**S.E.a.T.S.S.**

Specialist Education and Training Support Service (Sensory Team – Hearing Impairment)

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Woodford Green

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If you have any queries or want any advice please contact us by emailing **SEATSS@redbridge.gov.uk**

If you do not have access to email and need advice please phone us on **07780 164239**

**Profound Hearing Impairment**

**Facts:**

* Profound hearing impairment is usually sensorineural ie caused by damage in the inner ear.
* Without hearing aids the child may not hear any sounds at all, or only very loud environmental sounds such as a door slamming. They will not hear any speech sounds.
* They will need very high-powered hearing aids or have one or two cochlear implants.
* Consistent hearing aid/implant use is crucial if the child is to develop good spoken language skills.
* Even with hearing aids/cochlear implants they may find it difficult to access all the sounds of speech and so it will be challenging for them to acquire spoken language.
* Some profoundly deaf children will use sign language as their primary means of communication.
* Others will need sign support to help them develop their language skills.
* At school the child will benefit from the use of a radio aid system.

**Implications:**

* Spoken language may be delayed and speech intelligibility may be adversely affected.
* Language skills may be delayed such as a limited vocabulary, omissions of word endings.
* The child will find it even harder to hear when there are high levels of background noise.
* They will become more tired due to the constant level of concentration required.
* They may need extra support in school and regular input from a specialist Teacher of the Deaf.

**General strategies:**

* Ensure all those interacting with the child are aware of the hearing loss and its implications.
* Ensure that the hearing aids or cochlear implants are worn consistently all day.
* Speak clearly but don’t shout or over-enunciate.
* Ensure you have the child’s attention before starting to speak.
* Help them to lip read by facing them when you speak and not covering your mouth.
* Don’t stand in front of a window as this will put your face into shadow.
* Support spoken language with visual clues whenever possible, especially in the early years.
* Use signs and/or gestures to support the development of spoken language.
* Keep background noise to a minimum so the child can hear the key message more clearly.

**Extra strategies for school staff:**

* The child should be seated close to the teacher and to one side, so that they can see both the teacher and their classmates.
* If a radio aid system has been provided, ensure it is used consistently and appropriately.
* Reiterate what other pupils say during class discussion.
* Check the pupil has understood instructions and key points.
* Additional language support may help a child with a limited vocabulary.
* Help the child learn topic and general vocabulary using written and visual cues.
* During group work allow the child’s group to work in a quieter space whenever possible.
* Be aware that they will find it difficult to access information presented through video or audio. Try to use subtitled versions, make notes, or repeat/summarise the information orally.