

6th January 2025

School Entry Hearing Screening Service Provision – Harrogate and District Foundation NHS Trust

Dear school.

It's with regret that I am writing to inform you that we have made the difficult to decision to pause school entry hearing screening for the 2024/25 academic year.

As commissioners of the service, it is a decision we have not taken lightly but resource challenges for the Middlesbrough 0-19 Healthier Together, along with a lack of significant evidence to support a continued universal screening offer, have prompted the decision.

Whilst the decision has been taken to pause screening for the 2024/25 academic year, the decision is not permanent. To help us plan for the future of the screening programme and ensure it meets the needs of schools and students we would appreciate you completing the following questionnaire to support future discussion and decision making.

<https://arcg.is/1f4yjC2>

The service will continue to provide screening for vision and weight (via the National Child Measurement Programme) as normal in the 2024/25 academic year.

Information is attached overleaf to help you identify and support hearing loss in children. We would also like to remind you that referrals can still be made to the audiology department at James Cook University Hospital via General Practice.

Please do not hesitate to get in touch with myself for further discussion
graeme_nicholson@middlesbrough.gov.uk

Yours faithfully



Graeme Nicholson

Advanced Public Health Practitioner
Public Health South Tees
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Signs to look out for which show early signs of hearing loss in children

Often children don't show any visible signs of hearing loss. However, those who see children day-to-day may start to notice the following:

- changes in behaviour
- increased tiredness and frustration
- lack of response when called
- difficulties working out where sounds are coming from
- lack of concentration
- preferring to play alone
- sitting close to the TV, or wanting it turned up
- saying 'what?' a lot
- speech becoming less clear
- seems quieter
- speaking too quietly OR too loudly
- less babble and smaller range of sounds

If you, a colleague or a parent have concerns over a child's hearing we suggest you make an appointment with your GP to discuss further. The GP may in return refer you to paediatric audiology at South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation NHS Trust if further screening is required.

Useful support and guidance

Information about paediatric audiology support available via South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation NHS Trust

<https://www.southtees.nhs.uk/services/audiology/childrens-hearing/leaflets/paediatric-audiology-leaflets/>

Further supporting information

<https://www.ndcs.org.uk/information-and-support/childhood-deafness/hearing-loss/>

<https://www.baaudiology.org/public-information/hearing/>