



New Ways of Working

“Strange times” has been a constant refrain of our team leader over the last nine months, and truer words have never been spoken. We have all had to adapt the way we work in order to continue to provide support and guidance for parents, children and young people, and schools.

Improving our IT skills has been a necessity and a huge challenge for some(me!). We are now all adept at taking part in virtual meetings, voicing over presentations, using video calls to connect with children and young people as well as with their parents. Meetings have taken place in children centres, in gardens and in car parks in order to maintain some face to face where it has been absolutely needed.

We have produced many leaflets on a range of topics including step by step pictorial guides for equipment use, cleaning equipment and mask use. All our training is now in video form and on the Local Offer for all to access.

Our audiology technician works from the boot of his car in school car parks in order to check pupil's equipment. Brrrrr!!

We have continued to work closely with our colleagues in the hubs and with other professionals – audiologists, staff at the Emmeline, speech and language therapists and staff in schools and pre-schools.

This last nine months has been difficult for all of us but there are those who have had to cope in exceptionally difficult circumstances. There looks to be hope on the horizon and we all look forward to a time when we can see people face to face. Until that time we will continue to do our very best to guide, advise and support in whatever ways we can.

Teacher of the Deaf



Not a lot of room!!! Ben working in his Smart car, in order to make it possible for a pupil to use a radio aid.

This term's newsletter...

- * Updates from the hub schools- Middleton Primary and St John Fisher
- * Online pantomimes and useful links
- * Primary school admissions
- * Battery safety reminder
- * Learn a few seasonal BSL signs that have been snuck in!



New Ways of Working- Middleton Hub

The festive season is here and it's normally a time of year that we get together as a whole school to enjoy carols, performances and pantomimes. Due to Covid-19, things this year are slightly different, but at Middleton primary school we have managed to find new ways of being able to enjoy these festive moments.

We are learning the Christmas carol 'It was on a starry night' in BSL and coming together virtually to be able to perform this as a school whilst keeping everyone safe. We are also taking part and watching the BSL signed pantomime Rapunzel in December for the whole school to enjoy.



We carry out phase assemblies virtually which are inclusive for all the children. We have had children presenting work and discussing what they have been achieving in their bubbles, including a very successful anti-bullying week which was shared across the whole school. We are continuing with this by completing a kindness advent calendar throughout the month of December. Face masks and visors are not worn by our staff who are communicating with deaf pupils so they can still access a good form of communication, but we are maintaining social distancing and using screens to keep everyone safe within our setting.



Working from home during a bubble closure.

As we continue in the new year, we are still providing home learning for those pupils that require it. We are using a range of platforms so that every child can access work depending on the technology equipment they have at home. For our deaf students and our deaf parents, we are arranging face to face video calls so they can be accessed and translated, practical sessions and, where needed, learning packs are printed and sent home.

From everyone at Middleton Primary school we hope you all enjoy the holidays and remain safe.

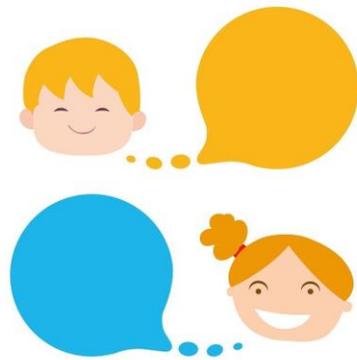
More information about the Rapunzel pantomime on Wednesday 16th December and how primary schools can sign up for pupils at school and those learning at home, can be found on the [Norfolk Music Hub website](#).

An online pantomime to enjoy at home- [Derby Theatre](#) are performing The Little Mermaid with closed captions and on Saturday 2nd January with BSL interpretation.



Catch up Funding

Some schools or colleges may be providing 'catch-up' support or tuition to individual children or young people who they feel need it as a result of the disruption to their education this year. If you want to know more, we recommend you discuss this with the school, your child's class teacher or SENCO and ask what is being done in your child's school. If you want further support with this or have further questions, please feel free to contact your Teacher of the Deaf.



Want to get in contact with other deaf children and young people?

NDCS offer a pen pal service for children and young people aged 8-18. Applications open again at the start of 2021 and you can register your interest now by joining their [waiting list](#).

St John Fisher Hub Update

At St John Fisher school this term we have been focusing on developing resilience and thinking about how our current students can support primary students who are preparing to move up to secondary school. In previous years we have run transition events such as a sensory animal experience and a multi-skills sports festival, however this is not possible at the moment. Instead, our two Year 8 Hub students have made a video in which they discuss their own experiences of moving up to secondary, outlining their fears and also what the reality was when they arrived. The video has been uploaded to our school website. We are grateful to our students, Amna and Marek, for agreeing to participate even though they were both very nervous about doing so.

We are also in the process of setting up our sensory room, which will be operational after Christmas. We are looking forward to developing experiences for all our students, but particularly those with autism and those with some sort of sensory impairment. Two of our staff have now completed the Multi-Sensory Impairment (MSI) Intervenor training and they are looking forward to thinking about how this resource might support all learners effectively.

What's new?



Have you seen the latest winner of the NDCS storyteller competition book **The Quest for the Cockle Implant?** Written by 9 year old Maya, the story tells the exciting adventures of Angel, a deaf mermaid, in her search to find her missing cockle implant. Find out more about the story, including an interview with Maya [here](#).



decorations

Clear Face Masks

A solution or adding to the problems? [Which?](#) have created a useful article on the different types of clear face masks and how effective they are.



Early Language and Literacy

[Hungry Little Minds](#) and [Words for Life](#) websites have lots of ideas and activities to support your little one with developing their language and literacy skills at home.

Follow the [Peterborough Reads Facebook page](#) to view online stories and more activity ideas to try.



The [Speech and Language Therapy Service](#) has updated their website with lots of useful tips for supporting your child at home.

There is also the joint therapies [Facebook page](#) (occupational therapy, physiotherapy and speech and language) for more updates and tips.



The [mobile app](#) that gives 50 activity ideas for parents to experience together with their children.

Upcoming Events

The [NDCS website](#) has regularly updated information and blogs on Government changes to do with Covid-19 that may impact children, young people and families living with deafness.

- 15th December - All about face masks
- 21st December - Online coffee morning
- 5th January – Promoting positive behaviour
- 12th January – Real life experiences
- 16th January – Parents as partners
- 14th January – Overcoming sleep issues
- 20th January – Education Health Care Plans (EHCPs) for deaf parents who are BSL users
- 19th and 26 January – New to hearing loss

Expert parent programme – 3 workshops in January

More information about the events and how to book can be found [here](#).

Choosing a Primary School

The deadline for [primary school admissions](#) starting September 2021 is **15th January 2021**.

A few things to consider...



Meet with the special needs coordinator (SENCO) or head teacher to discuss your child's needs.

If a tour of the school wasn't possible in person, have you had video tours or a video call instead?

Are there other children or staff with a hearing loss at the school?

Do the staff have previous experience of working with deaf children?

How are all children included in all school activities, including after school clubs?

Are the classrooms and group rooms good listening environments? e.g. Have lots of soft furnishings, low ceilings, carpets, contained quiet spaces

How does the school involve parents?

Who will be responsible in school for checking hearing aids / technology?

How will your child be supported if they need additional help?

If you have any concerns or questions, please contact your child's ToD.

[NDCS](#) also has advice on choosing deaf friendly schools.

Important Reminder on Battery Safety...



Please keep spare batteries and flat or dead batteries where young children cannot reach them or play with them.

Hearing aid batteries can cause harm or even death if swallowed, put up a child's nose or put in their ear. The chemicals in the battery can damage skin tissue and cause bleeding.

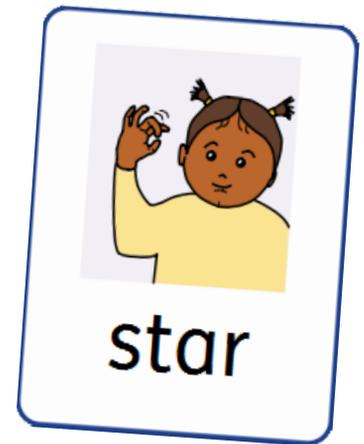
If you think your child has swallowed a battery you must act quickly. Go to your nearest emergency department (A and E) or dial 999. Say that you think a battery has been swallowed, what type of battery and when it was swallowed. Do not let your child eat or drink and do not try to make them sick.

You can find more information on the [NHS website](#).

Peterborough Audiology

The audiologists are working through the backlog of reviews that built up this year due to Covid-19 restrictions. However, if you have any issues, please get in contact with them so they can prioritise their support.

01733 673991



PDDCS News

This year the PDDCS (Peterborough and District Deaf Children's Society) had their first Zoom virtual summer school. Not being able to get together didn't stop the children socialising with their deaf peers and having lots of fun.



More recently they've also had a Halloween sign party and a Christmas magic workshop.

To find out more about PDDCS, how to join their next events and get in contact with other families in the area, visit their [website](#) or [Facebook page](#).

The [Local Offer](#) page has regularly updated advice on SEND services.



Sensory Resources

Sense Scotland have some lovely sensory ideas to try out on their '[Be Playful](#)' page that you could try over the Christmas break. Have you tried story massage? Find out more, including some ideas to try at home [here](#).

Winter Grant Scheme

If your family or someone you know is in need of support with food, energy bills or essentials this winter, the Winter Grant Scheme set up by Peterborough and Cambridgeshire City Councils may be able to help. For more information and how to get in contact, click [here](#).



Happy



New



Year

Would you like to write something for our next newsletter?

It could be about your experiences of face masks, your first term back at school or a review of new technology or resources. If you have something to share, speak to your ToD or send us an email to senandinclusion@peterborough.gov.uk



And finally...

From all of the Sensory and Physical Support Team, we wish you all a happy Christmas break and a healthy 2021.

