Disability Living Allowance (DLA)

National Deaf Children's Society

A guide to filling in the Disability Living Allowance (DLA) form for a deaf child

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, Northern Ireland and Wales. In England and Wales, DLA is managed by Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). In Northern Ireland, it is managed by the Department for Communities (DfC). You can use this guide if you live in Northern Ireland; the names of institutions are different, but the law and the process is the same.

If you live in Scotland, you can no longer apply for DLA as this has been replaced by Child Disability Payment (CDP).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 guidance notes DWP or DfC send with the form. You should also read them carefully. We provide 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 disability or long-term health condition in addition to their deafness, make sure you fill those in as well and explain the extra help you give them because of their 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 of DLA can be paid to children of all ages up to age 16. Your child must satisfy the tests (have relevant needs) for at least 3 months before an award can be paid and be likely to have the same needs for at least the following 6 months. The claim can be started earlier but payment will not be made until the 3-month period has passed.

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

How to start your DLA claim

England and Wales
If you live in England or Wales, contact the Disability Living Allowance Helpline.

Phone: **0345 712 3456** (voice)
Textphone: **0345 722 4433** (text)

When you phone the helpline, you will be asked for some details about you and your child, and a paper DLA claim form will be posted to you. There will be 2 dates stamped on the form. The first is the date you requested the form, and the second is the date you must return the completed form by. If you return the form by the second date, any DLA your child is awarded will start from the first date (the date you requested the form). If you send the form back late, any award will start from the date DWP receive your form.

Or you can download the claim form at gov.uk/government/publications/disability-living-allowance-for-children-claim-form. If you choose to download and complete the claim form, any award will start from the date DWP receive the form.

Northern Ireland
If you live in Northern Ireland, the process is similar, but the names of institutions are different. Contact the Disability and Carers Service by phone, textphone or email to request a paper DLA claim form.

Phone: **0800 587 0912** (voice)
Textphone: **0800 012 1574** (text)
Email: dcs.forms@dfcni.gov.uk

You can also download the form at nidirect.gov.uk/publications/disability-living-allowance-dla-child-claim-form-and-guidance-notes-dla-1a.

Contents

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). 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. There are 2 important aspects of this law.

- 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 needs 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 consider case law when assessing a claim. Case law judgements are decisions made by social security Judges that interpret the legal tests.

The disability tests
There are 2 parts to DLA, the care component and the mobility component. There are 5 disability tests for the care component that may be relevant to your deaf child.

Not all the mobility tests are relevant to deaf children. One of the mobility tests may be relevant if they are aged 5 or over. Another test may be relevant if they are aged 3 or over and have a disability or long-term health condition in addition to their deafness.

Understanding the language of DLA
When applying for benefits, such as DLA, the language DWP uses can sometimes be confusing. The words used on the claim from are different to 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): Means 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, like help with fitting and removing hearing devices and help with language development. The help they need must be due to their deafness and connected with 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 2 times, or more, during the night.

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: 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

The care component of DLA is split into the lowest, middle and highest rates. These rates are determined by 5 disability tests.

Lowest rate care component

Your child will qualify for the **lowest rate** of the care component if they require attention from another person for a significant portion of the day, whether for a single period or several periods.

Middle rate care component

Your child will 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 **OR/AND**
2. Continual supervision throughout the day to avoid substantial danger to themselves or others.

OR

At night

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

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 device, which may contain a button battery. This also includes potential risk to other children, who may pick up and swallow parts of hearing devices 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_Nov_2022.pdf.

Highest rate care component

The highest rate will 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

The mobility component of DLA is split into the lower and higher rates. These rates are determined by 8 disability tests. Not all the mobility tests are relevant to deaf children.

Lower rate mobility component

The lower rate will be awarded to a deaf child if they are **aged 5 or over** and 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 enable your deaf child to take advantage of their ability to walk outdoors. Your child will satisfy the test if they are less aware of traffic or outdoor hazards than a hearing child, for example:

- they cannot be warned or directed by voice from a distance
- they cannot hear sounds from behind, such as a car or cyclist approaching

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.

Higher rate mobility component

The higher rate mobility component will only be awarded if your child is at least 3 years old and has a long-term health condition or disability, in addition to their deafness. This health condition or disability must mean they:

- are physically unable to walk, or
- are 'virtually unable to walk', or
- are deaf blind, or
- have a severe mental impairment

Unable to walk due to a physical disability

If your child has a physical disability and they are unable to walk at all, they may qualify for the higher rate mobility.

Being virtually unable to walk

If your child has a physical disability and their ability to walk outdoors is severely limited due to severe discomfort (e.g. pain or breathlessness), or the exertion of walking causes a serious risk to your child's health due to severe physical conditions they may qualify for the higher rate mobility.

Your child may also qualify as 'virtually unable to walk' if they have behavioural problems related to a physical condition, that mean they cannot make progress on foot. This includes conditions, such as Down's Syndrome or brain damage.

Severe mental impairment

If your child qualifies for the highest rate of the care component, they may also be able to qualify for the higher rate mobility component due to 'severe mental impairment'.

‘Severe mental impairment’ means severe learning disabilities. To qualify for higher rate mobility, children with severe learning disabilities must:

- be in a state of arrested development or incomplete physical development of the brain, resulting in severe impairment of intelligence and social functioning; **and**
- display extreme disruptive behaviour; **and**
- be so unpredictable they need to be constantly watched over when awake; **and**
- regularly need to be physically restrained to avoid injury to themselves or others or damage to property

Deaf blind

If your child is both deaf and blind, and the combination of these conditions means they cannot walk outdoors without assistance, they may qualify for higher rate mobility. Your child will be referred to a DWP healthcare professional to assess their levels of hearing loss and loss of vision.

Severe visual impairment

If your child has a ‘severe visual impairment’, even with corrective lenses, they may qualify for higher rate mobility. They must be certified as severely sight impaired or blind by a consultant ophthalmologist or have a Certificate of Vision Impairment (CVI).

For more information about claiming the higher rate mobility component, visit the Contact website: contact.org.uk/help-for-families/information-advice-services/benefits-financial-help/disability-living-allowance/claiming-dla-higher-rate-mobility/.

Supporting evidence

Including supporting evidence in your application is very important. It helps you to show DWP how your child’s deafness affects them and the extra support they need. 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. Evidence that is not relevant can make it more difficult for the decision maker to give you the right award.

If your child has a long-term health condition or disability, in addition to their deafness, include evidence of their care and mobility needs in the same form.

Supporting evidence should:

- show how your child's hearing loss or deafness affects them throughout the day
- back-up what you've said in the application form
- show that your child's care and/or mobility needs satisfy the tests for an award of DLA

You may be tempted to send in all the documents that you have, such as hospital appointment letters. However, 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 2 or 3 days. Try to record each time you give your child more attention and supervision **because of their deafness**.

DWP cannot return original documents, so any supporting evidence you send DWP should be a photocopy. You should submit any supporting evidence with your claim form. If you're waiting for any pieces of supporting evidence, write what it is in question 89 and send it to DWP once you've received it at: Freepost DWP DLA Child.

Make sure all supporting evidence is up to date (within 1 year of the claim if possible). Write your child's full name, date of birth and National Insurance number (if they have one) or DWP reference number on each piece of evidence so it can be linked to your claim.

Supporting evidence from professionals

Health and education professionals may work with your child because of their deafness or another disability or health condition. It can be helpful to include supporting letters from professionals in a DLA claim. Letters from a professional should explain your child's care and supervision needs because of their deafness and any other disability or health condition.

Use our template letters to request evidence from an audiologist or Teacher of the Deaf (ToD). These are available on our website at 'Supporting evidence from professionals' at ndcs.org.uk/advice-and-support/all-advice-and-support-topics/money-and-benefits/disability-living-allowance-dla#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 is not deaf.

- Make sure to explain all the help and supervision your child needs daily
- DWP decision makers are not experts on deafness. Explain that hearing devices do not mean your child can hear 'normally'. Explain things like listening fatigue (tiredness caused by the extra effort deaf children must put in to listen)
- Do not just say what help your child needs. Explain why they need this help and what would happen if they did not get it. It can feel negative but it's important
- Give details of when hearing devices, such as hearing aids or cochlear implants, are not useful, for example where there is background noise, or they cannot be worn due to an ear infection
- Only write about the help or supervision that your child needs now and is likely to continue. Changes that might happen in the future cannot be considered
- Do not worry about repeating yourself. It's better to repeat yourself 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 cannot 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 would not need to do if your child was hearing and write these on the form.

Filling in the form

Throughout the form you **must** show that your child needs much more attention or supervision than a hearing child of the same age.

Questions 1 to 22: About the child

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?

If you have any letters or reports, about your child's deafness or any extra support your child gets, list them here and include a copy. This could be from an audiologist, other health professional, 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 'Supporting evidence from professionals' at ndcs.org.uk/advice-and-support/all-advice-and-support-topics/money-and-benefits/disability-living-allowance-dla#evidence.

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

You can include the name of your child's audiologist, speech and language therapist or other health professionals who work with your child. If your child has another health condition or disability, in addition to their deafness, include the health professionals that support them.

On the form, there is space to include the details of 1 health professional. If your child has more than 1 health professional that you wish to name, add these to question 89 'More information'.

Questions 26 to 29: About the child's GP

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.

Questions 30 to 36: About the child's nursery, school and educational or specialist needs

Give the details, but if you do not 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 education setting. 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, do not worry about ticking the right box, just make sure you include a copy and write down here who it's from.

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 health professional. Ideally it would be a professional, but you can ask a friend with a child of the same age, your child's grandparents or an activity leader/coach.

We have template letters you can use to gather evidence from your child's ToD and audiologist. Go to 'Supporting evidence from professionals' at ndcs.org.uk/advice-and-support/all-advice-and-support-topics/money-and-benefits/disability-living-allowance-dla#evidence.

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 health conditions they have.

Question 41: Does the child use, or have they been assessed for, any aids or adaptations?
If your child uses hearing devices, such as hearing aids, cochlear implants or bone conduction hearing devices, list them here. In the column, 'What help do they need to use the aid or adaption?' you should write about what hearing devices cannot do, the problems they may cause and how you manage them.

There is not much space for all the relevant information here, but do not worry. You can continue your answer in 1 of the extra information boxes in questions 72 and 89. Make it clear that you are giving more information about question 41.

Hearing devices do not give a deaf child 'normal' hearing
If your child uses hearing devices, explain that:

- hearing devices do not replace 'normal' hearing
- hearing devices do not filter sounds in the way that a child with 'normal' hearing can
- hearing devices can make it harder to hear in everyday situations because they may amplify background sounds, which can mask the sounds your child needs to hear
- your child still struggles to hear even when wearing their hearing devices
- your child still needs help with communicating
- there may be longer periods when your child cannot wear their hearing devices, for example because of an ear infection; mention how long this applies for

Managing hearing devices

Explain the extra time and effort it takes to manage your child's hearing devices 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 devices
- checking and changing the batteries
- tending to your child's ears if they become chapped or sore
- stopping your child fiddling with their hearing devices and taking them out

Top tip

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

Question 42: When the child needs help
This question is asking if your child's needs vary (change). 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 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 2 diaries covering times when their hearing is better and worse.

About the child's mobility needs

Questions 43 to 48 relate to the higher rate mobility component, which will only be awarded if your child is at least 3 years old and has a health condition or disability, in addition to their deafness.

See pages 8 and 9 for more information about the higher rate mobility component.

Question 49: Do they need guidance or supervision most of the time when they walk outdoors?
Tick yes if your child **is aged 5 or older and** needs more supervision outside than a hearing child. Explain why in the large text box on page 19 of the form.

Question 50: Do they fall due to their health condition or disability?
Not all deaf children have balance problems because of their deafness, but some children do. Tick yes if your child falls over because of balance problems related 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 3 months before you 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 5 **OR** age 3 if your child has a disability of long-term health condition, in addition to their deafness. See pages 8 and 9 for information about the higher rate mobility component.

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 higher rate of the mobility component. Most deaf children who do not have another disability or long-term condition in addition to their deafness, will not be eligible for higher rate mobility and the Motability scheme.

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
- they cannot be warned or directed by voice from a distance
- you always need to have your child near enough to be able to make physical contact with them to move them out of the way of hazards, such as cyclists or runners approaching from behind
- you need to stop them to give them instructions face-to-face because they lip-read or use sign language
- your child finds it difficult to tell what sounds are because their hearing devices amplify every sound, not just the ones they need to hear like speech
- they find it hard to judge the speed, distance and direction of traffic because their hearing devices amplify all sounds
- wind and rain can affect how well hearing devices work

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 lower rate mobility.

If there have been any accidents, near misses or incidents when outside, make sure you include these. For example, moving your child out of the way of a cyclist approaching them from behind, that they have not heard.

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 cannot 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 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 down to sleep or wake up in the morning, tick yes.

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

- They take longer to wake up because they do not wake up naturally to sounds. They need you to touch them or turn on the light.
- They take longer to wake up because they are over tired from the extra effort of communicating during the day and they need you to wake them up.
- They become anxious or unsettled when their hearing devices are 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 devices are 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 are 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 disability or long-term condition in addition to their deafness. If your child uses speech, it may take longer to toilet train them. They may not pick up verbal messages or have 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 do to get their attention.

Question 57: Do they need encouragement, prompting, or assistance with washing, bathing, showering and cleaning themselves during the day?
This question will only be relevant to your deaf child if they are at an age where you need to help them wash, for example:

- your child needs extra attention when bathing because their hearing devices must be taken off. Say how long it takes to remove their hearing devices and what you must do before replacing them after they've had their bath or shower. For example, making sure that their ears are completely dry
- you need to remove your child's hearing devices when washing and bathing and this makes communication more difficult. Say if this means that you spend more time washing and bathing them than you would with a hearing child
- your child uses sign language, which makes it difficult to communicate with them and wash them at the same time

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 takes and the help they need to take them. For example, they may need eardrops to soften the wax in their ears or require medication if they often have ear infections.

Give details of any therapy your child receives from a professional or from 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 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 a language delay.

Question 61: Do they have difficulty seeing?
This question is not relevant unless your deaf 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 for your deaf child. There is not 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's difficult for your child to hear and communicate, including 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're not at nursery or school.

In most situations in daily life, there are different background sounds and 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

For a description of what the different levels of deafness mean, visit ndcs.org.uk/levels-deafness-and-hearing-loss.

Say if your child finds it difficult to:

- hear certain letter sounds
- hear speech clearly when there's background noise
- follow conversation in a group
- hear what's going on around them all the time, so misses out on incidental learning
- lip-read

Lip-reading

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 lip-read 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 if your child needs you to:

- attract their attention before you speak to them
- repeat yourself, explain, or say things a different way
- repeat or explain what other people are saying
- explain what the conversation is about for them to understand
- repeat or explain what your child is saying so that other people can understand them
- sign or use gestures
- give them a visual prompt such as holding up an object (objects of reference)

Explain that hearing devices:

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

It can be difficult to work out how many times a day 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 frequently throughout the day, make this clear.

Think about the day-to-day interactions you and others have with your child, like:

- getting up in the morning
- getting dressed
- calling for meals
- supporting your child with their behaviour
- conversations at home
- doing homework
- conversations with people who do not understand your child's deafness
- helping your child join in and play with other children

These kinds of interactions are important to mention to qualify for DLA, as they happen all the time. You should also write about the help your child needs at things like swimming lessons, appointments or activity clubs.

If your child uses sign language to communicate, say if they need someone to interpret for them when communicating with other people who do not understand their needs. The help you give your child to be understood by others or understand 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 is relevant.

Explain if other children do not realise your child is deaf or do not 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:

- does not 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 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 and reassure them
- refuses to speak or needs encouragement to speak

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

This will not 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 down 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 young child who uses hearing devices, read about the middle rate care component on page 6.

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 parts of their hearing devices. You should explain if your child does not like wearing their hearing devices 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. Read about 'continual supervision' on page 7.

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 gets 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 do not 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 about the extra time and effort you give to your child to help them learn language. Say if:

- 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 sign language or another type of signed communication, and you give extra attention to your child to learn language
- your child gets additional support to learn language from a Teacher of the Deaf (ToD) or staff in school
- you've been told your child has developmental delay due to their deafness, or you think 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 nursery or school. The form has several boxes 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 school
- whether your child finds it harder to hear and to follow what's going on in the noisy environment of a nursery or school
- whether carers and other children have difficulty understanding your child

Some deaf children need additional support in education, which has a different name in each nation.

- Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) in England
- Special educational needs (SEN) in Northern Ireland
- Additional learning needs (ALN) in Wales

If your child has SEND, SEN or ALN and they have a document which shows the type of support they need, you should include this information. If your child is not getting any additional support, write down what you think they need.

IMPORTANT

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 your child:

- uses a radio aid or other assistive technology and needs help to manage it
- has an interpreter to help them communicate in school
- has a notetaker to understand lessons because they cannot lip-read the teacher and write notes at the same time
- needs staff to step in to repeat and explain what has been said because they have difficulty listening in the classroom due to background sounds, including other children talking or sounds from equipment
- needs staff to step in to repeat and explain what has been said because they have difficulty communicating outside the classroom environment, for example, at breaktime and lunchtime when there are background sounds
- needs extra lessons in English or maths
- needs additional support to prepare for new subjects and vocabulary

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

Your child is assessed against the help they need to live normal daily 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 have not already mentioned.

- Extra help to understand story books, as you may need to spend more time explaining words and their meaning
- 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, as 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 cannot do because there's no support available.

- Visiting friends or family
- Going to a place of worship
- Brownies or Cubs
- Swimming
- Football
- Youth clubs
- 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 devices and any other equipment they may need when they're out.

If you're claiming for a baby or a young child who has hearing devices, explain if you have to supervise your child to make sure they do not take their hearing devices out or their hearing devices do not fall out while playing. Read about the middle rate care component on page 5.

Say 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 or 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 need 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 devices, explain if communication at night is more difficult because they are not wearing their hearing devices.

For more information about how deafness may affect sleep, visit ndcs.org.uk/sleep.

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 3 months before you can apply for DLA and are likely to have 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 3 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 3 months and are 6 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 does not have enough space. You can also include anything on this page that you have not been able to put anywhere else on the form.

For example:

- If your child has difficulty making sense of the world, either because they do not 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 or online videos that use spoken instructions, for example needing someone to explain what's being said.

About you

Questions 73 to 88
You must sign and date the form here.

More information

Question 89: Tell us anything else you think we should know about the child's day to day difficulties
This is 1 of the boxes that you can use to explain the help your child needs because the rest of the form does not have enough space to go into detail.

Remember to include supporting evidence to the form, see more information on page 9. It's important to include supporting evidence but make sure it does not contradict what you've said on the form. If you use our template letters, check that the professional's responses support what you've said in the form. Find our template letters under 'Supporting evidence from professionals' at ndcs.org.uk/advice-and-support/all-advice-and-support-topics/money-and-benefits/disability-living-allowance-dla#evidence.

Make sure all supporting evidence and extra pages are labelled with your child's name and National Insurance number or DWP reference number. Keep a copy of your filled in form and make sure all supporting evidence you send DWP is a photocopy as they will not be able to send original versions back to you. Read about supporting evidence on page 9.

Declaration

You must sign and date the form here.