TOP TIPS FOR SUPPORTING A LEARNER WITH A HEARING IMPAIRMENT

- Make sure that you have a child’s/young person’s attention before starting to talk, otherwise they may not follow the first part of the conversation or instructions.

- Noise levels should be kept to a minimum as any background noise, particularly from voices, will be amplified by hearing aids / cochlear implant processors.

- Speak clearly and at your normal pace. Speaking too slowly or over exaggerating your mouth patterns will make it harder for a deaf child/young person to understand you. Even if a child/young person is using British Sign Language they will also be following lip patterns.

- When changing the topic of the conversation let the child/young person know, otherwise they may find the discussion confusing. It is useful to introduce the topic first before going into detail.

- Do not shout as this will distort your lip patterns. For those who use hearing aids sudden loud noises can be uncomfortable or shocking.

- Keep your face clear and do not cover it with your hands, hair or any objects.

- The speaker should not stand in front of a brightly lit window or hold a book in front of their face as this restricts access to lip pattern and facial expressions.

- The child/young person needs to be positioned near to the speaker where they can see and hear the speaker clearly, and turn to see others when they contribute.

- If you talk for a long period of time it can be difficult and tiring for a deaf child/young person to lip read. Keep your sentences short and remember to explain any new vocabulary or technical terms.

- Regularly check that information given has been understood.

- Allow the child/young person enough time to respond to a question – they may need more thinking time than others even when they are well able to answer the question.

- Repeat or paraphrase contributions from other children, as children’s voices are usually softer than the adult’s.
• Explain any new vocabulary or technical terms. Write or display key words/phrases.

• Use visual cues to support the spoken word, e.g. real objects, pictures, diagrams, key words.

• Hearing impaired learners need to concentrate very hard due to the effort required to listen and lip read. This can lead to tiredness which can affect the ability to concentrate and attend.

• Those with a hearing loss may not be able to hear instructions clearly when the fire alarm goes off. An adult will need to repeat or visually reinforce instructions.

• Be aware of safety implications when outside and during more noisy lessons/activities. for example, the child/young person may not hear a warning shouted from a distance or if they are not facing the speaker.

Some useful webs links:
National Deaf Children’s Society
National Deaf Children’s Society – Literacy Corner
National Deaf Children’s Society – Maths Corner
National Deaf Children’s Society – Memory Corner
The BUZZ, National Deaf Children’s Society
Let’s Sign
Signed stories:
British-sign.co.uk
Action on Hearing Loss
Success for kids with hearing loss
Apps for deaf learners: