

Ovingdean Hall News



Ovingdean Hall
Foundation

Summer 2021

Psychological support for deaf children

As part of our commitment to helping deaf children through the pandemic and beyond, we have increased our support for SignHealth's psychological services.

SignHealth have identified that mental health issues often first present in childhood, and that early intervention can help young people manage their health into adulthood, reducing the risk of escalation.

In 2020, we supported a pilot project at Heathlands School in St Albans, funding an accredited Deaf counsellor who has been supporting vulnerable children identified by the school. The counsellor has provided weekly one-to-one therapy sessions delivered in British Sign Language.

The data collected from this pilot has demonstrated not only great demand for the service, but also presented evidence of the positive impact psychological support can have on children's mental health and wellbeing.

In response, SignHealth are now developing a Provider Collaborative, a consortium of NHS children's mental health services and D/deaf children's charities working together to create a 'one-stop shop' for mental health support.

THE DEAF HEALTH CHARITY SIGNHEALTH



While we continue to support the counselling sessions, we are now also contributing towards the development of the Provider Collaborative.

We have been working with SignHealth for many years. With your support, we have also funded online safety workshops for schoolchildren, and provided an advisor to Deaf women and girls who have experienced or witnessed abuse.

SignHealth capitalise the letter D in Deaf to describe people who are culturally deaf, who primarily use sign language and who may identify as part of the Deaf community. You can find out more at: www.signhealth.org.uk/about-deafness/deaf-or-deaf/

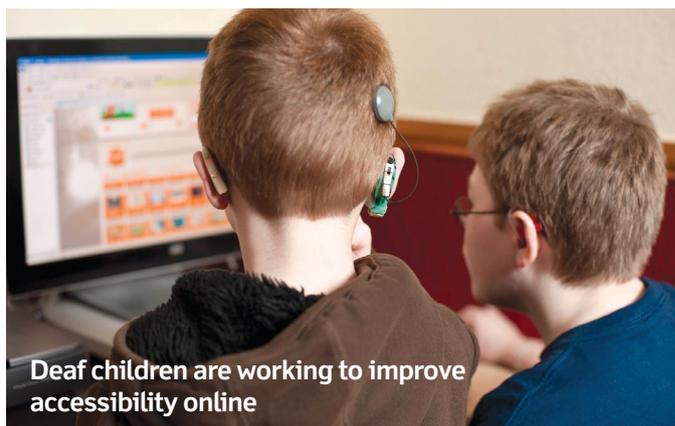
An internet for all

The pandemic has highlighted the opportunities and challenges of the internet. While online communities have brought people together, inaccessible content has made others feel more isolated.

The National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS) has reported that deaf children and young people want to advocate on issues such as more accessibility and better representation on websites.

As a result, they have trained a team of deaf Young Inspectors (YI) to report on the accessibility of key websites. The YI's findings have led to Childline and BBC Newsround making improvements to their websites, and the team is currently working with other high-profile organisations to ensure that content is engaging and available to all. OHF has supported this project with a substantial donation.

'Projects like this are vital and they could not run without generous donations such as the one made by the Ovingdean Hall



Deaf children are working to improve accessibility online

Foundation,' said Rosie Eggleston, Participation Manager at NDCS. *'As a result, deaf children and young people will start to get the same access to quality online content, entertainment, news and learning as hearing children already enjoy.'*



Online inspiration

Earlier this year, Panathlon gave schools on its deaf programme a big morale boost during lockdown by introducing pupils to three inspiring sporting role models.

They organised for England Rugby Sevens player Jodie Ounsley, England deaf cricket international James Dixon and Deaf Tennis Men's Singles National Champion Esah Hayat to take part in online Questions and Answers with enraptured students via Zoom.

'The session with James was fantastic for our pupils,' said one teacher. *'Esah was a great role model, he shared lots of good advice,'* said one parent, while another added that *'Jodie was great, what an inspiration.'* Jodie is also a Patron of one of our charity partners, The Elizabeth Foundation.



Clockwise, left to right: Esah, Jodie and James

Tony Waymouth, Chief Operating Officer, said: *'It has been great to give deaf children positive experiences through lockdown. The platform to talk to these role models and learn about their experiences as successful deaf athletes has been invaluable. Thank you, Ovingdean Hall Foundation for your continued support.'*

A HUGE thank you to all of our friends for funding these amazing projects for deaf children. If you would like to help our work, you can donate online at www.ovingdeanhall.org/support-us or please send your cheque or CAF voucher (payable to Ovingdean Hall Foundation) to the address below.

You can also help us when you shop at Amazon by nominating us as your charity at www.smile.amazon.co.uk. Amazon will give us 0.5% of your net purchase, at no additional cost to yourself.

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Thank you very much!

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