



Bath & North East
Somerset Council



Joint Authority Support for Children, Families and Schools

Sensory Support Service Newsletter

[Sensory Support Service website](#)

Supporting children and young people with hearing loss, vision or multisensory impairment to have the best opportunities to learn, develop and grow.

June 2025

Our best wishes for all children and young people (CYP) who are going through exams or transitioning into school, between schools, into college, higher education, other training or work. In this newsletter we give you a summary of our annual survey and what we are doing to address some of your comments, also look out for a warning from Oticon and a range of events for CYP, support group for parents with children with complex needs, a reminder of Deafblind Week, etc.

1. Sensory Support Service Annual Survey

Settings:

We are happy to report that the response from educational settings was very positive with 100% of responses rating the overall quality of service provision as good or better and 96% rating the quality of written information provided as good or better. There were only 54 responses received.

Parents and carers:

We had 2 surveys, one for parent/carers of children and young people supported at level 1 (see more information below about levels of support) and another survey for parent/carers of children and young people supported at level 2 and 3. Once again, number of responses was low, 45 for level 2 and 3 and 16 for level 1.

Overall, the rating was below 80% good or better which is what we aim for. For parent/carers of CYP at level 2 and 3, the rating was close to 80% but for parent/carers of CYP supported at level 1 this was between 60 and 70%, however we only had 16 replies for level 1.



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Many responses were very positive with parents mentioning how much difference our support has had and how invaluable the service is. But other responses were not so positive and these included comments outside of our service provision, e.g. other professionals. Still, we are trying to understand what could be better.

The main issues for some parents and carers were:

- Communication – not knowing whether the service is involved, not getting feedback after visits, not knowing who to contact
- Other professionals and services not giving enough support and long waiting times such as therapists, respite, social care etc.
- Not getting newsletters or concerned that newsletters do not replace face to face visits.
- More opportunities to meet families
- More BSL support

What are we doing:

- We will add more information to our compliment slips for additional support and advice
- We will ask schools to let you know we are visiting
- We will also publish newsletters on our website from next year, so if our emails go to spam, you can still access these.
- Please be assured that newsletters do not impact on the level of support your child receives, it will never replace our support. Newsletters have been introduced to improve communication and make you aware of developments, events, etc.
- We are working with our partners to provide opportunities for families to meet, share experiences.
- We are working with our charity partners such as NDCS and FCDC to find a solution to providing free BSL for families in the local area, including on-line options
- We are considering how to improve our surveys and response rates

One concern we have is that many of the negative comments referred to lack of social care, respite, occupational therapy input, and not necessarily our



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service provision. We do understand that there are frustrations around some services, and we are considering how to give you an opportunity to make comments about these whilst also provide feedback specific to Sensory Support Service provision.

2. Service Helpline

Just a reminder that you can always contact our service, preferable via email on sensorysupportservice@bristol.gov.uk or by phone on 0117 9038441/2

3. Acorns Support Group

We know that many parents find it useful to meet other families with children who have had a diagnosis of hearing loss. Acorns is a support group for families in Bristol, South Glos, BANES and North Somerset.

We have a creche run by our lovely staff team and a group of wonderful volunteers. If children are happy to be left in the creche, we have a parent room where parents can grab a hot drink and take part in our programme of information and support.

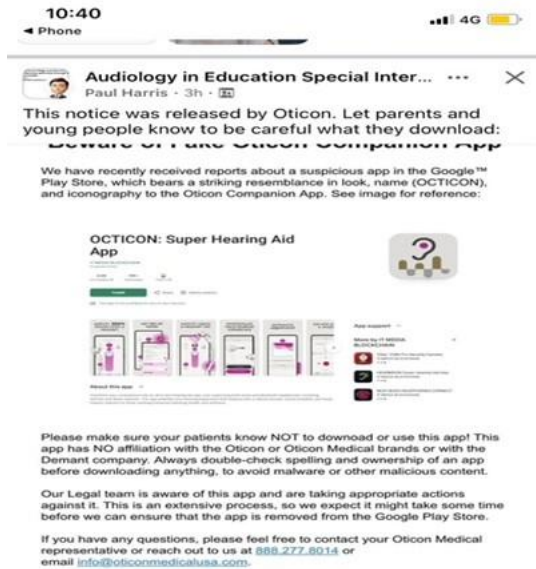
When: Wednesdays during term time

Time: 10.30am to midday

Where: Elmfield House, Westbury-on-Trym, Bristol, BS10 6AY

Who: Babies and pre-school children with a hearing loss, their siblings, and parents and carers.

4. Warning from Oticon



WARNING

We've received a warning notification about a suspicious OTICON Super Hearing-Aid app on Google Play Store. Please do not download or use this app, it has no affiliation with Oticon or Oticon Medical Group. Please remember to check spelling and ownership of apps before downloading anything, to avoid malware or any other malicious content.

5. Glue Ear talk for parents and carers

We are running a few sessions supported by Glue Ear Together, about finding out what glue ear is and why it is so common, understand signs and symptoms and learn about different interventions available. These sessions take place at Elmfield House.

Date: Tuesday 14 October 2025 10.30am to midday

Where: Elmfield House, Greystoke Avenue, Westbury-on-Trym, Bristol, BS10 6AY

Book your FREE place: sensorysupportservice@bristol.gov.uk



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6. Ask Alison...

Do you have any questions regarding growing up as a deaf child? Are there things you've wondered about, but aren't sure who to ask? Why not meet with our Sign Language Communication Advisor and Deaf Role Model – Alison.

Alison's words: "I am deaf, I understand what it is like to grow up as a deaf child, I have a strong sense of my own deaf identity, I understand deaf culture, I am empathetic and am proud to be a BSL user. Having raised my own children, I know it can be daunting, I am happy to answer any questions from my own experience and as a deaf role model".

If you would like to meet with Alison, please email alison.wherry-alimo@bristol.gov.uk and book a time. These sessions will be held online and will have a BSL interpreter.

Dates:

9 July 2025, 1.30pm to 2.30pm

8 October 2025, 1.30pm to 2.30pm

7. Deafblind UK: Celebrating Deafblind Awareness Week 23 June 2025 to 29 June 2025

'Shining a light on support for children and young people'

At Deafblind UK, Deafblind Awareness Week is a significant moment in their calendar. It's a time to spotlight the experiences of those living with deafblindness and to encourage greater understanding across society.

This year, the focus is on Children and Young People Services.

To find out more, please go to www.deafblind.org.uk

8. Navigation and Nurture: Support Group for parents of children with complex disabilities

Murmuration Community Therapy are running monthly gatherings, for parents of medically complex and profoundly disabled children. It's particularly aimed at parents of pre-schoolers, but there's no strict rules, it's for any parent that



has a child with complex disability that needs support, connection, navigation and nurture.

When: Thursday 3 July 2025 **Time:** 10am to midday

Where: St Anne's House Community and Creative Hub, Bristol BS4 3AB

[Find out more and book your free tickets.](#)

9. DEWA: D.E.A.F Cultural Celebration event

The Deaf Ethnic Women's Association is inviting you to a special event of activities, guest lectures and food on **Saturday 5th July 2025**.

Where: Edgbaston Park Hotel, Birmingham

Day time: 11am -3pm

Night time: 6pm-10pm

For more details and to book your ticket, email dewa@dewa.org.uk

10. Learn BSL at your own pace

[Learn more about the opportunity to learn British Sign Language with Sense Sign School.](#)

If you do not want to receive information, please let us know by emailing our generic email and telling us the name of your child
sensorysupportservice@bristol.gov.uk

11. Want more information on special educational needs and disability for the under 25s?

Find a link to the Local Offer for your area by following the link below:

- [Bristol](#)
- [South Gloucestershire](#)
- [Bath and North East Somerset](#)
- [North Somerset](#)

12. General Data Protection Regulations as of 25 May 2018

The Local Authority (LA) uses data to carry out specific functions for which it is responsible, such as the assessment of special educational needs and/ or disabilities, home to school transport requirements, admissions, children/ young people's welfare, children looked after, exclusions and early years support. Anonymised information is used to derive statistics, to inform decisions on (for example) the funding of education settings, to assess educational performance and track Service provision.

The Sensory Support Service keeps information about your child so that we can provide services and to keep a record of these services. This information may include information that supports your child's development, monitor progress, specialist assessments and advice/support given to settings to enable them to meet your child's needs. This information will also include contact details, attendance information, characteristics such as ethnicity, special educational needs and any relevant medical information.

We will only request and share data with people already involved you're your child, people relevant to statutory duties and individual circumstances.

For information regarding data sharing, including retention periods, please visit the [Bristol City Council privacy statement page](#).

If you wish to access the personal data held about you or a young person you are responsible for, please contact Bristol City Council in writing:

**Data Protection Officer
Bristol City Council
PO Box 3176
Bristol
BS3 9FS**