

Emmbrook Infant School



Total Communication Base Audiology Policy

Approved by:	Children and Learning	Date: January 2017	
Last reviewed on:	Spring 2023	Frequency of review:	3 years
Next review due by:	Spring 2026		
Changes made on Review	Date Spring 23	Name of base changed from Heraing Impaired Resource Base to Total Communication Resource Base throughout the policy.	

Aim

We strive to ensure that the audiological needs of our pupils are met appropriately via robust monitoring of their equipment and joined up working with other professionals e.g. educational audiologist; cochlear implant hospitals etc.

Our children are actively encouraged to wear, use and maintain their hearing aids and cochlear implants and radio aids daily.

We ensure that the children have the opportunity to develop the best use of their hearing in order to communicate and to support their learning and development.

Total Communication Base Objectives

To ensure that optimum use is made of the children's amplification equipment .

To work closely with each child's audiology service (e.g. the Royal Berkshire Hospital/cochlear implant hospital/Educational Audiologist) to ensure that pupils are provided with appropriate amplification.

To communicate closely with parents re the working of the pupil's equipment; ensuring that issues are reported swiftly to the hearing aid/cochlear implant hospital as appropriate.

To involve pupils in the daily checks of hearing aids and cochlear implants and to promote pupils developing self-care skills.

To keep staff informed of audiological developments and research and implement them when they will provide benefit to the pupil.

To continually review and improve the audiological provision in the TCB.

Pupil Objectives

To recognise the value of maintaining their equipment at school and at home, according to the pupil's age and stage of development.

To be aware of the benefits of amplification for detecting and identifying sounds in the environment and for the pupil's receptive/expressive speech and language skills.

To be aware of the benefit of the pupil's radio aid equipment as a means of providing a louder signal in background noise.

Provision of Amplification

Each child is provided with hearing aids or cochlear implants as appropriate by The Royal Berkshire/ Cochlear Implant Centre etc The TCB will work closely with the providers of each pupil's equipment to monitor the function and benefit of the equipment.

Sound field Systems are provided in each classroom and in the school hall at both schools. The sound field systems are checked regularly by a Front Row technician and batteries are replaced on a yearly basis.

Radio aid equipment is loaned via the Sensory Consortium Service. The schools are also supported by a local Educational Audiologist on a termly basis.

Staff will receive training about personal amplification including daily checks and troubleshooting, the use of Sound field and radio aid systems.

Visitors will be made aware of the use of radio aid equipment and Sound field Systems and will be provided with basic training to enable them to use the technology correctly. They will be provided with deaf awareness and tips regarding communication with TCB children.

Monitoring

Pupil Records:

Audiology profiles include a note of all information on the child's equipment and include:

- A running record of the pupil giving details of age aided and any changes to pupil's hearing and subsequent changes to type of hearing aids/ cochlear implants to date
- The child's most recent audiogram
- Details of hearing aid/cochlear implant make, model, programmes, settings, serial numbers etc
- Details of radio aid make and the type of receivers
- Any modification made to the mould or elbow (e.g. type of mould: full, carved, skeleton, material used, type of tubing: standard or thick walled, libby horn, vent or damper)

Hearing Aid Review Appointments:

The children have regular reviews of their hearing aids at The Royal Berkshire Hospital who monitor any changes in the pupil's hearing and adjust the settings of the hearing aid as appropriate. Children with cochlear implants attend their implant centre on a regular basis. Lists or review appointments are circulated by the hospitals or the cochlear implant Teacher of the Deaf and are noted to ensure that:

- Parents are reminded of the appointment
- Teachers of the Deaf are given the opportunity to attend review appointments
- Records are amended following hearing aid/ cochlear implant reviews

Systematic Checks of Equipment

Hearing aids are checked by the TCB TA or Teacher of the Deaf on a daily basis and records kept of these checks. Attenuators are used with high powered aids to enable checking at user volume setting for Health and Safety reasons to prevent the testers' hearing being affected.

Checks are made of the following:

- Casing and switches
- Elbow for cracks, debris or moisture
- Earmoulds and tubing for cracks, moisture, blockage and flexibility (plastic hardens with time)
- Tubing for discolouration
- Batteries working and in the right way
- Cleanliness of the battery compartment and contacts
- Listening to the hearing aid using a stetoclip and attenuator to check sound quality
- Squeeze or shake casing whilst listening to check for intermittent faults

If having done this a problem is identified, the hospital audiology department will be informed as a matter of urgency.

Cochlear Implant Checks

- Check the processor is using the programmes advised by the cochlear implant centre
- Check the batteries are the approved type. Check disposable batteries are not corroded and are in date, rechargeable batteries are charged. Rechargeable batteries lose their ability to charge over a period of time and so need to be monitored for being replaced (as advised by the relevant implant centre)
- Check the batteries are fitted correctly
- Check that the battery contacts are clean and do not show any signs of rust
- Check that the leads/ coil are not damaged
- Check the function of the microphone/ speech processor through the listening earphones
- Assess the sound quality
- Check the transmission of the coil using a signal check device

If having done this a problem is identified, the cochlear implant centre will be informed as a matter of urgency.

Combined Hearing Aid/ Cochlear Implant/Radio Aid Check

- Check leads and connections
- Listen to radio aid alone
- Fix connecting lead onto hearing aid or cochlear implant and listen in
- Check integrity of system by speaking into transmitter at least 4 metres from the listener
- Encourage child to use the FM Toolkit descriptors to describe the sound quality.

Equipment

The Resource keeps a small supply of spares. Termly orders are made of audiological equipment to ensure the children are catered for.

The children are encouraged to manage their own audiological equipment from an early age. For the younger deaf children this means praising any attempts to change batteries or insert moulds without help. As children become older they are encouraged to take responsibility of their equipment e.g charging their radio aid. Often this becomes part of their ISP targets. Child friendly daily check lists have been created so that the pupil is encouraged to take an active part in the upkeep of their equipment.