

# Choosing a school

When you begin thinking about your child starting school, there are lots of things to consider.



This is not a definitive list and there may be questions that are specific to your child (for example, medical or dietary needs), however it does give you a great starting point. Remember that choosing a school is about much more than just these points. It's important that you and your child feel happy and confident in the school and its values, so think about what matters to you as a family too.



## Classroom Acoustics & Technology

Thinking about the classroom my child will be in:

- Is it open-plan?
- Are any of the ceilings very high?
- Is there good lighting?
- Any sound treatments to the walls or ceilings?
- Is there a sound level meter to monitor background noise volume?
- Is there a sound field system?
- Are there carpets or curtains?
- Is there a sound field system?

## School information

Make sure you get a copy of the **school prospectus or handbook**- this should include:

- The name of the Head teacher and the school contact details.
- Information about their accessibility plan, equality information & SEN Information report.
- Latest Ofsted School inspection findings. You can find out more about the school here\*.
- How many children are in the school & in the class your child may join?
- How does the school usually support children with special educational/additional needs?
- Have you supported other deaf children at this school?
- Have staff received deaf/disability awareness training?

## Working Together

- How will we communicate?  
For example, home-school book, school email system, teacher meeting
- I/we use sign language. Who would interpret for us with the class teacher, at parents' evenings and annual reviews or at school events, such as assemblies?
- Who is responsible for organising this?

## Supporting my child

- What additional support will be available for my child to learn and participate in class?
- Who will provide training for staff? This might be deaf awareness or specific training to manage hearing technology.
- Who decides how much and the type of support my child needs?
- Who will provide this support? For example, the class teacher, classroom teaching assistants, teaching assistant specifically for my child.
- How often will this be reviewed?
- How does the school work with other professionals? For example, Teacher of the Deaf, Speech and language therapist, Educational audiologist, Educational psychologist.
- How will my child be included in all school activities, including breaktimes and afterschool activities? For example, would communication support be provided if required?



## If the school has an Enhance Resource provision for deaf children in its mainstream school:

- What communication approach does the provision follow? If the provision uses sign language, what sign language training and qualifications do the staff have?
- How many deaf children are there now?
- How many deaf children does the school expect there to be in the future?
- How many children will be in the mainstream class?
- How many deaf children are likely to be in my child's class?
- How many teachers are there in the unit? Are all the teachers qualified ToDs?
- How many support assistants are there? What qualifications do support assistants have?
- What training will mainstream staff receive on the specific needs of my child? For example deaf awareness training or how to use technology, such as a radio aid.
- How do you decide how much time my child will spend in mainstream or the enhanced resource provision?
- What level of support will my child receive when they are in mainstream classes and who will provide the support?

Wherever they go to school and however they communicate, **Hear Together** are passionate about kids developing confidence & self-esteem and making friends. That's why we run our activities for children from babies to young adults!

Find out more about what we offer at [www.hear-together.org.uk](http://www.hear-together.org.uk)

For more information about the steps that schools can take to make sure there are good listening environments in place for your child, visit [www.ndcs.org.uk/acoustics](http://www.ndcs.org.uk/acoustics).

\*School inspection reports (England): [reports.ofsted.gov.uk](http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk)