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

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

91 Ray Lodge Road

Woodford Green

Essex IG8 7PG

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**

**Unilateral Hearing Impairment**

**Facts:**

* Unilateral hearing loss only affects one ear. The affected ear may have a mild, moderate, severe or profound loss but the other ear has normal hearing.
* Children with unilateral hearing impairment usually develop good speech and language skills.
* They also usually have clear speech.
* There are some situations where it will be challenging for them to hear clearly, such as when there are high levels of background noise.
* Some children with unilateral loss are given a single hearing aid for the affected ear.

**Implications:**

* The child may have difficulty locating the source of sound.
* Special care needs to be taken in traffic as they may not be able to hear where the traffic is coming from.
* They may have difficulty hearing in background noise eg a playground, restaurant or noisy classroom.
* They may be more tired during the school day due to the extra concentration needed for them to listen.

**General strategies:**

* Ensure all those interacting with the child are aware of the hearing loss and its implications.
* If the child has a hearing aid, ensure it is worn consistently, ideally throughout their waking hours.
* Speak clearly but don’t shout or over-enunciate.
* Ensure you have the child’s attention before starting to speak and use a natural, interesting voice to maintain attention.
* Help the child to lip read by facing them when you speak and not covering your mouth.
* If you sit next to them, ensure you sit nearer their better ear.
* Support spoken language with visual clues whenever possible, especially in the early years.
* 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 towards the front of the class, with the unaffected ear nearer the teacher.
* Reiterate what other pupils say as they may not be able to hear pupils clearly who are not sitting nearby.
* Check the pupil has understood instructions and key points.
* Help the child learn topic and general vocabulary using written and visual cues.
* During group work allow their group to work in a quieter space whenever possible.
* Be aware that in PE lessons, where the children are moving around, they may not be able to locate who is speaking.