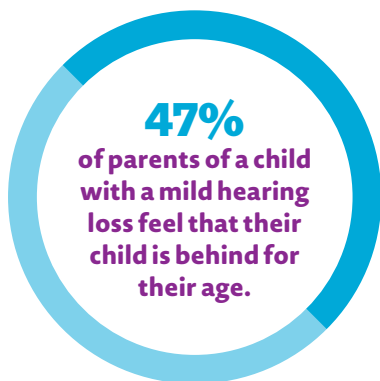
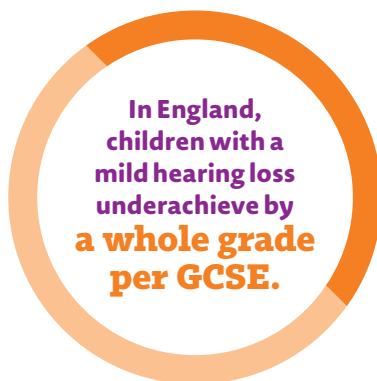


# Mild hearing loss

Information for  
professionals



Mild hearing loss can have a major impact on all aspects of a child's development, including language and literacy skills, working memory, attention and concentration, and social skills.



With your support, children with a mild hearing loss can achieve as much as other children.

**Mild hearing loss has a particularly big impact on language and learning in the early years.**

Adults with a hearing loss can sometimes 'fill in the gaps' of what they've not heard by thinking about the situation, drawing on past experiences and making an educated guess at what someone has said.

Younger deaf children can't do this because they haven't had the chance to build up a vocabulary or memory of what someone might say in a particular situation.

# Signs of mild hearing loss

Doesn't respond  
when called

Constantly asks  
for speech to be  
repeated

Watches faces/  
lips intently

Doesn't  
always follow  
instructions  
straightaway

Often  
misunderstands  
or ignores  
instructions

Makes little or no  
contribution to  
group discussions

Watches what  
others are doing  
before doing it  
themselves

Complains  
about not being  
able to hear

Often needs help  
from their friends

Tires easily

Talks too loudly  
or too softly

Becomes easily  
frustrated

Appears  
inattentive  
or as though  
daydreaming

Plays alone and  
doesn't engage  
with group social  
activities




**Remember: mild hearing loss can fluctuate, especially if the child has glue ear. Children may display some of the above signs on some days but not others.**

## What can you do to help?



### 1 Make sure communication is clear and effective.

- Check that you have the child's attention before you start talking, eg by saying the child's name.
  - Speak clearly and at your normal level and pace – speaking too slowly or exaggerating mouth patterns will make you harder to understand as it distorts speech.
  - Make sure the child can see your face clearly to help them to hear you and follow your lip patterns. Avoid standing in front of a window or bright light, or turning to face the board while speaking.
  - Make your teaching as visual as possible by using photos, graphics and other visual aids.
  - Encourage turn-taking and speaking one at a time during group work.
- 
- Many of the steps will be all the children work with**

**Many of these steps will benefit all the children you work with.**

**2 Reduce background noise as much as possible.**

- Turn off any equipment, like overhead projectors and computers, when not in use.
- Shut the door if there's outside background noise.
- Use soft furnishings and fabrics to help improve acoustics.

**3 Make the most of hearing technology** such as soundfield systems (which allow your voice to be heard clearly and equally across the classroom). Be aware that some children may be reluctant to use hearing technology – gently encourage and support them.

**4 Factor in plenty of breaks** as children with mild hearing loss have to concentrate harder than their peers, which can lead to tiredness (more information at [ndcs.org.uk/tired](https://ndcs.org.uk/tired)).

**5 Check there's been a full assessment of the child's needs** relating to their hearing loss. Get advice from a specialist Teacher of the Deaf on this.



# Next steps

- Always talk to the child's parents – they will have lots of ideas and suggestions.
- If the child is old enough, ask them how you can best support them.
- Speak to the person responsible for special or additional needs in your school.
- Contact the local specialist education support service for further advice and support from a Teacher of the Deaf.
- If you think a child might have an undiagnosed hearing loss, discuss this with their parents and suggest they ask their GP for a referral to an audiologist.



## More information

- [ndcs.org.uk/primary-education](https://ndcs.org.uk/primary-education)
- [ndcs.org.uk/secondary-education](https://ndcs.org.uk/secondary-education)
- watch our video with tips on supporting children with a mild hearing loss (go to [youtube.com/user/ndcswebteam](https://youtube.com/user/ndcswebteam) and search for 'mild').



## Any questions? We're here to help.

Freephone Helpline: **0808 800 8880**  
[helpline@ndcs.org.uk](mailto:helpline@ndcs.org.uk)  
[ndcs.org.uk/livechat](https://ndcs.org.uk/livechat)  
[ndcs.org.uk](https://ndcs.org.uk)

# About us

**We're here for every deaf child who needs us – no matter what their level or type of deafness or how they communicate. We want to work with professionals like you to overcome the barriers that hold deaf children back.**

Visit our website **[ndcs.org.uk](https://ndcs.org.uk)** to join us for free. You'll have access to:

- › our expert information resources for professionals
- › our quarterly digital magazine and email updates
- › our workshops and events
- › our Freephone Helpline.



**National  
Deaf Children's  
Society**

**We are the National Deaf Children's Society,  
the leading charity for deaf children.**

**Freephone Helpline:**

**0808 800 8880 (voice and text)**

**helpline@ndcs.org.uk**

**ndcs.org.uk**



Funded by



Department  
for Education

This resource was developed by the National Deaf Children's Society, with support from the National Sensory Impairment Partnership (NatSIP). NatSIP is funded by the Department for Education (DfE) in England.



© National Deaf Children's Society

November 2022. Next review due: November 2025

Published by the National Deaf Children's Society  
37–45 Paul Street, London EC2A 4LS

Tel: 020 7490 8656 (voice and text) Fax: 020 7251 5020

This publication can be requested in large print or as a text file.

For resource references or to give us your feedback email  
**informationteam@ndcs.org.uk**.

The National Deaf Children's Society is a registered charity in England  
and Wales no.1016532 and in Scotland no. SC040779. JR1442.



**National  
Deaf Children's  
Society**