Deaf Friendly FC

Coaching Deaf Footballers Course

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Our vision is of a world without barriers for every deaf child.

Foreword

Football is our national game and everybody who wishes to play should be given the opportunity to reach their potential, regardless of their ability. This is why I welcome the development of the National Deaf Children's Society and FA training resource, *Coaching Deaf Footballers* and urge all coaches to attend. Deaf players have, and can achieve at the very highest level. It is hoped this initiative will enhance provision at all levels for deaf players and that the project is a great success.

Sir Trevor Brooking
Director of Football Development
The Football Association

Acknowledgements

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We would also like to thank our project sponsors Football Foundation, Phonak UK and SportsMatch for their invaluable support.

Please note: NDCS uses the term 'deaf' to mean all types of deafness, including temporary deafness such as glue ear.

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Introduction

Welcome to the *Coaching Deaf Footballers* course.

The purpose of this course is to provide coaches with ideas and guidance on how to adapt, where necessary, to include deaf players in regular coaching sessions and match situations at their school or club.

The course has been designed primarily for coaching children and young people. However, many of the coaching points and advice given are equally applicable for use with all footballers with any level of hearing ability.

By the end of the programme the participant should be able to:

- apply and extend their existing coaching skills and experience to meet the needs of deaf players;
- feel confident when coaching deaf footballers;
- have improved their awareness of deafness and provide better understanding of the needs of deaf footballers;
- use basic communication skills for coaching deaf footballers;
- use basic British Sign Language signs appropriate to coaching football sessions;
- identify appropriate safety and medical considerations;
- plan a range of coaching sessions that include deaf footballers;
- understand how to include deaf footballers in a match situation;
- understand the player pathways available for deaf footballers including the appropriate structures for competition.

Coaching deaf footballers is no different than coaching any other group of players. The skills and qualities needed to be a good coach will be the same no matter who the players are.

With the right awareness and adaptation techniques, coaches should be able to help all players, regardless of their hearing ability, to achieve their own sporting potential and individual aspirations in a safe supportive environment.

Why do deaf people play football?

Football is our national game enjoyed by millions across the country whatever their gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation and physical or mental ability.

Football is also extremely popular for deaf or hard of hearing people and there are thriving football competitions for deaf people taking place across the country.

One of the most important issues to understand, as a coach, is why deaf people become involved in football and what benefits they get from this involvement.

This will help enable you to provide all players with a positive, welcoming coaching environment that challenges and engages them.

Below are some of the reasons why deaf people might play football. You will notice that they are the same reasons why anyone else, deaf or otherwise, would choose to play football!

- Improve fitness
- Develop new skills
- Achieve in competition and gain recognition
- Make friends
- Experience a personal challenge
- Experience the thrill of competition
- Enjoyment

You may also have recognised that sport can offer individuals a great deal more than simply an opportunity for participation, friendship, enjoyment and success.

It can develop other skills that will enhance many areas of daily life:

- Improve confidence and self-esteem
- Learn how to take responsibility
- Handle pressure and stress
- Cope with disappointments and set backs as well as successes

These are valuable skills for all people. They will be particularly important for deaf people who may gain greater confidence in social situations through participation in sport.

Understanding deafness

The National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS) uses the term 'deaf' to mean all types of deafness, including temporary deafness such as glue ear.

According to the Royal National Institute for Deaf People (RNID), there are almost 9 million deaf and hard of hearing adults in the UK. Around 700,000 of these are severely or profoundly deaf. NDCS research shows there are 35,000 children with a moderate or profound hearing loss in the UK. Together this amounts to roughly one in seven, or 14%, of the UK population*.

It is important to be aware that every individual's experience of deafness and the extent of their hearing loss are different. This means there is a range of classifications for deafness and a wide variety of equipment, such as hearing aids, designed to help deaf and hard of hearing people.

This section of the course booklet is designed to give you basic background knowledge of how the ear works, understanding of deafness and the solutions and technologies available to enable deaf people to communicate more effectively.

This knowledge will give you a better understanding of the deaf players you may be coaching and enable you to understand why adaptations to your coaching style may be necessary for the benefit of both the players and yourself.

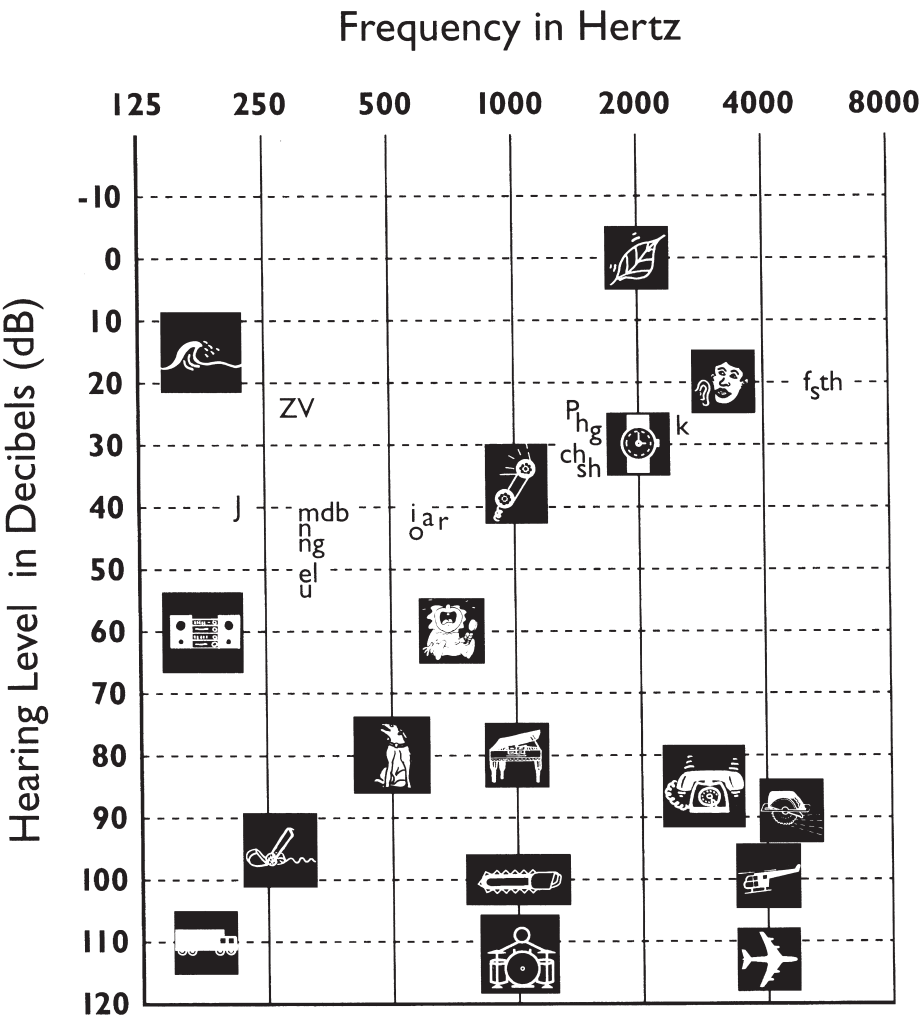
*Source – www.rnid.co.uk and www.ndcs.org.uk

What is sound?

Sound is an invisible vibration. It travels in waves, spreading outwards from the source of the sound and is made up of small and very quick changes in air pressure.

Individual sounds are different in both loudness (intensity) and pitch (frequency). Loudness can be measured in decibels (dB). The decibel scale is logarithmic which means that every increase of 10 dB indicates that the sound is ten times louder. For example, if you turn the television up from 50 dB to 60 dB the sound you are listening to is ten times louder than the previous one.

The 'pitch' of a sound is also important. A high-pitched sound is where sound waves happen at a very fast pace. This is why it is referred to as high frequency. Low frequency is where low-pitched sound is made up of slower sound waves. Frequency is measured in Hertz (Hz). Speech is a mixture of high and low frequency sounds. Consonants are generally higher in frequency than vowels. The chart below shows examples of everyday sounds, their frequency (high or low pitch) and decibels (loudness).



The crowd at a football match, for example, can generate around 120dB, a comparable sound to that of a jet plane taking off!

The ear

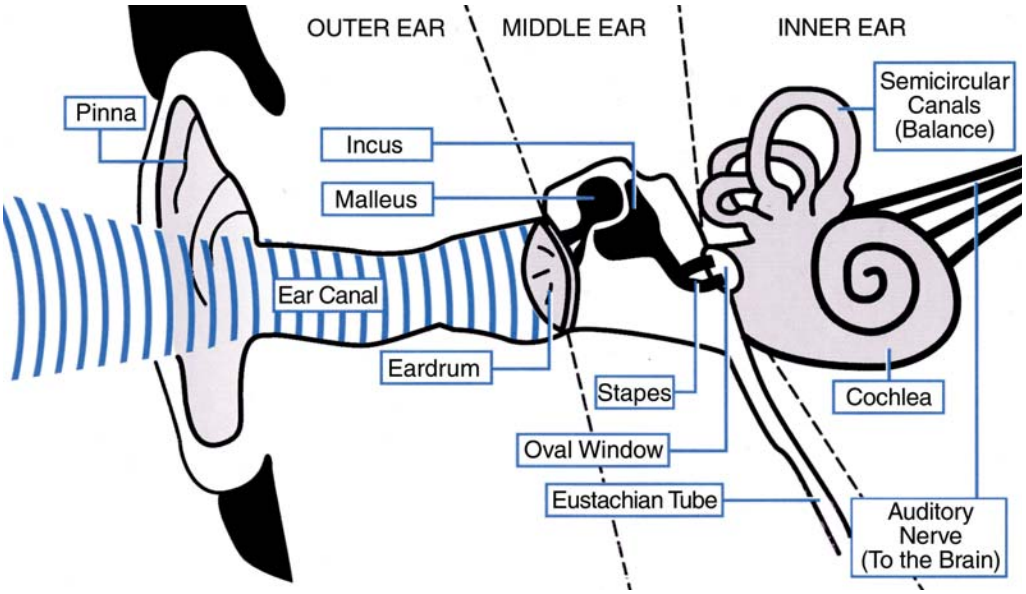
The ear has two functions: hearing and balance, both of which are closely connected.

Hearing involves the ear, part of the nervous system and part of the brain. All three elements must work together for you to be able to receive sound and be able to convert it into messages for the brain to understand.

Balance involves the semi-circular ear canals. These are three tubes filled with fluid that work like spirit levels sending messages to the brain when we move around.

The ear can be divided into three main sections:

- Outer ear
- Middle ear
- Inner ear



How the ear works

Sound waves enter the ear canal and cause the eardrum to vibrate. These vibrations are passed across the middle ear by three tiny bones: the hammer (malleus), anvil (incus) and stirrup (stapes). These act as levers, increasing the strength of the vibrations before they pass into the cochlea via the oval window. In the snail-like structure of the cochlea there are thousands of tiny sound-sensitive hair cells, which are set in motion by these sound vibrations. The movement of the hair cells is converted into electrical signals that travel along the auditory nerve to the brain where they are interpreted and given meaning.

Types of deafness

There are two main types of deafness, which are described below.

Conductive deafness

This is the most common type and occurs when sound cannot pass through the outer and middle ear to the cochlea and auditory nerve in the inner ear. This is often caused by fluid building up in the middle ear (glue ear). Glue ear can cause temporary deafness and can either clear up naturally after a short period of time, or it can develop into a long-term condition requiring surgical intervention or wearing hearing aids.

This type is common in young children and it is likely that, as a coach, you may come across this. Glue ear should not stop children taking part in their regular football activities but it is useful to be aware that their ability to hear you may be reduced. Their confidence and occasionally their balance may also be affected. Adapting your coaching sessions to fully include children with glue ear is important to maintain and improve their development and enjoyment of the game.

Sensori-neural deafness or nerve deafness

As sound passes through the outer and middle ear, tiny hair cells in the cochlea convert sound waves into electrical signals. These signals travel along the nerve of hearing (the auditory nerve), to the brain.

Most cases of sensori-neural deafness are caused by loss of, or damage to, the hair cells in the cochlea that means that the cochlea is not processing the sound effectively. The deafness may be genetic or caused by an infectious disease such as measles, mumps, rubella or meningitis and is permanent.

The inner ear also holds the semi-circular canals that regulate balance. This too can be damaged due to the infection and this may have an effect on a person's balance. This is something coaches should be aware of. If working with junior footballers, it might be worth asking parents if their child has had such problems in the past.

Degrees of deafness

The term 'deaf' covers a wide range of different levels and types of hearing loss, it can refer to people who are born deaf through to elderly people who have gone deaf through old age. The definitions below are a simple way of describing the various degrees of deafness.

Mild deafness: (20-40dB of hearing loss).
- This is most common amongst elderly people
- Hearing aids can sometimes be useful
- Would hear a baby crying or music from a stereo but may be unable to hear a whispered conversation
- A child with glue ear will usually have mild deafness

Moderate deafness: (41-70dB).
- Will find hearing aids useful
- Will generally have been educated orally (eg speech only)
- Would hear a dog barking or a telephone ringing but may be unable to hear a baby crying

Severe deafness: (71-95dB).
- Will find more powerful hearing aids useful
- Would be able to hear chainsaws or drums being played but may not hear a piano or a dog barking

Profound deafness: (more than 95dB).
- Hearing aids may be of limited use
- Some will prefer signing as a main means of communication
- Would be able to hear a large lorry or aeroplane noise but not a telephone ringing
- May use a cochlear implant (see page 12 for an illustration of a cochlear implant)

Totally deaf:
- Hearing aids will be of no use
- Signing as a main means of communication will be essential
- May use a cochlear implant

Deafened:
- Usually from a sudden illness or accident.
- May need to learn a new form of communication, such as British Sign Language (BSL)

These are very basic descriptions of the varying degrees of deafness. It is important to remember that every individual's hearing ability is different and may not be easily classified. As a coach it is worthwhile getting to know how much a deaf player in your team can hear and understand and what requirements are needed.

Impact of deafness on children and their language skills

Children develop communication, learning and social skills in their day-to-day activities. The impact of deafness in these areas will be different for individual children. No two deaf children are the same and any level of deafness can affect a child's access to their environment.

Deafness often has the greatest impact on language development. English is a spoken language, and from a very early age we learn about speech patterns and sentence structures from listening to people talking.

Deaf children may not hear all words that are spoken and they may not hear all the individual sounds in any one word. For example, 's', 'f' and 't' are soft, high sounds. Many deaf children cannot detect this sound and so instead of hearing "footballs", they might only hear "oo'ball".

Deaf children may have a limited vocabulary because they do not hear different words being used in conversations around them and may not be confident that they have heard a new word correctly. This includes place names and technical terms that might be used occasionally in conversations about football.

Remember a deaf child may:

- not be able to hear enough to make sense of what is said
- think that they have understood fully and not realise that they have missed out on important information (such as how to do a particular training drill correctly or the kick off time of the next match)
- misunderstand what is said.

Hearing aids and cochlear implants

Most hearing aids work by making the sounds going into the ear louder. Hearing aids come in various shapes and sizes. Some have controls that allow the hearing aids to be set to match the user's level of deafness. All have a microphone that will receive sounds.

Hearing aids can be worn on the body, behind the ear or in the ear. There are also hearing aids that work by vibration.

A hearing aid consists of a microphone and an amplifier. The microphone picks up the sounds in the environment and the sounds are then amplified. The amplified sound then travels through the ear mould, into the ear canal. They enable people to make the most of any residual hearing they may have. Hearing aids do not restore typical hearing levels. It is important to remember all noise, including background noise, is amplified making communication difficult in noisy environments.

The hearing aid microphone works best at a distance of between one and two metres from the speaker in quiet conditions.

In general, hearing aids have three main functions:

- **INPUT:** To pick up sounds using the microphone
- **AMPLIFICATION:** Changes the loudness of the sound to the most suitable level for the user
- **OUTPUT:** Sends the amplified (louder) sound into the ear through the earmould.

Cochlear implant systems work differently to hearing aids. Instead of amplifying sound they use electrodes, which are implanted in the cochlea, in the inner ear, to provide a sensation of hearing for the brain to process.

Most hearing aids have one or two controls that you can adjust. Bear in mind that the child is likely to be comfortable with adjusting their hearing aid controls themselves and will know what the most suitable setting is for them. It should be stressed that it is the parent's responsibility to ensure their child's hearing aid is working correctly and the settings are at a suitable level for that child.

It is important to understand that hearing aids and cochlear implants are not a 'total solution' for those who are deaf or hard of hearing. Every individual will benefit from their hearing aids differently. It is important for coaches to learn how well deaf players in their squad or training session can hear and understand.

Different types of hearing aids

Behind the ear hearing aids

Behind the ear (BTE) hearing aids are the most common type. They can be fitted to both ears or one ear. The aid hangs behind the ear. The elbow joins the hearing aid to the ear mould that sits inside the ear canal. The elbow, tubing and mould are vital parts of the hearing aid system.

Almost all hearing aids used by young children will be digital. Digital hearing aids use a mini-computer to process the sounds that are received through the micro-phone. They are adjusted by programming the processor inside the hearing aid.

Digital hearing aids can also automatically adjust the volume of the output and limit the loudness. Some digital hearing aids can reduce constant background noise, such as traffic noise.

Example of BTE hearing aid

Cochlear implants


Example of cochlear implant

When someone has a cochlear implant, electrodes are surgically implanted in the cochlea with the skull. These electrodes are connected to a receiver that is implanted into the skull behind the ear. This receives electronic information from the transmitter, which is attached by a magnet to the outside of the head.

The user wears a microphone which is usually worn like a BTE hearing aid. The speech processor is either body worn and connected by a lead to the microphone, or contained with the microphone in the BTE unit.

The speech processor converts incoming sound from the microphone into electronic signals that are then passed to the transmitter and onto the receiver in the skull. These signals are then passed to the implanted electrodes in the cochlea.

There are other types of hearing aids, such as bone conduction hearing aids and bone anchored hearing aids, but BTE and cochlear implants are by far the most common types you will come across whilst coaching deaf footballers.

Communication options and approaches

The information below describes the variety of communication options that are used by deaf people. Most deaf people will use a combination of these when communicating.

Auditory-oral/oral approaches

With the use of hearing aids, radio aids and cochlear implants to amplify residual hearing, people can develop their listening skills and a spoken language.

Lipreading

This involves the ability to read lip patterns. Lipreading is difficult to learn but many deaf people will naturally try to lipread when they are communicating. Many speech sounds look the same when spoken (eg: 'pot' and 'bat') so it is difficult for most deaf people to rely solely on lipreading to communicate as they can only pick up a small percentage of what is being said. Lipreading is usually used alongside other communication approaches.

British Sign Language (BSL)

Over 70,000 people within the British Deaf Community use BSL. It is a visual language using handshapes, facial expressions, gestures and body language to communicate. BSL is an independent and complete language with a unique vocabulary. It has a structure and grammar different from that of the written and spoken English. Similar to other languages it has evolved over time and developed regional dialects.
On March 18 2003 the government officially recognised BSL as a minority language. BSL is covered in more detail in the 'British Sign Language (BSL) Introduction' section.

Fingerspelling

This is where each letter of the alphabet is indicated by using the fingers and palm of the hand. It is used for signing names and places or for a word that doesn't have a sign. The British Finger Spelling Alphabet poster is included in the course pack.

Sign Supported English (SSE)

SSE uses signs taken from BSL. It is used in English word order but does not attempt to sign every word that is spoken. This may be an easier way to become familiar with sign language as it means that you can use signs together with your own language. As it uses the same signs as BSL, it can be helpful to children, parents and coaches who wish to develop BSL skills at a later stage.

Signed English (SE)

SE is an exact representation of the English language through the use of signs, where a sign is used for every spoken word. It is usually used in educational settings to develop written and spoken English skills.

Makaton

Makaton is a sign system that is used with children and adults (deaf and hearing), who may have communication and/or learning difficulties (for example, children with Down's syndrome). It uses speech together with signs (taken from BSL) and symbols and is grammar-free.

As a coach, you are unlikely to come across some of these communication methods. By learning the communication methods listed elsewhere in this booklet along with basic, football related BSL signs, coaches will enhance their ability to communicate with all deaf footballers whatever their preferred method of communicating may be.

Communicating with deaf footballers

It is important that deaf footballers are given the same opportunities to learn new skills and enjoy the game as every other footballer in their team or club. As coaches you will understand the importance of good communication and the ability to offer your players a safe, enjoyable and positive learning experience.

Below are some simple communication hints and tips to ensure that you, as a coach, are fully including deaf footballers in your coaching sessions, matches and other relevant social situations. You will find that many of these tips are useful for communicating with ALL players regardless of any disabilities they may have and you will have come across them during other coaching courses. All it will take is some simple, commonsense adaptations to give all your players the opportunity to improve their skills and enjoy themselves.

- Ask the players themselves if you are communicating clearly and if there are ways you can improve things. Most will be happy to tell you if you ask!
- Ensure you have the full attention of all the players before speaking. (This could simply involve calmly raising your arm and waiting for the group to stop talking/signing and face you).
- Ensure you are speaking in a well-lit area and that the players can see your face. If outdoors at night with floodlights on, make sure that light from flood lights is shining on your face. Lights shining directly behind you will cause your face to be in shadow and much harder to lipread.
- Try to stay in one place and maintain eye contact when talking rather than walk around the pitch or changing room. If you need to move elsewhere, for example, to move cones, then do not talk during this period. Try and stay within easy talking distance of the players.
- When talking, avoid standing in front of a distracting background or in a noisy area (such as near a busy road or in a room with a TV on). It can be especially hard to concentrate on listening when such distractions are taking place, particularly for children.
- Relax and speak clearly. Do not exaggerate lip movements or facial expressions because this distorts the shapes you would normally make and can make it more difficult for people to understand you.
- Do not shout or raise your voice. This does not improve a deaf person's ability to understand you and your facial expressions when shouting can seem like you are angry.

- Give out brief and simple instructions. Tell the players what topic you will be discussing beforehand.

- Do not eat or chew gum while speaking or block your face with your hand. Many deaf people rely on lipreading and this needs to be as clear as possible.

- Try to use as little jargon as possible and stick to one point at a time (remember the use of coaching points from FA Level 1 courses and the need to keep things simple).

- If there is more than one coach, always speak one at a time. If a new person is going to speak, they should raise their hand first to signify they will now be talking, this allows the players time to turn and face the new speaker.

- If possible, always use demonstrations to ensure greater understanding of what you want the players to do. Try not to talk and demonstrate at the same time!

- Use pre-agreed visual signals for different actions during a game or training session (for example, for stop, play, free-kick, and so on). Most can be fairly straightforward and can simply be the same signals a referee would use in an official match. Always check that the players understand prior to a game or session. Use these visual signals as well as or instead of oral signals (whistles, shouting and so on).

- Make up your own signals and involve all the players in inventing them. Children will enjoy doing this and it will help improve awareness of deafness and any players in their team who are deaf. It may also give your team an advantage over other teams who won't understand what your signals mean and won't know what you are going to do next!

- If players are spread out over the pitch during a training session and you need to speak to them all, stop the session using pre-agreed visual signals and bring them in to the middle of the pitch before speaking. If you need them to remember their positions then tell the players to leave a marker on the pitch where they were standing (for example, their bibs).

- Be patient. Be aware that players may not respond straightaway to verbal or even visual signals, especially during a match situation.

- Persevere. If players do not understand, don't give up. Try a different way of communicating or explain again more clearly.

- Write things down if stuck; take a notebook with you onto the field if necessary.

- When arranging future training sessions or matches, it might be easier to hand out a slip of paper to all the players with the details on. This not only helps players who are deaf understand exactly what is planned, but also helps hearing players. They won't be able to use any excuses now for turning up late!

- Learn to fingerspell or learn British Sign Language. You can find details of courses and contacts at the back of this course booklet.

Communicating by telephone

As a coach, you will be aware that you spend a lot of time organising coaching sessions, matches, and so on and you will be contacting the players, parents and other relevant parties on a regular basis. When not face-to-face, the most obvious and quickest way of communicating is by telephone.

Some deaf people may be able to have a conversation via telephone but be aware that this is not the case for a lot of deaf people. If you need to speak to a deaf person and the phone would be the quickest and most logical choice of communicating, think first before assuming the person can hear on a phone. Even if you are able to have a face-to-face spoken conversation with them, the phone might not be suitable because it takes away the ability to lipread, which may be a vital part of their ability to understand conversations.

The easiest way of finding out this information is to simply ask the person if they can use the phone. If the answer is yes, also ask if you will need to adapt slightly. For example, not speaking so fast or making sure you are not in an area with lots of background noise.

If they cannot have a telephone conversation, also ask about what alternative ways you can communicate with them. Many deaf people now have mobile phones for text messaging, for example.

You can also use a service called ‘Typetalk’. This is a telephone relay service that involves communicating via an operator who converts what has been spoken into text. This is then displayed onto the screen of a textphone for the deaf person to read at the other end of the line. They can either talk back to you directly or type out their reply and the operator will tell you exactly what has been typed. The Typetalk information leaflet is included in the course pack and will give you all the information you need to use this valuable service.

British Sign Language (BSL)

BSL is a visual language using hand-shapes, facial expressions, gestures and body language to communicate. BSL is an independent and complete language with a unique vocabulary. It has a structure and grammar different from that of the written and spoken English and is known as a topic-comment language. For example, the question in English 'What is your name?' becomes the sequence 'Name you what?' in BSL. The topic of the sentence, 'name you', comes first, followed by the comment, 'what?'

Similar to other languages it has evolved over time and developed regional dialects. Signs used by someone in Liverpool may mean different things to someone in London. Likewise, deaf people in different countries do not use the same sign language, just like a spoken language. The government now officially recognises BSL as a minority language, a similar status to Welsh and Scottish Gaelic.

There are many places to learn BSL throughout the country. You can find information about BSL courses in the contacts section at the back of this booklet.

As coaches working with BSL users, you can have a volunteer communicator, communication support worker (CSW) or BSL interpreter present to ensure that you can communicate fully with each other. The next section goes into more detail about working alongside volunteer communicators, CSW's and BSL interpreters and the difference between each of these roles.

See also the 'football signs' chapter shown on the DVD with the course pack for some commonly used football related words and their signs.

Working with BSL communicators

If there is a deaf player, whose first language is BSL attending your training session or match then they may be supported by a volunteer communicator, communication support worker (CSW) or BSL interpreter to ensure the player can fully communicate with the coach and other players.

However, it should be stressed that this is as a last resort, especially after you have completed the *Coaching Deaf Footballers* course! By putting into practice the communication tips and guidelines, as well as learning basic BSL and 'football signs', communicating with deaf footballers directly should be your aim as a coach.

Below are a few guidelines on working with BSL communicators

- **Volunteer communicators –** NDCS uses volunteers to communicate during children's events and activities including football coaching sessions. Volunteer communicators will have achieved CACDP* (Council for the Advancement of Communicating with Deaf People) Level 2 or above and will be able to sign your instructions to the group. Please remember they are volunteers and are not professionally trained CSWs or interpreters.

  Cost – travel expenses.

- **Communication support workers or CSWs –** help with communication between deaf students and hearing tutors. They are based mainly in educational settings, schools, colleges, universities and so on. CSWs will have a minimum of CACDP Level 2 signing and are working towards or hold the Edexcel Professional Development Award in Communication Support Work with Deaf Learners.

- **BSL interpreters –** BSL interpreters are professionally qualified to translate between English and BSL. Junior trainee interpreters (JTIs) have a minimum of CACDP* level 3 BSL skills, trained interpreters hold CACDP level 4 and have proven knowledge of interpreted standards. Interpreters are registered with the Association of Sign Language Interpreters (ASLI) and are booked for professional meetings, interviews, training and conferences.

  Cost – costs vary depending on the interpreter and agency that you use but can range from £25 to £40 per hour. Interpreters usually charge for a minimum of two hours along with additional travel expenses.

*CACDP levels – The Council for the Advancement of Communication with Deaf People. They are similar to the 1st4Sport FA Coaching Course structure with students working their way up starting at Level 1 up to Level 4. Those with Level 4 signing skills are usually full-time interpreters.

When working with communicators, it is important to be aware of the following points:

- Make sure that you let the communicator know what you plan to do during a training session in advance. Perhaps hand them a copy of the session plan. This will allow the communicator time to prepare and ask any questions about the session that they may not understand.

- Position yourself so the players can see both yourself and the communicator clearly. Standing with the communicator side-by-side is usually the most effective.

- Talk to the group/player directly rather than to the communicator, even if all the players are deaf and all are looking at the communicator, you are still there to coach the players, not the communicator.

- Speak clearly and not too fast, it is hard work listening to someone speaking and then interpreting his or her words into BSL!

- Plan activities that give the communicator and the deaf player(s) a break from watching. This could include scheduling regular drinks breaks or activities where there is no regular intervention from the coach.

- If asking a question to a group and you want a response, wait until the communicator has finished signing before allowing a response. This gives both the deaf players the chance to respond and the communicator more time to interpret.

- You cannot look at two places at once so, when demonstrating or working from a whiteboard, build in a time lapse so that the deaf players can look at you and then turn their attention to the communicator, otherwise they will miss the explanation. Remember, coaches should not be talking during demonstrations anyway!

- Try and use basic BSL yourself, even if the communicator is present. This will help you communicate directly to the player and help build a relationship with them as you would a hearing player. See the 'football signs' chapter on DVD with this pack for some basic signs to use during your coaching sessions.

Be aware that it is impossible to learn BSL just from this course or from the DVD. If you would like to learn BSL and communicate with BSL users then the best place to start is to take a course taught by a qualified sign language teacher.

Contact the Council of Advancement in Communication with Deaf People (CACDP) for more information on booking a BSL interpreter or attending a BSL course yourself. Their details can be found at the back of this booklet.

Health and safety considerations

As a coach, safety considerations are an essential aspect of all coaching sessions and matches, regardless of whether there are deaf or hearing players. Coaches must also be aware of the specific individual needs of all their players. This can include people who are deaf and other associated issues. Coaches should factor in these considerations when organising and delivering their coaching sessions and matches.

Wearing hearing aids during matches

Hearing aids are sensitive pieces of electronic equipment and risk being broken if they fall out of the ear during vigorous activity. For this reason some deaf people will choose to play without their hearing aids just in case. However, others prefer to wear their hearing aids, particularly if they play in mainstream teams, so that they can use them to hear instructions or calls from team mates. It is generally accepted that children can use their aids when playing sport provided they are comfortable and securely fitted. If in doubt advise parents to ask for further advice from their audiologist (hearing specialist).

It can be worth making the referee aware that there is a player wearing a hearing aid before the match begins. However, official FA guidelines now state that it is the player's and their parent's choice whether they wear their hearing aids during matches, not the referee's.

Wearing cochlear implants during matches

Having a cochlear implant involves having a receiver package implanted under the skin behind the ear and an external package that is worn similarly to a hearing aid. The main risk with sport is suffering a blow to the head on or around the site of the internal package, which risks damaging the package or the skin around the area. Although the risk is very small this could mean that it becomes necessary to have repeat surgery to replace the package. Like hearing aids, the external equipment is sensitive and risks being broken if it falls off during a match.

British Cochlear Implant Group safety guidelines state 'vigorous sports (for example, football, netball, hockey and squash) - It may be advisable to remove the external parts of the system. If there is some risk of blows to the head the external parts should be removed and a form of head protection worn (for example, a scrum cap).'

It is generally accepted that children and adults will play football while wearing their cochlear implant although it is advisable that they check with their cochlear implant professional beforehand.

As in the previous section, it can be worth making the referee aware that there is a player using a cochlear implant before the match begins. However, official FA guidelines now state that it is the player's and their parent's choice whether they wear the external part of their implant during matches, not the referee's.

Children who have recently had cochlear implant surgery are advised against playing football until the operation site has fully healed (approximately 6 weeks).

Gaining deaf players' attention

Football Club Child Protection polices are designed to protect children from potential harm and also to protect the integrity of the adults who look after them. Consequently, physical contact between players and coaches is now frowned upon. This can be a problem if, as coach of a junior team, you wish to get the attention of a deaf child who has his/her back to you and cannot hear you calling for them.

As this is a common issue for deaf people, it is quite acceptable to gain the attention of a deaf person by tapping them on the shoulder, this includes deaf young people.

There are other ways of gaining their attention, such as walking around them until they see your face. This can be used if you are still unsure about tapping them on the shoulder.

It is always wise to ensure that any communication between a coach and players takes place in an appropriate, open environment to protect both the child and the integrity of the coach.

Fire safety

It is essential to be aware that deaf people may not be able to hear the fire alarms. If the fire alarm has gone off, coaches and officials should follow their club fire safety policies and guidelines. Particular care should be given to ensuring that any deaf players under their care are accounted for. This may also involve checking the toilets and changing rooms, for example, where deaf players may not have realised the alarm has gone off. This may include physically entering all the toilets and rooms, should it be safe to do so, to ensure everyone is out.

Planning and organising coaching sessions

All the general principles of how to establish goals and the planning, organisation and delivery of coaching sessions are equally applicable when coaching deaf footballers.

By using commonsense and considering the welfare and enjoyment of all players, coaches often need to make only minor adjustments and adaptations to coaching sessions to ensure all players are fully included and health and safety considerations are met.

The next section shows how, as coaches, you can adapt sessions and match situations to include deaf footballers.

Preparation work

If you are going to be using a communicator it is a good idea to have a basic plan of each coaching session for them to look through in advance. This will give them time to prepare and also ask any questions they may have. Of course, this is also beneficial for you as a coach because it allows you to plan the session and enable you to deliver a quality training session for all players.

Visual signals

Visual signals are vital for training sessions involving deaf footballers and are often the only adaptation needed to ensure all players are fully involved. The benefits of the signals are twofold. Firstly, for practical reasons, a deaf player may not be able to hear or understand a coach speaking or hear a whistle being blown whilst they are concentrating on an activity or game. A visual signal allows them to fully understand what is going on. Secondly, visual signals are used for health and safety reasons, such as if a session needs to be stopped for an injured player.

It is important that the coach makes all the players aware of what these signals mean before beginning a drill or game. If the session involves both deaf and hearing players, the coach can use both visual and verbal signals.

The main visual signals can include:

- Raising an arm to signify players should stop what they are doing and pay attention to the coach.
- Raising and waving a brightly coloured bib/flag/shirt if you want the session to stop immediately or for them to change direction, etc (always use same colour so players know exactly what it means).
- Signals similar to those referees use to show certain actions (for example, play on, simulating throwing action to denote throw-in).

Warm ups

Warm ups and cool downs are essential aspects of a coaching session or match situation. They should be fully inclusive and often need very little adaptation beyond some visual signals to ensure deaf players understand what to do. It is important to be aware that the coach will only need to speak to the group as a whole before the warm up games begin in order to explain what the players need to do. Nothing needs to be said during the games themselves, other than words of encouragement for hearing players (and visual signals such as the thumbs up for deaf players who might not hear your verbal encouragement).

Here are a few examples of warm ups using strong visual signals.

Traffic lights

Each player has a ball, the players move around the designated area with the ball at their feet. When the coach holds up a red cone they must all stop with the ball under control.

Introduce a yellow cone and the players must change direction with a turn. A green cone denotes the players must increase their speed with the ball.

Pairs

Players jog around a designated area trying to dodge each other. When coach holds up two cones all players must get into pairs. Any player not in a pair is out. This also works if the coach holds up three, four or even five cones in turn until there are only two players left.

Simon Says

Each player has a ball to dribble around with. The coach will then demonstrate a series of skills and dribbles one at a time. The players should only copy the coach if he/she is also holding up a red cone. If the coach doesn't raise a red cone when demonstrating a skill, the players must not copy the coach's action.

These examples show that the actual content of the warm ups and the benefits they have on the players stays essentially the same. In many cases, these activities can have a positive effect on all players' development. For example, holding up cones and other visual signals encourages the players to look up more, thereby improving their spatial awareness on the field of play.

Cool downs

If players and coach are moving together (such as jogging round outside of pitch), then it is useful to tell the players what will be taking place before starting off (for example, copy what coach is doing whilst jogging). Coaches should position themselves so deaf players can see what they are doing; lipreading is very difficult whilst on the move, as is signing. Visual actions will make it much easier for the players to understand what to do.

Demonstrating

By now you should realise that there is very little adaptation needed from coaching sessions involving hearing players. It is simply a case of using commonsense communication techniques and using clear visual signals to ensure you are communicating clearly with your players. When delivering any activities, it is always best to demonstrate what you wish the players to do beforehand. By using demonstrations, the players will have a visual representation of how to do each activity. This not only helps deaf players understand what to do, but is a useful coaching tool for all players!

Try using the following simple steps:

- Briefly explain what the activity involves and what you wish the players to do.
- Demonstrate the activity, but remember – do not speak whilst doing the demonstration.
- Ask for understanding (repeat if anyone has not understood).
- Start the activity.

Match situations

Similarly to training situations there are very few adaptations to make in a match situation to ensure deaf footballers can take a full and active role in proceedings.

Coaches and officials must be aware of the possible need for visual signals as well as verbal signals to ensure all players understand the decisions of the referee.

Many deaf footballers play or are involved in mainstream football teams. Therefore it will not be uncommon for them to be playing in matches with officials who may not have had any experience of officiating deaf footballers before. It may be useful to speak to the official(s) beforehand to inform them that there is a player who may not react or understand when the referee blows his/her whistle or speaks to the player.

Below are the main points to make to officials.

- Be patient if the player does not react to a referee's whistle or instructions straight away, they may not have heard or understood if they are busy concentrating on the ball.
- Use visual representations of what actions are required (eg simulating a throw in). In general, however, players understand the basic signals all referees use and this should be sufficient for all players.
- If playing against a mainstream team, or with a group of players with little experience of playing against deaf teams, make arrangements for them to wave at the deaf player(s) when the whistle is blown to alert deaf players not looking at the referee. Of course, honesty and trust is needed in such a situation!
- It may also be worth asking the referee to wave a brightly coloured flag (such as an assistant referee's flag) every time the whistle is blown. This visual signal will be more easily picked up by players who cannot hear the whistle.

If you use the last suggestion, be aware that this should only be done in agreement with the player in question before approaching the officials. Many players will be content with the status quo and may be embarrassed or unhappy with such adaptations being made for them, so check with them beforehand.

Rule adaptations

As deaf footballers can take a full and active part in mainstream football matches, it should be clear that no rule adaptations need to be made from the laws of the game as laid down by FIFA.

There are, however, some deaf-specific competitions, such as the English Deaf Football (EDF) Cup and British Deaf Football (BDF) Cup, which are governed by the following regulations.

- All players must have a hearing loss of 55 decibels minimum in their better ear to qualify for games specifically designed for deaf people.
- Players must send audiograms (records of hearing tests) to the governing body office to be verified and registered with the International Deaflympic Committee.
- All players must remove their hearing aids and cochlear implants during games. This is to ensure a degree of fairness for all players and is only applicable in official deaf-specific competitions.

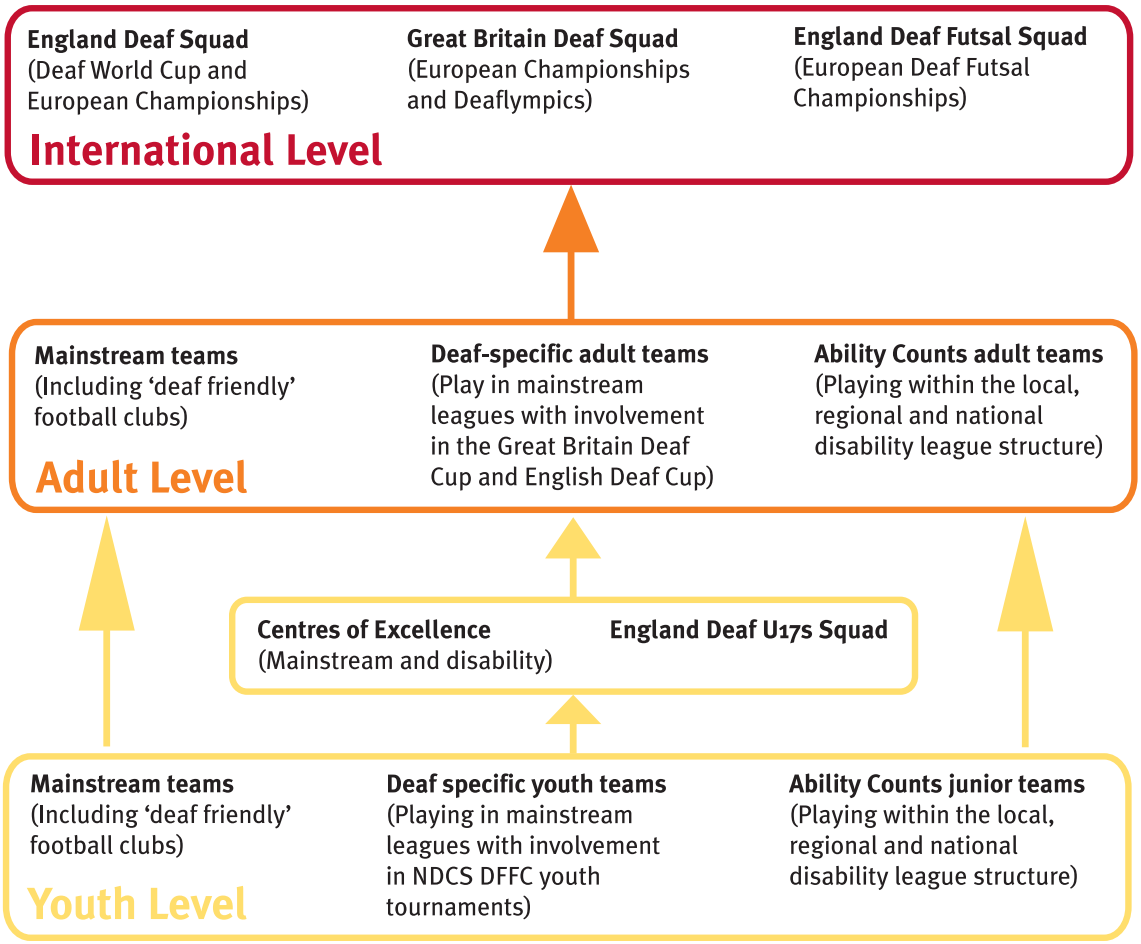
Competitions include annual knock out cups, indoor and outdoor small-sided competitions and Futsal tournaments.

There are Deaf Football European and World Championships every four years.

The Deaflympics originated in 1924 and are held every four years. This includes a football competition that includes a Great Britain team.

More information on contacting the relevant authorities can be found at the back of this booklet.

Player Pathway



Please Note

Many FA Charter Standard Clubs now have 'Soccerbility' or 'Ability Counts' teams and regular coaching sessions taking place to ensure everyone is able to participate in football activities whatever their ability.

It is important to be aware that deaf footballers can play football in either a mainstream setting or with 'Soccerbility' or 'Ability Counts' teams. Deaf footballers should be given the option of choosing to play with either group and every effort should be made to ensure their needs are met, whichever team they choose to join.

Notes

Notes

Useful addresses and contacts

The National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS)

NDCS is the national charity dedicated to creating a world without barriers for deaf children and young people.

NDCS also runs the Deaf Friendly Football Club (DFFC) project, which helps mainstream clubs become accredited with Deaf Friendly status. They also have a national database of Deaf Friendly clubs, coaches, officials and competitions.

15 Dufferin Street, London, EC1Y 8UR
NDCS Freephone Helpline: 0808 800 8880 (voice and text)
Fax: 020 7251 5020
Email: football@ndcs.org.uk (DFFC info) or helpline@ndcs.org.uk (general info)
www.ndcs.org.uk/football

The Football Association

The FA is the governing body for the English game. It is responsible for all regulatory aspects of the game of football in England. This includes disability football.

Football Development Unit, 25 Soho Square, London, W1D 4FA
Tel: 020 7745 4545
Fax: 020 7745 4546
Email: info@thefa.com
www.theFA.com

The Royal National Institute for Deaf People (RNID)

A national charity for deaf people that aims to achieve a better quality of life for deaf and hard of hearing people. It does this by campaigning, lobbying, raising awareness of deafness, providing services and through social, medical and technical research. It also runs Typetalk (see below)

19-23 Featherstone Street, London EC1Y 8SL
RNID Freephone information line: 0808 808 0123
Email: informationline@rnid.org.uk
www.rnid.org.uk

RNID - Typetalk

A telephone relay service providing vital communication links for deaf and hard of hearing people. The attached leaflet should explain this service and how it works in more detail.

Customer services team: 0800 7311 888
Tel: 0151 709 9494
Email: Helpline@rnid-typetalk.org.uk
www.typetalk.org

England Deaf Football (EDF)

The EDF is part of UK Deaf Sport and the English Federation of Disability Sport and regulates the EDF competitions open exclusively for deaf people and their football teams.

UK Deaf Sport, c/o EFDS, Manchester Metropolitan University, Hassall Road, Alsager, Cheshire, ST7 2HL
Tel: 0161 247 5629
Fax: 0161 247 6895
Email: secretary@englanddeaffootball.co.uk

British Deaf Football (BDF)

The BDF are part of UK Deaf Sport and regulate the BDF Cup. A competition open for deaf football teams throughout the UK.

Email: bdfc_co_ordinator@yahoo.co.uk

Sports Coach UK (1st4Sport Qualifications)

The regulatory body for coaching courses in the UK. The 1st4Sport qualifications are recognised and regulated by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority.

1st4Sport Qualifications, Coachwise Ltd, Chelsea Close,
Off Amberley Road, Amley, Leeds, LS12 4HP.
Tel: 0113 290 7610
Fax: 0113 231 9606
Email: enquiries@1st4sportqualifications.com
www.1st4sportqualifications.com

Council for the Advancement of Communicating with Deaf People (CACDP)

CACDP is a registered charity aimed at raising standards of communication between deaf and hearing people through nationally accredited BSL courses. They are also the registration body for professional BSL to English interpreters. They have a directory of registered interpreters and regular BSL courses throughout the country. If you want to find out where your nearest sign language course is taking place, please contact CACDP for more details.

CACDP, Durham University Science Park, Block 4, Stockton Road,
Durham, DH1 3UZ
Tel: 0191 383 1155
Fax: 0191 383 7914
Textphone: 0191 383 7915
Email: durham@cacdp.org.uk
www.cacdp.org.uk

British Deaf Association (BDA)

The BDA is the largest Deaf organisation in the UK that is run by Deaf people. They represent the sign language community and are active campaigners in improving standards and rights for Deaf and hearing sign language users.

They also have an extensive online information database of organisations, groups and services for Deaf people throughout the UK.

London Office: 69 Wilson Street, London, EC2A 2BB
Email: info@signcommunity.org.uk
Textphone: 020 7588 3529
Telephone: 020 7588 3520
Fax: 020 7588 3527
www.signcommunity.org.uk

Association of Sign Language interpreters (ASLI)

ASLI is the professional association and support network for sign language interpreters in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Their members include those who work as interpreters and deaf and hearing people who support their aims. They also have an extensive database of qualified sign language interpreters from across the country.

Fortuna House, South Fifth Street, Milton Keynes. MK9 2EU
Email: office@asli.org.uk
Telephone: 0871 474 0522
Fax: 01908 32 52 59
www.asli.org.uk

Using the NDCS Deaf Friendly Football Club database

The NDCS website has a regularly updated online database of clubs which have signed up to the NDCS Deaf Friendly Football Club project and who are committed to ensuring deaf people have the best opportunity to take part in football, either as a player, coach or club official.

The database will be used by deaf children and their families to find their nearest and most suitable 'Deaf Friendly' club. It can be found at www.ndcs.org.uk/football

If you think your club should be a part of this database then please email the DFFC team on football@ndcs.org.uk

Contacting local organisations

If clubs and coaches wish to find deaf players, coaches and volunteers in their area, there are a variety of local organisations that will have the relevant information.

There are many such organisations across the country. They can be found via a variety of sources including internet search engines, telephone directories, local council offices and newspapers and, in some cases, the NDCS Deaf Friendly Football Club online database.

Local organisations to consider include the following:

- Deaf schools
- Schools with hearing impairment (HI) units
- Deaf youth clubs
- Deaf centres
- Social services
- Ear, nose and throat (ENT) departments of hospitals
- Local deaf children's societies (often registered with NDCS)

Additional reading

Deaf United
Atherton, M. Russell, D and Turner, G. H.
Douglas McLean 2000
ISBN 0-946252-46-7

Deaf Friendly Teaching
NDCS publication 2003
ISBN 0-904691-75-6

The FA Football Development Programme Coaching Disabled Footballers
Fitzsimmons, T.
The Football Association and Sports Coach UK

NDCS provides the following

- A Freephone Helpline 0808 800 8880 (voice and text) and a range of publications for parents and professionals that can be downloaded from our website at www.ndcs.org.uk
- Clear, balanced information on many issues relating to childhood deafness
- An audiologist and technology team that can give advice and answer any questions about deafness and equipment that may help deaf children
- A children's equipment fund and an opportunity to borrow equipment
- Support with benefits claims and Disability Appeals Tribunals
- Education advice and support at Special Educational Needs Tribunals and Appeals
- Family weekends, special events and training for families of deaf children
- A team of family officers across the UK
- Sports, arts and outdoor activities for deaf children and young people
- A quarterly magazine for our members plus age-appropriate handbooks and regular email updates
- An online forum for parents and carers to share their experiences, available on the NDCS website at www.ndcs.org.uk/parentplace

The NDCS Deaf Friendly Football Club project aims to remove the barriers to participating in football that many young deaf people face. The project opens up the playing and coaching opportunities availiable to them.

Email: **football@ndcs.org.uk**

www.ndcs.org.uk/football

ndcs
every deaf child

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