

Information about deaf children and young people in the UK



Numbers of deaf children

There are more than
50,000
deaf children in the UK.

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babies are born deaf every day.

More than
90%

of deaf children are born to hearing parents.

The number of deaf children across the nations is:

England: **46,404**
Northern Ireland: **1,417**
Scotland: **3,647**
Wales: **2,486**

Levels of deafness

- In the UK, half of deaf children are born deaf. The other half become deaf during childhood.
- Every deaf child is different and may have different levels of deafness:
 - **unilateral (deafness in one ear): 22%**
 - **mild: 26%**
 - **moderate: 31%**
 - **severe: 9%**
 - **profound: 12%.**

Hearing technology

- **Hearing aids don't fully restore hearing**, but are vital for thousands of deaf children to make the most of the hearing they have.
- A **cochlear implant** is a type of implanted hearing device that converts sound into electrical signals. Cochlear implants are suitable for children with a severe to profound hearing loss.
- There are three other types of hearing implants: **bone conduction hearing devices** (also known as **BAHA**), **middle-ear implants (MEI)** and **auditory brainstem implants (ABI)**.

Glue ear

- **8 out of 10 children** will experience glue ear before the age of 10.

Radio aids (pre-school)

- We believe that all local authorities across the UK should provide radio aids for deaf children aged 0–4 to use at home, if they want one. This technology helps many deaf children to hear conversations, to acquire language, and to take part in family life.
- Percentage of education/ local authorities that say they provide radio aids to families with pre-school deaf children to use at home:
 - **England:** 87%
 - **Northern Ireland:** 100%
 - **Scotland:** 38%
 - **Wales:** 64%

Communication

- A breakdown of how severely and profoundly deaf children communicate in school and education settings:
 - **60%** communicate using **spoken English or Welsh only**
 - **9%** use **British or Irish Sign Language**
 - **22%** use **sign language alongside spoken English or Welsh.**

Schools

- **78%** of deaf children in the UK attend **mainstream schools** where they may be the only deaf child.
- **6%** of deaf children attend **mainstream schools with resource provisions** – a resource provision provides specialist support to deaf children as part of a mainstream school.
- **3%** attend **special schools for deaf children.**
- **12%** attend **special schools not specifically for deaf children.**
- **1 in 5** deaf children have a special or additional need alongside their deafness.
- In **England**, only **1 in 5** deaf children have an **Education, Health and Care plan.**

Teachers of the Deaf

- Deaf children rely on specialist support from Teachers of the Deaf. But there's been a **decline of 15%** in the number of qualified Teachers of the Deaf in **England** since 2011.
- Across the UK, **50%** of Teachers of the Deaf are due to retire in the next 10 to 15 years.



Education and attainment

- Even though deafness is not a learning disability, deaf children across the UK underachieve in education. With the right support, deaf children can achieve the same as their hearing peers.
- In **England**, deaf children achieve, on average, a whole grade less in each subject than other children in their GCSEs.
- In **Wales**, there are attainment gaps at every key stage between deaf children and their hearing peers. For example, deaf children are 21% less likely to reach the expected attainment levels for the foundation phase than other children.
- In **Scotland** deaf learners are twice as likely to leave school without any qualifications at all.
- In **Northern Ireland**, only one in five deaf pupils go to university and over a quarter leave school with fewer than five GCSE passes.

Moving on from school

- **Post-16:** the majority of deaf young people continue their education at college (sixth form or further education).
- **Deaf people are twice as likely to be out of work as their hearing peers.** However, with the right support or adjustments in place, deaf people can work in a wide range of jobs.
- **75% of deaf young people** told us they don't know what technology is available to support them in work – tailored careers support is vital.

We're here to help you campaign

Contact us if you want support to meet with your MP or other decision-maker at campaigns@ndcs.org.uk. We have information about deaf children in your local area and can offer lots of advice to make meeting your MP a success. If you're not ready for this but still want to take action, why not sign up to the **Campaigns Network** and become a champion for deaf children and young people? We'd love to have you on board.