

SENSS DEAF AND HEARING SUPPORT TEAM

Deaf Awareness Bulletin

The SENSS Deaf and Hearing Support Team are a team of Qualified Teachers of Deaf Children and Young People 0-19 years. We work across Oxfordshire supporting families and settings.

Did you know?

There are over 54,000 children who are deaf across the UK.

The SENSS Deaf and Hearing Support Team provides a service for just over 750 children across Oxfordshire.

The term deaf can refer to all types and levels of deafness. It can be temporary or permanent.

Deaf Awareness Week 'Right to understand - Together, we break barriers' May 4th - 10th 2026

Look here for [deaf friendly communication tips](#) from the NDCS including:

- Always face the person
- Speak clearly, slowly and steadily
- Don't cover your mouth- so the person can lip read
- Repeat and rephrase if necessary



Some children have shared their 'top tips' too!

"If I'm in a good seat it changes everything."
Lyra

"I hear best when you look at me when you talk."
Hadassah

Free BSL courses for schools!

- Commanding hands have an online course. Click [here](#) to find out more!
- [Let's Sign BSL](#) has online BSL resources.
- SENSS Deaf and Hearing Support Team has a video of '100 first signs?' Contact [SENSS](#) here or ask your Teacher of the Deaf for more information.
- Signature has created 'The School of Signs' – a programme designed to make BSL accessible, engaging, and age-appropriate for primary-aged children. Click [here](#) for more information!

Activities for Deaf Awareness Week

- Hold an assembly to raise awareness.
- Try a BSL fingerspelling challenge – can you fingerspell your name?
- Try some basic Maths using BSL! Can you count to 10 in BSL?
- Make a poster on deaf awareness and what this means.
- Make links to science by looking at how the ear works.
- Label a diagram of the ear, look at how sound travels, look at loudness and pitch of everyday sounds including an audiogram and what this shows.
- Research significant or well-known deaf people, for example Thomas Edison, Helen Keller, Rose Ayling-Ellis and Gertrude Ederle.
- Take this NDCS deaf awareness [quiz](#) and look at this [video](#) titled 'how to be more deaf aware.'
- Introduce children to some books with deaf characters
- Think about the different ways in which people communicate, produce a poster to share your ideas with others.
- Share any of your work with us at the Deaf and Hearing Support Team - we would love to hear from you!



BOOKS TO PROMOTE Deaf Awareness

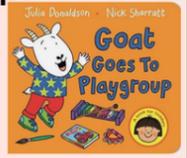


World Book Day (5th March 2026)

EARLY YEARS

- 'Goat goes to playgroup' - Julia Donaldson and Nick Sharratt
A story about Goat and his friends and their day at playgroup.

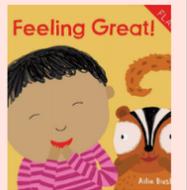
Features characters wearing hearing aids.



- 'Elephant and the lost blanket' - Alex Naidoo
A story about Elephant losing his special blanket in the park and his friends coming together to help him. Elephant wears hearing aids and Tiger has cochlear implants.

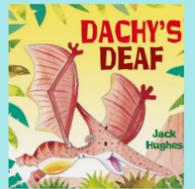


- 'Feeling great!' - Ailie Busby
A lift the flap board book for children to find out all about themselves, featuring characters with hearing aids.



PRIMARY

- 'Dachy's deaf' - Jack Hughes
Dachy wears hearing aids and sometimes he turns them off when his friends are too noisy. One day when his aids are off Dachy gets into trouble. Can his friends rescue him in time?



- 'Freddie and the fairy' - Julia Donaldson and Karen George
A story about good speaking and listening skills and encouraging children to reflect on how they communicate with others.

- 'The everywhere bear' - Julia Donaldson and Rebecca Cobb
The adventures of a little bear from a class in year one. Features characters who are deaf.



SECONDARY

- 'Your song for a whale' - Lynne Kelly
It's a story about a deaf girl Iris who finds a whale called Blue 55. The whale sings at a different frequency to other whales and thinks he's the only whale in the world!

- 'Harriet versus the galaxy' - Samantha Baines
Harriet's hearing aids don't just hear everyday sounds. They help translate an alien language!



- 'A quiet kind of thunder' - Sara Barnard
Steffi is lost without her best friend on the first day of sixth-form but is soon introduced by the teacher to the new kid Rhys who knows BSL..



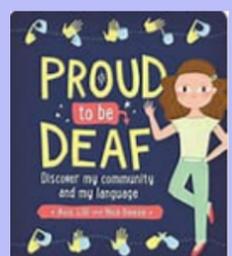
BOOKS WITH SIGN

- 'My first signs' - Annie Kubler
Board book containing over 40 BSL signs. Makaton compatible.



- 'Listening to the quiet' - Cassie Silva
The main character, Jacki's mama is losing her hearing. Together they are learning Sign Language.

- 'Proud to be deaf' - Ava Lilli and Nick Beese
A story about 7 year old Ava and her experiences of being deaf.



Useful Websites and Links



Source Type	Quick Notes	Links
NDCS	The National Deaf Children's Society has lots of free videos and resources for Deaf Awareness Week	Deaf Awareness Week National Deaf Children's Society
ODCS	Oxfordshire Deaf Children's Society - a charity that provides opportunities for families with deaf and hearing impaired children and young people in Oxfordshire	Oxfordshire Deaf Children's Society Incorporating Friends of the Young Deaf
Newsround	An article from Deaf Awareness week 2024	Deaf Awareness Week 2024: How you can celebrate and support people with hearing loss - BBC Newsround
Cbeebies	Videos and stories celebrating Deaf Awareness	Celebrate Deaf Awareness Week - CBeebies - BBC
Let's Sign BSL and The School of Signs	Free online resources for learning BSL Free online BSL course for schools	Let's Sign BSL https://theschoolofsigns.org.uk/
British Deaf Association	Some more resources and ideas for Deaf Awareness week	British Deaf Association - The BDA stands for Deaf Equality, Access and Freedom of Choice

TALKING TO YOUR DEAF FRIENDS



Some deaf people speak, some use sign language and some use both.

Find out what your friend does.



Five top tips

- 1 Get their attention. Try waving or tapping their shoulder.
- 2 Speak normally. Not too slowly or too loudly.
- 3 Face them when you talk. Make sure they can see your mouth.
- 4 Use your hands. Point at what you're talking about.
- 5 Keep trying. Try texting on your phone or writing a message down.

Source: NDCS <https://www.ndcs.org.uk/documents-and-resources/talking-to-your-deaf-friends-postcard/>

If you would like to contact us and share some of your Deaf Awareness Week activities please email us on SENSS@oxfordshire.gov.uk