

# Hearing Times®

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## Primary school results make “stark” reading for deaf children

Deaf children are at risk of being left behind in the Government's literacy and numeracy drive, warns the National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS), as statistics out today show that almost two thirds of deaf children (64 per cent) are leaving primary school without grasping simple sums and sentences

Key Stage Two results published last month revealed most deaf children are failing to achieve good standards of literacy and numeracy, compared with 19 per cent of children without Special Educational Needs (SEN), and many are also progressing at a slower rate.

NDCS has linked these stubbornly poor levels of achievement to a lack of specialist support in the classroom, a situation set to worsen as councils cut services for deaf children. The charity, which supports deaf children and their families across the UK, is making an urgent plea to councils to protect specialist Teachers of the Deaf, vital to deaf children's achievement, from further cuts.

Jo Champion, Deputy Director of Policy and Campaigns at NDCS, said, “It is appalling that thousands of children, who have the potential to achieve anything, are being denied vital support at school. Today's stark figures show the result of this neglect.

“Even though deafness is not a learning disability, it is going to be almost impossible for deaf children to make up this lost ground at secondary school. Unless councils protect the vital support that deaf children need to learn, we are going to see them falling even further behind.

“These results must be a wake-up call for Government both national and local to improve support for deaf children and ensure that they are given every opportunity to succeed.”

**Unless councils protect the vital support that deaf children need to learn, we are going to see them falling even further behind**

The results show that almost three times as many deaf children (30 per cent) are failing to make the expected level of progress in maths by the time they leave primary school, compared with children who have no Special Educational Needs (SEN), which is just 11 per cent. For English, 25 per cent of deaf children are failing to progress at the expected rate, compared with 13 per cent of pupils without SEN.

NDCS launched the *Save Services for Deaf Children* campaign, earlier this year, revealing that one in five councils has cut educational support for deaf children and calling on councils to protect or reinvest in these vital services.

For further information visit [www.ndcs.org.uk](http://www.ndcs.org.uk)



NDCS is pleading councils to protect specialist Teachers of the Deaf, vital to deaf children's achievement, from further cuts, through the *Save Services for Deaf Children* campaign

## JDA Diamond Jubilee celebrations

A highlight of JDA's 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary year was the Diamond Jubilee Fundraising Dinner at the Glaziers Hall, London

Two hundred guests attended the event, with special guest Stephanie Beacham, who is partially deaf. More than 20 Jewish Deaf Association members attended the dinner which was organised by the JDA's Hear!Hear! committee and JDA staff.

A speech was made by Louise and David Sorkin, whose son, Kieran, was born in 2005 with no ears. They told the guests about their search to find the right treatment for their son and said it was thanks to the help of Jody Sacks, JDA Family Services Coordinator, that they found the right support for Kieran.

Jody first began to support Kieran when he was only six months old, “It was such a relief to be able to share the burden we had been carrying with someone who was not only sympathetic, but who could instantly offer us practical help,” she said. “Through Jody, we became much clearer about what was available to us and we met other young Jewish families with deaf children. Our world really opened up.”

Louise explained that Kieran, who is now six, has endured more consultations and operations than most people do in their entire lives. And, last March, he finally had a bone anchored hearing aid (BAHA) screwed into

his head, his hearing instantly improved and he has gone from strength to strength.

“The JDA helped us to get Kieran into Sinai School where he is rapidly catching up with the other children of his age,” Louise added. “He's popular, loves life and when he's nine and his growth is sufficient, he will finally be given his ears. Jody has become a firm friend and whenever we need guidance, it's good to know that JDA's just a phone call away. We never miss the JDA Family Fun Days as they're a unique chance for us and our children to mix with other families with shared experiences. So we would like to thank all at the JDA.”

The guests then watched an appeal video about the JDA which, in just a few short minutes, featured many of its members using JDA services, as well as showing our work with hard of hearing people and families with deaf babies and children.

Thanks to this wonderful appeal video, which was followed by a stirring speech by JDA Executive Director Sue Cipin, the Dinner raised £80,000 towards the JDA's on-going support services for the Deaf and Deafblind community, for families with deaf babies and children and for those people with a hearing



Guest speaker, actress Stephanie Beacham, with sign language interpreter, Gloria Ogborn

loss acquired in later life.

In her speech, Stephanie Beacham told the audience: “It's great to see that the JDA is doing so much to support people of all the different generations. People really do need specialist help and it's thanks to wonderful organisations like the JDA that they are getting it - and they rely on it!

Stephanie told the guests that she knows full well what it's like to be deaf. She now only has 40 per cent hearing in her left ear and is completely deaf in her right ear.

## British Deaf group take up Nepal Challenge

Deafway have announced the first 12-day Community Challenge trip to Nepal

From 15-26 November the group, traveling in four wheel drive vehicles on the tough roads of Nepal, will experience how difficult life can be for deaf people living there - and raise money to change deaf people's lives for the better.

This Community Challenge will give participants the opportunity to meet Nepalese deaf people and to visit Deafway's projects in four different regions of Nepal.

Deafway Chief Executive, David Hynes, said, “If you are born deaf in Nepal, you are usually denied this right. The implications of not developing language are massively negative and you are destined to live a life on the very margins of society, neither accepted nor contributing.

“We cannot and will not give up on thousands of Deaf children and adults who still being denied the most basic human rights - the right to language.

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