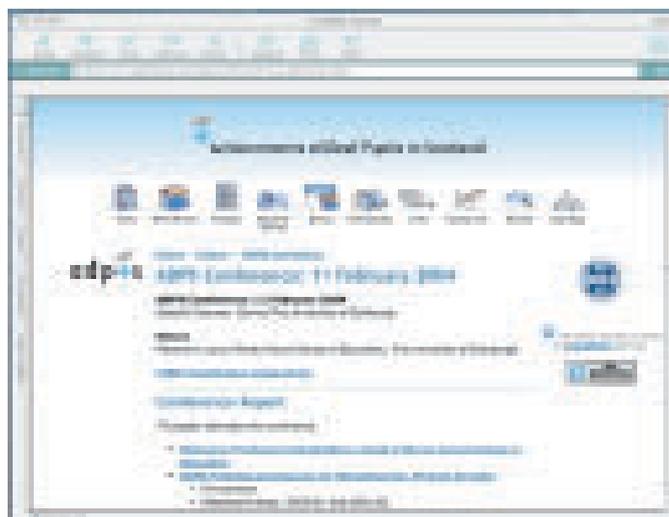


Achievements of Deaf Pupils in Scotland

Conference and Website Launch, 2004

At the time of writing our last report for the SSC newsletter, we were preparing for our February conference and website launch. Here is a brief summary of the day, which was held in the Moray House School of Education and was attended by more than 70 people. You can get more detailed information about all the sessions via this web link:

http://www.education.ed.ac.uk/adps/events/conference_2004/index.shtml



Formal Presentations

Professor Pamela Munn, Head of School, opened the day by emphasising the importance of ADPS, particularly in terms of monitoring the effects of 'inclusion' policies among deaf children in Scotland. Mary Brennan began by setting the context of ADPS findings, in terms of Scottish/UK policy, legislation and technological developments. She also referred to similar developments within the USA, where a recent Gallaudet Research Institute Newsletter raised concerns about the achievement gap between deaf and hearing children - and a concern that many deaf children in mainstream were not being provided with adequate language and communication access.

Selected Findings

Mary presented statistics on the proportions of

deaf children in various placements since 1996, showing how the proportion of pupils in schools for deaf children had gone down by 2001/02 to 6%. One graph illustrated the distribution of children with different levels of hearing loss in various types of school placement. Mary emphasised how important it is to have precise information, so that we can track things like the changing proportion of profoundly deaf children in mainstream and of mild/moderately deaf children in special schools. Using 5-14 National Test results as an example, Mary presented some information about attainments. The graphs on P7 pupils illustrated the fact that deaf children are not achieving as well as hearing children, a situation also noted by Gallaudet Research Institute. The figures can be broken down into groups of pupils with different levels of hearing loss so that attainment of profoundly deaf/cochlear implanted children can be compared with that of children with severe, moderate and mild deafness. This makes the numbers in each group very small, so a few years information would need to be looked at in order to draw real conclusions.

Standard Grade results showed that a smaller proportion of deaf children achieved credit awards compared to hearing children. Out of the 7 credit passes achieved by profoundly deaf children in 2001 and 2002, 6 of the passes were in Art and Design; interestingly, the 7th was in English. Information from America illustrated the fact that literacy of deaf children typically lags several years behind hearing learners. Also, the range of scores gets bigger for older deaf children whereas it gets narrower for hearing children. ADPS information shows a similar pattern.

Information on Visual Impairments, Disabilities and Learning Difficulties

Dr Jackie Grigor, Consultant Paediatrician, who had been going to co-present, was unable to attend. Therefore, Marian Grimes illustrated the point that percentage figures of deaf children

otland (ADPS) - project update

with 'additional disability' need to be treated with some caution. Extent of likely impact on learning, comparison with prevalence among the hearing population and clear information on diagnosis are important factors. ADPS and Dr Grigor are working together to develop a new type of coding system which takes impact on learning into account.

Pupil and Ex-pupil Perspectives

Marian also presented on behalf of Claire Leiper. She described the importance ADPS attaches to including views of pupils and ex-pupils and gave an overview of the individual interviews and focus groups undertaken and planned. Marian read through a number of quotes illustrating key themes, such as choices/decision-making and inclusion experiences.

Website launch

Cathie Craigie, MSP, launched the new ADPS website. As chair of the Scottish Parliament Cross Party Group on Deafness, Cathie has maintained a close interest in deaf issues in Scotland, including the work of ADPS. She commended David Healy for the design of the website. Emily Healy, part of ADPS team, demonstrated how to navigate through the website. The main website address is:

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

Partnerships with stakeholders

The following people spoke about the value of ADPS information to the groups/organisations

they represent: Maire McCormack (parent), Lorna Mortis (teacher of deaf children), Ken Corsar (Director, National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS) Scotland), Carole Torrance (President, British Association of Teachers of the Deaf (BATOD)) and Lilian Lawson (Director, Scottish Council on Deafness (SCoD)).

Group discussions/plenary session

Attendees split into small groups and discussed issues from the day and questions they would like to put to the panel in the plenary session. Panel members included: Ken Corsar (Director, NDCS Scotland), Mike Gibson (Head of Additional Support Needs, Scottish Executive Education Dept (SEED)), Lilian Lawson (Director, SCoD), Carole Torrance (President, BATOD) and the ADPS Team. Issues raised:

- the need for the Scottish Executive and Local Authorities to address issues raised by ADPS evidence;
- the need for ADPS to continue to collect information over a longer period of time;
- the need to recruit and train more teachers of deaf children;
- the need for deaf people to be encouraged to take up careers in deaf education.

Lunch provided a valuable opportunity for people to relax and network and a number of people commented on their evaluation forms that this had been very important to them. BSL/English interpreters, lipspeakers, projected speedtext and a loop system were provided.

Please do get in touch with us if you have any comments or queries - and don't forget to visit the website!

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