

Managing Hearing Loss in School–Age Children Fact Sheet

Hearing Loss is...

- ✓ **Conductive** – resulting from disorders of the outer and/or middle ear (such as ear infections or abnormal ear structures).
- Sensorineural** – resulting from disorders of the inner ear or the cranial nerve that carries auditory signals to the brain (such as resulting from meningitis, noise exposure, or problems at birth).
- Mixed** – a combination of the above.
- Central** – results from disorders of the central auditory nervous system (such as auditory processing). It will not be identified through school hearing screening programmes but by an audiologist using very specialised tests after alternative explanations are ruled out.

Hearing Loss is not ...

- ✗ Limited to hearing per se. It can impact on language, social development, academic achievement and mental health.
- ✗ always apparent because it is invisible and may be masked skillfully. Other presenting issues/ behaviours may be linked back to an underlying hearing impairment (e.g. 'meltdowns' could result from frustration by hearing loss).

Communication effects:

Children typically exhibit **delays/difficulty** with:



- language concept;**
- auditory attention, memory and comprehension;**
- receptive and expressive language;**
- syntax, semantics and vocabulary development;**
- speech perception and production.**

Academic effects:



- problems in academic achievement**, involving language, arts and vocabulary;
- delays in development, reading, spelling, maths and problem solving;**
- lower scores** on achievement and verbal IQ tests;
- need for **special education** or **support** classes;
- increased need for organisation support in the classroom.

HI Difficulties include...

Social effects:

- feelings of **isolation, exclusion, embarrassment, annoyance, confusion** and **helplessness**;
- refuse to participate** in group activities;
- acting **withdrawn** or **sullen**;
- Exhibiting **lower levels** of **social maturity**;
- have significant **problems following directions**.



- Hearing loss may be in **one** or **both ears**. Hearing loss may **fluctuate**, be **permanent**, or **temporary**.
- Children can exhibit:
- varying** degrees of difficulty **hearing** and **understanding environmental** and **speech** sounds;
- significant problems listening and understanding in **noisy** and **echoey** environments.



Ways to help pupils with hearing loss ...

The **Birmingham Sensory Support Service** can assess and diagnose HI and provide advice and support.

Classroom accommodations : positive intervention plans and informal supports like adaptive equipment/ assistive technology.

Self-advocacy training helps pupils understand, ask for and explain to others what they need to succeed.

Keep your language clear—speak in **short sentences** and use key words. **Repeat** instructions/ information in different ways. Teachers can use **visual supports** to make classrooms more HI friendly.

Remember young people may wear one or two **hearing aids** and use a **radio aid**.

Other Information ...

https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/info/50154/specialist_services/1485/deafness_and_hearing_loss

https://www.ndcs.org.uk/?gclid=CjwKCAjwT-L2BRA_EiwAacX32bOrxU-QXaxYj1gK0MTHwe6uFkQso805TZDy-lc22EiW7T93enCZMExoCCUkQAvD_BwE

