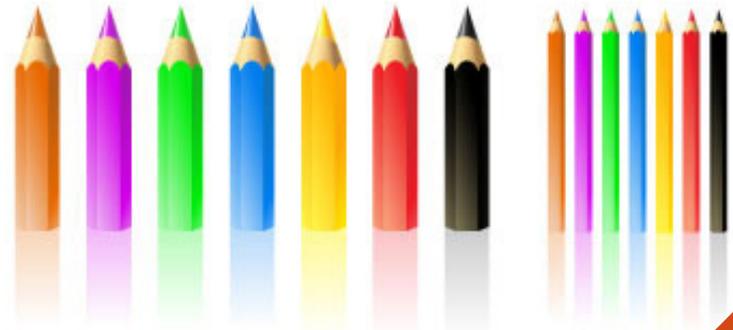




Communication Tips for Teachers



Cork Deaf Association

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instructions so that they can **carry out a task independently**

3. **encourage pupils to give their opinions** and think for themselves
4. expect deaf children to **conform to the same standards of discipline** as the rest of the class. **Clear boundaries** help children learn what behaviour is acceptable.

Clear Communication

There are five ways that you can enable a deaf child to understand:

1. repeat
2. re-phrase
3. explain
4. simplify
5. clarify

It is essential to check in with pupils on a regular basis.

Monitor their progress and ask for feedback.

Introduction: Teachers

You are a **model for your students**. If you are open in your interactions with deaf and hard-of-hearing students in your classes, hearing students will follow your lead. But **if you are hesitant or withdraw from interaction** with deaf and hard-of-hearing students, your hearing students will perceive this as an acceptable behaviour. It's important that students understand you have a class in which **everyone has access to all of the same information**.

Establish Ground Rules as Early as Possible

1. Require students to **raise their hands if they are asking or answering questions**, and to keep their hand raised after you have recognised them until the Deaf and hard-of-hearing students have recognised who is speaking. **Make it a daily classroom habit.**
2. **Slow down** – slow down to allow all students to understand and process your presentation fully.
3. **Pause between topics**

Students who use ISL usually consider English as their second language.

Students may

1. have difficulty with **learning and communicating through English** such as spelling and grammar, reading for meaning or writing fluently and expressively
2. have difficulty **completing assignments** or may find **exam situations difficult** due to difficulties with reading comprehension or written expression
3. **misinterpret information**, particularly where there is **possible ambiguity** in terminology
4. have **difficulties in group situations**, following a discussion and difficulties making contributions.

Tips for Teachers

1. If you are finding it **difficult to understand what a student is saying**, ask them to **repeat** it or write it down.
2. It is important to **gain the student's attention** (without startling him/her) before speaking by waving your hand

4. **consider the pace of the lesson** – if a deaf child has to concentrate on watching and listening for long periods of time they can become fatigued
5. **differentiate activities and include tasks that do not rely solely on listening**
6. use **accessible resources** such as DVD's with subtitles
7. prepare **homework sheets** to give to pupils
8. **think about how to assess what a child has learnt and understood**
9. **when setting homework** - students need to be **clear about what is expected of them**
10. **keep instructions simple**, avoid long and detailed explanations.

Development of Independence Skills

1. **develop opportunities for pupils to make choices** e.g. choosing an activity or deciding how they would like to be supported
2. **ensure that pupils have understood information** or

6. don't just contact parents when there is a problem, also **let them know when their child has done well**
7. **consult with parents**, ask them how home/school communication could be improved.

Class Preparation

Questions teachers might like to ask themselves before planning a class

1. what is the child's preferred method of communication?
2. is there any equipment the pupil needs for my class?
3. what situations in the class might be difficult for the pupil? What can I do about this?

Important issues to consider when planning a lesson

1. have **clear aims and objectives**
2. **identify new** or specialist **vocabulary**
3. **present information** and concepts **visually**

discretely, tapping a microphone, and making eye contact.

3. **Speak at the same pace and volume** as you would normally - speaking in a louder voice or excessively slowly may interfere with hearing aids or loop systems.
4. **Repeat questions or remarks from other students** in the room.
5. Ensure **important information**, for example a change of room location, is communicated in a **written format**.
6. Make **class notes available in advance** if possible, so students can familiarise themselves with the language to expect in the class. Students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing **may rely more heavily on text books** than other students, so providing a clear reading list at the beginning of the course can be very helpful.
7. When you pose a question, **pause for at least 5-10 seconds** before calling on a student for a response. It will become a habit for you and your class.
8. Control communication by **calling and pointing on the**

student you wish to communicate with. In addition, take the time to **repeat student statements** and wait before calling on another student.

9. 'Write, pair and harvest' - first allow students to **write** their individual answers. Second, **pair** each student with another, thus allowing them to validate their individual answers with a peer. Finally, **harvest** the answers by allowing students to provide their answers to the class.

IMPORTANT: Plan ahead

Guidelines if a Student is Lip-Reading

1. Try to **review** or give a **summary** of information covered.
2. **New vocabulary or acronyms are impossible to lip read**; writing them on the board and giving an explanation helps.

tasks and coursework assignments - so that they can support their child's learning at home

3. **recognise the knowledge and experience** that parents have about their child and **ask them for advice** and help if their child is having difficulties at school
4. if a parent **raises a concern** about their child's education **respond as quickly as possible.**

Advice from teachers

1. **allow parents to determine their degree of involvement** in decisions affecting their child
2. **involve parents in planning** and reviewing meetings
3. when writing to parents **use plain English and avoid using educational jargon**
4. **keep notes of your assessment** and **share** these with the family
5. **produce information for parents** such as a booklet which includes information about your curriculum area, practical advice for supporting their child and who to contact if they have a concern or complaint

Remember a deaf child may -

1. **not be able to hear enough to make sense of what is said**
2. think they have understood fully and **may not realise that they have missed out on important information**
3. **misunderstand what is said** or written
4. encourage children to say when they don't understand.
Some children find it embarrassing if they have to ask for clarification in front of their classmates or if a teacher continually checks if they have understood: this needs to be **handled sensitively**
5. **Nod their heads without really understanding** - use open-ended questions to ensure that they have understood instructions/information

Working in Partnership with Parents

Advice from parents

1. **keep parents up-to-date** with their child's development and progress
2. **give parents copies** of schemes of work, homework

3. **One cannot read and lip read at the same time**, thus it is important to allow the person extra time to read passages/notes if you are explaining things.
 4. Remember **it's tiring trying to lip-read** and concentrate at the same time so have **breaks** at appropriate times
- Helpful tip for teacher—Visual Aids:** Have a picture of something on the wall and speak only when you can see it!

Guidelines for Tutorials or Group Work

1. Tutorials can be **particularly difficult**, especially if the student is required to follow streams of conversation from different people in the group
2. Try to ensure that **everyone in the group can be seen** by the Deaf/Hard of Hearing student
3. Try to encourage students to **speak one at a time** in group situations
4. It is imperative that you **control the flow of the discussion** and **insist on turn-taking**.

Some Key Points when Teaching

1. **Use proper names** when instructing students – including technical terminology e.g. ‘Move the small beaker to the table by the window.’ – NOT ‘Move it over there’.
2. **Avoid** terms like ‘this’ and ‘that’
3. **Allow time for students to reference the item** or location so that the **proper association** is made.

Note-Taking

1. **Note-taking can be extremely difficult** for students as they **can’t lip-read and write** at the same time so provisions have to be made – perhaps **notes could be given out before the class** talk or perhaps it’s better to give handouts at the end of class; less distraction and more concentration occurs during the class.
2. Notes could be photocopied from a **designated note-taker** in the class
3. Make sure that students **know they can ask for things**

to be repeated or rephrased

4. **Write** on the board when you are introducing **new topics**
5. **Repeat correct answers** because students might pick up the wrong answer and think it’s correct.

Children in Mainstream Settings

Emotional and Social Development -

1. encourage social and functional independence
2. ensure that deaf children are not socially isolated either in the classroom or the wider school environment

Academic Development -

1. have **appropriate expectations** of deaf children
2. have **appropriate resources to promote learning**
3. **promote independence** skills
4. ensure **all areas of the curriculum are available** to deaf children through appropriate support