

Sensory Support Team 0-25yrs Weekly Update



Welcome to our weekly update on 14th January from the **Sensory Support Team 0-25yrs** for children and young people with a hearing loss or visual impairment and their parents, carers, school staff and professionals.

Weekly Update 14 January 2021

Dear Families,

Welcome to our first newsletter of the New Year. We hope 2021 will be the year when we get to grips with Covid 19 and eventually have the freedom to meet friends and family, be able to plan ahead and travel and explore the world again.

Unfortunately our schools have had to close their doors once more but we have some guidance on accessing online learning within this issue.

Many, many thanks to those who have contributed to this week's newsletter, I know how busy everyone is so it is much appreciated. Please keep sharing.

As always, please feel free to contact your QToD/QTVI or myself if there is anything you would like to discuss or anything we may be able to support you with.

Stay safe

Sibel

Copies of our newsletters can be found at

[Weekly update on 17th December.pdf](#)

[Weekly update on 19th November.pdf](#)

We would also love to be able to share your stories, videos and real-life experiences so please drop me a line. We are happy to help with the technology side of things!

sibel.djemal@cambridgeshire.gov.uk



Accessing Remote Learning for your D /deaf child/ young person

Your D/deaf child/young person may be unable to attend school due to coronavirus; schools are offering remote learning in these situations. Remote learning can present challenges for your child. Here is our guidance to help you ensure that virtual lessons are accessible.

Check that remote teaching is accessible for your child/young person.

- We have provided all schools/settings with guidance. If you would like a copy please contact your Teacher of the Deaf
- Check with your child/young person what works well (eg video clips with subtitles) for them and let the school know
- Ask for handouts prior to the online lessons, this will help your child to be prepared and know what to expect in the virtual session.

Online lessons

- Use a quiet room.
- Minimise background noise.
- Put live captions on if needed.
- Sometimes live captions are not always accurate, an alternative is to download Otter app. (available on Apple/Android) which may give more accurate subtitles.
- “Pin” the speaker; this will ensure that they are always showing.
- Remember to mute the mic until your child wants to speak.

Access to equipment

- If your child doesn't have a laptop or tablet in order to access to online lessons, please let your child's school know and ask if they can provide one.
- Talk to your child's Teacher of the Deaf if you feel that using a radio aid or Roger may help your child to access to online lessons in terms of sound quality.
- Family Fund – you can apply for a grant to help to fund equipment you may need.
<https://www.familyfund.org.uk/>

Checking in•

- Keep in contact with your child's teacher to discuss how your child is managing remote learning and to resolve any issues.
- Contact your child's Teacher of the Deaf for advice and support.

Accessing Remote Learning for your visually impaired child/young person

Your visually impaired child/young person may be unable to attend school due to coronavirus; schools are offering remote learning in these situations. Remote learning can present

challenges for your child. Here is our guidance to help you ensure that virtual lessons are accessible.

Discuss with your child's teacher

- Check that remote teaching is accessible for your child/young person.
- We have provided all schools/settings with guidance. If you would like a copy please contact your Teacher of the Vision Impaired
- Check with your child/young person what works well (e.g. video clips with audio description) for them and let the school know
- Ask for handouts prior to the online lessons, this will help your child to be prepared and know what to expect in the virtual session.

Online lessons

- Use a quiet room.
- Minimise background noise.
- "Pin" the speaker; this will ensure that they are always showing.
- Remember to mute the mic until your child wants to speak.
- Give your child a comfortable seating position with the screen at a suitable height

Access to equipment

- If your child doesn't have a laptop or tablet to access to online lessons, please let your child's school know and ask if they can provide one.
- Talk to your child's Teacher for Vision Impaired Children if you feel that using other assistive equipment may help your child to access online lessons.
- Family Fund – you can apply for a grant to help fund equipment you may need.
<https://www.familyfund.org.uk/>

Checking in

- Keep in contact with your child's teacher to discuss how your child is managing remote learning and to resolve any issues.
- Contact your child's Teacher for Visually Impaired Children for advice and support.

This Weeks Fun Activity

Home schooling can be fun and an opportunity to do the things we used to do before screens
Each week we will share a fun activity for you to try as a family.

This week's fun activity is Splash in a puddle or (if we get snow, make a snow man or snow ball).

Can you send us a photo of what you find or make a picture to share with us?

Send your picture to sensory.supportteam0-25@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

We would like to share these in future newsletters, if you don't want this to happen, please let us know when you send in your picture

Family Support Group

Happy New Year everyone! At the virtual Family group today we made snowmen using paper plates or an old cereal box plus felt tip pens or scraps of coloured paper. Below are some of the fabulous creations. If you would like to join in with our next session please contact your QToD/VI or email Bridget at Bridget.Joyce@cambridgeshire.gov.uk



Parent Mentoring

Parent Mentor

Hi, my name is Jo and I'm a family support advocate and I'm also mum to Kate a wonderful 16 year old going on 21 currently studying for A-level maths, physics and art. She's a keen sports woman and plays for the U18 Cambridge Ladies Rugby team. Why did I want to become a family support advocate? Well, Kate was born profoundly deaf to a hearing family with no experience of deafness. She was born on time following a normal pregnancy, meaning it was a bit of a shock!

We've come a long way and faced many battles including diagnosis, the minefield of different technologies, the worry of 'should we, shouldn't we' implant, DLA forms, getting her into the schools we've wanted, getting her the support she needs and not least of all not knowing what the heck to do for the best! As if being a parent wasn't difficult enough, we were thrown into a world we knew nothing about and quite frankly we were blooming terrified. If we had had a crystal ball, we could have saved ourselves a load of heartache, but we didn't. THE biggest help was from other people further down the line, not to tell us what to do, as everybody's situation and needs are totally unique. Our heads were stewed, but it was incredibly reassuring to have someone say, 'It's okay to feel like this!', 'Have you tried this?' or 'Did you know about this?' I felt I wanted to be that, to other families in exactly the same position as I was.

I was matched with mum Atieh and her son Adrian and we hit it off instantly – it's not hard as he's utterly gorgeous, but due to Covid19, I've not actually been able to give him a cuddle. We have met a few times outside in a country park and use email or instant messaging to keep in touch during lockdowns. It's really enjoyable as I'm just meeting up with a new friend and I hope that it's been useful for Adrian. Due to lockdown, we've not managed to get the dads together, but are very much looking forward to doing that. I would really encourage newly diagnosed families to give it a go and for us families a bit further down the line to consider offering a bit of time to just offer some encouragement. Lord knows I don't have the answers, but what I can do is be there to say 'It'll be okay'.

Parent Mentee

'I can talk about every emotion around having a deaf child without being judged. Jo has lots of experience and gives me advice if I ask for it. Jo really helped me when she talked about her daughter, who has done so well, it made me realise that there is a bright future for Adrian'.

MouseTrap

theatreprojects

How can we support you in 2021

2021 is finally here and we're ready to face new challenges and embrace new opportunities. At this time of year, we would usually be writing to you with an exciting offer of a theatre day especially created for D/deaf students. But while theatres are still closed, we want to know if there are other ways we can support you at this challenging time. Are there any projects or one-off workshops that our fantastic Deaf and hearing drama facilitators can offer (either online or in-person)? How can we, as an arts and education charity, support your students? Please complete this short survey to let us know.

[Complete the survey](#)

If you would like a copy of this text in large print, Braille, audio tape, or in another language contact: Sensory Support Team 0-25yrs, Amundsen House, Stocks Bridge Way, St Ives PE27 5JL

01480 373434 or Sensory.SupportTeam0-25@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

