal Record Check in Northern Ireland).

How do you help deaf children develop their language and communication skills?

We learn through play – singing, stories and cooperative play. We use visual aids, give instructions one at a time and use signs with all the children. We also do one-to-one activities with the deaf child, given to us by his speech and language therapist. We model good listening and praise the children when they do too. As our childcare setting is also our home, our rooms have soft furnishings that improve acoustics and we limit music and television to reduce background noise.

How do you support their social development?

The children become very good friends. We celebrate each child's strengths and differences and play with toys that show deafness positively, like teddies wearing hearing aids. During group activities, they save a space opposite me for

their deaf friend, as they know he needs to see my mouth when I'm talking, and our games involve turn-taking and teamwork.

How do you work with parents to support the child?

Sharing information is vital – we use records, diaries, text messages and chatting at drop-off and collection. Before a child starts with us I visit the family at home to see what the child is like and to discuss their needs with the parents, and they all get to know me too. Review meetings for the child are held at my home and all the professionals who work with them attend.

What would you say to parents who are considering a childminder?

Ask lots of questions – any good childminder will be more than happy to answer them. Registered childminders in England follow the Early Years Foundation Stage, so you can feel confident that your child will learn and develop in line with nurseries, while also benefitting from a home-from-home environment.

→ To find out more about childcare options for your deaf child and about your rights in different parts of the UK, visit www.ndcs.org.uk/childcare.



Education changes for special or additional needs in the UK



There are different education systems in place in each of the four nations across the UK – and Governments are continuing to make changes...



England

A number of big changes were made to the special educational needs system in 2014 including:

- replacing statements of special educational needs with new Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans
- a new 0–25 framework, with new rights for young people in some areas
- requiring local authorities to set out a Local Offer of the support they expect to be available.

More recently the Government has announced a two-year pilot where parents will be able to ask Tribunals to consider any issues in their child's EHC plan around health and social care where previously they could only look at education issues.

Amid these changes, the Government has been very clear that the changeover to the new system shouldn't lead to any reduction in support.

Over the last few years, local authorities have been busy implementing these changes but it's clear that many have been struggling. For example, all statements should have been converted into EHC plans by the end of March 2018 but we know that many local authorities failed to meet this deadline or produced rushed EHC plans that were of poor quality.



If this applies to you or you'd like more information about the changes, contact our Freephone Helpline or visit www.ndcs.org.uk/sen.



Wales

At the end of last year, the Welsh Assembly passed a new law which will replace all current learner support plans and statements of special educational needs with Individual Development Plans (IDPs).

IDPs will be available for 0–16 year olds and for those in further education aged under 25. The changes will be phased in between September 2020 and 2023. Until then, IDPs will not be legally enforceable and your current rights to request a statement will remain in place.

We're keen to make sure the new law and accompanying regulations work for deaf learners and their families and we've been doing lots of campaigning in this area. We're pleased to have seen a positive response to a number of our key concerns, including a commitment to a national IDP template and the development of deaf-specific guidance for learner assessments. We're now talking to the officials drafting regulations on the new law.



To read more about our campaigning work in this area and the upcoming changes, please visit www.ndcs.org.uk/IDPWales.



Northern Ireland

Northern Ireland's special educational needs (SEN) system has been under review for many years. In 2016 the Assembly finally passed the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Act. This introduces a new SEN framework for any child in school up to the age of 19. It aims to:

- improve early intervention
- ensure the child is listened to in the process of decision-making
- shorten the time taken for a child to be assessed
- introduce a new mediation process for when there is disagreement about support.

However, while the Act has now been passed, we're still waiting for the Regulations, Code of Practice and training

for staff and school governors. The Regulations and Code of Practice can't be issued until the Assembly has reconvened and there's a minister in post. This means it will probably be at least September 2019 before the framework is in place. Until then, your child's current rights will still apply.

We've been campaigning since the SEN review began. The good news is that deaf children are still within the threshold for a statement and there will still be a robust annual review and appeals process.



We're still pressing to make sure the Code of Practice reflects the needs of deaf children and will be keeping a close eye on developments. For more information email campaigns@ndcs.org.uk.



Scotland

Scotland already has a separate additional support needs system which has been in place for many years.

More widely, major reforms to the education system are being considered following the Education (Scotland) Bill 2018. The legislation aims to give more power to headteachers by putting schools in charge of key decisions covering:

- the curriculum
- school staff and management structure
- the creation of new regional collaboratives to support best practice among teachers
- strengthened engagement with young people and parents in school life.

These reforms are based on the presumption that decisions about children's learning and school life should be taken at school level.

How deaf education services will operate within the proposed education structure is still unclear. We've asked for clarity on how the Government will ensure the necessary knowledge and understanding of the needs of deaf pupils and the specialist support they may require will be available at school level. However we also think that a regional approach is an opportunity to help create more equal access to high quality specialist support services for deaf pupils across Scotland.



We've urged the Scottish Government to fully consider the needs of deaf pupils within the review and will be closely following the progress of the legislation. For more information email campaigns.scotland@ndcs.org.uk.



Supporting your child's education over the summer



✓ Developing literacy and maths skills

For ideas and activities to help develop your child's reading, writing and maths skills over the summer, see our resources *Helping Your Deaf Child to Read and Write* and *Helping Your Deaf Child to Develop Early Maths Skills*. There are booklets for different age groups.

www.ndcs.org.uk/schooleducation

✓ Vocabulary

Ask your child's school for a list of key vocabulary for each subject for next term so you can go through it with your child before they come across it in lessons.

✓ Exam information

If your child will be taking public exams in the next two years (GCSEs/ standard grades, AS/A-levels/ Highers), ask the school which exam boards they're using and have a look at their websites. They contain useful information such as exam timetables and grade boundaries, as well as topics to be studied. www.ndcs.org.uk/exams

✓ Moving on from school

If your child is starting college or an apprenticeship or going to university next term, visit www.ndcs.org.uk/leavingschool.



Technology for summer sports

Summer is a great time for enjoying sport but sometimes this can cause extra challenges for deaf children. Here we discuss how technology can help.

RADIO AIDS are the big winners for use in sports. A radio aid can help reduce the impact of background noise and send an instructor's feedback straight to your child's hearing devices.



"Before we got the radio aid, Harry used to miss instructions and would really have to focus on his rugby coach to hear what was being said. He's so much more confident now because he can concentrate on the actual sport rather than the coach.

"The radio aid is also invaluable for cycling on the road. Before we had to cycle two abreast and Harry would have to look at us to receive instructions. Now he can go in front or behind and still hear what's being said – it's so much safer and enables him some independence."

– Fran, mum to Harry (7) who's mildly to moderately deaf and uses a Roger Touchscreen Mic and Roger X receivers.

"Fencing competitions are noisy with loud spectators. The acoustics are further hindered by large echoing sports halls and protective masks. David's radio aid has given him the confidence to take part and the ability to hear the referee's instructions. He's now a Scottish youth fencing champion."

– Claire, mum to David (10) who's moderately to severely deaf and uses a Roger pen and integrated receivers with his hearing aids.



If you don't have a radio aid at home, streamers used with clip-on microphones can be a solution. Streamers wirelessly send the sound from the microphone to a child's hearing aids or cochlear implants. Lots of manufacturers of hearing devices have developed specific streamers. For example, if your child has Phonak hearing aids, they can only use a Phonak streamer called the Compilot. There are different models of the Compilot, each compatible with different hearing aids. They'd wear this around their neck and their sports coach or instructor would wear the Compilot's clip-on microphone which sends their voice to the child's hearing aids via the streamer. Oticon's Streamer Pro 1.3A works in a similar way.

If your child has Cochlear's cochlear implants you may be able to use Cochlear's Mini Microphone. It sends your voice straight to your child's implants without the need for them to wear something around their neck.

There's lots of mainstream technology that's not designed for deaf people but may help your child enjoy sports. Think about what your child's challenge is and how technology could help to overcome this. For example, if your child enjoys rock climbing but can't hear the instructor's voice when on the wall, a laser pointer might help if the instructor uses it to point out the next hold.



SWIMMING WITH COCHLEAR IMPLANTS

Being the ultimate summer sport, swimming deserves special attention. The acoustics of indoor swimming pools can make it difficult to hear and children may not be able to wear their hearing devices in the pool. Unfortunately, while many hearing aids are described as splash-proof or water resistant now, we don't have solutions to make hearing aids suitable for submersion yet.

If your child has cochlear implants, there are waterproof accessories that can allow them to use their implants in the pool. For example if your child has an Advanced Bionics Naída cochlear implant, you can get the waterproof and shockproof Aquacase. The processor goes in the Aquacase, which is a small box that can be clipped on to clothing or worn on an armband, and your child would also need the AquaMic headpiece and AquaMic cable to connect the headpiece to the processor in the Aquacase. Advanced Bionics' Neptune cochlear implant is fully waterproof.

Cochlear also has a few solutions for its cochlear

implants. The Nucleus 7 can be used with the Aqua+, which is a silicone sleeve for the sound processor. Your child would also need the specific Aqua+ coil and cable to safely enjoy any kind of water activity. Cochlear's Kanso cochlear implant can be used with the Aqua+ for Kanso, and the Nucleus 5 and 6 also have a special Aqua+ sleeve.

MED-EL has WaterWear covers for its Sonnet, Opus 2 and Rondo cochlear implants. All parts of the implants fit into this cover so there's no need for a waterproof headpiece.

To keep cochlear implants in place and not lose them in the pool, you can put a stronger magnet in the coil or wear a swimming cap over the implant.

Unfortunately radio aid receivers, such as the Roger X, can't be used in the water. But if your child has the Cochlear Nucleus 6 or 7 or the Kanso, a solution might be to use Cochlear's Mini Microphone. If the swimming teacher is not in the water, they can clip the microphone to themselves and stream speech directly to your child's cochlear implant.



Megan

"Our daughter uses Cochlear's Mini Microphone along with Aqua+ and it has helped transform swimming lessons. With the Mini Mic she has a direct wireless feed from the microphone, which is worn around the instructor's neck, to her cochlear implants. She can be fully submerged underwater and still hear the instructor clearly. The Mini Mic has a range of seven metres but the new Mini Mic 2+ has an impressive 25 metre range.

"It's a great product. As the child doesn't need to wear anything extra around the neck, it's ideal for most sporting activities."

– Gavin, dad to Megan (5) who is profoundly deaf and has Nucleus 7 cochlear implants.



➔ To find out more about the wide range of technology that could help your child go to www.ndcs.org.uk/technology or to borrow a product from our Technology Test Drive loan service go to www.ndcs.org.uk/techdrive.

Reviews

Would you or your child like to write a review for Families magazine? Email magazine @ndcs.org.uk.

Books and products for deaf children... Tell us what you think!



A-Z Islamic Signs in BSL

Written by Aminul Hoque and Habiba Khanam and illustrated by Rahima Begum

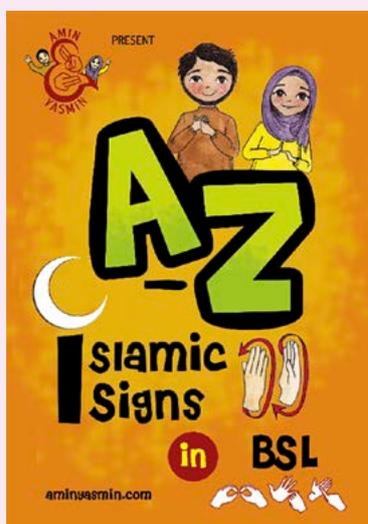
Amin & Yasmin Ltd (2017)

Available from **Amazon**, **Shopify** and **Waterstones**

£9.99

5-10

11-14



A-Z Islamic Signs in BSL is published by Amin & Yasmin Ltd, who have put together a 'unique journey' showcasing an A-Z of Islamic signs in a fun and engaging manner.

Both my son, Adam, and I thought the book was an extremely helpful resource for Muslim families with deaf members who want to introduce their children to British Sign Language (BSL) by using the example of everyday Muslim words and phrases. We thought that the vocabulary used in the book was extremely relevant, both in everyday use

and during religious ceremonies and occasions.

The sign vocabulary was well illustrated through the culturally diverse pictures of different Muslim children, as well as being well accompanied by the instructions and Arabic translation. I would definitely recommend this book to any Muslim families with deaf children who are starting to teach their children BSL. It would also be helpful in religious schools to help teach hearing pupils how to interact with their deaf Muslim counterparts in BSL.

-Altaf, dad to Adam (12) who is profoundly deaf and wears cochlear implants.



Adam

→ Key

This resource could be most suitable for the following ages:

0-4

5-10

11-14

15-18

19-25

“ The Roger pen cuts out a lot of the background noise.

Videomail

With the **videomail.io** website you can send short videos directly from your webcam by email, useful if you want to send a message in BSL.

Available at **videomail.io**

🆓 Free

11-14

15-18

19-25

The Videomail website is for BSL users who aren't confident using English to communicate. So what does it do? It allows a BSL user to record themselves signing using a webcam, then they can send it to the receiver of their choice by putting in their email address.

It's useful for many different situations – for example emailing people about jobs, volunteering, interviews, applications, surveys and everyday conversation too. However it's only useful if the receiver understands BSL as well.

The website is free to access and the name is easy to remember. I found it easy to use and the FAQ section is easy to understand too, which is important. It's useful as it can be used for anything and sent to anyone. The sender doesn't have to be deaf to use it and a deaf person can request this as a method of contact if they want to (again, depending on whether the other person understands BSL).

However some downsides are that the quality of the video depends on the quality of your webcam and the video can't be more than three minutes long.

– Frankie (18) who is profoundly deaf and uses BSL.



Frankie



Suzanne and Edward

Phonak Roger pen

The Roger pen is a radio aid transmitter that looks like a pen. Like other radio aids it works with a receiver (or receivers) and allows your child to hear speech more clearly.

Available to borrow from our **Technology Test Drive** (www.ndcs.org.uk/techdrive) or buy from **Connevens** (www.connevens.co.uk).

🔄 Price variable

0-4

5-10

11-14

15-18

19-25

Because Edward was wrongly diagnosed with autism which was classed as his primary need, we struggled to get a radio aid provided for him. We eventually managed to get him reassessed and we got a radio aid for use in his school. Edward's got speech, language and communication delays and the radio aid made such a big difference to his listening and communication at school. Unfortunately we weren't allowed to take the radio aid home but with financial help we managed to get a Roger pen and two Roger X receivers for home.

The Roger pen helps Edward with a lot of activities. At Cubs he's in a wooden hut and the Roger pen cuts out a lot of the background noise. He's very independent and gives the pen to whoever is talking. If they split into groups, he just passes it around. Edward also does gymnastics and performing arts. The coach and instructor wear the Roger pen on a lanyard and can speak to Edward in a calm voice and give him instructions without needing to pull him aside and out of the group. It's easier for him to listen to them and his concentration has improved so much. We also connect it to the TV, an iPad or iPhone and then the Roger pen acts like headphones for him.

The Roger pen is also great for parents. If we're at the playground or in a busy place, I just talk to him through the radio aid and don't need to shout. It's absolutely fantastic! I don't want us to ever be without it.

– Suzanne, mum to Edward (9) who is moderately deaf and wears hearing aids.



📞 Freephone 0808 800 8880
 ✉️ helpline@ndcs.org.uk
 💬 www.ndcs.org.uk/livechat

Helpline



Q Our baby daughter was born prematurely and we've just been told that she's deaf. We're pretty shocked at the news. We have our first audiology appointment soon – do you have any suggestions about what questions we should be asking?



Congratulations on the birth of your daughter! There's no right or wrong way to feel following the news that she's deaf and it's understandable that you're feeling shocked. It can take time to come to terms with and you may feel you have lots of information to take on board.

You may find it helpful to have a look at our website and download our booklet, *My Baby Has a Hearing Loss* from www.ndcs.org.uk/baby. This includes information about what you can do to help your baby and details the support available to you.

We'd also suggest reading the information on our website about hearing tests. You can download our booklet *Understanding Your Child's Hearing Tests* from www.ndcs.org.uk/hearingtests and there's also some suggested questions you may wish to ask your audiologist.

It can be difficult to take in all the information the audiologist gives you following the diagnosis. Don't worry if you forget to ask something or if you find you can't remember everything you've been told. Many audiology teams are happy to speak to parents following appointments and provide reports.

Besides your audiologist, there are other professionals who can support you within health, education and social services. You can find out more about them at www.ndcs.org.uk/people. A key professional will be your Teacher of the Deaf. It's likely that the audiology team will have already made a referral for you but do ask if it hasn't been mentioned to you. Visit www.ndcs.org.uk/tod for more information about the support Teachers of the Deaf can offer.



Special Educational Needs Reform – England: Frequently Asked Questions

What type of information is it? An updated factsheet that is available to download from www.ndcs.org.uk/sen or order from our Freephone Helpline.

Who's it for? Parents of children and young people with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities in England.

What's it about? The Children and Families Act 2014 came into effect on 1 September 2014 and changed the way children and young people with SEN and disabilities in England are supported in education. This factsheet answers your questions about the legislation and may be particularly helpful if your child still has a statement of special educational needs.

You might also like: *Special Educational Needs (SEN) Support: Meeting the needs of deaf children and young people without an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan (England) factsheet.* www.ndcs.org.uk/sen





What's new from us?

Talking to your deaf friends

What type of information is it? A poster and postcard which can be downloaded from www.ndcs.org.uk/deafawarenessresources or ordered from our Freephone Helpline.

Who's it for? For deaf children and young people to give to their hearing friends to help them be more deaf aware or for anyone who wants to promote deaf awareness among hearing children and young people.

What's it about? Both the poster and postcard give five top tips for communicating with your deaf friends and the information on the back of the postcard challenges some of the misconceptions around deaf people such as 'deaf people can't enjoy music.'

You might also like: Our Look, Smile, Chat resources which aim to improve hearing children and young people's understanding of deafness and how to communicate with deaf people. www.buzz.org.uk/looksmilechat



Home education

What type of information is it? Web content which can be found at www.ndcs.org.uk/homeeducation.

Who's it for? For parents of deaf children who may be considering home schooling their child or want more information about it.

What's it about? The webpage explains what home education is, what your legal rights are and whether you need any qualifications to home school your child. It also explains more about exams and following the National Curriculum and lists other places you can go for more support if you're home educating.

You might also like: What are your child's rights in education? www.ndcs.org.uk/educationrights



JOIN SOUND OUT AND HELP MAKE OUR INFORMATION EVEN BETTER

Join Sound Out, the new name for our network of people affected by childhood deafness who want to improve outcomes for deaf children. There are loads of ways you can get involved and help us improve our information, services and publications. We need reviewers, people to take part in surveys and focus groups and families to share their stories or simply tell us what else they need. Go to www.ndcs.org.uk/soundout for more information.

If you've registered on our website www.ndcs.org.uk you can order or download publications: click Family Support and then Order and view our publications. Or contact our Freephone Helpline on **0808 800 8880** (voice and text) or email helpline@ndcs.org.uk.



An Outstanding School with a bilingual philosophy...

Where our children Learn, Grow and Flourish

Frank Barnes
School for Deaf Children

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Frank Barnes
School for Deaf Children

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Local support groups

In
your
area

Pat is the Chair Person for her local support group Orkney Deaf Children's Society. She's mum to Leila (5) and Eloise (3) who is profoundly deaf.



Five minutes with...

... Orkney Deaf Children's Society

I JOINED MY LOCAL DEAF CHILDREN'S SOCIETY BECAUSE...

I wanted there to be something for our children on a more local basis. As a mother of a deaf child I wanted to make sure all deaf children in our community have a positive childhood and minimise any isolation or barriers they might experience in a rural area. Having a local deaf children's society has not only meant we have a brilliant local group but we're now linking in with other groups so we have a wider support network.

I'M PART OF THE COMMITTEE BECAUSE...

I want to contribute to understanding deafness in the local community and doing lots of fun things. For me it's essential to link in with other parents of deaf children to know that you're not alone.

THE THREE WORDS I'D USE TO DESCRIBE MY GROUP ARE...

passionate, diverse and fun.

THE MOST IMPORTANT THING I'VE LEARNT FROM BEING PART OF THE GROUP IS...

to get everyone's point of view before making a decision. We're very lucky to have a committee who have very different backgrounds including parents of deaf children, a hearing support teacher, a head of children's services, a primary teacher and deaf adults.

MY FAVOURITE MEMORY OF THE GROUP IS...

the launch party. Although we didn't really know each other it was a great buzz and we all had a fun time. The local deaf children's society from Highland also came to support us which was the beginning of some special new friendships.

OUR MOST POPULAR EVENT IS...

the Santa Fun Run. It was a bit daunting and a lot of hard work organising this event. However we were very lucky to get sponsorship for it, which raised funds and also awareness of deafness and the group through local radio, newspaper and social media. It brought the whole community together and everyone had lots of fun. Everyone keeps asking what date next year's event will be!

I'M MOST PROUD OF... having the whole community behind us and constantly being told that we're doing a good job!

OUR FUTURE PLANS INCLUDE...

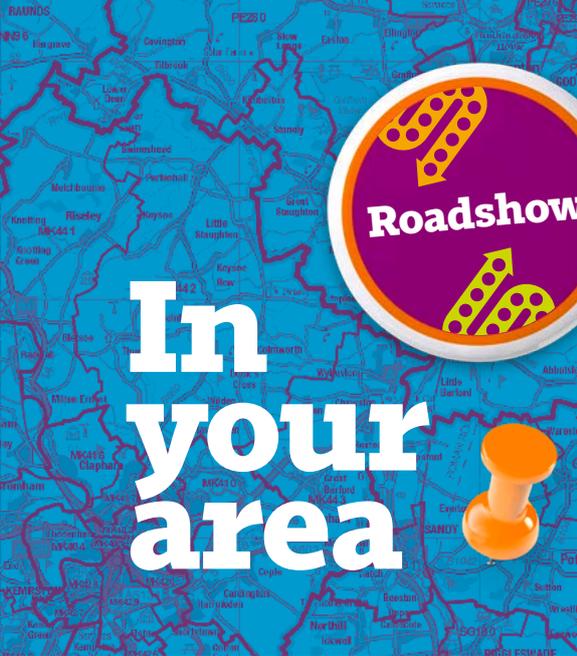
a trip to the local alpaca farm, where we get to feed and pet the animals, and a diving event in the sea with a local diving team where the children will get one-to-one instructors at one of the World War II wrecks. We're also linking with Grampian Deaf Children's Society and joining them for a residential weekend at an outdoor activity centre.

IF WE HAD UNLIMITED FUNDS I'D LIKE TO... teach everyone Sign Supported English which we think is beneficial to everyone and fun to learn.

EVERYONE SHOULD GET INVOLVED IN A LOCAL SUPPORT GROUP BECAUSE...

it feels really good to give something back; also to see the children having lots of fun without deafness being an issue.

➔ To find out more about local support groups and to find your nearest one go to www.ndcs.org.uk/localgroups.



In your area

Kelly, mum to Thom (4) from Belbroughton Primary School in the West Midlands, got in touch with the Roadshow team to request a visit. But it wasn't just Thom who benefitted, the whole school enjoyed their day.



→ You don't have to wait for your school or college to request a visit from our Roadshow. We welcome requests from young people and families and we can then speak to your school to arrange a date to visit. To book a visit, go to www.ndcs.org.uk/roadshow.



“It was a brilliant opportunity for both deaf and hearing students.”

“THOM COMES FROM A HEARING FAMILY and is the only deaf child in a mainstream school so I felt it was really important for him to be able to meet deaf role models. Also lots of his friends' parents had been asking how they could best support Thom and teach their children to be more deaf aware.

Having the Roadshow visit Thom's school meant a huge amount to me and my family and I was thrilled to see that all of the staff on the bus were deaf. It was a great experience for Thom and his friends to meet successful deaf adults leading independent lives.

I sat in on the morning sessions and they were so good. The presenters kept the children engaged and interested. It was a great experience for the hearing children to see deaf people using sign language with an interpreter and putting their signs into sounds; they needed to look forward to watch the speaker but the sound was coming from behind. This was a challenge they dealt with well and I expect not many of them will have seen that before. It was a brilliant opportunity for them all.”

Thom's hearing friends enjoyed meeting the team and visiting the Roadshow too:

“I loved the Roadshow bus because I got to try on a hearing aid, learnt lots of signing and ways to help Thom. I try to help him with what I learnt now.”
–Phoebe (4).

“Nash said he enjoyed the bus because it was different, which is why he remembers it. He said they all got to try on hearing aids and they were uncomfortable but Thom has to wear them so he must be brave. It clearly brings awareness to the children.”
–Kirsty, mum to Nash (4).

“On the bus Poppy most enjoyed being able to try out the pillow that deaf people use to help wake them in the morning. Sam said his favourite bit was trying out the hearing aids. For me, it was lovely to hear how the children were full of enthusiasm while sharing their different experiences of their time spent on the Roadshow bus.”
–Heidi, mum to Poppy (8) and Sam (5).



Our Roadshow is coming to your area!

Our Roadshow bus has been touring the UK for over 20 years, delivering fun and engaging workshops for deaf children, their friends and family, and the professionals supporting them. But we are so much more than the big purple bus! We have lots of different visits to offer and we look forward to coming to your school or event soon.

What is a Roadshow team visit?

A visit from Roadshow staff members to your school to meet with young people, deliver workshops in the classroom and have one-to-one time with deaf pupils. Children and young people will meet a deaf role model and hearing children will gain better understanding of deafness and good communication techniques.

What is a volunteer visit?

Volunteer visits are deaf awareness sessions in a school assembly designed to be delivered to the whole school or a year group. Suitable for primary, secondary and further education, they are delivered by a team member or a volunteer.

What is an after-school visit?

After-school sessions are a chance for parents who work during school hours to meet the Roadshow team or a volunteer, to ask questions and see the latest technology. Parents will also meet other parents of deaf children and gain mutual support.

What is a Roadshow bus visit?

Our team spend a day at the school, college or university and carry out workshops on board our Roadshow bus for deaf students, their hearing friends, families and professionals.

➔ If you're interested in finding out more about our different visits, please contact our Freephone Helpline on **0808 800 8880**.





Events

In your area

We have lots of fantastic free events coming up. Here's a taster of just a few.

Events programme for 8-18 year olds

At our events young people get involved in many sports and creative and outdoor activities. Events are age-specific and targeted at a broad range of young people, with the chance to learn new skills and make new friends while having lots of fun.

- **Multi Activity Residential, 6-10 August**
Kent, England (age 8-15)
- **16+ Life Skills Residential, 6-10 August**
Kent, England (age 16-18)
- **Mission Adventure Wales, 13-17 August**
Llanbedr, Gwynedd, Wales (age 8-15)
- **Adventure Weekend, 12-14 October**
Perthshire, Scotland (age 14-18)

What's on?



→ INTERESTED IN ONE OF OUR EVENTS?

We have an applications process for all our events for deaf children and young people, so it's best to send your forms in as soon as you can. We'll then get in touch to talk it over, before letting you know if your child has a place about eight weeks before the event. Check our website for more information on the process, specific deadlines (approximately 11 weeks before the event) and to download application forms.



Getting your child ready for school: Communication and Technology (2–4 years)

A one-day information event for parents and carers with deaf children aged 2–4 years. Learn about technology, communicating and the importance of learning through play.

- **7 July**
Telford, England
- **16 September**
Stirling, Scotland
- **6 October**
Liverpool, England

Newly Diagnosed Information Days (0–2 years)

A two-day information event for families with newly diagnosed deaf children aged 0–2 years. Sessions will cover support around communication, early learning (with a focus on numeracy and literacy) and hearing and technology.

- **14–15 July**
Plymouth, England
- **6–7 October**
Newcastle, England
- **13–14 October**
Cardiff, Wales

→ We hold free events all over the UK for deaf children, young people and their families. Download our events calendar and find out more at www.ndcs.org.uk/events.



Making informed decisions

Laura, mum to Erin (1), attended our Newly Diagnosed Information Days in Cardiff to help her make informed choices about Erin's future.



Erin failed her newborn hearing screen and, after two further tests, we were told that she was severely to profoundly deaf when she was four weeks old. She got her first hearing aids when she was six weeks old.

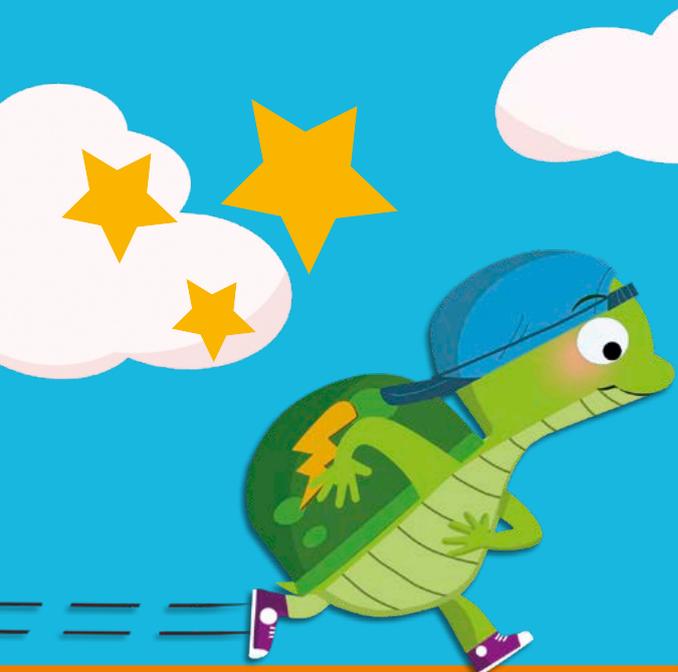
We heard about the National Deaf Children's Society through the local Hearing Impaired service so we got in contact with them and they were really helpful and sent us lots of useful information. We went along to their Roadshow bus and were told about the Newly Diagnosed Information Days. We decided to go because we thought it would be helpful to speak to other parents and to find out as much information as we could – so that we'd be able to make informed decisions and do the best we could for Erin.

One of the best things about the event was hearing from the deaf role models who talked about their experiences of growing up as a deaf child and what they had achieved as adults. We were able to talk to other families who were going through the same things as us which helped us a lot.

We learnt how to communicate with Erin in the best ways possible and found out how we can access support that we may need in the future. The event made us realise that we are not on our own, and it made us feel positive about the future for Erin regardless of her hearing impairment.

We were shocked and upset when we first found out that Erin was deaf. There's no history of deafness in our families so we worried about what it meant for her future. Erin has such great support from the professionals who work with her and from our family, she now has bilateral cochlear implants and is doing really well. As Erin grows up, we hope that she'll be able to have the same opportunities as her hearing peers. She's such a happy little girl and we couldn't be more proud of her.

→ Our Newly Diagnosed Information Days are two-day events for families of deaf children aged 0–2 who have been diagnosed as deaf in the past 12–18 months. To find one in your area see left or have a look at www.ndcs.org.uk/events.



Our new storybook,
**Jake and Jasmine
to the Rescue,**
is an ideal gift for
children aged 4–7.

When Jake, who is deaf and has a cochlear implant, returns to his superhero school after the summer he finds out that Tilly, the school's tortoise, has gone missing. Jake teams up with Jasmine, a new girl in his class, and together they go on a quest to find the school's much-loved pet and show that anyone can be a superhero!

All money
raised will help
us create a
world without
barriers for
deaf children.



Find out more
[www.ndcs.org.uk/
jakeandjasmine](http://www.ndcs.org.uk/jakeandjasmine)

Available to buy on Amazon

Get involved

Campaigning in Parliament for early years radio aids

In the last issue of this magazine we reported on the benefits of access to radio aids for preschool deaf children to use at home with their families. We thought you might like to hear more about our campaign event in Parliament.

ELEVEN FAMILIES WITH THEIR DEAF CHILDREN AND SIBLINGS came along with us to the Speaker John Bercow MP's House in Parliament to tell MPs about the importance of access to radio aid technology for children in the early years. MPs could also try out the technology using a demonstration kit.

Parents spoke about their experiences of using radio aids with their children. They explained that all local authorities in England should be providing radio aids for preschool deaf children but currently only half of them are. The children really enjoyed playing and running around the big, grand venue. Some MPs read stories to deaf children using the radio aid.

Dominic and Lucy came to the event with their daughter Lola (3)

"We had a fantastic day at the Houses of Parliament talking to MPs. We told them about the impact having access to a radio aid has had on our daughter's development and how this has significantly increased the interaction we have with her at home.

The MPs we spoke to were all incredibly engaged and keen to learn more about us and our family and how they might be able to help others like us. Having Lola there clearly had a huge impact; it made the whole

situation much more tangible and memorable for them.

We had one moment when Lola asked for the radio aid to be switched between us when one of us stopped speaking and the other started, which was a fantastic live demonstration for the MPs of how the technology really helps and makes a difference to her."

Natalie and Thomas also attended our event with their daughter Sophia (4)

Their local MP Iain Duncan Smith used the microphone to read a story to Sophia.

"The event was a great opportunity to engage and influence MPs in vital decisions about funding of radio aids for early years deaf children."

GET INVOLVED



Campaign for radio aids

→ We're still working on influencing local authorities to provide radio aids in the early years. If you want to get more involved in this, or any of our other campaigning and lobbying, join our Campaigns Network. www.ndcs.org.uk/campaignsnetwork



Get involved



Pizza, pennies and pulling out all the stops to support deaf children



Georgina and her employer Papa John's Pizza joined forces to raise money for us.

SINCE DECEMBER 2017 we've been proud to be the fundraising partner of Papa John's Pizza. Their generous customers have supported us by topping up their orders with donations and their amazing staff got together for some hugely successful fundraising. To date they've raised over £13,000 and counting, all of which has been thanks to the tireless determination of one person, customer service advisor and busy mum Georgina.

"I wanted to support the National Deaf Children's Society because my four-year-old son Leo was born with a hearing loss and then 18 months ago was diagnosed with moderate bilateral sensorineural deafness. The discovery and Leo's journey to-date hasn't been easy and there are a lot more challenges on the way. I was introduced to the National Deaf Children's Society by our local audiology department. We have attended two National Deaf Children's Society weekend events since Leo was diagnosed. I can't emphasise enough how comforting and insightful these events are. One of the most touching moments was taking Leo to the crèche and him seeing other children like him – wearing hearing aids. His face glowed and despite his delay in speech and language, his facial expressions said it all. On this occasion, words were not needed.

After this, I was determined to give something back but I had to balance my efforts with my busy family life, job and supporting Leo. Initially this was quite daunting, until Papa John's stepped in to help. They've helped me raise more than I ever expected."

➔ **Big companies getting involved in our work makes such a huge difference for raising both awareness and money. If you'd like more information on how your company can support us, please email corporate.fundraising@ndcs.org.uk.**





“ The feeling gave us such a sense of achievement...”

Read how Coralie was inspired to take on the Royal Parks Half Marathon along with close friends Alison and Rachel.

What made you sign up for Royal Parks Half Marathon?

I wanted to support my NCT friend Alison after discovering her son had hearing difficulties soon after he was born. We were inseparable during those early days of being mums together. After an email from her asking for support to raise funds for the National Deaf Children's Society we decided to do the Royal Parks Half Marathon together. It was perfect timing as I was having a hard time with my second baby not being a good sleeper and I needed to do something for me. Some fresh air and running with my friend had to help us through this tricky time. We also roped in our lovely friend Rachel who had running experience and really helped with our training.

The light evenings over the summer were perfect for training. By the end of the summer we were getting pretty fit. We felt amazing and lost a little of our baby weight too! We were shocked and stunned at our progress and after racking up to 10 mile runs we were really feeling good.

What was the event like? What kept you going?

At the start of the race we were buzzing and really nervous but knowing we'd done all the hard work to prepare felt great. The atmosphere was super and the sights around London really helped keep my mind occupied. The crowds were so supportive it

brought tears to my eyes. Sweets and drinks were handed out by onlookers and music was voluntarily played. The kindness of Londoners really shone that day. It was really tough by mile 10; I was so tired but I kept going and before I knew it, it was done. A time of two hours 24 minutes; I was exhausted and proud.

What would you say to anyone thinking of taking part in this event in 2018 for the National Deaf Children's Society?

We raised over £1,200 for the National Deaf Children's Society and the feeling gave us such a sense of achievement. I'd highly recommend this challenge and I found the charity really made it personal. I had a phone call before the run and a handwritten thank you card afterwards. I wasn't just a name or number; they were really appreciative of my efforts.

➔ Interested in joining #TeamNDCS for the Royal Parks Half Marathon on Sunday 14 October 2018? Register online today at www.ndcschallenges.org.uk/royalparkshalf for one of our limited charity places and we'll send you everything you need to get started. Hurry, 50% off registration fee until 30 June.

For more information contact **020 7014 1165** or email ndcschallenges@ndcs.org.uk.



Coralie, Alison and Rachel





When I'm a

grown-up

Do you ever wonder what your deaf child will do when they grow up?

Deaf people share their experiences of the world of work, including how their employers and colleagues adapt to their needs.



I'm Director and Designer at Paradise Clothing because...

I'm passionate about designing clothing. I started Paradise to save money for university but after making £11,000 in four hours realised I'd launched a successful business! I took a year out to study

streetwear and Paradise is now doing incredibly well. I'm profoundly deaf with a cochlear implant but only use an interpreter if I'm in a large room where lots of people will be vocal. My job usually requires one-to-one communication which I can cope with.

In the past I've suffered from social anxiety and worrying about communication barriers but

through running my own business and working with different people and projects I've learnt a lot about myself and how to deal with this better. It's by persevering through adversity that you find a new-found confidence in dealing with the world around you. This is a massive, and on-going, achievement for me.

–James Boyle

I'm a biomedical scientist because...

I never stop learning interesting things. I carry out a range of scientific tests to help doctors diagnose diseases or monitor how effective treatment is. I'm currently working in haemoglobinopathy where I test the bloods from pregnant women to check if they have any hereditary diseases. We also test newborn babies to confirm if they have a haemoglobin disease, for example sickle cell anaemia.

I started as a medical lab assistant and was offered the chance to do a biomedical sciences degree. I worked full-time and studied part-time at University of Bradford. I'm profoundly deaf and I made sure I had Disabled Students' Allowances, Access to Work support and one-to-one support from the lecturers. I became a registered biomedical scientist in 2011.

We tend to have a number of meetings so I have speech-to-text support or a lipspeaker or Sign Supported English (SSE) interpreter. I also have a fantastic line manager who makes sure I have the right support.

–Alexandra Broderick



I'm an artist and small business owner because...

I've loved being creative from an early age and used to love watching *Blue Peter*! I set up my business, GazCraft, in 2017 because there was so much demand for the personalised frames I had made for family, friends and colleagues. I was born profoundly deaf and British Sign Language (BSL) is my first language. The only special arrangement I need for my job is around communicating with hearing customers. My partner is hearing and can sign so he helps me with that.

I create custom 3D frames using scrabble-style letters and other items such as butterflies, buttons and hearts. The best part about the job is when I see how happy the customers are when they receive their frames.

–Gary O'Dowd



➔ **What does your child want to be when they grow up? For more information on careers, check out our section about life after leaving school at www.ndcs.org.uk/leavingschool.**

St John's

Catholic School for the Deaf



For residential and day pupils aged 3 - 19 years

"Staff have very high expectations of what every pupil can achieve and this message is at heart of the school's ethos. As a result, pupils in all groups make good progress academically, socially and emotionally."

Ofsted, 2015



"My daughter is so much happier since she came to St John's. She has achieved more than I thought possible. She has become the person she was meant to be." **Parent**

"Don't worry about your shyness - you will gain confidence and achieve." **Pupil**

For more information or to arrange a visit please contact:

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T: 01937 842144 **F:** 01937 541471 **E:** info@stjohns.org.uk **W:** www.stjohns.org.uk

Where every voice is heard and celebrated





You see a child...
We see a
**BRIGHT
FUTURE**

The right learning environment, the right attitude and the right approach can make a world of difference. At Mary Hare School we see the potential in every pupil and help them reach their goals.

For more information or to arrange an individual visit, please contact
Debbie Jacobs: (d.jacobs@maryhare.org.uk or 01635 244215)
or visit our website www.maryhare.org.uk

Securing the future of deaf children and young people

