

Ovingdean Hall News



Ovingdean Hall
Foundation

Winter 2021

A home and a community



Doncaster Deaf Trust
A National Centre of Excellence

We have supported two important projects at Doncaster Deaf Trust that have helped their Communication Specialist College stay open and thrive during the pandemic.

Through the College, the Trust helps young people, aged 16-25, to gain vocational qualifications alongside developing their personal independence. Some of this support is delivered within Darley Lodge, a residential building where young people learn life skills such as cookery and how to budget and shop for essentials.

In recent years, the Lodge had become tired and dated. Initially, the Trust had planned a rebuild, but changed their focus in response to the pandemic.

'Plans shifted to fully refurbish the Lodge and create separate bubbles within the property,' said the Trust's fundraiser Ian Proudler. 'This meant the entire Lodge would not have to isolate when Covid arrived, which it did. This has worked so well in protecting our students, their wellbeing and education, that we have remained open throughout the pandemic.'



Students working
in the new café

The refurbishment has included a new roof and windows, and also carpets and soft furnishings that the young people and staff chose together. The improvements are welcome: *'Feels like at home,'* said one young person.

We have also supported the College's new barista café. Barista work is popular with the students, and the College community worked together to convert an old building into a vibrant café.

'When I first came here, I was quiet and reserved and didn't mix very well,' said one young person who works in the café. *'Once I was trained I was able to communicate better and talk to staff and students. I now feel able to work in a café or cooking environment with a barista when I leave college.'*

Research for children with dual-sensory loss

We have supported important research to benefit visually impaired children who also have a hearing loss.

Claire Lingard's doctoral research into dual-sensory loss at The University of Manchester explored the prevalence of hearing loss among visually impaired children. She also investigated the awareness of this issue among the children's teachers and parents.

Claire is the Principal Clinical Scientist and Service Manager in the Audiology Department at Sandwell and West Birmingham NHS Trust. She carried out research at two schools for visually impaired children. She found that 41% of those children tested had some degree of hearing loss, and in 80% of these cases, this issue was previously undetected.

Claire's research findings have led her to make two recommendations:

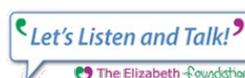
- That when diagnosed with a visual impairment, children are referred to an audiologist at the same time
- That teachers training to support children with a visual impairment also learn about the prevalence of hearing loss and how to access Audiology services



The University of Manchester

Claire hopes that her research, which featured in a poster at The British Academy of Audiology's annual conference, will lead to early diagnosis and better support for children with dual-sensory loss.

Supporting families



Last year, we shared news of The Elizabeth Foundation's online programme to help parents to develop their deaf baby or toddler's communication skills.

We can now report that *Let's Listen and Talk* has reached over 800 individuals and families across the UK. 'With your help we have been able to keep our *Let's Listen and Talk* free of charge and with positive outcomes for all,' said Karen, their Deputy Chief Executive.

...And supporting teachers



We are delighted to sponsor the online training programme organised by the British Association of Teachers of the Deaf (BATOD).

Their Continuous Professional Development series, which runs until March 2022, has included webinars on supporting the mental health, communication and language of deaf children and young people.

Looking ahead!

In 2022, we celebrate our TENTH anniversary! We look forward to letting you know more about our plans in the spring...

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 <https://smile.amazon.co.uk/>. Amazon will give us 0.5% of your net purchase, at no additional cost to yourself.

Thank you very much!

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