



A Word in Your Ear



The Swindon Hearing Support Team's Newsletter

Issue 9, June 2020

Covid-19: An update from the HST

The Hearing Support Team has continued to work remotely throughout Lockdown and been in regular contact with schools and students. We have been able to support their use of equipment and expect this to continue as more children and young people return to school. As students have begun returning to their settings we have been reassessing our position on seeing students and having face to face contact. We have contacted all settings on our caseloads and the general consensus is that, at this time, most settings are not accepting external visitors unless it is deemed essential.

As always, we continue to work closely with the Audiology department at the Great Western Hospital, particularly with regard to new referrals and New Born Hearing Screening.

Currently as a service we are particularly looking at the needs of children and young people who are involved in transition between settings. We have endeavoured to be in touch with as many receiving settings as possible and are already planning training for September. Whilst regular face to face contact has been more limited due to Lockdown, we have focused on refining and expanding our training packages for schools, and our resources for young people and their families. Work completed has included a new training video for schools on Glue Ear, access to a new website, Facebook page, a Communication booklet and Transition booklet.

We do look forward to seeing children and young people in school again once we are able and to continue our work with children young people and their families.

Stay Safe ☺

Staffing:

Joanne Cooke and Nida Batchelder will be leaving us at the end of August. We wish them both all the best with their new ventures.



We have Claire Tompkins and Sarah Gray joining the team from September 2020.

HST

Hearing Support Team

HSTAdmin@swindon.gov.uk

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New Website and Facebook Page!

Our new HST website is now live. The site is still under development and will continue to evolve over the coming months.
<https://www.swindon.gov.uk/hearingsupportteam/>

We have also launched a Closed Facebook group for the young people, parents and carers whom we work with. Please search for:

Swindon Hearing Support Team



<https://www.facebook.com/groups/269843547380015/>

Radio Aids and Other Assistive Listening Devices

At some point during the next few weeks we will be collecting all radio aids and other assistive listening devices in so that we can do a full check, audit, clean and security mark of everything.

We will of course look at each case individually and leave equipment until an appropriate time for collection. We will also prioritise equipment that will be used over the summer and make sure that it is available for use. Please contact your Advisory Teacher of the Deaf if you have any questions about this.



Year 6 Transitions

Year 6 pupils may be feeling excited or nervous about starting their new secondary school in September.

Here are some tips on how to prepare for the move from Primary to Secondary schools:

- Look at the website of your new school – what information can you find? Here are some questions that you could search for answers:
 - What time does school start and finish? What time is lunch and break?
 - What subjects will you be studying?
 - Did you know that science lessons could be either biology, chemistry or physics?
 - Do you know what sports you will be learning during PE lessons?
 - Do you know what clubs are available at lunchtime or after school?
 - Are there any virtual tours of the setting?
 - Are there any Transition sessions available (online)?
- Remember everyone in your class is new to the school and are probably feeling the same as you.
- Do not be afraid to ask questions if you miss any information or would like to know more. Bring a pen and notepad to write things down if you or they don't understand something.
- Smile and say hello ☺

The Hearing Support Team will be offering training to all Swindon schools in September so that staff can be more aware how to support deaf and hard of hearing students in their classes. Please contact your Teacher of the Deaf if you have any queries or would like to discuss your hearing needs.



Post 16 Transitions

If you or a young person you know is going to **New College** in September make sure they go to the **Transition Project** which runs from **Monday 17th August to Wednesday 19th 10-3pm.**

The proposed merger of New College and Swindon College is due to be completed at the end of July. The intention is for students to be based on one of the two campuses but with additional benefits of being able to access resources and facilities on both throughout their studies. This merger may be delayed due to the current situation.

Keep an eye on the website to find out when the induction days are as things might be different this year due to Covid-19.

Post 16 Transitions Continued...

If you are staying at your school and going into Sixth Form, make sure that you are able to do the course you want **after** you have got your results. Check when results day is!

If a young person is moving onto higher education this September then they can contact the disability advisor for their preferred university from which they have received a conditional offer. They can request a meeting to talk about the support that needs to be in place by next September. If communication support is required for the meeting then the university should set this up. (NDCS)

Keep in Touch



Our main office is located at:
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Mental Health



If you know a young person who would like some support with their mental health then they can contact www.kooth.com where they can get free safe and anonymous advice online.

There is also a lot of help and advice relating to support for your mental health during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on www.youngminds.org.uk and

<https://signhealth.org.uk/with-deaf-people/psychological-therapy/what-to-do-if-your-child-needs-mental-health-support/>

<https://signhealth.org.uk/with-deaf-people/crisis-text-service>

HST Challenges

Lockdown has been so hard for us all, both adults and children. We have had good days and bad days. We thought it would be good to focus on the positives of Lockdown and to share what we have been up to in order to pass the time.



Jo has been busy in her garden and has grown her first crop of potatoes!

Heather challenged herself to run 5k and has now signed up to do 100k over 2 months for charity!



Jill has been looking through her cookery books and experimenting with some new (mostly healthy) recipes.

Jane has made some jam with gooseberries from her garden.



Have you challenged yourself to learn or try something new? Create a new fitness goal? Or re connect with a past hobby?

We would love to hear what you have been up to! You can share these on our post in the Closed Facebook Group or e-mail us if you would prefer:

HSTAdmin@swindon.gov.uk

Prime Youth Theatre Online workshops for socialising and theatre skills, ages 9-25

Prime Theatre are running a digital programme. This consists of 6 different workshop strands that provide a space for young people to:

- Express themselves creatively
- Socialise with peers from across the UK
- Develop drama skills that they may have been cultivating through GCSE/A-Level or extracurricular drama
- Prepare for a professional arts career

Block A: 15th June-17th July

Block B: 27th July-28th August

You can sign up for either block or both!

Digital Showcase: Friday 28th August 7pm

Find out more here:

<https://www.primetheatre.co.uk/youth-theatre/>

E-mail: info@primetheatre.co.uk

Theatre mobile: 07709 664755

Summer Reading Challenge 2020



Swindon Library & Information Service have been preparing for the 2020 Summer Reading Challenge. To take part, children (and their parents/guardians) register online and set their own challenge:

<https://summerreadingchallenge.org.uk> Select 'Swindon' from the drop down menu to identify your library authority.

Find out more here:

<https://swindonlibraries.wordpress.com/2020/05/28/the-summer-reading-challenge-2020/>

Or If you have any questions regarding the 2020 Summer Reading Challenge, or wish to contribute towards the SRC Blog, please contact: Debbie Jackson (Outreach Librarian, SRC Coordinator): djackson@swindon.gov.uk

Great Western Hospitals Audiology Update



Audiology continue to operate a reduced service. However, they are more than happy to help with any issues or concerns over the phone.

Their contact details are:

GWH Audiology: 01793 696640

West Swindon Audiology: 01793 889420

E-mail: gwh.audiology.dept@nhs.net

NDCS



The NDCS have created video lessons to help families learn British Sign Language. Have a look at their YouTube channel to find out more. There are regional variations too!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-L7-P7dpmdM>



Face covering exemption cards



Some people can't wear a face mask or covering because of a **disability** or **severe distress**.

We have designed these D.I.Y cards to help deal with public situations that might happen.



The first side of the card is always the same and some people will be happy using it on its own.

Show it to quickly explain that you have a legal **reasonable excuse** not to wear a face mask.



If you want a non-verbal way to explain more you can double side your card with one of the extra messages.



These can be printed or kept on your phone as photos.

Find out more on our website keepsafe.org.uk/mask

