Information
For families

National Deaf Children's Society

Disability Living Allowance (DLA): A guide to filling in the claim form for deaf children

We use the term 'deaf' to refer to all types of hearing loss from mild to profound. This includes deafness in one ear or temporary hearing loss such as glue ear. We use the word 'parent' to refer to all parents and carers of children.

Introduction

This is a step-by-step guide to help you fill in the Disability Living Allowance (DLA) claim form for your deaf child in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. If you live in Scotland, you can no longer apply for DLA as this has been replaced by Child Disability Payment (CDP). We have more information about CDP on our website at **ndcs.org.uk/cdp**.

This guide supports but does not replace the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) guidance notes sent with the form. You should also read them carefully. We've only provided guidance on the sections of the form that are most relevant to deaf children. If any of the other sections apply to your child because of a physical or mental condition in addition to their deafness, make sure you fill those in as well and explain the extra help you give them because of these additional needs.

Make sure you complete the form in your own words and based on your own situation. We give lots of examples of the different needs a deaf child may have, but each child's needs will be different – our examples are just to get you thinking.

Note that if you're already getting DLA for your child and have been sent a renewal form by DWP the questions will be in a different order.

Qualifying period

The care component can be paid to children of all ages. Your child must satisfy the tests (have relevant needs) throughout the three months before the date of claim and be likely to have the same needs for the following six months. The claim can be started earlier but payment will not be made until the three-month period has passed.

Your child will not usually be required to attend an assessment with a DWP health care professional unless they are both deaf and blind (see below).

How to get a claim form

If you live in England or Wales contact the Disability Living Allowance Helpline.
Phone: **0345 712 3456** (voice)
Phone: **0345 722 4433** (text)
Download the claim form: **gov.uk/government/publications/disability-living-allowance-for-children-claim-form**.

If you live in Northern Ireland, contact the Benefit Enquiry Line.
Phone: **0800 220 674** (voice)
Phone: **028 9031 1092** (text)
Download the form: **nidirect.gov.uk/publications/disability-living-allowance-dla-child-claim-form-and-guidance-notes-dla-1a**.

Contents

Understanding Disability Living Allowance (DLA) **4**
Definitions of terms used in DLA 5
Care component disability tests 6
Mobility component 7
Tips for filling in the form 8

Filling in the form **9**
About the child 9
About the child's health condition or disabilities 10
About the child's mobility needs 11
About the child's care needs 13
Difficulty hearing, speaking or communicating 15
About you 20

More information **20**

Understanding Disability Living Allowance (DLA)

Disability Living Allowance (DLA) is a disability benefit for children under 16. It's paid by Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and what entitles someone to DLA is set out in law. Knowing the law behind DLA can help you have a successful claim.

The criteria for entitlement to DLA is set out in the Social Security Contribution and Benefits Act 1992 Sections 72 and 73. Important aspects of this law to remember include the following.

- A diagnosis is not required for entitlement to DLA. It's your child's needs due to their condition that are assessed.
- DWP decision makers will award DLA based on disability tests. The tests look at what level of care and supervision your child requires from another person.

The care and supervision your child requires must be 'substantially in excess' of the needs of a hearing child of the same age or be equivalent to the needs of a younger hearing child.

Decision makers should also consider case law when assessing a claim. Case law are decisions made by judges about how the legal tests should be interpreted.

The disability tests

There are two parts to DLA, the care component and the mobility component. There are five disability tests for the care component that may be relevant to your deaf child.

Not all the mobility tests will be relevant to your deaf child. One of the mobility tests may be relevant if they are aged five or over. Another one of the mobility tests may be relevant if they aged over three and have additional needs.

Understanding the language of DLA

When applying for benefits, such as DLA, the language DWP uses can sometimes be confusing. There is a difference between the words used in the form and the words used in the law.

On the next page we have included some of the legal terms used in DLA and their definitions. You can refer to these definitions when reading this guide and filling in the form, to help you understand the questions asked in the form and show where your child meets the disability tests in your answers.

Definitions of terms used in DLA

Bodily functions: breathing, **hearing**, seeing, eating, drinking, walking, sitting, sleeping, getting in and out of bed, dressing and undressing, going to the toilet, getting in or out of the bath, washing, **communicating**, **speech practice**, help with medication or treatment.

A day: A 'day' is from when your household gets up in the morning to when the last person in the household goes to bed at night.

A night: A 'night' is from when the last person in the household goes to bed and finishes when the household normally gets up.

Continual supervision (during the day): Frequent or regular, but not non-stop. Your child does not need to be supervised every single minute.

Attention: Active help that you give to your child. For example, help with fitting and removing hearing aids and cochlear implant processors, and help with communication and language development. The help they need must be due to their deafness and connected with the bodily functions of speaking, hearing, and communicating.

Frequent attention (during the day): Attention several times during the day, not once or twice.

Prolonged attention (at night): Attention for at least 20 minutes.

Repeated Attention (at night): Attention at least two times, during the night, or more.

Watch over (at night): Having to be awake and listening out for your child, as well as checking on your child.

Substantial danger: The real possibility of an incident occurring that has a severe consequence even if the likelihood of the incident occurring is rare.

Significant portion of the day: This means at least an hour, but not necessarily all at once.

Guidance (walking outdoors): This includes directing or leading. It can be physical or verbal, such as holding your child's hand or telling your child to look out for hazards. It can also include persuasion or encouragement.

Supervision (walking outdoors): Monitoring your child for a need to intervene or actively intervening, for example, to avoid danger.

Care component rates and the five disability tests

Your child may qualify for the middle rate care component if they require from another person:

During the day

1. Frequent attention throughout the day in connection with their bodily functions AND/OR
2. Continual supervision throughout the day to avoid substantial danger to themselves or others.

OR

At night

3. Prolonged or repeated attention in connection with their bodily functions **AND/OR**
4. Someone to be awake for a prolonged period or frequent intervals to watch over them to avoid substantial danger to themselves or others.

Your child will qualify for the lowest rate of the care component if they require from another person:

5. Attention for a significant portion of the day whether for a single period or several periods.

Attention with bodily functions

One of the tests for the care component of DLA is how much attention a child needs because of their disability. A child will be entitled to the **middle rate** of the care component if they require *'frequent attention throughout the day with their bodily functions'*. This is set out in the Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992 Section 72 (SSCBA s.72(b)(i)). This test is relevant to deaf children who may need frequent attention throughout the day to help them to communicate, for example help to listen and understand others or to make themselves understood.

Continual supervision

Another test for the care component of DLA is how much supervision a child needs. A child will be entitled to the middle rate of the care component if they require '*Continual supervision throughout the day in order to avoid substantial danger to himself or others*.' (Himself can mean any gender.) This is set out in the Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992 Section 72 (SSCBA s.72(b)(ii)).

Continual supervision means frequent or regular, but not non-stop. Your child does not need to be supervised every single minute.

This test is relevant to deaf babies and young children who need to be supervised because of the risk of substantial danger from swallowing all or part of a hearing aid or cochlear implant processor, which contains a button battery. This also includes potential risk to other children, who may pick up and swallow parts of hearing aids or cochlear implant processors if they're removed or fall out. For example, when children are playing.

It's recommended that if this is relevant to your child, you should include the information sheet about button battery safety from the audiology department at Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children: media.gosh.nhs.uk/documents/Button_battery_safety_advice_from_the_Audiology_department_F1913_FINAL_Jul20.pdf.

Highest rate care component: The highest rate may be awarded to your child if they satisfy **either or both** of the daytime tests **AND either or both** of the nighttime tests.

Mobility component rates and tests

Not all the mobility tests are relevant to deaf children. There are three tests that may be relevant to your child.

1. They are aged five or over and require more guidance and supervision outdoors due to their deafness.
2. They have additional needs due to a physical cause (this can include an intellectual disability).
3. They are both deaf and blind.

Lowest rate mobility component: The lowest rate may be awarded if your child is **aged five or over** and they can walk but they require more supervision and guidance when outdoors than a hearing child of the same age.

The guidance and supervision you provide should be to enable your child to take advantage of their ability to walk outdoors. Your child may satisfy the test if they are less aware of traffic or outdoor hazards than a hearing child. For example:

- they can't be warned or directed by voice from a distance
- they can't hear sounds from behind.

They may need someone within reach to guide and supervise them. The guidance or supervision your child requires must be 'substantially in excess' of that required by a hearing child the same age or be equivalent to the guidance and supervision that a younger hearing child requires.

Highest rate mobility component: The highest rate mobility component may be awarded at if your child is at least **three years old** and has additional needs that have a physical cause. This may include balance issues due to their deafness or behavioural issues linked to an intellectual disability.

Your child may qualify for the highest rate of the mobility component if they are both **deaf and blind.** They may be referred to a DWP healthcare professional to assess their hearing and vision loss.

Supporting evidence

The rate your child is awarded for the care and mobility components will depend on how well the evidence you send in matches the tests. Think of it as trying to help the decision maker apply the tests. Sending in evidence that is not relevant can make it more difficult for the decision maker to give you the right award.

Our template letters will help you gather relevant evidence from your child's Teacher of the Deaf (ToD) and audiologist: ndcs.org.uk/supporting-letters-DLA#Template.

You may be tempted to send in all the documents that you have but it's better to select evidence which clearly explains your child's need for attention and supervision from another person. It may be helpful for you to provide a diary of a ‘typical day’, or you may want to keep a diary for two or three days. Try to record each time you give your child more attention and supervision **because of their deafness**.

Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) cannot return any documents you send them as evidence. Keep the original documents and send in photocopies as supporting evidence.

Tips for filling in the form

You need to show that your child’s needs are greater than a hearing child’s. Compare your child’s care and supervision needs to a child of the same age who isn’t deaf.

- Make sure you explain all the help and supervision your child needs on a daily basis.
- DWP decision makers aren’t experts on deafness. Explain that hearing technology doesn’t mean your child can hear ‘normally’. Explain things like listening fatigue (tiredness caused by the extra effort deaf children have to put in to listen).
- Don’t just say what help your child needs. Explain why they need this help and what would happen if they didn’t get it. It can feel very negative but it’s important to include.
- Give details of when hearing technology, such as hearing aids or cochlear implants, aren’t useful. For example, where there is background noise or they can’t be worn due to an ear infection.
- Only write about help or supervision that your child needs now and is likely to continue. Changes that might happen in the future can’t be considered.
- Don’t worry about repeating yourself, it’s better than leaving something out.
- Send in supporting evidence.
- Remember, the form is the same for every type of disability or condition, so not all the questions will apply to your child.

If your child can’t do things that a child their age would normally be expected to do, give details on the form. If you know a hearing child of a similar age it may help to make a comparison.

Remember: you may do some things automatically. Think about all the things you do that you wouldn’t need to do if your child was hearing and write these on the form.

Filling in the form

Throughout the form you **have to** show that your child needs much more time or effort spent on attention or supervision than a hearing child of the same age.

About the child

Questions 1 to 22

Basic questions that cover things like your child's name, age and where you live.

Question 23: Has the child had or are they due to have any assessments by a health professional or specialist to help diagnose, manage or monitor their health condition or disabilities?

If you have a copy of your child's audiogram, list it on this page and then make sure to attach a copy of it with the form. List any other assessments your child has had or is waiting for and any results of tests you have or are waiting for.

Remember a diagnosis can be relevant but is not essential for your child to qualify for DLA. It is their needs that are assessed.

Question 24: Do you have any letters or assessment reports about the child's health conditions or disabilities?

You should explain, as best you can, what the results of the audiogram mean. For example, "The audiogram shows she cannot hear soft letter sounds at all," or, "it shows he has no access to high frequency sounds". For a description of what the different levels of deafness mean, visit ndcs.org.uk/deafnesslevels.

If you have any letters or reports that explain the audiogram, your child's deafness or any extra support your child gets, list them here and include a copy. This could be from a Teacher of the Deaf (ToD), Speech and Language Therapist (SLT) or the person responsible for special educational needs or additional learning needs at your child's school.

For more information on supporting letters, including guidance for audiologists and teachers on how to write an effective supporting letter, go to ndcs.org.uk/supporting-letters-DLA.

Question 25: Does the child have any health professionals, who are not their GP, who support them with their health condition or disabilities?

Don't worry if they don't. Don't put down the details of anyone you're not confident will support your claim.

About the child's GP

Questions 26 to 29

This question is asking for your GP's details. Include the practice name, address, phone number and the main doctor you see when you go to the GP.

About the child's nursery, school and educational or specialist needs

Questions 30 to 36

Give the details, but if you don't feel confident that anyone at the school or nursery can accurately describe your child's condition, make this clear. Some parents have problems getting the help they think their child needs from their school. Only give the contact details of someone you trust and who understands your child's deafness.

Question 37: Does the child have any of the following reports, plans or statements?

Make sure you tick the relevant boxes and attach copies of the reports you have. If your child has had an assessment but you're not sure what it's called, don't worry about ticking the right box, just make sure you include a copy and write down here who it's from.

More information from someone who knows the child

Question 38: Is there anyone else who knows the child and can tell us about their difficulties?

Ask someone who knows how deafness affects your child to fill in this statement. This could be a Teacher of the Deaf (ToD), Speech and Language Therapist (SLT) or another medical professional. Ideally it should be a professional, but you can ask a friend with a child of the same age or your child's grandparents.

You can use these template letters to gather relevant evidence from your child's ToD and audiologist: **ndcs.org.uk/supporting-letters-DLA#Template**.

Question 39: Sharing information about the child's health condition

Sign and date here.

About the child's health condition or disabilities

Question 40: Please tell us about the child's health condition or disabilities

In these boxes, write about your child's deafness and any other disabilities or medical conditions they have.

Question 41: Does the child use, or have they been assessed for, any aids or adaptations?

If your child uses hearing aids or cochlear implants, list them here. In the column, 'What help do they need to use the aid or adaption?' you should write about what hearing technology can't do, the problems they may cause and the work you do to manage it.

There isn't much space for all the relevant information here, but don't worry. You can continue it in the extra information box for questions 72 and 89 towards the end of the form. Just make sure you write which number question you're continuing your answer for.

Hearing technology doesn't give a deaf child 'normal' hearing

If your child uses hearing aids or cochlear implants, explain that:

- hearing technology does not replace 'normal' hearing
- hearing technology does not filter sounds in the way that a child with 'normal' hearing can
- hearing technology can make it harder to hear in everyday situations because aids or implants magnify background sounds, which can mask the sounds your child needs to hear
- your child still struggles to hear even when wearing their hearing technology
- your child still needs help with communicating

- there may be longer periods when your child can’t wear their hearing technology, for example because of an ear infection; mention how long this applies for.

Managing hearing technology

Explain the extra time and effort it takes to manage your child’s hearing technology when they are present or just before and after an activity. Say how long it takes each time and how many times a day you have to do it. Help you give may include:

- fitting, removing and refitting hearing aids or cochlear implant processors
- checking and changing the batteries
- tending to your child’s ears if they become chapped or sore
- stopping your child fiddling with their hearing aids or cochlear implant processors and taking them out.

Keep a diary for a day of how many times you have to fit or remove your child’s aids or processor and the time of day. Send this with your form as evidence of the extra attention you have to give your child.

Question 42: When the child needs help

This question is asking if your child’s needs vary. For most deaf children, their level of deafness stays the same, so they need help most of the time. If this is the case for your child, this page is not relevant. You can tick the box ‘majority of days’ and move on to the next question.

If your child’s hearing levels fluctuate due to a condition such as glue ear, you can explain about that here. Explain how much help your child needs when their hearing is worse and when it’s better. Try to estimate how many days in a normal week or month their hearing is worse or better. It can be useful to keep two diaries covering times when their hearing is better and worse.

About the child’s mobility needs

Questions 43 to 48 relate to problems with walking that have a physical cause.

Question 43

Tick yes if your child has balance problems due to their deafness or they have behaviours that put them at risk due to an intellectual disability.

Question 46

Tick the relevant box to describe your child’s walking speed.

Question 49: Do they need guidance or supervision most of the time when they walk outdoors?

Tick yes if your child needs more supervision outside than a hearing child. You can then explain more in the large text box on page 19 of the form.

Question 50: Do they fall due to their health condition or disability?

Tick yes if your child falls over because of balance problems due to their deafness and explain these problems in the large text box on page 19.

Question 51: When did the child’s mobility needs start?

Your child needs to have had extra mobility needs because of their disability for three months before you can apply for DLA and be expected to have the same needs for at least the next 6 months from the date you claim. This is called the qualifying period. The earliest they can qualify is either their third or fifth birthday, depending on what their mobility needs are.

You can write from age five **OR** age three if your child has additional needs, such as behavioural issues linked to an intellectual disability.

Question 52: If the child is eligible for help from Motability, would you like us to send you information about the help they can offer?

This is only relevant to deaf children who qualify for the highest rate of the care component. Most deaf children who don’t have another disability or long-term condition in addition to their deafness (additional needs), such as physical problems walking or behavioural issues linked to an intellectual disability, will not be eligible for the highest rate care and the Motability scheme.

More information about their mobility needs

Question 53: Tell us anything else we need to know about their difficulties with standing and moving around or how their needs change from day to day.

Write about your child’s need for supervision when outdoors due to their deafness. For example:

- they're anxious when outdoors because of their deafness or another disability or long-term condition
- you always need to have your child near enough to be able to make physical contact with them because their hearing loss means they cannot be directed by voice from a distance
- you need to stop them to give them instructions face to face because they lip read
- your child can’t cross the road safely (explain why)
- they find it difficult to judge the speed and direction or traffic from sound picked up by their hearing technology
- they may be more at risk of an accident, for example from cyclists on pavements, roller skaters, skateboarders and runners because they cannot hear sounds from behind
- your child finds it difficult to tell what sounds are because hearing technology amplifies every sound, not just the ones they need to hear like speech and traffic
- wind and rain can make hearing technology harder to use.

This test is about your child’s ability to walk on unfamiliar routes only. Your child’s ability to walk on familiar routes is disregarded. If your child cannot hear sounds from behind them or cannot be warned or directed by voice from a distance, they should qualify for lowest rate mobility.

If there have been any accidents, near misses or incidents when outside, make sure you include these. For example, “last week a cyclist came from behind and expected my child to move out of the way. My child didn’t hear the cyclist coming, but I managed to grab him in time.”

About the child's care needs

This section of the form has a series of questions with tick boxes and follow up questions. The questions cover daily tasks like washing, dressing, eating and going to the toilet. If you have to help your child with these tasks, or they take your child longer than a hearing child, you should tick yes.

You will be asked how often and for how long your child needs help. If you can't be exact, estimate the longest and shortest time, for example 10 to 20 minutes or 10 to 12 times a day.

There is very little space to write a description of the help your child needs. There are extra information boxes on pages 34 and 39 where you can write more. You can also attach extra sheets of paper but make it very clear which questions the extra information you add relates to.

About help needed during the day

Question 54: Does the child need encouragement, prompting, or assistance to settle in bed during the day?

If your child needs extra help to get into bed, settle at night or get up in the morning, tick yes.

The follow up questions ask you to estimate how often and for how long they need help. For all your answers, explain the extra help you must give them and why you have to give it.

- They take longer to wake up because they don't wake up naturally to sounds and they need someone to wake them up by touching them or turning the light on.
- They take longer to wake up because they are over tired from the extra effort of communicating during the day and they need someone to wake them up.
- They become anxious or unsettled when their hearing technology is removed at bedtime, and they need extra reassurance from you.
- You need to stay in the room until they fall asleep because they're anxious when their hearing technology is removed.

You should describe any special routines you have to get your child up in the morning or settle them at night because of their deafness. You should explain why these routines are different to the usual ways of settling a hearing child at night, such as reading stories or listening to music. If you do settle your child by reading stories you should explain if this takes longer if you're signing to them.

Question 55: Do they need encouragement, prompting or assistance to manage their toilet needs?

This is only likely to be relevant for younger children, unless your child has another condition as well as deafness. If your child uses speech, it may take longer to toilet train them. They may not pick up verbal messages or the language to cope with toilet training and they may need help for longer than a hearing child.

Question 56: Do they need encouragement, prompting, or assistance to help move around indoors, use stairs or get into or out of a chair during the day?

Explain if your child cannot hear you if you call them from another room and what you have to do to get their attention.

Question 57: Do they need encouragement, prompting, or assistance with washing, bathing, showering and cleaning themselves during the day?

If your child is at an age where you have to help them wash explain if your child needs extra attention when bathing because their hearing aids or cochlear implant processors have to be taken off, making communication more difficult. Say if this means that you spend more time washing and bathing them than with a hearing child.

Explain if it's difficult to communicate with your child and wash them at the same time. For example, if your child uses British Sign Language (BSL) or Irish Sign Language (ISL), explain if it's difficult to sign and hold them in the bath at the same time.

Explain how long it takes to look after their hearing aids or cochlear implants. For example, if you have to take out their aids, make sure their ears are really dry, check the aids for wax or condensation, check the batteries and replace the aids after they've had their bath or shower.

Question 58: Do they need encouragement, prompting, or assistance to dress and undress during the day?

This question may only be relevant if your child has another disability or long-term condition in addition to their deafness.

All young children require assistance to dress and undress. If you are teaching your older child to dress themselves and this takes longer because of their communication needs, you can write about it here.

Question 59: Do they need encouragement, prompting, or assistance to eat and drink during the day?

This question may only be relevant if your child has another disability or long-term condition in addition to their deafness.

If your child requires prompting or encouragement to eat due to tiredness from the extra effort of listening and communicating throughout the day you can write about it here.

Question 60: Do they need encouragement, prompting, or assistance with managing their medication or monitoring or managing any treatments carried out at home during the day?

Give information about any medicines your child has to take and the help that they need to take them. For example, they may need eardrops to soften the wax in their ears or require medication for ear infections.

Give details of any therapy your child receives from a professional support worker or from the family. This could include speech and language therapy, music therapy, play therapy, help with learning to lip-read or to sign, or help from a Teacher of the Deaf (ToD).

Explain the help that your child gets from the professional and give details of any exercises that you do with your child. If any tests have been carried out by professionals, it's helpful to send copies of the results if they provide evidence of any language delay.

Question 61: Do they have difficulty seeing?

This question is not relevant unless your child also has a visual impairment.

Questions 62 to 65: Do they have difficulty hearing, speaking and need help communicating?

These are the most important and relevant questions on the form when it comes to your child's deafness. There isn't much space to include details here, so tick the boxes that apply to your child and include more details in the extra information boxes on pages 34 and 39.

Your child is assessed against their ability to live normal daily life. Think about all the situations in normal life when it is difficult for your child to hear and communicate. Particularly when they're not at school and are taking part in social activities. DWP should consider all the help your child needs throughout the day including when they are not at school.

Most situations in daily life involve different levels of background noise. Explain how different sounds and noise levels affect your child's ability to hear and communicate. Give as much information as you can and explain the extra attention that your child needs to help them communicate. There's a separate question later in the form about school or nursery.

Difficulty hearing, speaking and communicating

Explain if your child finds it difficult to:

- hear speech clearly when there's background noise
- follow conversation in a group
- hear what's going on around them all the time so miss out on incidental learning
- lipread.

Lipreading

It can be difficult for children to lip read. This is acknowledged in DWP guidance **'Medical Guidance for DLA and AA decision makers (child cases)' at page 543**. 'When children are still building up an understanding of the language they might find it difficult to lipread words they are not familiar with. It also relies on a speaker having a clear lip pattern. An adult who has a good understanding of the language being spoken, may understand more.'

Make sure you write down on the form if you find you have to:

- attract your child's attention before you speak to them
- repeat yourself, explain, or say things a different way
- explain what the conversation is about for them to understand
- repeat or explain what other people are saying to your child
- repeat or explain what your child is saying so that other people can understand them.

Explain that hearing technology:

- does not restore normal hearing or filter sounds in the way that a hearing child can
- amplifies all sounds, which can make it difficult for your child to concentrate on the sounds they want or need to hear.

It can be very difficult to work out how many times you help your child with communication and how long it takes each time. If you spend extra time and effort helping your child with communication lots of times throughout the day, make this clear.

Think about all of the day-to-day interactions you and others have with your child:

- getting up in the morning
- getting dressed
- calling for meals
- disciplining your child
- conversations at home
- doing homework
- conversations with people who don't understand your child's deafness
- helping your child join in and play with other children.

These kinds of interactions are really important to mention to qualify for DLA, as they happen all the time. Help needed at things like swimming lessons, appointments or clubs are important but only happen once or twice a week, so won't be enough on their own to meet the DLA criteria.

If your child communicates through sign language, say if they need someone to interpret for them when communicating with people who don't use sign language.

Other people may not understand your child's needs. The help you give your child to understand others or be understood by them counts as interpretation. You do not have to be a trained interpreter. The help your child has from you or someone else who understands their needs as a deaf child is relevant.

Explain if other children don't realise your child is deaf or don't understand their communication needs. Give details if you need to make extra effort to help other children communicate with your child. It can be helpful to keep a diary to show this.

Speaking

Say if your child:

- doesn't use speech and explain what happens when they want to communicate and the help you need to give them
- has speech that is difficult for other people to understand and give details of the help you need to give, like speaking for them or explaining what they've said to someone
- becomes frustrated with the effort required to speak to other people and whether you need to calm them and reassure them when they're frustrated
- needs encouragement to speak or refuses to speak.

Question 65: Do they have fits, blackouts, seizures, or something similar?

This won't be relevant unless your child has another disability or long-term condition in addition to their deafness.

Question 66: Do they need to be supervised during the day to keep them safe?

This question has a series of follow up questions, but no space to write down any details. Write any details in the extra information boxes on pages 34 and 39 or on additional sheets of paper that are clearly marked with the question they relate to.

If you're claiming for a baby or a young child who uses hearing technology, read about the middle rate care component on **page 5**.

If your child is older, the supervision they need is likely to be different. DWP may not accept that school age children are at risk of swallowing their hearing technology. But you should explain if your child doesn't like wearing their hearing technology and takes them off, putting younger children at risk of picking them up and swallowing them. For example, when children are playing.

Tick yes to the questions that apply to your child and any of the follow up questions. Many of the questions ask if your child has problems 'regularly'. Remember your child does not need to be supervised constantly to qualify for DLA.

Deaf children can take longer to grasp concepts and ideas, including the concept of danger. If this is the case, point out your child's vulnerability and your need to be extra vigilant. Some of the questions here are also an opportunity to tell DWP about your child's emotional health and wellbeing (mental health). Say if your child may get frustrated and upset because of their difficulties with communication leading to behaviour that puts them at risk. Give examples of when you need to supervise them to keep them safe because of their behaviour.

Question 67: Do they need extra help with their development?

Deaf children have less opportunity to absorb and learn language than a hearing child would. They don't hear as much of the sounds going on around them, such as people speaking or the television. It's important you write on the form details of all the extra time and effort you give to your child to help them learn language.

Say if:

- you teach your child how to listen and make sense of sounds or make an extra effort to teach your child to make the sounds of words
- your child has speech and language therapy and give details of the exercises you've been given to do with your child
- you play games with your child to help them understand sounds or language
- your child uses BSL or another type of signed communication, and explain the extra attention that your child needs to learn the language, including support or teaching that your child gets from support workers, such as a Teacher of the Deaf, and all the extra help you have to give at home to help them learn sign language
- you've been told your child has a developmental delay due to their deafness, or you feel they have one.

Question 68: Do they need encouragement, prompting or assistance at school or nursery?

It's very important to give details of any extra help, attention or supervision that your child may need at school or nursery. The form has several boxes in it which you can use to describe the help they get, or the help you think they need.

Give details of:

- any extra support that's provided at nursery or playgroup or if your child goes to a specialist nursery or playgroup
- whether your child finds it harder to hear and to follow what's going on in the noisy environment of a nursery or playgroup
- the carers and other children having difficulty understanding your child.

If your child has special educational needs (SEN) in England and Northern Ireland or additional learning needs (ALN) in Wales, and they have a document which shows the type of support they need, get, and how often, then include this information.

If your child isn't getting any additional support, write down what you think they need. For more information about the additional support available for deaf children in education, visit **ndcs.org.uk/additionalsupport**.

It's important that you check school reports carefully before sending them to DWP as supporting evidence. If you think that your child's need for attention is not described properly or your child's needs are not being met at school, you should explain why. If you disagree with something in a school report, you should say why.

Explain if they:

- use a radio aid or other equipment, an interpreter or notetaker in lessons
- can't watch the teacher and take notes at the same time, and if they have a notetaker because of this
- need staff to step in to repeat and explain what has been said
- can't see the teacher when watching a screen in a dark room, so can't follow what's being said
- need to sit where they can clearly see and hear the teacher
- need extra lessons in English or maths
- have difficulty listening in the classroom due to background noise, including other children talking or sounds from equipment
- have difficulty communicating outside the classroom environment for example, at breaktime and lunch time when there is background noise.

Question 69: Do they need encouragement, prompting or assistance to take part in hobbies, interests, social or religious activities?

Remember that DLA is assessed by the help needed to enable someone to live a "normal life". This includes social activities, and your child is entitled to the same social life as a hearing child.

At home

Give details of any other extra help you give your child at home that you haven't already mentioned.

- Watching TV with family. You may need to spend time explaining something they have not heard or understood because of their communication needs.
- Extra help to understand story books. You may need to spend more time explaining words and their meaning to them.
- Help with art and craft activities, as it may take them longer to follow instructions and you may have to repeat yourself or explain more thoroughly.
- Playing board games or computer games. You may need to spend more time explaining the rules to them.
- Encouragement to join in social activities at home, such as family gatherings, because they find it difficult to follow group conversations.

When they go out

Explain any communication support your child needs to take part in activities outside the home. You can also mention activities your child would like to do but can't because there's no support available.

- Visiting friends or family
- Brownies or Cubs
- Swimming
- Football
- Youth clubs
- Going to the dentist or doctor
- Going to the cinema
- Shopping

Explain again how your child's need for help with communication relates to these activities. For example, if your child stopped an activity because they found it too noisy or if they need help to understand or join in activities. Include anything you have to do with their hearing technology, radio aids and any other equipment they may need when they're out.

Explain if your child has difficulty joining in with other children or making friends because other children do not understand their communication needs. Give examples of the encouragement and help you give your child to play with other children. Explain if your child misses out on social activities because they are tired due to listening/concentration fatigue.

About help needed during the night

Question 70: Due to a health condition or disability do they wake and need assistance or supervision during the night?

Only fill in this section if your child needs a lot more attention during the night than a hearing child the same age. For DLA, the night starts when the last person in the household goes to bed and finishes when the household normally gets up.

Say if your child wakes up during the night because they're scared or feel isolated. This can be made worse by the darkness and their lack of access to sound. Explain what you have to do, how frequently and how long it takes. Do you have to get up and go into their room to comfort them? If your child wears hearing technology, explain if communication at night is more difficult because they aren't wearing their hearing aids or cochlear implant processors.

Additional information about care needs

Question 71: What date did the child's difficulties with their care needs start?

Your child needs to have had extra needs because of their disability for three months before you can apply for DLA and are likely to the same needs for at least the next 6 months. This is called the qualifying period.

For example, if your child was given hearing aids when they were three months old and has needed extra help and supervision because of this, you may be entitled to DLA when they've been wearing the hearing aids for three months and are six months old.

More information about their daily living and care needs

Question 72: Tell us anything else we need to know about their difficulties with their daily living and care needs or how their needs change from day to day.

This is a page that you can use to explain the help your child needs because the rest of the form doesn't have enough space. You can also include anything on this page that you haven't been able to put anywhere else on the form.

For example:

- If your child has difficulty making sense of the world, either because they don't hear conversations going on around them or because of a language delay. Give examples of their difficulties and explain how you give them extra attention to help them to make sense of new words and ideas.
- If your child needs extra attention with educational materials such as computer games, DVDs or online videos that use spoken instructions, for example needing someone to explain what's being said.

About you

Questions 73 to 88

These are very basic questions about you; complete **your** details here.

More information

Question 89: Tell us anything else you think we should know about the child's day to day difficulties

This is one of the boxes that you can use to explain the help your child needs because the rest of the form doesn't have enough space to go into detail.

Remember to include supporting evidence to the form, see more information on page [X]. It's important to include supporting evidence, but make sure it doesn't contradict what you've said on the form. If you use our NDCS template letters you should check that the responses you receive support what you have said in the form. You can find our template letters at ndcs.org.uk/supporting-letters-DLA#Template.

- If your child has a cochlear implant, or is going through the implant assessment process, ask your implant centre for a supporting letter that explains what your child needs due to their implant.
- Don't forget the other types of supporting evidence:
  - supporting letters from people who know how your child's deafness affects their daily life
  - diary of a typical day showing the assistance and supervision you provide and when
  - a diary covering a week or month showing how many days your child's hearing was better or worse if your child's needs fluctuate (change)
  - results of any tests that prove your child has a language delay
  - copies of school documents if they show the type of support they receive at school and how often.

Make sure all supporting evidence and extra pages are labelled. Keep a copy of your filled in form and make sure all supporting evidence you send the DWP is a photocopy as they won't be able to send original versions back to you.

Declaration

You must sign and date the form here.

Factsheet 09.2023

This information can be requested in large print or as a text file.

For resource references or to give us your feedback email **informationteam@ndcs.org.uk**.

National Deaf Children's Society