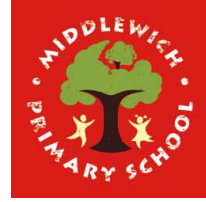




Middlewich Primary School

Statement of Practice for Audiological Management



General aims

- To ensure all pupils have constant access to suitable amplification
- To ensure all equipment is functioning correctly.
- To ensure any required repairs are identified and carried out swiftly.
- To promote access to the curriculum through optimum use of equipment.
- To carry out regular, basic audiological and acoustic assessments.
- To encourage and advise parents in understanding the functions and benefits of equipment.
- To keep non-specialist staff and those within the unit informed about technological developments in audiology and support them in using the equipment optimally.

Audiological Equipment

All children within the unit will have some type of amplification. They may have hearing aids and/or cochlear implants. In addition to their personal equipment most children will also be provided with a radio aid system. These systems are used in class (often alongside the school soundfield system) and also used during withdrawal situations and other appropriate situations. Once equipment is issued, this is used on a daily basis.

Staff Training

The teacher of the deaf will run annual formal INSET sessions for mainstream staff on good practise, use of audiological equipment and general deaf awareness. Mainstream staff working directly with HI children will receive further support and training where needed and appropriate. Specialist staff within the base will also receive more detailed training to further their professional development.

Equipment Checks

Hearing Aids:

All hearing aids are tested each morning by the teacher of the deaf or another suitably trained member of staff. This is done shortly after the children arrive in school. Any problems with flat batteries, tubing or wax blockage is dealt with immediately. Where a fault cannot be solved, parents will be informed immediately so suitable action can be taken.

Cochlear Implants:

Cochlear Implants are also checked daily. Depending on the processor, lights usually indicate the status of the processor and alert staff to any problem. In addition, the six 'Ling' speech sounds are also used to check the children are able to discriminate sounds across the speech frequencies. Any faults are reported to parents, who have control over spare parts. If a fault cannot be rectified, contact is made with the appropriate cochlear implant team for advice.

Radio Aid Systems

Radio aid systems (both transmitters and receivers) are checked daily in conjunction with the child's personal amplification. Any problems with interference and sound quality can then be detected and dealt with quickly. If the problem cannot be fixed immediately, further support from the Educational Audiologist may be sought.

Self - management and self-advocacy skills

Pupils are expected to be involved and proactive in the management of their own equipment. They are encouraged to complete general routines independently (e.g. replacing batteries, cleaning earmoulds, removing condensation) when developmentally appropriate. They are taught the required vocabulary to describe any faults to an adult and are encouraged to do this immediately should they feel this is a problem. If needed, self-management targets are written into the children's IEPs. As well as equipment management, children's self-advocacy skills are also promoted so that they themselves can request changes to their listening environment when needed.

Use of the Hearing Aid Test Box (Electroacoustic Checks)

An FP35 test box is used in school to check that hearing aids are working correctly and to specification. Balancing procedures also ensure that the desired advantage is obtained through radio aid use. Checks are carried out monthly or as soon as possible when any changes are made to the children's personal equipment.

Ear Moulds

Ear moulds are cleaned and re-tubed as necessary during the morning check procedures. New ear mould impressions are taken at the local audiology department. There is no visiting audiology service to do this at school. Parents will be alerted should any cracks or splits in the ear mould appear.

Soreness/ Discharge

If soreness or discharge is present, the aid will be removed and parents/carers notified so that a medical appointment can be made as soon as possible.

Communication with other professionals

Children who use hearing aids will attend a hearing aid review every year or more frequently if the child is younger. The teacher of the deaf may communicate directly with the clinic via phone, email or in writing regarding a child's equipment or setup if needed. For children using cochlear implants, the time between appointments depends upon how long the child has had the implant for. Implant reviews are held at the cochlear implant centre.

The staff within the HI resource base have close links with the local authority Educational Audiologist.

Record Keeping

Information on type of amplification, model and settings is kept in the audiology file in Poppy Room. Specific details and guides on troubleshooting children's equipment are also held for reference. Staff working within the resource base can refer to this file as and when needed. Details on daily checks and electroacoustic results (where appropriate) are also held for each child.