

## Toolkit/guidance/advice

### Supporting d/Deaf children at school

**Create a good listening environment by** considering the acoustic environment of a classroom or learning space. Reduce the reverberations and echoes in a classroom or learning space by:

Carpeting floors

- Lowering ceilings
- Fitting curtains or blinds
- putting rubber tips or 'hush ups' on the bottom of chair and table legs
- using display drapes on walls and covering hard surfaces with drapes.

Reduce background noise by:

- Closing doors to noisy areas or corridors.
- Closing windows to outside noise, closing curtains and blinds if necessary.
- Positioning full bookshelves and cupboards against partition walls (to minimise noise transfer from other rooms).
- Ensuring heating and air conditioning systems operate within acceptable noise levels through regular maintenance.
- Turning off IT equipment, such as interactive whiteboards, computers and overhead projectors, when not in use.

**Promote effective communication across the school.** All communication with d/Deaf learners must be clear and effective.

For this to happen:

- ensure a child's personal equipment such as hearing aids are checked and are working correctly.
- make sure you have the child's attention before you start talking.
- speak clearly and at your normal level and pace – speaking too slowly or exaggerating mouth patterns make you harder to understand.
- ensure that the child is sitting at an appropriate distance from you – speak to your Teacher of the Deaf about what is appropriate.
- allow the child to see your face and lips when speaking – putting something in front of your face or turning to write on the whiteboard will make it difficult for them to lipread.
- ensure you are not standing with your back to a light source, as a shadow cast across your face can obstruct the child's view.

- check that the child understands what has been said in a sensitive way, as some deaf children may dislike admitting they have not understood, repeat or rephrase if needed.
- make sure the child can see the teacher and/or the communication support worker and speak directly to the pupil not the communication support worker or teaching assistant.

### **Good practice teaching strategies**

- For those children who rely particularly on watching your face when you speak, allow them time to move their attention between you and visual support.
- repeat any questions that other children in the classroom may have raised before answering them.
- during group work ensure the child is sat in the correct position and consider moving the group to a quiet area.
- pre teach identified and unknown vocabulary.
- display and reference vocabulary within the classroom.
- when using interactive whiteboard use subtitles where available or provide a transcript and discussion prior to the lesson.
- be aware that once the lights are dimmed to watch the whiteboard as the child will not be able to see the speaker's voice.
- use visual symbols to support understanding.
- always check that oral information/instructions have been understood.

### **Using assistive listening devices Roger Mic/EduMic:**

- switch the device on when talking to the whole class or group in which the child is working.
- wear the microphone about 15cm from the mouth.
- switch it off or mute the microphone when having a conversation that the child does not need to hear (the signal can travel some distance and even through some walls)
- avoid standing in a noisy place, such as next to an overhead projector or open window, as the radio aid will pick up background noise and transmit this to the child.
- avoid letting the microphone knock against clothing or jewellery.
- make the handover and return of any hearing technology at the beginning and end of each lesson as smooth and inconspicuous as possible. For example, some pupils do not like giving their radio aid to their teachers if they are concerned about drawing attention from peers. Ask the Teacher of the Deaf about leads from the

radio aid to audio equipment such as language lab, soundfield system or computer.

Training, advice and support can be provided by a Teacher of the Deaf and implemented by school staff. Please contact our team for further information.