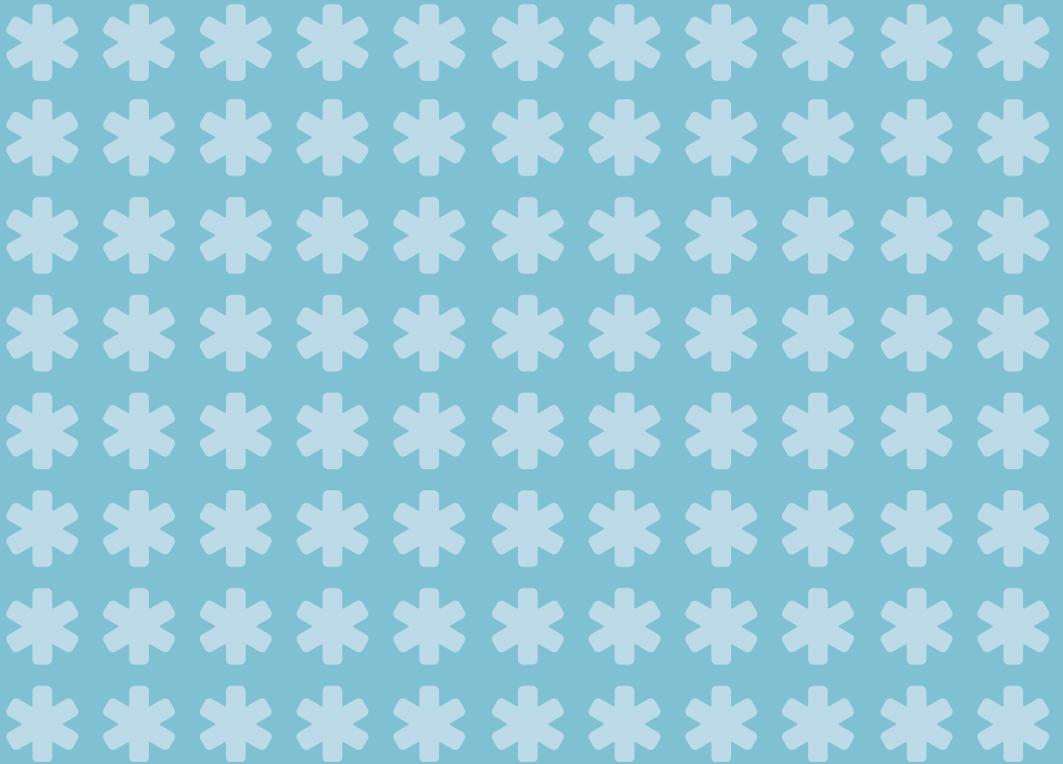


Service information guide

B&NES and Wiltshire Children's Community Audiology Services



Welcome to
B&NES and Wiltshire Children's Community
Audiology Services

We are a team of specialist paediatric audiologists and experienced clinical support staff, supported by our administrative team.

Our community based service provides hearing assessment for any child referred from birth to 16 years old, or 19 years old if they have Special Educational Needs. We also assess and care for any child with permanent hearing loss requiring monitoring of hearing and communication development.

What we do

The service offers assessment for any child whose parents or health and educational professionals are concerned about their hearing. We provide hearing assessments for children, using techniques that are age and developmentally appropriate. We have modern facilities at St Martin's Hospital on the south side of Bath that include specialist equipment for testing children under the age of two and a half.

We can see any child whose family doctor is in:
Bath & North East Somerset
Frome and Shepton Mallet in East Mendip
North West Wiltshire (Malmesbury to Warminster and Bradford-on-Avon across to Devizes)

Many of the children that we see have a temporary hearing loss caused by congestion behind the eardrum ('glue ear'). We can monitor the hearing of these children and refer on for intervention if necessary. We also provide specialist care for children with permanent hearing loss. These children are seen regularly for monitoring and hearing aid support. Our specialist paediatric audiologists work with hearing support teachers from the Sensory Support Services, and paediatric hearing aid audiologists from the Royal United Hospital, Bath.

Many of our children are first seen as babies, because a hearing concern was picked up by the Newborn Hearing Screening Programme. For other children, a hearing problem becomes apparent when seen in clinic as an older child. We review and monitor children with known hearing loss, with or without hearing aids. We are also pleased to support children with permanent hearing loss who have moved in to the area from another audiology service.

How to access this service

Referrals must be made using our audiology referral form, which can be downloaded from our website: www.wiltshirechildrensservices/audiology

Referrals are accepted in the post or by email and can be made by:

- GP
- Health Visitor, School Nurse
- Speech and Language Therapist
- Paediatrician (community or hospital based)
- Other health or education professional

A parent/guardian wishing to discuss a referral to our service, can get in touch with us directly.

Referral criteria

- Sudden hearing loss (over a period of 72 hours or less) in one or both ears in child younger than 5 years. Refer within 24 hours of onset
- Parental concern about persistent reduction in hearing (ongoing for at least 1 month) in one or both ears
- Nursery/ pre-school/school concerns about hearing
- Known hearing loss or history of medical condition associated with hearing loss
- Significant and sustained speech and language delay
- Concerns with listening: easily distracted by other auditory or visual cues, difficulty listening in background noise, slow or delayed responses when spoken to, misunderstanding or mishearing what is said, frequently requesting repetition

When not to refer

- Recurrent ear infections- instead refer to ENT
- Sudden hearing loss if the child is 5 years or older (refer to ENT)
- Occluding wax- instead follow local guidelines or refer to ENT
- Mild or recent speech concerns with no other symptoms- instead refer to Health Visitor or Speech & Language Therapy
- Speech delay in a child under 18 months of age- instead advise family to contact Speech Language & Therapy for advice

How can I help prepare my child for their Audiology appointment?

Some tips for families:

Explain to your child that they are going to have their hearing checked and will be playing some listening games

Encourage your child to become familiar with headphones if you have them at home. It is helpful to practice putting them on with your child if they are happy to do so

Arrange to attend without siblings where possible

Avoid bringing your child if they are poorly (e.g. with a very heavy cold, contagious illness such as chicken pox, a sickness bug or symptoms of coronavirus). Please get in touch to cancel and rearrange their hearing test. Food and drink should not be brought into the test rooms. Also, if possible your child should take their dummy or soother out during the hearing test. Please switch all mobile phones off.

Allow plenty of time for travelling to the hospital and parking (if you are driving). If you are late for your appointment we may have to rearrange it and see you on another date.

Advise us before your appointment date if you are unable to attend or if you need an interpreter or any special assistance for your child's appointment.

A story aimed at children, which explains what happens at the Audiology Clinic, can be downloaded from our website:

www.wiltshirechildrensservices.co.uk/audiology

Your child's Audiology appointment

Before we assess your child's hearing we will ask you some questions about your child, including:

- Concerns you may have about their hearing or speech
- Your child's responses to sound
- Your child's understanding of speech and speech development
- Your child's general development and health
- Any family history of hearing loss

Measuring your child's hearing:

We use a range of hearing tests and will decide which ones to use depending on your child's age, development, and the type of concerns raised about their hearing.

Young babies are often tested whilst they are sleeping - if we would like your child to be asleep for their hearing test we will explain this in your appointment letter. Once a child is 8 months old, we usually like them to be awake and alert for their appointment. Our assessment usually involves looking at their reactions to sounds or playing a game with sounds.

The hearing tests measure how the different parts of the ear (outer, middle and inner ear) respond to sound. The response to sound is measured at different frequencies (itches). We may use different methods such as loudspeakers, headphones and a bone vibrating headphone to measure your child's hearing. For more information about hearing tests for babies and children please ask a member of our team for details.

What happens next?

At the end of the appointment we will discuss the results with you and agree a care plan for your child. We will give you time to ask questions. Please let us know if you would like a copy of your child's hearing test results or care plan.

Discharge- if your child's hearing is satisfactory, they will be discharged from the audiology service

Recall- if enough information has not been obtained in one session, a further appointment may be arranged to get more information

Review- if your child has a temporary hearing loss likely to be caused by congestion (glue ear or otitis media with effusion) we will discuss this with you and arrange to review their hearing and discuss management options

Monitor- if your child has a permanent hearing loss, we will discuss this with you and arrange to regularly check their hearing and communication development. We will discuss different management options with you including hearing aids

Onward referral- with your agreement, we may refer your child to other health and education professionals such as:

Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT) at the hospital for consultations and surgical management

Local hearing aid Audiology Team for hearing aid management

Paediatrician to investigate possible causes of hearing loss

Hearing Support Team to provide educational support for your child

Our commitment to safeguarding your child

Virgin Care is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of adults, children and young people and to protecting them from the risks of harm. To achieve this we have dedicated National and Local Safeguarding Adults and Children's Leads and policies, guidance and practices which reflect statutory and national safeguarding requirements.

Your rights and responsibilities

When using our services you can expect care to be provided in a safe setting by a caring, compassionate and non-discriminatory team. You can expect to be told the names of those involved in your child's care and to have access to sign language and translation services. You will be provided with information on your child's diagnosis, treatment and results, including information on any alternatives and risks to their treatment.

Your child's records

We record all of the information about your child confidentially and securely in a file or on our electronic clinical system. Keeping healthcare records is important as they help to:

- Record important clinical information
- Help health professionals to care for your child
- Improve public health and the services provided to your child

We will only share information about a child/young person with your consent unless required by law or the data is anonymised. However, in some circumstances, when we feel that your child or others are at risk, we may share information without consent.

A member of our team can provide with more details including our leaflets-

Your Health Records and **Your Rights and Responsibilities**

Further information is available

Further information specific to your child's individual hearing needs can be found on our website or provided as leaflets.

A range of Children's Community Audiology resources are available:

- Helping my child to hear
- Children and ear wax
- Children and tinnitus
- Children and loud sounds
- Children and loud noise exposure
- Glue ear
- Grommets
- Aftercare following grommet insertion
- Conductive hearing loss
- Sensorineural hearing loss
- Local support information for families

Ask a member of our team for further information. Please let us know if you require a different format or language.

The National Deaf Children's Society can provide additional support

t: 0808 800 8880

w: www.ndcs.org.uk

Your opinion really matters to us

We hope this leaflet covers all you need to know about our service. Please let us know if you have a comment, a compliment or a complaint by filling out one of our feedback forms or telling a member of the team. If you have any questions or queries, please get in touch.

Would you recommend us?

You can help shape your service by taking part in the Friends and Family Test. Tell us what was good or what could be improved about your recent visit to our service. We will take on board your comments and suggestions by making the necessary changes to make your next visit as pleasant and comfortable. You can provide feedback by free text message, on a paper form or online at

www.virginicare.co.uk/feedback

What if I have a concern?

We are committed to providing you with the best service possible. If you would like to make a complaint, please speak to a member of the team caring you in the first instance. Alternatively, you can speak to our Customer Experience Team: t: 0300 303 9509

or write to: Virgin Care Customer Experience Team
Farnham Hospital
Hale Road
Farnham. GU9 9QL

A member of our team can provide you with our leaflet that contains the full complaints process-

Customer Experience: Here to help

Get in touch

Children's Community Audiology

Room 17, Ground Floor
Midford House, St Martin's Hospital
Kempthorne Lane
Bath. BA2 5RP

t: 01225 394536

e: vcl.bathneswiltshildrensaudiology@nhs.net

w: wiltshirechildrensservices.co.uk/audiology

