

LET'S HEAR IT!

NEWSLETTER OF
DORSET DEAF CHILDREN'S SOCIETY
SPRING 2018



A MAGICAL DAY AT THE HARRY POTTER STUDIOS!



What a fantastic day we had on Saturday 21st October 2017 at the Warner Bros. Studio experiencing the Harry Potter Studio Tour. Two coaches set off from Dorset with 110 of our members for an absolutely magical day!

It was a great way to start the school half term and there were some very excited children (and adults) travelling up the motorway. On arrival we all queued up in the foyer to start the tour and first of all went into a room with TV screens all around showing the actors from the films talking about their experiences at the Studio. Then we went into the cinema where we watched a short film. The film ended with a picture of the Great Hall doors on the large screen then the screen rolled up and the actual doors were there. They opened the doors and revealed the great hall decorated with lit up pumpkins. It was really magical!



After the great hall everyone was free to experience the rest of the studio at their own pace. All the actual sets from the films were on display and loads of hands on experiences for the children. From the Forbidden Forest and on to Platform nine and three quarters and the Hogwarts Express, film and special effects, the Ministry of Magic, Diagon Alley, Knight Bus, Privet Drive and the amazing Hogwarts Castle model. Everyone had an amazing time.



Thank you to Warner Bros for providing BSL sign support for us and all the families were given a free digital guide to use. The tour ends with a visit to the shop which had the most amazing selection of things to buy, even if some of it was rather expensive the children still managed to find something to remember the day!



NEWSROUND

A BIG THANK YOU FROM DDCS!

Dorset DCS wishes to thank all the individuals and organisations who have made donations, fundraised for us or provided something for us free of charge. Without you we could not provide the support for the children and their families!

THANK YOU TO:

Connect Business Technology for printing the 'Let's Hear it Briefly' flyers free of charge

Strategic Solutions Financial Services
Diane Spedding
Martin Bray

Insurance Institute of Bournemouth
Co-Op Local Community Fund
Mrs R.M. Mantell
Graeme Swatton
Vivien Ford

In Memorium – Mr Roger Hopkins
National Citizen Service

The Blandford School - Christmas Party Venue
Catering Academy – Christmas Party Food
Rushmore Golf Club
Darren Slade

Hannah Rose – Bournemouth Borough Council
In Memorium – Mrs Anne Harris
St John with St Michael Church, Poole
Royal Air Force College Cranwell
Dorset Community Fund – Joy & Lance Collier Fund
In Memorium – Mr Derek Walbridge
Charles & Susie Andrews

Ideas for fund raising could be a sponsored event, car boot sale, cake sale, donations instead of gifts, a collection box in a work place, raffle or a school mufti day.

Why not give it a go!

DO YOU HAVE AN EXPERIENCE YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE WITH OTHER FAMILIES?

We are always looking for articles for our newsletters. It really helps to read what other families have experienced, or maybe you just have a story to share? Please contact Shirley on 01202 571089 We would love to hear from you!

HELP AND CONTACTS

CHAIRMAN – Kevin Forbes, 11 Heather Road, Bournemouth. BH10 5EE 01202 510078
VICE-CHAIRPERSON, TREASURER & MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY - Shirley Sorbie,
Touchwood, 9 Oakland Walk, West Parley, Ferndown, Dorset BH22 8PF 01202 571089
SECRETARY - Yvonne Hussain, 80 Gresham Road, Winton, Bournemouth, Dorset. BH9 1QT
01202 518330

Website – www.dorsetdcs.co.uk

E-mail – info@dorsetdcs.co.uk

NDCS FREEPHONE HELPLINE 0808 800 8880 (voice & text)



DORSET PARENT-CARER COUNCIL

**OUR BIGGEST and
MOST IMPORTANT SURVEY!**

Are you a parent or carer of a child or young person aged 0-25 years with an additional need, with SEN or a disability and WITH OR WITHOUT a Statement or Education Health & Care Plan (EHCP)?

We need your views on a range of services and provisions.

We need to know what is working and what is not working.

We will pass this information on to the Dorset County Council and the Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group and work together to make improvements.

Our voice as parents and carers is much stronger if it is a united one.

**FREE £5.00
GIFT VOUCHER**
(subject to eligibility)

Have
**Your
Say**

PTO

dpcc@dorsetparentcarercouncil.co.uk

07827 793 244



DORSET PARENT-CARER COUNCIL

**OUR BIGGEST and
MOST IMPORTANT SURVEY!**

Have
**Your
Say**

The survey is available online.

It looks at important and varied topics such as:

- education
- EHCPs
- social care
- short breaks
- and a range of health services.

It covers Children's and Adult services.

Our previous surveys have helped make a real difference to services and brought about positive changes to benefit families and their children and young people.

How to find the survey

A link to the survey can be found on the DORSET PARENT-CARER COUNCIL website
dpcc@dorsetparentcarercouncil.co.uk

Or at www.goo.gl/UbuqQe

You do not need to leave your name, but if you do, you may be eligible for a £5 gift voucher as a thank you for your help.

dpcc@dorsetparentcarercouncil.co.uk

07827 793 244

NDCS HELP LINE

Do you need help and advice about DLA claims or education for your child?

If so please ring the NDCS help line number
0808 800 8880 or
Email helpline@ndcs.org.uk

DDCS GRANTS

DDCS has funds available for grants and will consider contributing towards our member's costs or partial costs for deaf related equipment, activities or learning.

We have in the past contributed towards signing classes and provided literature to support signing. We have also provided specialist alarm clocks for children to become more independent at getting up in the morning!

We may also be able to offer grants in certain circumstances for financial support with a deaf related project.

Please contact us in writing or by emailing info@dorsetdcs.co.uk

Each case is considered on its individual merits.



For more information, news, pictures and future events please visit our website.
www.dorsetdcs.co.uk

CHRISTMAS PARTY 2017

On Saturday 25th November 2017 we held our annual Christmas Party at The Blandford School, Blandford. We changed the start time this year making it an hour earlier at 1pm and eighty children and eighty five adults came along to enjoy what was to be a fun packed afternoon.

As they arrived families were entertained with music from Richard, Party time for Kids, who also organised some games for the children. The children were able to have fun at the craft tables making Christmas Cards and Angels and there was also face painting of some great festive faces! Thank you to Joanna, mum of Lilly, and Carla who do such amazing face painting for us. The Dorset DCS information table was available for families to help themselves to any literature they might need and NDCS Christmas Cards were on sale raising money, not just for NDCS, but also for Dorset DCS.

Everyone then enjoyed a finger buffet with plenty of delicious food. The savoury food was provided for our families by the school catering company, The Catering Academy. We would like to thank Karen Hall and her team for giving up their time to make the savoury food for us. All the cakes, biscuits and fruit and tea, coffee and squash for the children were provided by DDCS. A big thank you to all the Trustees who helped and one of our parents, Suzie Batten, who volunteered to make cakes and Christmas biscuits for us.

After the food it was time for the entertainment provided by Richard and Party Time for Kids! This included games for the children and dancing and before long the adults were chosen by the children to join in! There were some interesting photos and films being taken! It was then time for a visit from a very special visitor..... Father Christmas who brought presents for all the children.

We would like to thank Liz Bishopp and her team at The Blandford School for once again letting us have the venue free of charge.



TECHNOLOGY INFORMATION EVENING

On Tuesday 6th March the Hearing Support Service held a Technology Evening at The Dorford Centre, Dorchester providing information for children and young people and parents/carers. The Service has been focussing on technology and assistive devices that can make listening more comfortable at home and school and arranged for a visit from the NDCS Technology Roadshow in February and a visit from Connevans for the Technology Evening. Dorset Deaf Children's Society sponsored the Technology Evening and Shirley Sorbie went along to provide information and support to families.

The evening was a great success and well attended and parents and children went away with a much better knowledge of what is available to help them.

Further Information:

Connevans have produced a short interactive guide on their website (pictured) – you can click on links within the guide which will take you to the relevant page in the main catalogue:

https://www.connevans.info/image/connevans/DeafEquipment_explained.pdf

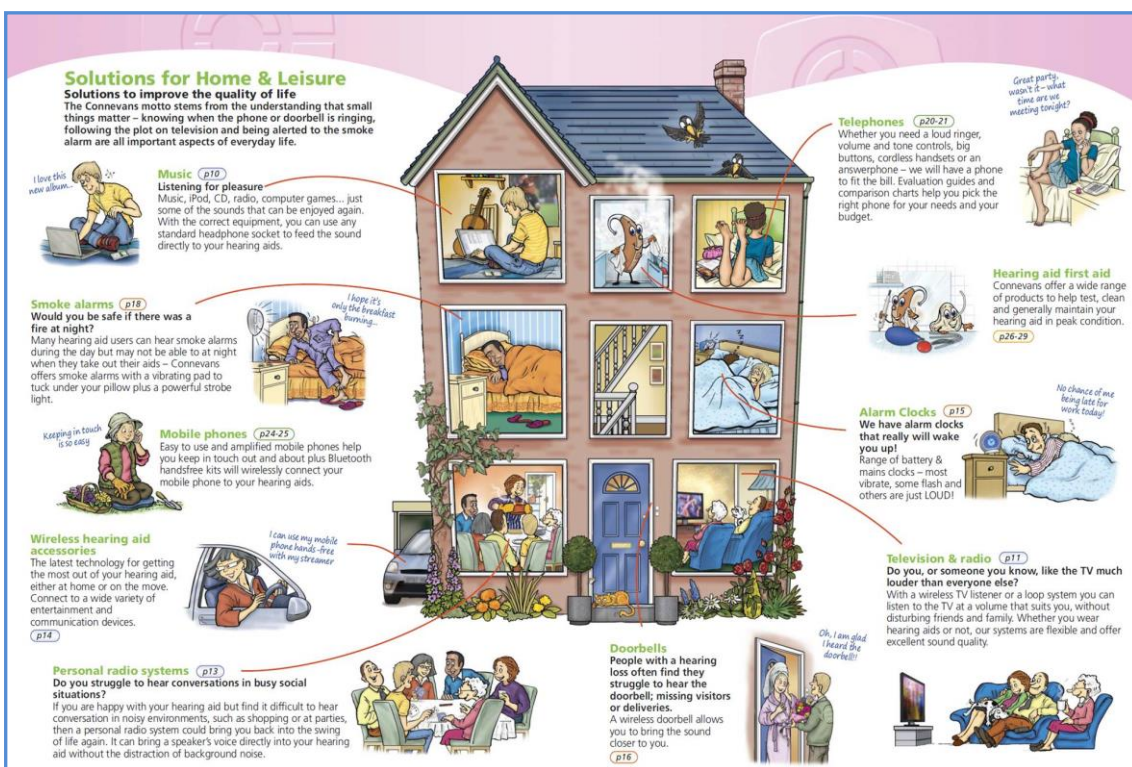
Connevans offer a 30-day returns policy if you find that any equipment doesn't meet your needs, plus you pay no VAT.

Or, you can borrow some equipment through the NDCS Technology Test Drive loan scheme:

http://www.ndcs.org.uk/family_support/technology_and_products/technology_test_drive_product_loan_service/index.html

The NDCS has a list of charitable organisations who may be able to help if you need support to finance specialist equipment:

http://www.ndcs.org.uk/family_support/useful_links_and_organisations/financial_support/index.html



Grants are also available from Dorset Deaf Children's Society

Hopefully a Technology Evening will be organised for families in the East of Dorset later in the year.

BACKCHAT

ISLA'S JOURNEY Aleesha Lloyd

Isla was born in June 2017. I had a very straight forward pregnancy, and a relatively easy birth with no complications. Isla and I were discharged from hospital four hours after she was born. Her new born checks were all completed, except for the new born hearing screening test and I was happy for the test to be carried out a few days later when we were settled back at home. The Midwives visited us at home to check all was well with baby Isla. Isla was quickly discharged from the midwifery team and the health visitors then stepped in, and during their visit they carried out the new born hearing screening test. Isla failed the test at 5 days old. She then went on to fail one more before the Health Visitor arranged for a more senior member of staff to come and carry out a more detailed test. The test consisted of her having little pads placed on her forehead and behind her ears, but again, she failed. At this point, at just 4 weeks old, Isla was referred to our local audiology centre.



As any mother would, I started watching Isla more, focusing on her reactions to sounds and intentionally making noises to get a reaction. Sometimes she reacted, other times she didn't. I was watching out for her startle reflex, and seeing whether she stirred to the door slamming, the Hoover being on, pots and pans being stacked, the phone ringing. She didn't respond much, and when she did, I couldn't be 100% sure it was because she was hearing the sounds. What I did subconsciously, was prepare myself for the worst, and accepted that Isla was Deaf. I was trying to protect myself from what seemed at the time to be the worst case scenario.

So, little baby Isla, now 5 weeks old. Still tiny, but developing beautifully, set off for her first audiology appointment. I took Isla alone, as my husband, Ed, was working. Isla was very good. For this appointment she had to be asleep, or not moving. We had what was called an AABR test, with little probes stuck to her tiny head. I had to hold her completely still, but at least we were going to get this done, once and for all. About an hour into the test, I knew something was wrong. Now I'm no expert, and I had never seen any audiology graphs or mappings done before, but I could hear how loud the Audiologist was making the sounds, and Isla wasn't flinching.

The test finally came to an end, 2 hours later. The Audiologist told me she was going to go and gather her findings and then discuss the results with me. She only leaves for what feels like under 5 minutes, which was a blessing, as I was feeling so anxious. She returns, "So, the test indicates that Isla does have a hearing impairment!" I wish I could say I was shocked, but I wasn't. I feel like, deep down, I already knew. I got shown a graph. The graph was plotted at several points. The Audiologist explains that people that hear between 0-20db (decibels) have normal hearing. At 20-40db would be mild hearing loss, 40-60db would be moderate hearing loss, 60-80db would be severe hearing loss, and 80+ would be profound. As a complete beginner, it was very helpful that the graph that I was shown had little pictures on, to represent the noise level. She began to show me where Isla's results were on this graph, and all I saw was a helicopter, a plane, and a dog barking. Isla has *severe hearing loss*. She explained that it couldn't be glue ear, or conducting issues, as she used a device during the test that would eliminate that as an option.

I was devastated. My heart was shattered, and I couldn't understand why or how this had happened. I quickly gathered myself together as Isla needed to be fitted for her first set of hearing aids. I couldn't believe this was happening. We rearranged for a follow up appointment, to pick up the hearing aids the following week. I left the centre and headed to my car, to call my husband to tell him the news. I felt like I had gone to this appointment with a baby who could hear, and left with a baby who couldn't. Now I have to, not only digest all this information, but I had to somehow announce the news to Isla's big sister, Olivia, all of our friends and family. The thought of telling people about Isla's hearing loss was the hardest thought ever. I didn't want anyone to see her any differently, I didn't want anyone's pity, and I definitely didn't want Isla to be treated any differently. Isla was the first deaf person that I'd met, and I wondered how I could support her or whether I would ever be able to understand her life fully as a deaf person.

At 12 weeks old, Isla was referred to our Local Auditory Implant centre, and started the process to see whether Isla would be a suitable candidate for Cochlear Implants. The following months consisted of many appointments, with the Implant Team, our Local Audiologist, our Paediatrician, and our Health Visitor. We also had appointments that confirmed she had no visual impairments.



Days after diagnosis, we were contacted by our Advisory Teacher. This initial meeting was extremely important for Ed and I. To talk to someone about Isla's future and to ask questions that seemed too silly to ask anyone else. The comfort that we gained from this first meeting was priceless, and the confidence that we gained would see us looking at Isla's future in a completely different light. It helped that Isla's teacher and Isla's Key contact from The Implant Centre were able to support Olivia as well, who seemed to be struggling with her sister's diagnosis, and was concerned for Isla's future wellbeing. I joined a Pre-school group set up by the Hearing Support Service, where I got to meet lots of teachers, mums and carers and Shirley and Nicola from Dorset Deaf Children's Society. Having this support network is extremely important to me and my family, and it has made things easier to handle by having the opportunity to meet with others in a similar situation. It is also great to join in the activities organised by Dorset Deaf Children's Society that can include not only Isla, but her older sister too.

I started blogging about Isla's Journey as soon as she was diagnosed. I felt that I wanted to educate and inform people of the ins and outs of raising a child with hearing loss and hopefully provide some comfort to other parents in similar situations. As soon as we found out the news, we went straight to the internet to educate ourselves and to gain awareness on what life for Isla was going to be like. And finally I can now tell you, that it will be no different to any other child. She is due to have Cochlear Implants that will give her the opportunity to hear sounds, but for now, she is completely deaf. We have fully embraced British Sign Language and have signing nights at home, so my family can practice signing, and be confident and comfortable when communicating with Isla.



Isla couldn't have fallen into better hands. She has a wonderful family, and support network. She has not only inspired me, but as every day goes by, she teaches me something different. How we communicate with each other, is completely taken for granted. What am I doing with my hands? What expression am I showing? What distractions are there? All I want to do is educate others, and let them know, that it's ok. We are ok. Isla is ok

Isla is now 9 months old. She's very vocal and usually very happy (when she's getting her own way!) She is an extremely sociable baby, and enjoys being around lots of people. She is VERY loud and has the most striking, brown eyes, that she uses to get everyone's and anyone's attention! She enjoys the beach, swimming and long walks. As a family, we can't wait to see what Isla's future holds.

**Isla will receive bilateral cochlear
Implants around her first birthday
in June 2018**