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Pupils with Sensory Disabilities

Hearing Impairment

Erasmus+

Hearing Impairment

Classroom-based tips (focus on instructional methods)

1. **Inform the pupils about the presence of a fellow pupil who is deaf/hard-of-hearing**, e.g. through projects, discussion, parental participation, storytelling, involvement of the pupil himself/herself, depending on the pupils' age), taking care not to stigmatise the pupil, or make her/him uncomfortable.

2. **Provide activities promoting acceptance and support in order to avoid marginalisation.**

3. **Make use of natural gesture and facial expression as a clue to meaning.**

4. **Attract the pupil's attention before speaking; make sure you are facing him/her.**

5. **Speak clearly**; but avoid speaking artificially slowly, exaggerating your lips, or shouting as this affects the natural rhythm of speech.

6. **Make sure that there is adequate light on your face.** Do not stand with your back to windows.

7. **Position the pupil so that he/she can lip-read you easily and see the projector or board** and as much of the class as possible if there is to be a group discussion.

8. **Do not cover your face with your hands or objects or walk around while you are speaking.**

9. **Keep background noise to a minimum.**

10. **Repeat questions asked from the floor.**

11. **Make use of visual material,** i.e. handouts, key vocabulary, diagrams, written instructions, and virtual learning environments such as use of Blackboard.

12. **Indicate when you are changing the subject.**

13. **Check comprehension**; encourage and direct questions.

14. **Write important new words on the board to fix their form.**

15. **Provide copies of teachers' notes or recorded lectures**, as well as digital notes for pupils using technology

[Reference: http://www2.le.ac.uk/offices/accessability/staff/supporting-students-with-disabilities/information-for-staff-working-with-deaf-or-hearing-impaired-students]

School-based practical tips (focus on instructional methods)

Announcement / Sign at School

Equip school spaces with visual signs clearly marking school areas, such as dining area, toilets, canteen, principal's office, schoolyard, teachers' office, emergency exit doors and gym. Provide visual signage and written information for the hearing impaired.

Community

Find and have available contact details of local/national associations for deaf/hard of hearing individuals for further information and support.

Curricular Adaptations

Inform teachers to make necessary adaptations to the curriculum tasks. For example, based on one learning objective, provide a single worksheet which gets progressively harder.

Parents / Parents' Associations

Facilitate family support and confidence in parenting a child with a hearing loss. Arrange meetings between the parents and the staff to discuss the progress of their children and to enhance the collaboration between home-school. This will help to monitor progress and to discuss issues that might be related to the social life of the pupil, marginalisation, social interactions with peers, behaviour at home, self-esteem etc. In case the parents are signing deaf, a sign interpreter should be present.

School Celebrations / Events / Activities

1. **Include the pupils into the events by differentiating their role and contribution.**
   Example: instead of memorising a poem, take advantage of their talents in acting, theatre and role-playing.

2. **Involve deaf/hard-of-hearing pupils in lunchtime and after-school activities.**

School Purchases

1. **Consider extra cost for updating equipment,** such as video recorders that record subtitles, text telephones, televisions that have teletext.

2. **Provide and effectively use the appropriate technological equipment for deaf/hard-of-hearing children (e.g. FM system, etc.).**

3. **Improve the acoustic conditions in the classrooms and in the wider school environment.**

Pupil Support

1. **Refer to campus services such as the Writing Centre and the Academic Support Centre, if your institution possesses this type of service.** If such a service is not available, co-operate with those offering communication support to deaf/hard-of-hearing children (e.g. teacher of the deaf, classroom assistant, communication support worker, learning support assistant, etc.).

2. **Find and have available contact details of local/national associations for deaf/hard of hearing individuals for further information and support.**

Teacher Professional Development

Provide training for teachers related to the main difficulties of inclusion of deaf/hard-of-hearing pupils in classes, and the signs for early identification and assessment and practical tips for the teachers in order to support those pupils in the class.   Formal and informal training should be available for all staff in the school, not just those directly involved with the deaf/hard of hearing pupil. Deaf awareness training for pupils is vital as well.

Technology

1. **Consider extra cost for updating equipment,** such as video recorders that record subtitles, text telephones, televisions that have teletext.

2. **Provide and effectively use the appropriate technological equipment for deaf/hard-of-hearing children (e.g. FM system, etc.).**

3. **Improve the acoustic conditions in the classrooms and in the wider school environment.**

Supportive Literature

A hearing impairment by definition is "an impairment in hearing, whether permanent or fluctuating, that adversely affects a child's educational performance, but is not included under the definition of 'deafness'" as defined by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).
[Reference: http://www.specialeducationguide.com/disability-profiles/hearing-impairments/]

Pupils with hearing impairments who receive special education services are a diverse group. The level of hearing loss varies according to family, demographic characteristics, school experiences, and outcomes. Most have medium or high social and mental skills, live in two-parent households, and have household incomes above the poverty level. Some spend their days in special schools, though most spend their school time in regular schools. Some receive small-group or individual instruction on a regular basis, but whole-group instruction is most common. Nearly all receive some type of accommodation or modification. Most have better-than-passing grades in school.

Pupils that are deaf/hard-of-hearing face unique challenges inside the classroom. Many common learning modes that people take for granted — lectures, discussion groups and even one-on-one

conversations — can be a struggle for those who have any level of hearing difficulty. However, that does not mean a college degree is out of reach. Today's wide range of tools, devices and systems can help pupils who are deaf or hard of hearing thrive in an educational setting. [Reference: http://www.accreditedschoolsonline.org/resources/students-with-hearing-impairments/]

Research suggests that about 3% of children have hearing loss, ranging from mild to profound. Of those affected, about 10% fall into the "profound" category. [Reference: http://www.educationcorner.com/strategies-for-hearing-impaired-students.html]

Some studies have linked inclusion with higher academic achievement for deaf/hard of hearing pupils (Lynas, 1986; Kluwin & Stinson, 1993). However, the majority of studies have shown that deaf/hard of hearing children attending general schools mostly experience feelings of isolation, rejection and loneliness (Stinson & Antia, 1999), and encounter identity development problems (Leigh, 1999).

Hearing impairment can be a major obstacle to academic success, and "deaf students tend to lag behind their hearing peers across the curriculum. Part of the situation, of course, is a direct result of delays in language acquisition. But the complex of factors associated with learning including language, cognitive development, social and emotional learning, and educational experiences will affect achievement in other domains as well." (Knoors, & Marschark, 2014: 180).

Useful Websites

www.nidcd.nih.gov (quick statistics about hearing)
www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk (statistics about the UK people with hearing problems)
www.healthyhearing.com (report regarding how the hearing loss affects school performance)
www.seels.net/designdocs/SEELS_HearingIImpairmentReport.pdf (A National Profile of Students with Hearing Impairments)
http://www.ndcs.org.uk/ (National Deaf Children Society)
http://www.batod.org.uk/ (British Association of the Teachers of the Deaf)
http://www.earfoundation.org.uk/ (Ear Foundation)
http://ansr.org.ro/ (Romanian National Association of Deaf People)
http://darulsunetului.ro/ (Romanian Association of the Hearing Impaired)

EU Reports

EU Accessibility Act –
http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/IDAN/2016/571382/IPOL_IDA(2016)571382_EN.pdf

References

www.accreditedschoolsonline.org

www.educationcorner.com

http://www.specialeducationguide.com/disability-profiles/hearing-impairments/

http://www2.le.ac.uk/offices/accessability/staff/supporting-students-with-disabilities/information-for-staff-working-with-deaf-or-hearing-impaired-students

Johnson, C.C, Benson, P.V and Seaton, J.B. (1997).Educational Audiology Handbook. Appendix 11-A, p.448. Singular publishing Group, Inc

Kluwin, T.N. and Stinson, M. (1993). Deaf students in local public high schools. Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas.

Knoors, H. and Marschark, M. (2014). Teaching deaf learners: Psychological and developmental foundations. New York: Oxford University Press.

Leigh, I. (1999) Inclusive education and personal development. Journal of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education, 3, 236-245.

Lynas, W. (1986). Integrating the handicapped into ordinary schools: a study of hearing-impaired pupils. London: Croom Helm.

Stinson, M.S. and Antia, S.D. (1999). Considerations in educating deaf and hard-of-hearing students in inclusive settings. Journal of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education, 4(3), 163-175.