

INCLUSIVITY

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FACTS ABOUT DEAFNESS

> **talking to  
teachers  
about your  
child's  
hearing  
loss**

Starting school is an exciting time for children and families. For many, the change can also be a little unsettling. If your child is deaf or hard-of-hearing (DHH), it's only natural that you might have some concerns about how things will go.

You can help the transition to school (or the move to a new one) go smoothly by building good communication with teachers and helping them understand your child's needs. Here are some ways you can do this.



**I think Grace being embraced so much is testament to the school's commitment to providing modifications in conjunction with my advocacy about what Grace needs."**

**STACEY**, MUM OF DEAF STUDENT GRACE

## START THE CONVERSATION EARLY

Teachers typically love to be prepared. Rather than leaving it to the first day, aim to let teachers know about your child's hearing loss and needs beforehand. You could arrange a meeting in the week before school starts, for example, when many teachers are back at work and making plans for the coming term.

Some types of school might already have a plan for meeting new students. You can ask about this when you enrol.

## SHARE RESOURCES

**Resources are the backbone of teaching, so most teachers will appreciate you sharing them. You might like to give your child's teachers some information about:**

different types and levels of deafness

the assistive listening devices your child uses

deaf-friendly tips and techniques

how to create a good listening environment

basic Auslan signs they can use in class

common myths about deafness.

## CREATE A PERSONAL SUMMARY DOCUMENT

It can be helpful to create a simple summary of all the important things teachers need to know about your child.

**A single page or so should suffice. Include things like:**

which assistive listening devices your child uses

simple troubleshooting tips for those devices (such as how to change batteries)

where to position your child in the classroom

how to get their attention.

## KEEP THE COMMUNICATION GOING

Your child will spend a lot of years at school, so it's good to keep lines of communication open. You can take advantage of parent-teacher interviews to discuss your child's progress. If you need more time, you could arrange a one-to-one meeting. You could also get teachers' email addresses or start a communication diary that your child takes to and from school. Your child's teacher can let you know the best way to stay in touch.

Once relationships are built, it's easier to monitor what's happening with your child and raise any concerns if needed.



**Stacey and I talk regularly about where Grace is at. The main thing I really value from those conversations is getting insight into how Grace is going at home and what we can do to support her during her school day."**

**ROSIE**, GRACE'S SUPPORT TEACHER

## EXPLAIN SOME ACCESSIBILITY BASICS

Remind teachers to use the closed captions on videos and make sure assistive listening devices are switched on and working.

## WORK TOGETHER TO HELP YOUR CHILD THRIVE

Schools and teachers are great at lots of things, but you are the expert about your child. By working together, schools, teachers and parents can support DHH kids to thrive and fulfill their potential.



For further information about  
Deaf Children Australia  
[deafchildrenaustralia.org.au/buildingbridges](https://deafchildrenaustralia.org.au/buildingbridges)

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# BUILD ING BRIDGES

Deaf  
Children  
Australia.

Deaf Children Australia uses the term 'deaf'  
to refer to all degrees and types of hearing  
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