

Starting primary school



Preparing your
child for life at
primary school



Our vision is of a
world without barriers
for every deaf child.

Introduction

This guide aims to help you when your deaf child is approaching school age. Choosing a school where your child will be happy and have the best chances to learn and develop is very important. There are many things that you can do to help you choose a school, and tips are given in this guide.

Once you have chosen a school, you'll need to start preparing your child for school life. School days can be a wonderful time, where your child has a chance to learn and have fun. This guide gives you information on how you can prepare your child for some of the changes school life brings, and has some fun activities to help them start thinking about the kinds of things they will do when they go to school.

There is a forum on our website, Parent Place, just for parents (www.ndcs.org.uk/parentplace). Here you can place questions for other parents to answer, or you can share information on schools for deaf children, or anything to do with childhood deafness.

Throughout this guide you will see some text written in blue which is explained in the glossary on pages 19 – 20.

We list other useful resources throughout this guide and on page 18 which can be ordered from our Freephone helpline or ordered/downloaded from www.ndcs.org.uk/publications.

Terminology

The National Deaf Children's Society uses the word 'deaf' to refer to all levels of hearing loss and the word 'parent' to refer to all parents and carers of children.

The **local authority** is responsible for education in England and Wales. In Scotland it is the **education authority** and in Northern Ireland it is the **education and library board**. We use the term 'authority/board' throughout this guide.



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What types of school can my child go to?

Deaf children go to many different types of school. Below we have listed some of the main types of school your child could go to. Find out more in our factsheet *Different Types of School for Deaf Children*.

Mainstream school

Your child may go to a 'mainstream' school (a typical primary or secondary school). This means they go to all the usual lessons, and may or may not need extra support such as a teaching assistant, a **learning support assistant**, tutoring before and after lessons or support from a visiting **Teacher of the Deaf**.

Mainstream schools may define themselves in different ways, but all types of mainstream school receive state funding. You can contact your authority/board and ask for a list of schools in your area.



Mainstream school with a resource provision

Your child could go to a mainstream school which has a **resource provision** specifically for deaf children. These are sometimes known as resource bases or units.

One or more classrooms may have been adapted especially for teaching deaf children. In some schools, deaf children are taught only in the **resource provision**. In others, deaf children will take part in mainstream classes, with or without support, and have some classes in the **resource provision**.



Special schools

These schools exist to meet the needs of children with **special educational needs** or disabilities. Some **special schools** only cover one area, such as deafness or autism whilst other **special schools** may support children with a range of additional needs, including deafness. These schools will have specialist equipment, staff, support and teaching strategies to help meet the needs of the children who go there.



Whichever school you choose for your child, it is important that it will meet their needs, and is suitable for their age, skills and ability. If you would like to know about how a school meets **special educational needs**, ask to see their policy on **special educational needs/additional support needs**.

Choosing a school

Choosing a school for your child is a big decision. It is important that your child is happy, as how they feel in school will affect how they progress with their education. There are several things that you can do to help you choose a school for your child. The school you choose for your child should be able to meet their educational needs.

Make sure you visit all the schools that your child could go to. This will give you the chance to find out how different schools will meet your child's needs. It is important to plan these visits. If you like a school, plan a second visit with your child. Your child's feelings about a school are important, so take them to the school to have a look around and meet the staff. After the visit, ask your child what they like or don't like about the school.

When you visit schools, there are lots of things you might want to find out. Our factsheet *Which School for your Deaf Child?* provides a list of questions that you can take with you when you visit a school. It is a good idea to ask the same questions at each school, as this will help you compare the schools when making your decision.

Visiting a school

Before you visit a school, ask them to send you their prospectus. This should give you information on their policy on **special educational needs/ additional support needs**, their last inspection report, and a list of their staff. Things you might want to find out when you visit include the school's policies on bullying, religion and child protection, and the deaf awareness training that staff receive. If you are visiting a school with a **resource provision** for deaf children, or a **special school** for deaf children, it would also be useful to find out about their communication policy. Other things to think about could include how many children there are in the school, whether there are any other deaf children, what communication between the school and parents is like, what support your child would receive in the classroom, and what transport can be arranged, and support provided for your child in the school and for activities outside school hours.

You could also try speaking with any other parents of deaf children at the school.

Facilities and acoustics

It would also be useful to find out about the classroom's facilities and **acoustics** (that is, how sounds travel and are heard in a classroom). Find out if they have soft furnishings like carpets and curtains, and whether any large hard surfaces are covered with material, as these things can improve classroom **acoustics**. Check whether there is good lighting, and what technology the school has for children to use (for example, how many computers there are and whether there is a **soundfield system** for use in class or assemblies).





- If your child wears hearing aids or a cochlear implant, ask:**
- how often hearing aids will be checked and who will do this
 - whether the school keeps spare hearing aids and leads in case of breakage
 - what training staff will receive on technology for deaf children
 - what technology the school will provide (for example, text television or a fire alarm with a visual warning).

Friends

It is important to think about your child's social and emotional well-being. Children who are happy at school, have friends and know where to get help if they encounter difficulties, find it easier to learn and are more likely to reach their full potential.

When looking at different schools, consider how welcoming the staff are and how friendly and helpful the children are. Will the school provide deaf awareness training for staff and pupils? What lunchtime and after school activities are there and will the school make sure your child will be able to access these? What strategies are in place to support pupils during playtime to prevent loneliness and bullying?

All schools have to have an anti-bullying policy. Ask to see it and make sure your child knows what the school will do to prevent bullying, and what they should do if they, or someone else, is being bullied.

Visit www.ndcs.org.uk/bullying for information for parents, professionals and young people about deaf young people and bullying.



Support at school

Every child is different and may need different types of support at school. Schools have a duty to identify any **special educational needs/additional support needs** your child has, and to provide support to meet those needs, with advice from a specialist **Teacher of the Deaf** and other specialists as needed. This includes, where relevant, social, emotional and behavioural needs. In Scotland, bullying also counts as an **additional support need**.

The terminology and processes differ from country to country in the UK¹ but each country has a staged approach to introducing additional support to meet your child's needs. These are summarised in the table on page 7. The teacher responsible for making sure that your child receives appropriate support is the **special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO)**, or the **additional support for learning co-ordinator** if you live in Scotland.

The first stages of support

The **SENCO/additional support for learning co-ordinator** and/or your child's class teacher will create a plan for supporting your child from within the school's own resources, perhaps with some individual or small group work with a **special educational needs/additional support needs** teacher or **learning support assistant**. They should set targets for your child and record the strategies and resources they are using to do so. The plans should be reviewed regularly to check how effective the strategies have been in helping your child to make progress. Different targets, strategies and resources should be tried if your child isn't making progress. Where necessary, the school should involve external professionals such as a **Teacher of the Deaf**, speech and language therapist or **educational psychologist** to provide extra advice and support. A new plan should be drawn up, making use of their advice, then progress should be reviewed again. In Scotland this is called a personal learning plan (PSP). In the

other countries it may be known as an **individual education plan (IEP)**. The school should have a document recording the measures they have taken to support your child and how effective they were. If your child is still not making adequate progress in spite of all the extra help provided, you or the school can ask the local responsible body (see table on page 7) to carry out a formal assessment of your child's needs. If your authority/board agrees to carry out an assessment and concludes that more support is needed, it will issue a legally binding document which sets out a description of your child's needs and the provision required to meet their needs. For more information on this process, see our website or contact our Freephone Helpline.

If you are unhappy with a decision made by your authority/board, you can appeal to a **Tribunal**. For more information visit www.ndcs.org.uk/specialeducationalneeds.

Disability discrimination

It is unlawful for school to discriminate against a disabled child. These laws are set out in the Equality Act 2010 in England, Wales and Scotland and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 in Northern Ireland. School must make **reasonable adjustments** to ensure that all children are fully included in school life, both in the classroom and at playtimes or on school visits. For example, it would be unlawful to refuse to take a child on a school trip for a reason related to their deafness. Another example is the provision of radio aids. In line with the Equality Act 2010 all schools in England, Wales and Scotland are expected to provide **auxiliary aids**, such as radio aids or communication support, for children who need them. For more information about the Equality Act, see the National Deaf Children's Society factsheet *The Equality Act and your Deaf Child's Education in England, Scotland and Wales*.

¹ At the time of writing, Governments in Wales and Northern Ireland are proposing a range of changes to the law on special educational needs. The changes will probably happen in 2015 in Northern Ireland and 2016 in Wales. For more information, visit www.ndcs.org.uk/sen.

	Term used for additional needs	Support from within the school's own resources	If progress still isn't being made, school or parents can...	This may lead to a legally binding document being issued, known as a/an...	The responsible body for education of children in their area is the:
England	Special educational needs (SEN)	SEN Support (starting with school's own staff, then involving external professionals such as the Teacher of the Deaf /speech and language therapist if needed).	Request an Education, Health and Care (EHC) needs assessment .	Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan . EHC plans are replacing statements .	Local authority (LA)
Wales	Special educational needs (SEN)	School Action , then School Action Plus when external professionals (e.g. Teacher of the Deaf) are involved.	Request a statutory assessment .	Statement	Local authority (LA)
Northern Ireland	Special educational needs (SEN)	Stages 1 and 2 – support from school staff. Stage 3 – additional support from external professionals	Request a statutory assessment (Stage 4).	Statement	Education and Library Board (ELB)
Scotland	Additional support for learning (ASL)	Personal Learning Planning (PSP), moving to an Individual Educational Programme (IEP) if needed.	Ask the education authority to find out whether your child has additional support needs . Ask the education authority for a specific assessment by an appropriate agency (can be done at any time).	Co-ordinated support plan (CSP)	Education authority

You know best

Above all, remember that you are the expert when it comes to your child. Help school staff to understand your child's needs, and work with staff to help them provide a high standard of support. Some parents have found it helpful to produce short booklets setting out key information that staff need to know about their child. Examples can be found at www.ndcs.org.uk/passport.

Remember that you are the expert when it comes to your child. Help school staff to understand your child's needs.

Preparing your child for school

The school day is often very different from a day at home or at nursery. The school day is split up into different lessons, with playtime and lunchtime at set times each day. These changes may be a surprise to a deaf child unless you help them to get used to routines like the ones they may have to keep to in school.

If your child uses sign language, and the children in their class are not familiar with signing, it might be a good idea to go into school and speak to the children, and perhaps the school staff, about sign language. Or you could ask the school to find out about deaf role models who sign, and might be able to come into the school to talk about deafness and sign language. Speak to staff about your child's communication before your child starts school, so the staff are prepared and can do their best to meet your child's communication needs on their first day. If your child has a **Teacher of the Deaf**, they should be able to help with this.



Games to play

Playing games with your child gives you the chance to introduce new concepts, or new signs if you use signing with your child. Play also helps your child find out about themselves and the world around them. You can use role play games to help your child learn about what school life might be like. You could use toys to show your child what they might expect at school. For example, one toy could be a teacher, with the other toys acting as pupils. You can use the toys to act out what might happen in the classroom or during playtimes.



The school day

To prepare your child you could use reference cards, with pictures of things that they may not be familiar with at school (for example, desk, whiteboard, dinner hall). This might help them understand these new things better when they start school, as there are a lot of new things to take in.

You might also want to visit the school you have chosen, ideally with your child. You could take pictures of the rooms they will use, and the people they will spend time with. Or you could draw the rooms yourself. Use these pictures to make a book about the school and school life.

You could also include pictures of activities at the school. Look at these pictures with your child, explain them, and answer any questions your child has. Once your child has started school, they could use the pictures to tell you what they have been doing and who they have been working with. You could also make a book about home, with pictures of your home and activities you do together. This could help your child to tell their teacher and other people about their home life.

Being around other children and adults

Playgroup or nursery can help your child get used to being with large numbers of children and with different adults. You can also take your child to clubs and playschemes to help them learn to socialise with different children and adults. Getting your child used to being around groups, and among people they do not know, can help them prepare for the new people they will meet and spend whole days with at school.

When your child starts school, invite classmates round so that your child has time outside school to form friendships. Or suggest that you meet up with other children and their parents outside school, in your local park for example. This will give your child time to form bonds with other children, and help them feel socially included in school, especially during playtimes. Social interaction and communication between your child and other children in the school is important. It will help your child to feel part of the school community, and will give them chances to develop their social skills.

You could use toys to help develop your child's social skills. For example, you could act out a situation that might arise at playtime, where there are a group of toys together and one toy standing separately. Ask the child how they could get the lonely toy to play with the group. Perhaps show one doll from the group asking the lonely toy to play a game with the group. Then show them all having fun together. Or show them the lonely toy asking the group if they can join in the game.

The National Deaf Children's Society has produced a resource for teachers in primary schools on how they can meet the needs of deaf children, called *Supporting the Achievement of Deaf Children in Primary Schools*.



Preparing your child for school

Identifying and expressing emotions

Helping your child learn the words for different feelings and understand how that emotion makes them and other people feel, is excellent preparation for school and later life. Children who develop good 'emotional literacy' early on have skills to build positive relationships with others and tend to have better emotional health and well-being.

Reading stories together is a great way of introducing 'feeling words' and discussing how different characters may be feeling. This will help children develop the vocabulary to express their own feelings, whilst also developing empathy for others. Such skills will help your child at school as they will be able to tell their teacher if they are enjoying a subject or finding it frustrating to learn, will recognise when other children are feeling upset and know how to help, and will be better able to make friends.

Try to help your child let you know how they feel. This way they might feel more comfortable about sharing their thoughts and feelings with staff at school. Using pictures of facial expressions to explore feelings is useful, or you could ask them to draw how they feel, using different colours and shapes.

You could also talk to your child about different situations, and ask them how they would deal with them. For example, you could tell your child that a boy is colouring in a picture. He wants to use a red crayon, but he has not got one. You could ask your child how they think the boy feels, or tell them that he might feel disappointed. You could then ask your child how they think the boy could be happy again, and ask them what they would do if they were in this situation. This kind of activity can help children to identify situations in which they feel different emotions, and to explore how to deal with these different emotions.

Another activity could be for you to find or draw pictures of people with different facial expressions and ask your child to tell you which one is happy, which one is angry, which one is bored, which one is confused and so on. This is a good way to practise identifying emotions in other people.





Getting dressed and changing clothes

Children have to get changed for PE, so it is important that they can dress and undress themselves. If they cannot tie their shoelaces, give them shoes with Velcro so that they are easy to take off for PE and put on afterwards. You can make practising these skills fun. Perhaps you could have a race and see who is quickest at putting their coat on before you go out. It is useful to get your child to practise using different fastenings on things, such as toggles, buttons, zips, press studs, Velcro, and laces.

The parenting section of our website www.ndcs.org.uk/parenting contains lots of useful hints and tips written by parents.



Making choices

Children sometimes have to make choices at school. For example, their teacher might ask them to choose between two activities, or a lunchtime supervisor might ask them if they want to have mashed potato or roast potatoes. Give your child some experience of making choices at home. Ask them to choose between two different pieces of fruit, or ask them whether they would prefer to colour in a picture or play outside. Practising making choices at home can help your child feel confident when making choices at school, especially when they have to make choices quickly (for example, in the queue for lunch or during lessons).

Preparing your child for lessons

There are many fun things you can do at home to prepare your child for school. We know that children do well in school when their parents understand the teaching and learning that happens in school, and that parents can support their child's learning.

Doing activities with your child will help them learn things from a young age. These activities may include playing number games, singing nursery rhymes and reading. Learning is probably already taking place in your home, so many of these suggestions just build upon what you may already be doing at home with your child.

Use things that your child is interested in to get them involved in learning activities. For example, if your child likes toy animals, you can use toy animals to talk about numbers, colours, shapes and sizes.

Your child's **Teacher of the Deaf** will also be able to give you suggestions and ideas for games and activities you can play at home.

Using a timetable with your child will help them to begin to understand daily and weekly routines and activities. You can write or use photographs and pictures to show what will be happening every day that week. You can split the day into morning, afternoon and night. Your child will begin to know what will be happening and when, and will begin to develop the concept of today, tomorrow, yesterday and the weekend.

The National Deaf Children's Society can provide a weekly planner, which is an A3 wipe-clean magnetic board divided into days of the week and different times of the day. You can order the weekly planner via our website or by contacting our Freephone Helpline.

Remember that many everyday activities provide fun opportunities for learning. For example, cooking can involve literacy, maths and science (through reading the recipe, weighing and measuring the ingredients, tasting the food and talking about food and healthy eating). You could even write a book about 'How to make...' for a family member or friend.



With any game or activity, remember to recognise what your child does well and praise them for it.

Literacy

Language helps children to learn and understand what is going on in the world around them and good language skills are particularly important in helping children to learn to read and write. There are lots of fun things you can do to make sure your child starts school with good language and literacy skills. Key points to remember are:

- Make conversation and discussion fun and stimulating. Give your child lots of opportunities for conversation so they can develop their language and learn new words and phrases.
- Many deaf children rely on a good listening environment to develop their listening skills. Your child may not be able to do this easily but you can take some simple steps to make sure your home helps your child to listen more clearly. For example, you can use lots of soft furnishings and keep background noise to a minimum.
- Read with your child and encourage them to read a wide range of books, such as picture story books, traditional stories, rhymes and information books. Books should be enjoyable and at a suitable level for your child's understanding and development.
- Encourage them to write. Drawing and art activities and 'pretend' writing will help your child get ready for writing.

Phonics

Teaching phonics usually starts during your child's reception year in school. Phonics is a set of basic skills used when teaching reading and writing. At its simplest, phonics means seeing a letter on the page and making its sound when you say it. For more information about how you can help your child practise, read the National Deaf Children's Society factsheet *Using Phonics to Develop your Child's Reading and Writing Skills*.

Visit www.ndcs.org.uk/education for a range of resources to help you support your child to develop literacy and numeracy skills.

Ideas to make learning fun

- Role play helps children learn new words to use in different situations and see how people might react to what they say. Think of different situations you can role play together and take it in turns to be the different characters, such as doctor and patient, or in different places like the supermarket, toy shop or train station.
- Most children love singing and signing songs, and this also helps them to learn new words and how to use them.
- Make your own experience books. Buy a blank book for writing about different topics, such as family, hobbies, holidays and places your child has visited, and stick photos and pictures in. Encourage your child to write short simple sentences or captions. Experience books are fun and interesting, and a great way to encourage conversation and language development.

Preparing your child for lessons

Maths

You don't have to be an expert in maths to help your child develop a positive attitude towards the subject – everyday activities can help make sure your child starts school with good maths skills.

Ideas to make learning fun

- Understanding the language used with maths is very important for deaf children and during the day there will be lots of opportunities for your child to talk about things related to maths. For example, you could look at different sizes of bowls and spoons used at breakfast, ask how many apples to buy when you go shopping or talk about the time of day.
- Number and counting rhymes and songs and number stories are lots of fun. There are many to choose from and your child will probably want to sing their favourites over and over again. For example, the rhymes could include counting forward (e.g. *One, two, three, four, five, once I caught a fish alive...* and *One, two, buckle my shoe...*).
- Measuring things – like teddies, toys, furniture, garden plants – is a good way of introducing size, shape and concepts such as bigger, smaller, longer and shorter. You can ask your child basic questions like how they might tell which object is longer or taller and so on. When children are measuring for the first time, they may use non-standard units of measurement such as hand-spans, lengths of string or a piece of paper when measuring things, but you can introduce rulers or tape measures.
- Play a matching pairs game. Lay three or four pictures of matching pairs down with the picture facing the table. Take it in turns to try and find a matching pair and encourage your child to try and remember where the different cards are.

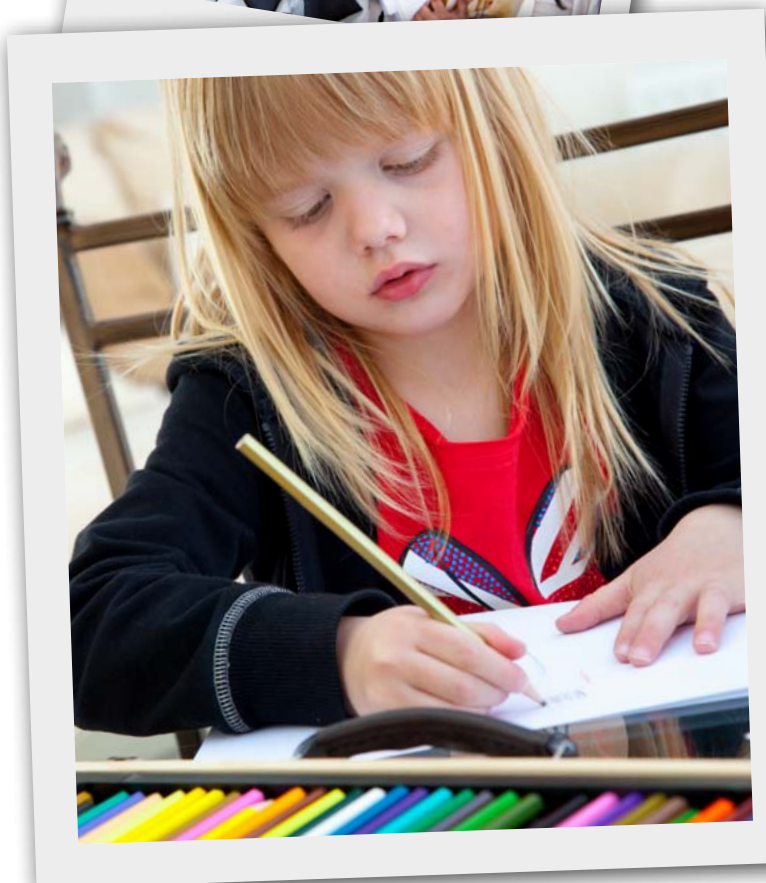


Drawing and art

Through drawing and art you can help your child develop their observation and writing skills. Skills like holding a pencil correctly are very important in school, and it is useful to prepare your child before they start school. This will help them when they start writing and drawing in school. Help your child by encouraging them to draw and colour in. There are many fun and easy-to-use colouring books available.

Art can also help your child become familiar with different colours and shapes. Place a few objects on a table and tell them what colours they are (for example, a green apple, an orange and a blue building block). You could tell them which colour each object is, then ask them to name each colour in a different order. You could then take one away and ask which colour has gone, or which colours are left on the table. You can do the same activity with objects of different shapes. There are lots of simple games you can play every day. While walking to school, ask them what colour things are as you pass them in the street (for example, the pink flowers, the man's blue coat, the green traffic light).

Playing with plasticine or modelling clay is a good way of helping your child to make shapes, and make objects they have observed. Give your child a simple object to try first, like a car or an aeroplane, and ask them to make it. Help them if they are not sure at first, perhaps by making one yourself. This activity can help your child to identify different shapes and put them together, and encourages them to carefully observe objects.



Preparing your child for lessons

Science

Understanding the body and being able to identify different body parts are useful skills for your child to have before they start school. Action songs such as *Heads, Shoulders, Knees and Toes* are a fun way of helping your child to get to know the names of different body parts.

You can talk about the senses – sight, smell, touch, hearing, and taste. To help your child understand these, you can play games. For example, ask your child to smell an orange, and then ask them to smell a peeled banana, and then compare the smells. You can have discussions about why some people wear glasses if they need help to see properly, or hearing aids if they need help with their hearing.

Encourage your child to think about healthy eating. Talk about which foods are healthy and which foods are not. Talk about the benefits of eating healthily, and the consequences of eating unhealthy foods.

Try to get your child to explore the world around them. Talk about different kinds of animals and the different places that animals live (for example, fish live in the sea, bears live above ground, and worms live in the ground). Find pictures of different animals and plants, and use storybooks about animals. You can explore the garden or local park for mini-beasts (insects). You can write details in a book, or draw pictures, and label them. You could plant seeds and learn about what plants need to grow. Cress seeds are very good for this as they grow very quickly and then can be eaten, or you could plant sunflower seeds for a longer activity.

ICT (Information and Communications Technology)

Children will use computers at school. It might be useful to help them become familiar with the different parts of a computer and how to use them. Show them the screen, the keyboard and the mouse. Show your child how to type in letters and use the mouse. If you do not have a computer at home, libraries often have computers that you can use with your child.

You can help your child to develop their reading and writing skills and other areas of learning with educational computer games. Using the internet with your child can encourage them to find information about subjects they are interested in.

Touch-screen, handheld computers, such as iPads have fun apps, including interactive stories, matching games, dressing up characters, making cakes, and letter formation, that can help your child develop new skills. There are also lots of fun websites and online games that you can use with your child to develop their reading and writing. Visit the BBC website for some fun games and activities about learning to read and write: www.bbc.co.uk/education. Be careful when choosing activities to turn off any background music that detracts from the clarity of sounds.

But most of all,
have fun while helping
your child to learn!

PE (physical education)

You can help your child to become familiar with some of the things they might do in PE at school. One activity you can do is play catch with a ball. This kind of game helps to develop hand to eye co-ordination. Stand quite near each other at first, and as your child becomes more confident with catching the ball, move further away from each other. You can also play games, such as hopscotch, which help with movement and balance. You can include counting in this game too.

Perhaps do some basic dance routines together, using jumping, stepping, skipping, clapping, waving and star jumps for example. Do these things one at a time, or perhaps jump and clap at the same time. This will help your child move different parts of their body at different times, and will help them to understand how they can move separate parts of their body to make routines.



Some more ideas

Our literacy and numeracy guides, available at www.ndcs.org.uk/education for parents with children aged 3 to 4 contain more information on fun activities you can do with your child to help them prepare for school. Here are some more ideas:

- Place different objects on a tray (for example, a comb, a cup, a ball, a fork, a remote control), ask your child to look at the things on the tray for a while and try to remember them. Ask your child to turn away while you take an object off the tray and hide it. Then ask them to look at the tray again and tell you which object is missing. You can take turns in this game, with your child taking something off the tray next. This game can help develop observation skills and memory.
- Label objects in your home. As well as writing on the labels, if you use sign language you could also have pictures of the signs on the label. This can help your child to make links between words, signs and objects.
- Cookery can be a fun and productive way of helping your child to get experience of planning, measuring and timing.

Useful resources and organisations

The National Deaf Children's Society resources

Available at www.ndcs.org.uk/publications

For families – education and learning:

- *Bullying: Advice for Parents of Deaf Children*
- *Different Types of School for Deaf Children*
- *Guide to School Transport*
- *Helping your Deaf Child to Develop Language, Read and Write (3 – 4 years old)*
- *Helping your Deaf Child to Develop Maths Skills (3 – 4 years old)*
- *The Equality Act and your Deaf Child's Education in England, Scotland and Wales*
- *Using Phonics to Develop your Child's Reading and Writing Skills*
- *Which School for Your Deaf Child?*

For families – special education needs/additional support needs:

- *Appealing to the SEN and Disability Tribunal in Northern Ireland about the Contents of your Child's Statement*
- *Appealing to the Special Educational Needs Tribunal in Wales*
- *How to Appeal Against a Special Educational Needs Decision in England*
- *Making a Reference to the Additional Support Needs Tribunal (Scotland)*

For schools:

- *Bullying and Deaf Children: A guide for primary and secondary schools*
- *Early Years Matters DVD*
- *Here to Learn DVD*
- *Memory and Learning*
- *Phonics Guidance*
- *Supporting the Achievement of Deaf Children in Early Years Settings*
- *Supporting the Achievement of Deaf Children in Primary Schools*

Department for Education publications

- *Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0-25 Years*

Our website www.ndcs.org.uk contains information about childhood deafness. Many of our resources are available on the website to download. There is also an online discussion group called Parent Place, where parents and other family members share information and practical advice.

The Buzz www.ndcsbuzz.org.uk is the National Deaf Children's Society website especially for deaf children and young people aged between 8 and 18 years old.

Our Freephone Helpline (**0808 800 8880**, voice and text) offers support and information to families, professionals and deaf young people. It is the first point of contact for all our services.

Organisations

Children's Law Centre (Northern Ireland)
www.childrenslawcentre.org.uk

Contact a Family: for families with disabled children.
www.cafamily.org.uk

Department for Education (England)
www.gov.uk/df

Department of Education (Northern Ireland)
www.deni.gov.uk

Enquire – the Scottish Advice service for Additional Support for Learning
www.enquire.org.uk

Equality and Human Rights Commission
www.equalityhumanrights.com

Independent Parental Special Education Advice
www.ipsea.org.uk

Information, Advice & Support Services Network
www.iassnetwork.org.uk

Sense: voluntary organisation working to support people who are deafblind.
www.sense.org.uk

Welsh government website with information on education
www.wales.gov.uk

Glossary

Acoustics: the science of sound. It also often refers to the quality of the sound environment. For example, good classroom **acoustics** are achieved by a low level of background noise, as well as other factors.

Additional support needs (Scotland): A child with **additional support needs** requires extra support to help them learn at school. Additional support can include a Personal Learning Plan, **Individual Educational Programme** or **Co-ordinated Support Plan**, for example.

Auxiliary aids and services: equipment to help children or young people to be included in school, such as radio aids/FM systems and walking frames.

Co-ordinated support plan (Scotland): A legal document which sets out the additional support and provision that children and young people who have long term, complex or multiple needs require.

Education authority (Scotland): the **responsible body** for education in your area.

Education and Library Board (Northern Ireland): the **responsible body** for education in your area.

Education, Health and Care needs assessment (England): a formal assessment by a number of professionals which aims to identify a child's **special educational needs** and make recommendations as to how those needs are to be met. For deaf children this must include advice from a **Teacher of the Deaf**. It replaces the **statutory assessment**.

Education, Health and Care plan (England): a document which describes a child's **special educational needs**, sets objectives for each need and details the provision which must be made to help the child meet the objectives. It is a legally binding document, written by the **local authority**, which draws on the advice provided by the professionals who contributed to the child's

Education, Health and Care needs assessment. Education, Health and Care plans will gradually replace **statements** from September 2014 until April 2018 when **statements** will cease to exist.

Educational psychologist: professional whose role is (amongst other things) to help children who have – or might have – **special educational needs/ additional support needs**, by assessing them and providing advice as to the facilities, strategies and resources required to meet their needs.

Individual Education Plan (IEP): a document on which the school records short-term targets and the resources and strategies it will use to help children with **special educational needs** make progress. It should be reviewed to check the effectiveness of the strategies, which should be changed if necessary.

Learning support assistant: also known as a teaching assistant. This role provides in-school support for a child with **special educational needs** and/or disabilities.

Local authority (England and Wales): the **responsible body** for education in your area.

Reasonable adjustments: schools are required (under disability and equality legislation) to make **reasonable adjustments** to include children with disabilities, whether they have a **statement** of **special educational needs** or not.

Resource provision: a specialist provision usually attached to a mainstream school. It supports deaf students at the school and sometimes deaf children who attend other schools in the area. **Resource provisions** should be staffed by qualified Teachers of the Deaf. **Resource provisions** are sometimes also known as a unit or a resource base.

Glossary

School action (Wales): support provided by a school/ nursery for a child with **special educational needs**, which is additional to or different from those usually provided by the school. This support is provided from within the school's own resources and a record should be made (usually on an **Individual Education Plan** – see above) of actions taken and how effective they have been. Northern Ireland uses a different approach (see Stages 1–5 below).

School action plus (Wales): if a child does not make adequate progress in spite of the interventions provided at school action, the school takes advice from external specialists such as an **educational psychologist, Teacher of the Deaf** or speech and language therapist. The advice should be followed and its effectiveness reviewed. Northern Ireland uses a different approach (see Stages 1–5 below).

SEN: special educational needs.

Special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO): a teacher in a school/nursery who has responsibility for identifying children with **special educational needs** and making sure they receive appropriate support. This is known as an additional support for learning co-ordinator in Scotland.

Soundfield system: loudspeakers are fitted around a classroom, and are linked to a microphone worn by the teacher. This allows the teacher's voice to be heard over the general noise of a classroom by all the pupils.

Special school: a school that exists to meet the needs of children with **special educational needs/ additional support needs**. Some special schools cater for a specific type of need, e.g. deafness or autism, while others cater for a wider group of needs.

Stages 1–5 (Northern Ireland): Northern Ireland has a five-stage approach to **special educational needs**, as set out online at www.education-support.org.uk/parents/special-education/.

Statement (England, Wales and Northern Ireland): a document which describes a child's **special educational needs**, sets objectives for each need and details the provision which must be made to help the child meet the objectives. It is a legally binding document, written by the **local authority**. Statements will be replaced by **Education Health and Care Plans** in England between September 2014 and April 2018.

Statutory assessment: an assessment which aims to identify a child's **special educational needs** and make recommendations as to how those needs are to be met. It must include advice from the educational setting (or sometimes from the child's **Teacher of the Deaf** if the child hasn't started nursery), an **educational psychologist** and a paediatrician. The **statement** will also include the advice of other specialists involved with the child (e.g. **Teacher of the Deaf**, speech and language therapist, occupational therapist). In England this will now be called an Education, Health and Care needs assessment.

Teacher of the Deaf: a qualified teacher, who is additionally qualified to teach deaf children. They provide support to deaf children, their parents and family, and to other professionals who are involved with a child's education.

Tribunal: This is a legal process set up to consider appeals from parents who disagree with decisions made by local authorities about a child's **special educational needs/additional support needs**. It is independent and there is one Tribunal judge who is legally qualified, and two specialist members who have knowledge and experience of **special educational needs/additional support needs**, but not necessarily deafness. A Tribunal is a legal process and a decision will be based on the facts of the case.

**The National Deaf Children's Society
is the leading charity dedicated to
creating a world without barriers for
deaf children and young people.**

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