



A Word in Your Ear



The Swindon Hearing Support Team's Newsletter

Issue 10, December 2020

An update from the HST

We are so pleased to be able to visit you again even though our visits may look different from before. We have been adjusting our Service delivery to take account of the new Guidelines and procedures and a big thank you to all our families, settings and, of course, especially our young people for working with us on this. It may be that you have yet to have a visit from your teacher of the deaf but be assured we will be in contact as soon as we can. If you would like to contact us, do not hesitate to email: jkilminster@swindon.gov.uk

We wish you all a Merry Christmas and a happy and healthy 2021!

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/>

Meet the Team:



Hi, I'm Jane Kilminster, the new Senior Advisory Teacher of the Deaf. I have been working with Swindon since February 2020 and am really pleased to be part of the Swindon Hearing Support Team. I previously worked as a Peripatetic Teacher of the Deaf in Berkshire for many years before and during my move to Wiltshire from Wokingham, in September 2018. It has been great this September to welcome two new members of staff, Sarah and Claire, who are beginning their journey as Peripatetic TODs and to work with the existing team, Jill, Jo, Jenny and Heather supporting their work with deaf children and their families.



Hi, I am Sarah Gray. I have 28 years teaching experience in mainstream primary schools. I have also been a SENCO in three different primary schools for the past 7 years. I have grown up with a younger brother who is profoundly deaf, so have always been interested in working with children who are deaf.



Hello, I am Claire. Before joining the Hearing Support Team I was an Early Years teacher. I look forward to working with you!

New Hearing Aids!

Depending on hearing loss, some young people have been issued with a new model of hearing aid by audiology - the Oticon Opn.

If you want to read more about the aids and what they do go to the following link:

<https://www.oticon.co.uk/hearing-aid-users/hearing-aids/products/opn-behind-the-ear-hearing-aids>



If a young person has been issued with an Oticon Opn hearing aid and they use a radio aid system they will need a different battery compartment fitted by audiology and a different direct input shoe provided by HST. We have changed the shoes where we are aware that new aids and battery compartments have been given but please let us know if you think we have missed you. You will know as the receiver will no longer attach to the aid!

New Locking Tools!

Lots of young people now have locking battery compartments on their hearing aids. We carry a wide variety of unlocking tools with us for all the different aids out there when we visit but we do not have enough to give the settings a tool to keep. They will need the tools to change batteries and if they use a radio aid they will need the tool to put on and take off the receivers. If a young person has two hearing aids they should have received two tools. Please can you send one of these into the setting for them to keep. If they only have one hearing aid we have asked audiology to issue a spare that can be taken into school. Please ask at appointments.



Transition to Post-16 Education

Jasper has a keen interest in Engineering and Maths. After completing his secondary education at a school for the deaf, he decided that he would like to study A Level Maths and a BTEC in Engineering via attending a local mainstream post-16 setting that specialises in these subject areas. Jasper shares his transition experiences below.

Jasper's responses...

(Comments transcribed from BSL)

What went well?

'It has been amazing because everyone was prepared before I arrived, the teachers, support and interpreters were all well prepared. The teachers are Deaf aware, as they had received Deaf Awareness Training from HST before I arrived. I did not expect the positive response from the other students on my course, they respect me and my communication needs, want to learn to sign to communicate with me and to work together in college. We also play card games and talk while chilling out. I thought they would not be interested in sign language or in me as a deaf person, but it has been amazing.'

What were the challenges?

'The main thing was the difference in the pace of the lessons as it is much faster, and using an interpreter and a note taker in lessons. Another thing was getting used to having an interpreter in maths lessons as I have to divide my attention between the interpreter and the board for the maths working outs but am ok now. It is challenging trying to lip-read the other students when the interpreter is not there, but we use our phones or gestures to communicate and they are learning BSL (British Sign Language) too. Apart from the communication, learning how to operate all the big engineering machines has been a surreal insight for me into the aviation industry which I aspire to have a career in'.

Transitions Continued...

How about the support?

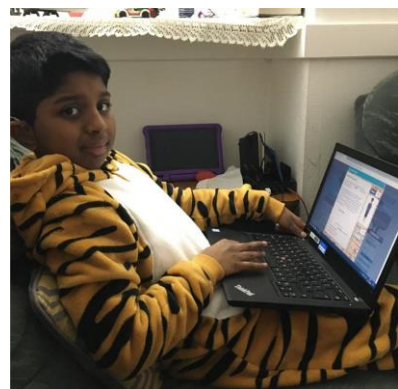
'It has been really good. I have a team of sign language interpreters who work on different days of the week. They translate into BSL what the teachers and students are saying in spoken English so that I can understand them, and the interpreters translate my contributions in BSL into spoken English. I also have a note taker who takes notes, as it is impossible for me to lip-read or watch the interpreter and write notes at the same time. After reading my notes from the lesson, the note taker also supports me with any new vocabulary. The tutorials with my visiting Teacher of the Deaf have really helped and increased my confidence in communicating with hearing students as she supports me with ideas and tips on being in a hearing environment.'

Transition to Secondary

Two students from different feeder primary schools joined The Warneford School in Highworth this September. Both students have a hearing loss and wear hearing aids as well as having a radio aid system each. They have settled in really well and have formed a lovely friendship, supporting each other with getting to grips with secondary and their radio aids systems. They have had a really positive start to their secondary education!

A BIG Thank You to Nationwide!

During the first lockdown, there were some children and young people who did not have access to technology. One of our team contacted Nationwide who kindly donated 6 laptops for that purpose. Here is one of our recipients who was very happy to be able to do some studying online at home. We are incredibly grateful to Nationwide for this very generous gift as are the children and families that have received them.



Stay tuned for more updates from the rest of the HST



Jo
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Heather
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Keep in Touch

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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>

A Christmas Carol

Bristol Old Vic Signed Performance

For more information or to download this performance please follow the link below.

<https://bristololdvic.org.uk/whats-on/a-christmas-carol#overview>

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We wish you a merry Christmas,



And a Happy New Year.