



1. Attending - Susanne Robertson, Amanda Walker, Kieran Gemmell , Jackie Donati, Sammy Sneddon, Catherine Cameron, Marie Cafferky, Katie Clark.

Apologies: Alan Simpson, Leza Munro, Alison Lawson, Brogan Ferguson.

2. Note taker - Katie Clark

3. Education Updates

Stirling

Catherine and I continue to work in our posts (1 fte & 0.6). We continue to work with all stakeholders to build capacity supporting our students 0-18. As mentioned we have been developing our practice of work within the EY which is an ongoing piece of work to best improve our practice to improve outcomes for our children and their families.

Additionally, work has been carried out with Active Stirling in relation to up skilling staff in using appropriate and deaf friendly strategies to support our learners as they participate in a number of sports and activities. We are aware the NDCS developed an information booklet on supporting deaf children and young people when they attend swimming lessons. This has proved useful and we have continued to signpost instructors and teachers to this as well as stress the importance of using visuals and providing demonstrations and check ins.

We have had positive feedback from students who take part in many activities. From our discussions there was a noticeable difference in terms of student wellbeing and feeling respected and catered for which is incredibly important.

Recently, Catherine attended the BSL Act 2015 conference and discussion in Stirling with our line manager. Catherine and I continue to offer families information about language choices including BSL. We are promoting the use of BSL/Sign of the Week across establishments to raise awareness around this. We have been working with a school that uses the Highland BSL pack as part of their 1+2 languages. We are continuing to promote this.

Following on from our last meeting and networking with other professionals, I am aware that other councils are offering BSL as a Wider Achievement course/module like Falkirk HS. Both these authorities organised a BSL tutor to work with students alongside a class teacher, however, it is an area to explore further within our work.

Catherine and I are working our set hours in our substantive post as Teachers of Deaf Children & Young people, however, senior leadership within the authority have outlined that at times we may continue to be deployed to other settings if deemed essential.

Clacks

Over the last few months I've been operating as the sole teacher of the deaf for the authority, our other TOD has been absent but has now recently returned to work.

TOD work focused around new referrals, preparing our swimming teams/schools for facilitating deaf friendly swimming sessions when engaging with our deaf children and young people (sessions during the school day). Effective collaboration between the sensory service and the peripatetic PE team has led to positive impacts for our children and young people.

We have just appointed our first Communication Support Worker (CSW) who will be positioned to develop the communication needs of select focus deaf pupils within the authority. They will be working with us 5 days a week and will take up post in August 2024.

Falkirk

The council are currently engaging with placements and families regarding a proposed asymmetric week beginning August 2025. There has been a meeting for parents as well as information online with

frequently asked questions. Little will change for WP pupils in terms of how the school day looks as they fit in with Bantaskin and Falkirk High timetables.

WP recently had their Gold Rights Respecting Schools accreditation visit. Still awaiting outcome but visit went very well. If achieved they will be the first School for the Deaf in Scotland to do so. In March WP hosted a Journey to Gold event. This was well attended by parents, local councillors and a representative from NDCS. BSL Interpreter Danielle Rennie has supported WP with the signs for the UNRC vocabulary.

Falkirk High has been able to offer BSL as part of their Wider Achievement subjects this year. In August it is to be piloted with a targeted group of young people as a core curricular offer.

Wider caseload has grown across Falkirk due to the increase in conductive deafness.

4. SLT Update

As a Speech and Language Therapy team we continue to be very busy with a consistently greater demand on our service. We are currently planning how we can support placements with their new intake of P1's in August given many children with ASN will be supported in mainstream. There is nothing of note to update in terms of the deafness caseload across FV. I am running a deafness awareness session for our newly qualified staff this week to increase their knowledge and skills around types of hearing loss, impact on speech, language and communication as well as more practical skills like interpreting audiograms and using Ling sounds.

5. Audiology

We continue to be under extreme pressure due to being short staffed, with unfilled vacancies and planned leave.

We interviewed last week and hope to have a part time specialist Adult Audiologist in post over the coming months.

Please could the team peruse and approve the following documents attached - comments welcome:

Diagnostic Auditory Brainstem Response (ABR)
Early Intervention and Ongoing Monitoring Procedure
Paediatric (Re) assessment Procedure
Paediatric Direct Referral Procedure

6. NDCS

My NDCS app is up and running and is proving popular.

List of online events including Family Sign can be found on our website <https://www.ndcs.org.uk/our-services/family-events/information-and-advice-sessions/>

There is a link on the NDCS website to make new referrals.

Radio Aids at home - discussion around the table

7. FVSC Update

Sensory Team Update

We have filled our Senior Support worker post Mandy Hollingsworth started initially part time but following a successful interview is taking the post fulltime starting 17th May.

The Deaf Rehabilitation Officer is a job share position with myself and part time is going out to advertising soon following a successful bid to HR.

Team has spent time recently advertising our service throughout the Stirling and Falkirk Council areas and are happy to meet with people to discuss our services and how we can help people with a hearing loss and also with sight loss.

8. SeeHear Update

Scottish Government has decided to withdraw the funding to the Alliance Scotland and this year will bring the facilitation of See Hear in-house. The See Hear leads network which was planned by the Alliance to take

place on 16 May was cancelled and SG will circulate a new date in due course.

The results of the National See Hear Strategy refresh are expected to be released in Spring 2025. Natalie McKechnie Falkirk Sensory Team and Jacquie Winning are the joint See Hear Leads for Falkirk. A couple of local network meetings have been planned but availability/take up was so limited that these had to be cancelled.

Any suggestions for local See Hear initiatives from CHSWG members should be forwarded to Natalie/Jacquie. Currently, See Hear funds Voices Off classes in Falkirk at the Sensory Centre on a Monday evening, (free for local people to attend), lip-reading classes in person at the Centre on a Monday afternoon and Youth Group facilitation in Falkirk area.

9. FVSC Youth and Family Support Service

Our Youth Group has gained a few new young people and have taken part in numerous activities including:

STEM: rocket building, lego, tower building challenge

Food: red velvet cupcakes, dessert making (cake shakes, ice-cream floats, Eton mess), pizzas, cookies

Creative: special effects make-up, drawing, playdough

Active: treasure hunt, football, cricket, tenpin bowling, table tennis, sensory room

Other: gaming night, Switch, VR headset, board games

We have extended our regular Friday evening time to 5.30-7.30pm to allow us to complete more in-depth activities, visit the local park and just spend more time with one another. This was tested during the Easter holidays and requested by young people and their parents/carers.

During the summer, we plan to continue our Friday evening sessions and add an additional session most weeks. A funding request has been placed and we hope to run a range of activities including messy activities (splatter painting, Elephants Toothpaste), outdoor activities (like den

building, cooking, treasure hunt), games, football coaching, a visit to the Science Centre – fingers crossed for a successful application!

Peer Support Group: Our 5th meeting will take place on Wednesday 29th May, 1030-1230 at The Sensory Centre. This is open for any parents and carers who have a child or young person with deafness. Our users find it extremely supportive and helpful. There is no formal agenda and is led by the needs of those attending.

Lottery Funding: Our successful bid from Lottery funding will start 31st May 2024 and will be used to expand our services in Stirling and Clackmannanshire. We will be investigating ways we can support children and families with sensory loss in these areas. If you have any suggestions, please email susannerobertson@forthvalleysensorycentre.org

Also, we have appointed a Deaf Advocate, Jack Spiers, starting 24th June, Business Development Manager, Zander Gray, starting 10th June and Operations Manager, Sandy Gillone, starting 10th June.

10. Deaf CAMHS

Discussed that as a group we would like to have a strategic focus around scoping a Deaf CAMHS in Scotland. Rachael O'Neil is very keen to have a Deaf CAMHS in Scotland. She has information about how one came to be in Northern Ireland following data gathered as part of a Masters Study. We agreed it would be useful to invite Rachael to a CHSWG meeting to share information and discuss how we can support moving this forward.

11. Hybrid Meetings

Brogan and Alison have requested hybrid meetings as they are unable to attend in person. The possibility of this was discussed during the meeting today and it was agreed that with an increased number of deaf members within CHSWG, it would be very difficult to manage hybrid meetings. It was agreed to continue with face to face only meeting.

12. AOB & Actions

- Aims of group for future meetings
- Linsey Stocks to be removed from email list for sharing of the minutes as Susanne Robertson is now the representative for FVSC.
- Focus around strategic view
- Deaf CAMHS
- Add Rights Respecting Schools (UNRC) as an agenda item.
- Amanda to contact Rachael O'Neil to a CHSWG meeting.

13. Dates for next sessions – venue Windsor Park

September 25th 10-12

November 27th 10-12

February 26th 10-12

May 21st 10-12