

Achievements of Deaf Pupils in Scotland

Our last report for the SSC newsletter included an article from Claire Leiper on her interviews with deaf pupils. We also gave brief updates on the National Survey, the Teacher Survey and Funding. At the time of writing we have just been informed that the Scottish Executive has awarded a further year's funding to the project. It is tremendous news that the Executive continues to show such commitment to ADPS. We will be working towards ensuring continuity of funding after this date. It was also very heartening to discover that the project has great cross party support among MSPs in the Scottish Parliament: Cathie Craigie, MSP, recently lodged a motion in support of continued funding of ADPS which, to date, has been signed by 34 MSPs across the political spectrum.

Meanwhile, here is an update on some of our activities.

National Survey up-date

We are now in the process of producing information from our second year of collecting data on deaf children. We achieved a response rate of 99%, which was excellent - a testimony to the commitment from teachers of deaf children throughout Scotland. As we build up the information year by year we will see patterns and trends beginning to develop. This will help national and local planning of services. As one teacher recently said:

"The information gives us directions to work towards in improving achievements of pupils."

The information will also be of use to parents and other interested groups. As National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS) Family Services Officer, Alan MacQueen, puts it:

"I have to say it is brilliant to actually have reliable statistics now and be able to use them to help plan our society's future."

Family Survey

We have worked closely with the NDCS to devise a questionnaire which services and schools have sent out on our behalf to families of deaf children all over Scotland. Regular readers will remember that we featured the questionnaire pilot day in a previous issue. Since then, 23 parents have agreed to be a band of 'back-up' volunteers for other families who may want some assistance when completing the questionnaires. A series of briefing events helped to clarify the role of the volunteer and identify the most likely questions which families may have.



Family Survey Volunteers discuss the questionnaires at a meeting in Perth

Mince pies and chocolate Santas helped to keep up the energy levels of a group of willing volunteers who also helped with the mammoth task of packing up over 2,000 questionnaire packs just before Christmas.

We don't have names and addresses of families, so we relied on deaf education services and schools to distribute the questionnaires on our behalf. As ever, we are very grateful to them for doing this.

We hope that, with the help of our volunteers, we will get a good response from families all over Scotland. **If you are a parent and have not yet returned your questionnaire by the time you read this, even if the deadline date**



Some of the volunteers who helped on
'Family Survey Packing Up Day'

of 16th February has passed, please do still send it in.

Other news

At the time of writing, we are about to launch our website at an ADPS Conference on 11th February. Cathie Craigie, MSP, will formally launch the site, which will contain lots of information about the project, including project findings as they become available. Our new website address is:

<http://www.education.ed.ac.uk/adps>

We are also providing Glasgow visiting service with a pilot standalone database which will be a means for them to use their own ADPS data to help to monitor and plan their service.

Claire Leiper has completed her individual interviews with school pupils and is about to undertake some group discussions in further education colleges. Again, we will report on this in future issues.

On 25th November, ADPS gave a presentation on project findings to the Scottish Parliament's Cross Party Group on Deafness which was attended by the Deputy Minister for Education, Ewan Robson. Carol Torrance and Alison Garbett, British Association of Teachers

of the Deaf (BATOD) representatives, also gave a presentation about teachers of deaf children, in which they used some information from the ADPS Teacher Survey. Regular readers may remember that this was a joint project between ADPS, BATOD and the Heads of Services Forum. We are about to start work on producing more comprehensive findings to inform further debate about the situation of teachers of deaf children in Scotland.

Please do get in touch with the project if you have any comments or enquiries.

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