

How we care for Deaf Students at Hendon

Before pupils arrive

Primary provision and parents who have requested information are sent an invitation to attend Prospective Parents' Evening along with the PDS booklet and examination results sheets.

PDS staff are present in the PDS on Prospective Parents' Evening to answer questions.

A BSL interpreter is available to sign speeches led by the Headteacher and other senior Staff. This is not only for the benefit of any parents who may be deaf, but ensures that all parents know that there is provision for deaf students at Hendon which offers signed access to the curriculum, when necessary.

Parents of all pupils are invited to look round the PDS at this meeting.

PDS staff are available by phone or email to answer further queries or give any assistance with form filling.

PDS staff attend the session in January when prospective pupils complete CAT tests.

Prior to the main Induction Day for new Year 7 pupils, pupils receive an invitation from current Year 7 pupils to come to the PDS for a days visit. The day is planned to develop confidence. It includes exploring round the school, opportunity to meet PDS pupils and staff, and to answer any questions the pupils may have.

As with all pupils, they then attend the full induction day with support where appropriate. They may bring a radio aid from their primary provision if they wish.

The Key tutor from the PDS will visit the primary school. Here they have access to the pupil's records, including any suitable commercial assessments and 'in house' monitoring. This gives the Secondary provision a clear picture of the pupil's academic and social and emotional status. These written records transfer with the pupil when they arrive at Hendon making the provision seamless.

Pupils at Hendon

Key PDS tutors

Key PDS tutors, who are all qualified teachers, support staff, Communication support workers or Teachers of the deaf, are allocated to each form and they follow these forms as they go up through the school.

If students need BSL they will be supported through signed interpretation.

They ensure that all Hendon staff teaching deaf students and others such as The School Pupil Officer and Senco receive information about pupil needs and strategies that are useful in the Pupil Profile, with copies of the IEPs going to appropriate staff. This information is also available for all staff on the shared drive under 'private' (s:\pds\private). Support staff work under the guidance of the Head of the PDS.

Tutors attend Registration and form times during the week as often as possible.

They attend assembly, to take notes. These are then displayed in the PDS for reference for pupils and staff.

Tutors support in PSE lessons (which are on a carousel),

Tutors support on Curriculum Extension Days, Sixth Form Taster Days and on school visits.

PDS staff also involve themselves with the life of school generally, for example Duke of Edinburgh Award, Activity Week etc

Tutors supporting pupils report back to the Key PDS tutor if there are any problems.

Tutors are available in the PDS at break, lunchtime and after school, to offer support if pupils have experienced problems, or to carry out very minor repairs to hearing aids and radio aids.

Staff run Homework clubs at these times to help students with homework problems

Tutors meet with their tutees to discuss targets for the IEPs, but may also oversee some School Action or School Action Plus pupils who also have hearing loss. Advice is also given to subject tutors about these pupils.

Training

PDS staff constantly update their knowledge and skills in the specialisation of teaching deaf curriculum.

The PDS has always had an excellent relationship with mainstream staff. The PDS staff practice training for the mainstream staff on a regular basis to ensure the mainstream staff have the necessary resources to help deaf students achieve in class.

Equipment

We try to ensure that pupils have the best amplification possible, by ensuring that equipment is working well.

Pupils collect their Radio Aids from the PDS every morning, and return them at night. This provides a useful opportunity to exchange a few words, give praise and generally chat to pupils.

A Teacher of the deaf has responsibility for audiology at the PDS.

Minor repairs can be done here, for example re-tubing, new batteries, checking cochlear implant processors.

For anything more serious parents are asked to send the hearing aid to the hospital. In some cases, we will do this for parents.

The School has a state of the art Soundfield system in classrooms. This enables both deaf and hearing students to access the teachers voice at the optimum level

Timetable

The timetable is set up so that wherever possible there is continuity of support. Subject specialist tutors are allocated where possible.

For Year 10 pupils and above, there is also time in the PDS for direct teaching. Changes to the timetable can be made to meet the needs of pupils or in response to other factors within Hendon School. Requests are made to Hendon regarding grouping of pupils, so that support can be maximized to increase cost effectiveness. However, this cannot be done to the detriment of any pupil, if pupils have very different abilities and teaching groups are set.

Support / direct teaching is on a one to one, up to a maximum of one to four basis. This means that staff are able to give individual support, enabling pupil needs to be met as far as possible and to achieve progress at all levels.

Hendon staff appreciate the support given in class, and the fact that PDS staff are able to support other pupils, either in a small group situation including deaf pupils, or on occasions when the deaf pupil is working independently. On the few occasions where circumstances prevent a member of the PDS staff from going into a lesson at short notice, (for example, if there is an urgent in-coming phone call, a pupil who needs to speak urgently to that member of staff, or has faulty equipment which needs attention in the PDS), then Hendon staff understand the absence or late arrival at lessons. The relationship is extremely good and very flexible. Hendon staff also recognize that there may be occasions when the PDS staff feel it is more beneficial to take out pupils to work in the PDS, either on their own or with a small group of hearing students, depending on the circumstances.

If students rely on BSL for communicating English is taught in the PDS through a combination of spoken English and BSL.

Examinations and Tests

The Head of PDS ensures that Special Arrangements are in place for all deaf pupils for external examinations. This may also include any student in the mainstream school who has a hearing loss, over whom we have oversight. These arrangements could include modified papers, additional time, rest breaks, sitting examinations in the acoustically treated PDS, and being able to have transcripts that may be read out, or signed, for examinations where CD resources are used.

For internal examinations, similar arrangements are made, with PDS staff modifying the carrier language of papers ourselves, as appropriate. We use specialist equipment to test students listening levels and speech perception

Parents

We maintain strong links with parents, and can assist those parents who need help filling in forms to apply for DLA etc. We can offer guidance to parents and pupils about choosing FE or HE courses that will be able to offer good support to the pupils when they leave school.

We ensure that parents who need interpreters are identified, and interpreters are booked for Annual Reviews or other important meetings.

We liaise directly with parents regarding faulty hearing aids, or if we feel that pupils need to have additional appointments at the clinic or hospital.

We also liaise with parents regarding academic progress or behaviour in close conjunction with Hendon staff.

Parents are invited in for meetings with the speech and language therapist on a regular basis.

Social Development

We recognize the importance of self-esteem and self confidence and work towards this at all times. We ensure that all pupils and staff have access to Deaf Awareness training so that the whole ethos of the school reflects the fact that there is provision for deaf students here. We also provide signing classes for all staff and pupils and we promote BSL through sign of the week which is done at briefings, assemblies and on display around the school. We offer specific training sessions, but also such events as Sign Language Awareness Week. We are very aware of the need to promote self esteem and dual identity with pupils who use BSL and spoken English.

We celebrate pupils' success at all levels, whether this is in or out of school. Many pupils maintain their links with the school after they have left.

We try to arrange social trips with other units for the deaf in order that students may widen their deaf peer group.

Liaison with Other Agencies

This can encompass a whole range of other professionals such as Speech and Language Therapists, Educational Psychologists, Doctors, Career Advisors and Teachers of the Deaf from other LEAs. Good quality liaison is essential to allow us to deliver the best possible support to the pupils.

Summary

This is an overview of the way that we care for pupils in the PDS, so that they can make good progress at school. Many of these activities would fall within the remit of our professional responsibilities as Teacher of the Deaf / teachers or support staff. However it is the way in which these responsibilities are carried out that should act as indicators of the high quality of care provided for the pupils. Without exception, staff show a high level of commitment at all times. Staff show great empathy with pupils and are able to anticipate difficulties before they arise, and work towards overcoming them in a sensitive, efficient and effective way. Staff share their expertise but also recognize when they need to consult others. Most importantly though, pupils feel that the PDS is of real benefit to them, and are confident with the care that we give.