

Mary Hare School for deaf children

The Local Offer

From the parent carer's point of view

1. How does the setting/school/college know if children/young people need extra help and what should I do if I think my child/young person may have special educational needs?

Mary Hare is a specialist school for deaf children and young people, aged 5 – 19 years of age. We teach deaf children through an auditory oral approach, which means that the young people at Mary Hare school learn through listening and speaking and writing English. We place great emphasis on language development. All children have access to the National Curriculum with a broad range of GCSEs, A Levels and BTECS and a growing number of vocational courses.

Mary Hare School appoints a Senior Manager as its SENCO to oversee the support for additional special needs of the children/young people at Mary Hare School. The SENCO is supported by a team of professionals all with experience in identifying needs, which are occasionally masked by hearing impairment. This includes dyslexia/dyscalculia, Multisensory impairment and physical and mobility difficulties. If you have any concerns about your child's special educational needs whilst at Mary Hare School you can contact the SENCO.

If a family decides that Mary Hare School is the right place for their child, they will be invited to an assessment week (usually held in November) when the school will assess the child/young person against a number of verbal and non-verbal tests. This is to assess whether the child/young person will benefit from the approach to education we offer. The assessments are conducted by Teachers of the Deaf, Speech and Language Therapists and Audiologists. We are assessing the potential of a child/young person, not their academic level and in our experience, we find that children and young people attending Mary Hare School come from a range of previous backgrounds and schools: mainstream, mainstream units or special schools with a signing or different communication approach.

We have a Pupil Recruitment Manager whose role is to support families with children/young people who would like to come to Mary Hare School. She can answer all questions you might have, or find a colleague to help.

Mary Hare School offers day placements for children/young people who live near enough to return home each day and boarding facilities for those who require it.

2. How will early years setting/school/college staff support my child/young person?

Mary Hare Primary School assesses pupils over a period of several days, to ascertain that it is the right school for each child. Taught within an auditory-oral philosophy, class groups normally have between 5 and 8 pupils working with a qualified teacher of the deaf in good acoustic conditions. Group hearing aids further support each child's use of residual hearing. Classroom assistants work in partnership with the teachers to support the work of the children. The high staff /pupil ratio means that adult support is readily available for pupils for follow-up work, reinforcement or an individual

programme. As well as classroom-based lessons, all children have weekly Music, Art, PE and Technology lessons. As the children progress through the school, the curriculum becomes increasingly wide-ranging and, for the oldest pupils, includes French and Health Education. Certain aspects of health education, including sex education, are dealt with after consultation with parents, both on an individual basis and in appropriate groupings when the need arises. Most children have a limited amount of homework each evening - 20 minutes for younger children and 45 minutes for older pupils.

At Mary Hare Secondary School, once we have assessed your child we will have information about the language level and specific communication difficulties of the young person. We use this to place your child in the appropriate class at Year 7. Teaching of classes (typically 8 – 12 children in acoustically treated classrooms) is carried out by qualified Teachers of the Deaf who are also subject specialists. Therefore your child will be taught each lesson by a professional who understands the language difficulties of deaf children and how to overcome them through spoken and written teaching.

The Language Enrichment Groups are supported by a group teaching assistant (under the direction of a Teacher of the Deaf or SENCO) who accompanies their class across the whole curriculum. This pupil centred approach allows the teaching assistant to identify each child's strengths and weaknesses and target support without compromising pupils developing independence. For a small number of pupils with additional needs such as a visual or physical impairment it is appropriate for a 1:1 TA to be allocated to support with adapting the curriculum or scribing for the pupil.

A team of 8 speech and language therapists provide individual packages of intervention tailored to each child's needs. Individual targets are set and reviewed termly to monitor progress. Pupils will engage in programs of 1:1 and group therapy.

An Educational Audiologist is available everyday to support pupils with their audiological needs. This may involve simple troubleshooting of issues with personal amplification equipment, taking of impressions for ear moulds or liaison with cochlear implant teams across the country to reprogram devices.

The school has invested in a range of technologies to assist in the classroom, including a 'Group Hearing Aid' (developed by the school specialist technicians). This equipment enables young people using hearing aids or cochlear implants to hear the teacher, the other young people in class and themselves speak. All classrooms are acoustically treated to provide the best listening environment and are equipped with interactive whiteboards.

Mary Hare School monitors your child's progress against the information gained through the initial assessment. In addition, Mary Hare organises two information days for new starters:

- One for families of children who are considering Mary Hare School
- One for families once they have accepted a place at the school

The pre-placement information day is an opportunity for families to ask as many questions about our approach and the support offered to deaf children and young people at Mary Hare School.

The day for families of new entrants is to give more detail information about procedures and the general day to day practical details of coming to Mary Hare School.

Every academic year at Mary Hare School has a Head of Year and young people also have a form tutor. Both these members of staff are available for questions/concerns from parents. Parents are given the direct contact details for the staff supporting their child. The Governors of Mary Hare School meet three times year to oversee the financial management and strategic direction of the school. They visit the school individually, to see at first-hand what happens in the classrooms, boarding houses and other aspects of the school day.

Mary Hare School measures the success of its provision for deaf children and young people through:

- Benchmarking its GCSE and A level results against those for children and young people in mainstream schools
- Measuring and monitoring the progress made by each individual child using Raise On-line and National data predicting individual pupil attainment (Midyis, Yellis and Alis) □
Half termly achievement and effort testing to monitor and evaluate progress.

3. How will the curriculum be matched to my child's/young person's needs?

At Mary Hare Primary School, children are grouped in classes according to their chronological ages, and taught literacy, numeracy and science in groups according to their language ages. All lessons are taught directly by teachers of the deaf who modify the language of the National Curriculum to make the learning accessible to each pupil.

In Year 7, pupils are grouped according to their level of language (which is assessed as part of the entrance procedures). Pupils for whom testing identifies a significant discrepancy between their chronological age and actual language levels are prioritised as requiring an intensive language programme, which we call LEGS groups (Language Enrichment Groups). This includes pupils with low reading ages and high non-verbal scores but for whom impaired language is proving a barrier to teaching and learning. Like their peers in the higher sets these pupils will follow a full national curriculum at KS3 including, music, drama and French.

A Language Enrichment Group pupil receives support from a dedicated teaching assistant who accompanies their group across the full curriculum. In addition the teaching assistant supports in supervised prep after school. Pupils within LEGS groups receive an enhanced programme of speech and language therapy with both individual and group sessions. The Speech Therapist also attends an English lesson to work in partnership with the English teacher. The Language Enrichment Plus Group (LEGS+) may not be ready to access the full curriculum. They are taught in a separate class with a dedicated class teacher who will deliver the breadth of curriculum in a different way.

Mary Hare School offers the children and young people attending the opportunity to study a wide range of GCSEs , A Levels and BTECs from the National Curriculum. We make every effort to enable them to have their first choice of subjects, even if this means teaching in small classes.

All pupils take part in the Accelerated Reading programme to increase their literacy skills.

Mary Hare School aims to offer a curriculum to deaf pupils that matches that of their hearing siblings. Pupils are not removed from any lessons for additional support (for example Speech & Language therapy takes place outside of lesson times). Pupils sit in a 'horseshoe' shape in class so they cannot fall behind or be lost in the lesson. Teachers make extensive use of eye contact, checking for understanding and asking pupils to explain their peers' contributions to ensure that all pupils are included in learning at all times.

4. How will both you and I know how my child/young person is doing and how will you help me to support my child's/young person's learning?

At the primary school, parents are fully involved with their child's progress. From the first day parents are given direct contact details for the class teacher, the key care worker, speech & Language therapist and the head. There is weekly communication between class teacher and parents through the home /school diary and with care through phone, text, and email. Contact with the Speech & Language therapist is through the speech folder, which goes home every weekend. There is a weekly Friday letter to parents from the head. Individual targets are set termly in the IEP, which parents are involved in through consultation and review. There are separate termly speech and language targets to monitor progress. The Annual Review allows parents to have thorough insight and input into the provision for, and progress of, their child. Parent consultations are also offered to any parent throughout the year and on a set day in the summer.

Once a pupil has been accepted into Year 7, the School holds an Introduction Day for parents and pupils, towards the end of the summer term, preceding their start in the following September. On this day, parents have the opportunity to understand who to go to for information about their child's progress in all areas of school life.

Parents receive Attainment and Effort Grades every half term, so are regularly updated on their child's progress. The school also has the reporting and parent consultation regimes which are to be found in mainstream schools. This is soon to be available online and the school is developing the range of information available to parents about their child via the school portal.

The Annual Review is a child centred occasion which provides a thorough and rigorous check on parent and child views of the services provided by the school.

Audiological issues are dealt with in school and pupils have daily access to expert help, minimising the times when he has to cope without his equipment.

Analysis of LEG pupil progress through KS3 has revealed a closing of the gap with the rest of the year group of 1 National Curriculum level over the period of KS3. Mary Hare School runs structured after school homework sessions with support for teaching and care staff.

5. What support will there be for my child's/young person's overall well-being?

We believe that our setting gives pupils a good and positive self-image and a confidence to engage with the hearing world which they will very much need as adults. In other words, we believe that our provision promotes lifelong inclusion.

At **Mary Hare Primary**, when the children come out from lessons at 4.00 pm, the Care Staff are waiting to meet them and to hear about the school day. Each bedroom group, which can vary in size, is the responsibility of one keyworker. This keyworker will look after every aspect of your child's welfare, keeping in regular contact with parents, liaising with the school nurse, talking with teachers, planning individual programmes and attending annual reviews.

We have taken great steps to make the bedrooms, play room and other accommodation areas as friendly as possible, to ensure your child is happy during their time at school. At the Primary School students who choose to board only stay 4 nights a week, going home on a Friday after school and not returning until late Monday morning.

Mary Hare School employs a Pastoral Consultant and a Health & Emotional Well-Being Support Worker who both support pupils who are experiencing emotional difficulties. This supports pupils' behavior in school and is a means to avoid exclusions where appropriate. The School also has links with the local Deaf CAMHS for pupils with mental health issues. The Pastoral Care Committee meets to discuss the needs of vulnerable young people.

The Personal, Social & Health Education (PSHE) programme includes the opportunity to discuss relationships, and sex education.

Every child has a dedicated keyworker in the boarding houses, as well as a Form Teacher and Head of Year in School.

Health care

There is 24-hour nursing care available for all children at Mary Hare School. The school has its own surgery which is used by the school nurse, who deals with all health matters affecting the pupils.

If a pupil needs medical attention during the school week, this is attended to by either a member of the school care staff or the nurse. If necessary, the nurse will consult with the Newbury GP who is the school's Medical Officer.

Medication is administered in line with the Mary Hare medication policy. Medication is administered by both care and nursing staff, all of whom have followed the schools medication training procedure. Consent is obtained from parents for all medication to be given. Medication is ordered and disposed of by the school nurse. Medication is stored securely and accessible only to appropriate personnel. Some pupils will self-administer their own medication – this will happen if thought to be appropriate and following a risk assessment for individual pupils.

Pupils' views

There is a thriving student council with reps from each year group who meet half-termly to discuss a variety of topics and concerns, with staff reps from both care and school.

House meetings are held once a month to discuss any issues which the students feel affect their lives. In February of Year 12 students can apply to become prefects. Successful applicants serve for one year and have a range of responsibilities and help organise whole school events. Hustings are organised for the positions of Head Boy or Head Girl. There are suggestion boxes around the campus and the school also carries out pupil surveys.

6. What specialist services and expertise are available at or accessed by the setting/school/college?

All lessons are taught by **Teachers of the Deaf** who are also subject specialists. Therefore your child will be taught each lesson by a professional who understands the language difficulties of deaf children and how to overcome them through spoken and written teaching.

Speech and Language Therapy

Mary Hare Primary School has four part-time Speech & Language Therapists who work closely with school staff to promote optimum progress in spoken language development for all the children. Each child is allocated a lead therapist who is responsible for speech and language intervention and advice. The lead therapist also provides a detailed report for the child's annual review. Children are usually seen 2-3 times a week depending on their profile.

At the Secondary School there is a team of full-time and part-time Speech and Language Therapists who provide both individual and group opportunities for pupils to improve their spoken language, communication and listening skills.

Teaching programmes take into account the results of the work of Speech and Language Therapists, together with any advice they are able to offer teaching staff. Language support work is carried out co-operatively between teachers and Speech and Language Therapists. Pupils do not normally miss lessons to attend Speech and Language Therapy. In years 7-11 they have their appointments at lunchtime or after school. Sixth formers are usually seen in one of their free study periods.

Audiology

Great emphasis is placed on utilising the residual hearing of our students so it is important that we have effective systems for making sure their equipment is working properly.

Mary Hare's Audiology Department is equipped with modern audiometric facilities enabling our resident audiologists to monitor pupils' hearing on-site. Earmould impressions can also be taken in school preventing the need for time-wasting clinic journeys. Our Audiologists work closely with the local hospital Audiology teams and most of the Cochlear Implant teams around the UK. More than 50% of pupils are Cochlear implant users.

All staff are trained in checking hearing aids and all systems and any faults are dealt with immediately.

Group Hearing Aid

Mary Hare School has developed a unique group hearing aid system which enables pupils to use their residual hearing to the maximum effect. Through the use of personal microphones they are able to hear themselves and their classmates as clearly as they hear the teacher. All children attending the school are fitted with their own interface box to use with the system. This system cuts out nearly all background noise and is an invaluable teaching and learning tool, especially when introducing a new topic to the class.

Mary Hare also has a music therapy unit that provides services to pupils. It is led by a member of staff who is internationally recognised as a leader in the field of music and deafness and the benefit of using music to develop language.

7. What training are the staff supporting the children and young people with SEND had or are having?

All GCSE, A Level and BTEC subject teachers are required to be qualified Teachers of the Deaf, or to qualify as a TOD within two years of being employed at Mary Hare School.

Vocational courses are taught by NVQ Assessors and Verifiers.

Teaching Assistants are all qualified in a Level 3 BTEC qualification for supporting hearing impaired pupils. Additionally some TA's have undertaken additional training in specific areas of interest such as dyslexia, visual impairment, multisensory impairments, physiotherapy and Autism. Some TA's progress on to qualify as Higher Level Teaching Assistants.

The Audiology Team's qualifications include:

BA (Hons) Audiology and Education
MSc (Educational Audiology)
MSc Audiology
HNC medical physics and physiological measurement
Part 1 and 2 of BSA audiology qualification

All speech & language therapists are registered with the Health and Care Professions council and the Royal College of speech and language therapists and have either attended or aim to attend the working with deaf people course run by CSD consultants within their first two years of employment. Some therapists have BSL qualifications.

Their qualifications include:

Bachelors degree in speech, language and hearing therapy (Hons)
Masters degree in human communication specialising in deafness
Advanced Clinical Skills diploma
PETAL training
BSc in Psychology
PGDip in Speech and Language Therapy
BA (Hons) in Linguistics and Language Pathology
BSc (Hons) in Speech and Language Therapy
Bachelor of Arts in Early Childhood Studies and English Language and Linguistics (Hons)
Post Graduate Diploma in Speech and Language therapy

The School has a senior member of staff who manages a programme of continuous professional development for all staff. Members of staff are encouraged to attend appropriate conferences and events that also add to their knowledge.

8. How will my child/young person be included in activities outside the classroom including school trips?

All pupils are able to go on school trips. There are a wide range of trips, some for a day, others for a week. Pupils go on different trips in different Years at school. They include:

- Trips to France
- Geography field trips
- Skiing trips
- Day trips to local places of historical interest

After school clubs are a very important part of the 24 hour curriculum at Mary Hare Primary. Children can participate in a range of on and off-site activities; this range is frequently revised and extended. Children are given every encouragement to attend clubs within the neighborhood so that over time they can mix with confidence both at school and in the local hearing community. Arrangements can always be made for day pupils to join in these activities.

At the **Secondary School** there is a full programme of after school activities, organised by the care staff. Students can take part in Horse riding, karate, life skills, trampolining, swimming, football, dodgeball, boxercise, arts and crafts, tennis, cricket, skateboarding, mountain biking, running, Duke of Edinburgh Award, canoeing and so much more.

At the weekend there are Roller disco and shopping trips, cinema and lunch in the local town of Newbury, football training and tournaments, puzzles and competitions, wall-climbing in Reading, visits to local events and shows, plus trips further afield to theme parks and attractions like the London Dungeons.

Cole's Diner is the school youth club. Styled as an American diner, it is a place where pupils can meet, hangout and have refreshments. Cole's Diner runs a number of themed evenings during term time such as; a mixed evening with Compton Teenscene youth club and Reading Deaf Society, comedy show, race night, national curry week, national cheese pizza day, pirates day and street dance.

Carnarvon Hall is provided for the 6th Form as a social and recreational meeting place. Care Staff and pupils organise on and off-site evening activities, such as swimming, football, quizzes, movie nights and evenings out in the Newbury area. At weekends there are trips to the cinema, ice skating, shopping, and ten-pin bowling depending on interest, plus special trips are made to places like the Clothes Show, concerts and sporting events. Every year leavers attend a leaver's lunch and leaver's ball- which is a glamorous occasion.

Within the 6th form there is the Social committee, set-up each year to focus on making Sixth Form life as enjoyable as possible.

9. How accessible is the setting/school/college environment?

All teaching areas in Mary Hare School have been built and designed to optimize the acoustic environment for deaf children and young people.

All new buildings are fully wheelchair accessible, but some of the older buildings, including the second floor of the main secondary school, are not yet fully accessible. A lift to access the maths department and library on the lower floors in school has been recently fitted. Ramps have been built for all main entrances.

The Primary School is not accessible with a wheelchair. The new lift was funded through a donation and we continue to fundraise to improve accessibility.

When meeting with families whose first language is BSL, the School will invite an interpreter.

Stairs are marked with coloured strip to aid people with a visual impairment.

The school hall uses technology to ensure that pupils can follow all presentations in assembly, with text being used to reinforce the spoken word.

10. How will the setting/school/college prepare and support my child/young person to join the setting/school/college, transfer to a new setting/school/college or the next stage of education and life?

Mary Hare School teaches children from the age of 5 to 19 years. The move from Mary Hare Primary School to the secondary is prepared through transition visits to spend time in class, meet their form teacher, have a tour of the campus and eat lunch in the canteen. The Head of year 7 visits pupils in Yr 6 in their classroom to get to know them and discuss their change of school. The Speech and language therapy team hold individual and group sessions to teach vocabulary for secondary curriculum subjects, label a map of campus and discuss it, give strategies and language to deal with social situations (eg making friends, asking the way).

The Primary School holds a transition day for parents and yr 6 pupils at Mary Hare Secondary School. Their class teacher will discuss issues around transition in class and PSHE and the assembly theme for final week in summer term on 'Moving on'.

In Year 11 pupils attend a 6th form exhibition outlining what Mary Hare 6th Form offers. Some young people join Mary Hare at 6th form and also attend this event.

The school employs a careers advisor who organizes work experience placements in year 11. From February year 12 – October year 13 pupils attend 80hours (spread over weekly sessions) on planning for their future, including Higher Education and work.

90% of pupils leaving Mary Hare School go on to university or another higher education establishment.

11. How are the setting's/school's/college's resources allocated and matched to children's/young people's special educational needs?

Since Mary Hare School is designed to meet the needs of deaf children and young people we place great emphasis on removing all barriers that prevent a pupil from learning effectively. The budget for this purpose is not a separate one but integral to all we do.

12. How is the decision made about what type and how much support my child/young person will receive?

Mary Hare School carries out assessments of Year 7 new entrants in November of the year preceding their entry. All pupils entering the school in a different year group will attend an 'assessment visit' which lasts typically 3 -5 days.

During these assessments, staff will assess the nature of the support required by a pupil. Sometimes after an assessment is carried out we will find that Mary Hare School cannot provide the necessary support for a child and in this case the family will be signposted to other appropriate provision.

Following the assessments, staff at the school will consult with the SENCO at the child's current school, as well as accessing independent reports.

The family is also consulted for their input.

How are parents involved in the setting/school/college? How can I be involved?

There is a Parent Association at both the Primary and Secondary School. All parents are welcome to join the Parent Association. A report from the Parent Associations is sent to the board of governors at each of their meetings. They hold fundraising events for projects and try to organise social evenings for parents to help them to get to know each other. There is also a representative from the Parent Association at each meeting of the board of governors.

All parents have the opportunity to put themselves forward for election onto the Parent Association.

Parents also volunteer to help out at events, promoting the school to other families. Parents also hold fundraising events for projects and equipment needed by the pupils.

The school has an annual production which all parents are invited to attend – with all pupils taking part (either on stage or backstage).

There is always the opportunity to meet with care staff when pupils are dropped off or picked up from school.

13. Who can I contact for further information?

We have a Admissions Manager whose role is to support families with children/young people who would like to come to Mary Hare School. She can answer all the questions you might have. For information about entrance procedures and events please contact:

Debbie Benson

Admissions Manager d.benson@maryhare.org.uk

01635 244215

For wider or other information about Mary Hare School please contact:

Ruth Taylor

PA to the Principal

r.taylor@maryhare.org.uk

01635 244275

Or go to our website: www.maryharschool.org.uk

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