



Consortium for Research in Deaf Education

2025 UK-wide summary

Education provision for deaf children in 2024/25

Introduction

In 2025, we carried out the 15th Consortium for Research in Deaf Education (CRIDE) annual survey on educational staffing and service provision for deaf children.¹

This report provides a high-level summary of the results across the four countries we surveyed. Separate reports are published for England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales which set out the results for each respective nation. All reports can be downloaded from www.ndcs.org.uk/CRIDE or www.batod.org.uk/information/cride-reports.

The survey alternates from year to year between a standard survey and a survey with a mix of core and thematic questions. The 2025 survey was the standard version covering the 2024/25 academic year.²

A number of changes were made to the standard survey in 2025 to streamline and reduce the number of questions³.

¹ For the purpose of this section of the survey, unless otherwise stated, we use the term 'deaf children' to include children and young people under the age of 20 (in England, Northern Ireland and Wales) or under the age of 19 (in Scotland) with sensori-neural or permanent conductive deafness.

² Reports from previous years can be found on the National Deaf Children's Society website at www.ndcs.org.uk/cride or on the BATOD website at www.batod.org.uk/information/cride-reports/.

³ For example, questions about deaf children with cochlear implants, bone conduction devices, who use English as an additional spoken language at home, who are new to the country, and post-16 support have been removed. A reference document that summarises this data from previous years has been produced and is available via the links shown in the above footnote.

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Interpreting the results

Services were asked to give figures for the position as of 31st January 2025.

In the survey, we acknowledge that services and children do not always fit into the boxes or options provided. Services were able to leave comments or clarify where needed throughout the survey. Notes about particular issues that emerged are included in the reports for each country.

As we see later, it is clear that some services experience difficulties in extracting data about deaf children in their area and there remain inconsistencies in how different questions are completed throughout the survey. The response rates to individual questions may sometimes vary and anomalies occasionally appear. We make every effort to investigate any inconsistencies that appear particularly strange. However, services do not always respond to such queries. **Therefore, the results should continue to be used with caution.** Caution is also needed due to differences in response rates to individual questions and potential mistakes in data provision between surveys.

We received a 99% response rate to the survey in England (132 services covering 150 out of 153 authority areas⁴), and a 100% response rate in Northern Ireland (one service), Scotland (30 services covering 32 authority areas) and Wales (14 services covering 22 local authorities).

A separate short survey was issued to 18 special schools for deaf children. This received responses from 16 out of 17 schools in England and the one school for deaf children in Northern Ireland⁵. This short survey was not sent to special schools for deaf children in Scotland as the main survey in Scotland included questions about these schools. A separate short survey was also issued to

⁴ One service did not provide a complete response and was not included in the analysis. The remaining two local authorities in England, City of London and the Isles of Scilly, were not contacted on the understanding that they do not have any deaf children in their areas.

⁵ There are no special schools for deaf children in Wales.

cochlear implant centres which received a response from 15 out of 16 cochlear implant centres that the survey was sent to across the UK.⁶

Please note that percentages in this report have been rounded up or down to the nearest whole number. Please also note that where there is a reported cohort of less than five children in any of the tables from individual country reports, in this report, we have replaced the figure with a '<5' and suppressed the actual figure to zero when calculating the totals in that table unless otherwise stated. This is indicated by an asterisk against the total.

⁶ We did not receive a response from the Belfast cochlear implant programme. In their 2024 response, the Belfast cochlear implant programme reported no TODs in employment, and commented that there was at the time still resource for one post but that they delivered this work via the education service and felt that this was working well.

Summary of key findings

Numbers of deaf children

- There were 53,225 deaf children reported by services across the UK, a 2% decrease since 2024.

Teachers of Deaf Children and Young People (TODs) and other specialist staff

- There were at least 1,548 fte TOD posts, of which 3% were vacant.
- Of the TODs in employment, 78% had the mandatory qualification, 13% were in training for the mandatory qualification or intending to train within three years, and 7% were teachers without the mandatory qualification and not in training. 1% were people not qualified as teachers.⁷
- There were at least 678 fte other specialist support staff directly employed by services in employment at the time of the surveys, 58% of whom were teaching assistants (or similar) and 23% of whom were communication support workers (or similar).

Resource provisions

- There were 253 resource provisions reported by services across the UK. There were 257 reported in 2024.
- The population of deaf children covered by each resource provision across the UK was 208.

Referrals

- Services reported that 9,396 referrals were received over the calendar year of 2024.
- 13% of these were for children identified as deaf through the newborn hearing screening programme.
- 23% of these were for children identified as deaf outside of the newborn hearing screening programme and before they had started statutory education.
- 64% of these were for children identified as deaf outside of the newborn hearing screening programme and after they had started statutory education.

⁷ This category was only asked about in the separate survey for special schools for deaf children in England and Northern Ireland.

PART 1: Deaf children in the UK

Services were asked to give details of deaf children living in the geographical area covered by their service.⁸

When giving figures for numbers of deaf children living in the area, we first asked for an overall figure and then asked for breakdowns by level of deafness, age, and educational setting. We found that some services did not always provide this data consistently; occasionally services gave broken-down figures where the sum generated a different total from that given elsewhere in the survey.

Coming up with a clear answer to the question of how many deaf children there are is therefore not straightforward. For this report, we have taken the approach of using the highest figure from either the overall total, given totals for questions, or the totals generated through the sum of the broken-down figures. We do this because we want to ensure we've captured as many deaf children as possible. We refer to this as the "adjusted total".

According to the surveys, the adjusted total number of deaf children under the age of 20 across England, Northern Ireland, Scotland⁹ and Wales was 53,225.¹⁰ This figure is a reported 2% decrease since 2024 when 54,321 were reported.

⁸ Services were asked to include: All children under the age of 20 (in England, Northern Ireland and Wales) or under the age of 19 (in Scotland) who have a unilateral or bilateral sensori-neural or permanent conductive deafness, at all levels from mild to profound, using BSA/BATOD descriptors; All deaf children, regardless of whether they receive support from the service; Children who attend education provision outside of the area but who normally live in the area. For the purpose of this section of the survey we use the term 'children' to include children and young people under the age of 20 (in England, Northern Ireland and Wales) or under the age of 19 (in Scotland). Please also note that we use the term permanent deafness to include those children with a syndrome known to include permanent conductive deafness, microtia/atresia, middle ear malformation, or those who have had middle ear surgery such as mastoidectomy. It also includes those children with glue ear who are not expected to 'grow out' of the condition before the age of 12 years (such as those born with a cleft palate, Down's syndrome, cystic fibrosis, or primary ciliary dyskinesia). Children with temporary deafness should not be included in responses to this question. Under temporary conductive deafness, we include those children with glue ear who may have been fitted with hearing aids as an alternative to grommet surgery but who are expected to 'grow out' of the condition before the age of 12 years.

⁹ Under the age of 19 in Scotland.

¹⁰ There were some services that reported large changes in numbers of children since 2024. Some services responded to queries on the reported figures, and some services did not. Please see individual country reports for more information.

Table 1: Number of deaf children living in the geographical area, by nation and region

Nation	Region	Number of deaf children reported (adjusted totals)	Percentage as UK total
England		45,902	86%
	East England	4,750	9%
	East Midlands	3,402	6%
	London	7,788	15%
	North East	2,430	5%
	North West	6,321	12%
	South East	5,975	11%
	South West	4,159	8%
	West Midlands	5,932	11%
	Yorkshire and the Humber	5,145	10%
Northern Ireland		1,527	3%
Scotland		3,649	7%
Wales		2,147	4%
Total		53,225	100%

By way of comparison, we also looked at figures from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) statistics on population estimates by region for all children and young people aged 0-19 in the UK.¹¹

¹¹ Aged 0-19 in England, Northern Ireland and Wales, and aged 0-19 in Scotland. Data from: www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/datasets/populationestimatesforukenglandandwalesscotlandandnorthernireland

Table 2: Percentages of children aged 0-19 (England, Northern Ireland and Wales) and 0-18 (Scotland)

Nation	Region	CRIDE 2025 percentage as UK total	ONS (mid-2024 data) percentage as UK total
England		86%	86%
	East England	9%	10%
	East Midlands	6%	7%
	London	15%	13%
	North East	5%	4%
	North West	12%	11%
	South East	11%	14%
	South West	8%	8%
	West Midlands	11%	10%
	Yorkshire and the Humber	10%	8%
Northern Ireland		3%	3%
Scotland		7%	7%
Wales		4%	4%
Total		100%	100%

Table 3: Number of deaf children living in the geographical area, by nation and region, over successive years

Nation	Region	2011	2023	2024	2025
England		34,927	45,671	46,933	45,902
	East England	2,572	4,857	4,731	4,750
	East Midlands	2,334	3,533	3,514	3,402
	London	5,271	7,654	7,524	7,788
	North East	1,949	2,275	2,252	2,430
	North West	5,037	6,308	6,473	6,321
	South East	5,624	5,587	7,114	5,975
	South West	3,348	4,237	4,235	4,159
	West Midlands	4,290	5,742	5,935	5,932
	Yorkshire and the Humber	4,502	5,478	5,155	5,145
Northern Ireland		1,238	1,428	1,603	1,527
Scotland		2,526	3,418	3,558	3,649
Wales		2,775	2,260	2,227	2,147
Total		41,466	52,777	54,321	53,225

The following table illustrates differences in the numbers of deaf children covered by services in each country. Please note that, as there is just one service in Northern Ireland, they do not appear in this table.

Table 4: Minimum, maximum and average number of deaf children living in each service¹²

	Minimum	Maximum	Average
England	75	1,805	348
Scotland	14	369	122
Wales	30	427	153

Services were asked about any issues or gaps in the data they provided for the number of children with permanent deafness. Information about the issues and gaps reported by services is included in the reports for each country but commonly reported issues included:

- services only having figures for children who are receiving support from the service (50% of services in England, 60% of services in Scotland, 50% of services in Wales)
- services not holding figures for children who have left school (20% of services in England, the service in Northern Ireland, 60% of services in Scotland, 50% of services in Wales)
- services not able to split out figures for children with permanent or temporary deafness (17% of services in England, 3% of services in Scotland, 14% of services in Wales).

The extent of these issues and gaps is a reminder that the figures generated from the CRIDE survey need to be used with caution. The data in this report are only as good as the data held by and provided to us, by local authorities, and the above section raises questions about how we can improve the data collected on deaf children. At the same time, we believe that data generated through the CRIDE reports remain amongst the best sources of data available.

What the survey tells us about the population of deaf children

The following tables provide breakdowns by age and level of deafness.

¹² Some services cover more than one authority area.

Table 5: Number and proportion of children living in the geographical area, by age¹³

	Early years/ pre-school	Primary- aged	Secondary- aged	Post-16 and under the age of 20¹⁴	Total
England	6,258 (14%)	17,240 (38%)	15,644 (35%)	5,844 (13%)	44,986 (100%)
Northern Ireland	172 (11%)	600 (39%)	570 (37%)	185 (12%)	1,527 (100%)
Scotland	557 (16%)	1,445 (41%)	1,294 (37%)	238 (7%)	3,534 (100%)
Wales	194 (9%)	896 (42%)	898 (42%)	159 (7%)	2,147 (100%)
Total	7,181 (14%)	20,181 (39%)	18,406 (35%)	6,426 (12%)	52,194 (100%)

Table 6: Changes in the number and proportion of children living in the UK, by age group since 2011

Age group	2011	2021	2023	2025
Early years/pre-school	5,469 (14%)	6,412 (13%)	6,432 (12%)	7,181 (14%)
Primary-aged	17,191 (44%)	20,468 (41%)	19,957 (38%)	20,181 (39%)
Secondary-aged	13,846 (35%)	17,747 (35%)	19,240 (37%)	18,406 (35%)
Post-16 and under the age of 20 ¹⁵	2,665 (7%)	5,881 (12%)	6,740 (13%)	6,426 (12%)
Total	39,171 (100%)	50,508 (100%)	52,369 (100%)	52,194 (100%)

Table 7: Number and proportion of children living in the UK, by level of deafness

	Unilateral	Mild	Moderate	Severe	Profound	Total¹⁶
England	9,700 (23%)	10,835 (25%)	14,237 (33%)	3,337 (8%)	4,980 (12%)	43,089 (100%)
Northern Ireland	419 (27%)	404 (26%)	437 (29%)	93 (6%)	172 (11%)	1,525 (100%)
Scotland	700 (21%)	621 (19%)	1,098 (33%)	313 (10%)	549 (17%)	3,281 (100%)
Wales	500 (24%)	530 (25%)	682 (32%)	186 (9%)	215 (10%)	2,113 (100%)
Total	11,319 (23%)	12,390 (25%)	16,454 (33%)	3,929 (8%)	5,916 (12%)	50,008 (100%)

¹³ It should be noted that the age ranges for each education stage vary slightly in the different countries in the UK.

¹⁴ In Scotland this is post-16 and under the age of 19.

¹⁵ In Scotland this is post-16 and under the age of 19.

¹⁶ Not including children where the level of deafness was reported as 'not known'.

Table 8: Changes in the number and proportion of children living in the UK, by level of deafness since 2011

Level of deafness	2011	2021	2023	2025
Unilateral	5,685 (15%)	10,690 (22%)	10,544 (22%)	11,319 (23%)
Mild	11,524 (31%)	12,419 (26%)	11,887 (25%)	12,390 (25%)
Moderate	12,063 (32%)	15,244 (31%)	15,406 (32%)	16,454 (33%)
Severe	3,956 (10%)	4,241 (9%)	4,286 (9%)	3,929 (8%)
Profound	4,546 (12%)	5,877 (12%)	5,910 (12%)	5,916 (12%)
Total ¹⁷	37,774 (100%)	48,471 (100%)	48,033 (100%)	50,008 (100%)

The following tables provide breakdowns by education setting for all children and then for school-aged children only.

Based on feedback from services, a change was made to the question on deaf children in education settings in the 2025 survey, to include a new option for services to tell us about deaf children in resource provisions¹⁸ that are not specifically for deaf children. This means that the results will not be directly comparable to those in previous years.

¹⁷ Not including children where the level of deafness was reported as 'not known'.

¹⁸ In the CRIDE survey, we have historically used the term 'resource provision' to include all schools with a resource provision, base or unit, specifically for deaf children and young people, regardless of whether staff in the resource provision are employed by the local authority or by the school.

Table 9: Number and proportion of deaf children living in the area by educational setting (regardless of whether in or out of local authority/education authority)

	England	Northern Ireland	Scotland	Wales	Total
Supported only at home – pre-school children	2,959 (7%)	126 (8%)	193 (5%)	71 (3%)	3,349 (6%)
Early years setting – pre-school children ¹⁹	2,847 (6%)	42* (3%)	359* (10%)	97* (5%)	3,345* (6%)
Supported at home – of school age and home educated	339 (1%)	6 (0%)	<5* (0%)	16 (1%)	361* (1%)
Mainstream provision (including state-funded and independent/private schools)	28,163 (62%)	999 (66%)	2,490* (69%)	1,549* (73%)	33,201* (63%)
Mainstream provision: resource provision for deaf children	1,920 (4%)	13 (1%)	167 (5%)	116* (5%)	2,216* (4%)
Mainstream provision: resource provision not specifically for deaf children	273 (1%)	0 (0%)	118* (3%)	77 (4%)	468* (1%)
Special schools for deaf pupils ²⁰	823 ²¹ (2%)	58 (4%)	45* (1%)	8 (0%)	934* (2%)
Other special schools, not specifically for deaf children	4,800 (11%)	277 (18%)	229* (6%)	141* (7%)	5,447* (10%)
All other post-16 provision (not including school sixth forms)	2,450 (5%)	0 (0%)	8 (0%)	58 (3%)	2,516 (5%)
Other (e.g. Pupil referral units, NEET and ‘not known’)	627 (1%)	<5* (0%)	0 (0%)	<5* (0%)	627* (1%)
Total	45,201 (100%)	1,521* (100%)	3,609* (100%)	2,133* (100%)	52,464* (100%)

¹⁹ In the Northern Ireland survey this was split up into two categories: Early years settings - pre-school children who have not yet started their official nursery year, and Early years setting – pre-school children who are in their official nursery year. The figures have been combined in this table.

²⁰ There are no special schools for deaf children in Wales.

²¹ The figure of 823 is based on returns from local authority specialist education services for deaf children. However, a separate short survey for special schools for deaf children and young people (which received responses from 16 schools) reported that there were 1,144 children and young people placed at their schools. Comparing the figures provided by special schools for deaf children and services, this suggests that services are under-reporting the number of deaf children in special schools for deaf children by around 39%.

Table 10: Changes in the number and proportion of children in the UK, by type of educational provision, since 2021²²

	2021	2022	2023	2025
Supported only at home – pre-school children	3,301 (7%)	3,127 (6%)	3,126* (6%)	3,349 (6%)
Early years setting – pre-school children	2,699* (6%)	2,623* (5)	3,161 (6%)	3,345* ²³ (6%)
Supported at home – of school age and home educated	329 (1%)	241* (0%)	257* (0%)	361* (1%)
Mainstream provision (including state-funded and independent/private schools)	30,962* (64%)	32,161* (64%)	33,102 (63%)	33,201* (63%)
Mainstream provision: resource provision	2,336* (5%)	2,466* (5%)	2,603 (5%)	2,684* ²⁴ (5%)
Special schools for deaf pupils ²⁵	907* (2%)	1,091 (2%)	956* (2%)	934* (2%)
Other special schools, not specifically for deaf children	5,351* (11%)	5,681* (11%)	5,638 (11%)	5,447* (10%)
All other post-16 provision (not including school sixth forms)	1,915* (4%)	2,267* (4%)	2,650* (5%)	2,516 (5%)
Other (e.g. Pupil referral units, NEET and ‘not known’)	731* (2%)	837* (2%)	755 (1%)	627* (1%)
Total	48,531* (100%)	50,494* (100%)	52,248* (100%)	52,464* (100%)

The following table looks at the proportion of **school-aged** deaf children in different educational settings.

²² This question was not in the 2024 survey.

²³ In the Northern Ireland survey this was split up into two categories in 2025: Early years settings - pre-school children who have not yet started their official nursery year, and Early years setting – pre-school children who are in their official nursery year. The figures have been combined in this table.

²⁴ In the 2025 survey this was split up into two categories: resource provisions specifically for deaf children, and resource provisions not specifically for deaf children. The figures have been combined in this table.

²⁵ There are no special schools for deaf children in Wales.

Table 11: Number and proportion of school-aged deaf children by type of educational provision

	England	Northern Ireland	Scotland	Wales	Total
Supported at home - of school age and home educated	339 (1%)	6 (0%)	<5* (0%)	16 (1%)	361* (1%)
Mainstream provision (including state-funded and independent/private schools)	28,163 (78%)	999 (74%)	2,490* (82%)	1,549* (81%)	33,201* (78%)
Mainstream provision: resource provision for deaf children	1,920 (5%)	13 (1%)	167 (5%)	116* (6%)	2,216* (5%)
Mainstream provision: resource provision not specifically for deaf children	273 (1%)	0 (0%)	118* (4%)	77 (4%)	468* (1%)
Special schools for deaf pupils	823 (2%)	58 (4%)	45* (1%)	8 (0%)	934* (2%)
Other special schools, not specifically for deaf children	4,800 (13%)	277 (20%)	229* (8%)	141* (7%)	5,447* (13%)
Total	36,318 (100%)	1,353 (100%)	3,049* (100%)	1,907* (100%)	42,627* (100%)

Table 12: Changes in the number and proportion of school-aged children in the UK, by type of educational provision, since 2021

	2021	2022	2023	2025
Supported at home – of school age and home educated	329 (1%)	241* (1%)	257* (1%)	361* (1%)
Mainstream provision (including state-funded and independent/private schools)	30,926 (78%)	32,161* (77%)	33,102 (78%)	33,201* (78%)
Mainstream provision: resource provision for deaf children	2,336 (6%)	2,466* (6%)	2,603 (6%)	2,684* ²⁶ (6%)
Special schools for deaf pupils	907 (2%)	1,091 (3%)	956* (2%)	934* (2%)
Other special schools, not specifically for deaf children	5,351 (13%)	5,681* (14%)	5,638 (13%)	5,447* (13%)
Total	39,849 (100%)	41,640 (100%)	42,556* (100%)	42,627* (100%)

Incidence of additional needs

The following table looks at the incidence of additional needs as reported to CRIDE by services. Different terminology is used to describe children with additional needs in the nations and there are also some differences over which 'conditions' fall under the category of additional needs.²⁷ Any comparisons should therefore be made with care.

Table 13: Number of deaf children with any other additional need apart from deafness, regardless of whether this need is recognised as a 'primary' or 'secondary' need

	Number of deaf children with an additional need	Percentage of deaf children with additional needs of all deaf children in each nation
England	10,862	24%
Northern Ireland	590	39%
Scotland	772	21%
Wales	620	29%
UK	12,844	24%

The proportion of deaf children in the UK with additional needs has fluctuated between 19% and 25% since 2011.

²⁶ In the 2025 survey this was split up into two categories: resource provisions specifically for deaf children, and resource provisions not specifically for deaf children. The figures have been combined in this table.

²⁷ These are: additional special educational need in England, special educational need or disability in Northern Ireland, additional learning needs in Wales, and additional support needs in Scotland.

Additional languages

We asked about languages used in education.

Table 14: Number of children, by languages mainly used at school/other educational setting

	England	Northern Ireland	Scotland	Wales	Total
Spoken English, Welsh or Scottish Gaelic	36,050 (88%)	1,317 (87%)	2,916 (88%)	1,524 (90%)	41,807 (88%)
British/Irish Sign Language	845 (2%)	34 (2%)	117 (4%)	28 (2%)	1,024 (2%)
Spoken English or Welsh together with signed support	1,693 (4%)	38 (2%)	198 (6%)	81 (5%)	2,010 (4%)
Other combination	2,312 (6%)	132 (9%)	82 (2%)	63 (4%)	2,589 (5%)
Total ²⁸	40,900 (100%)	1,521 (100%)	3,313 (100%)	1,696 (100%)	47,430 (100%)

If it is assumed that children with severe or profound deafness are more likely to use sign language, it can be estimated that 10% of children with severe/profound deafness in the UK used British Sign Language/Irish Sign Language in education whilst 20% used signed support with spoken English/Welsh. Combined, 31% of children with severe/profound deafness used some form of sign language in education. It should be stressed that this is a very rough approximation made for illustration purposes only. It must also be stressed that the use of spoken/sign language in education may not always match the use of spoken/sign language within the home or the child's own preferences.

The table below looks at differences between the nations on these estimates. Again, these are rough approximations for illustration purposes only.

Table 15: Children with severe or profound deafness using sign language in each nation

	England	Northern Ireland	Scotland	Wales	Total
Children using BSL/ISL	10%	13%	14%	7%	10%
Children using signed support with spoken English/Welsh	20%	14%	23%	20%	20%
Children using BSL/ISL or signed support with spoken English/Welsh	31%	27%	37%	27%	31%

²⁸ Total not including 'not known'.

PART 2: Teachers of Deaf Children and Young People and other specialist staff

There were at least 1,497 fte TODs in employment across the UK. This includes TODs working in a peripatetic role, in a resource provision, in a special school for deaf children, in a special school or college not specifically for deaf children, or working flexibly across these settings.

At the time the surveys were completed, there were at least 51 fte vacant posts across the UK. If the vacant posts are added to the total number of teachers working as TODs in employment, this would indicate there were at least 1,548 TOD posts, of which 3% were vacant.

Table 16: Number of TOD posts (fte) by nation

	Number of TODs in employment	Number of vacant posts	Total TOD posts
England	1,222.525	41.025	1,263.55
Northern Ireland	47.2	0	47.2
Scotland	165.57	7.6	173.17
Wales ²⁹	62.1	2.6	64.7
Total	1,497.395	51.225	1,548.62

The following table provides a break-down of TODs in employment by qualification status.

Table 17: Number of overall full time equivalent (fte) TODs in employment

	England	Northern Ireland	Scotland	Wales	Total
TODs with the mandatory qualification	966.265 (79%)	32.6 (69%)	106.29 (64%)	60.7 (98%)	1,165.855 (78%)
Teachers in training for the mandatory qualification or intending to train within 3 years	143.45 (12%)	4.8 (10%)	51.2 (31%)	1.4 (2%)	200.85 (13%)
Qualified teachers without the mandatory qualification and not in training	91.31 (7%)	9.8 (21%)	8.08 (5%)	0 (0%)	109.19 (7%)
People not qualified as teachers ³⁰	21.5 (2%)	0 (0%)	n/a	n/a	21.5 (1%)
Total	1,222.525 (100%)	47.2 (100%)	165.57 (100%)	62.1 (100%)	1,497.395 (100%)

²⁹ There are no special schools for deaf children in Wales.

³⁰ This category was included in the separate survey for special schools for deaf children in England and Northern Ireland carried out by CRIDE. It was not included in the CRIDE survey for Scotland which includes questions on special schools for deaf children in Scotland.

The following table instead shows the numbers of TODs in employment by their role.

Table 18: Number of TODs in employment overall by role

	England	Northern Ireland	Scotland	Wales	Total
Working mainly as a peripatetic TOD	632.405 (52%)	25.8 (55%)	91.37 (55%)	34.8 (56%)	784.375 (52%)
Working mainly in a resource provision ³¹	290.48 (24%)	3 (6%)	54.2 (33%)	24.5 (39%)	372.18 (25%)
Working mainly in a special school or college not specifically for deaf children or young people	2 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (2%)	3 (0%)
Working flexibly as a peripatetic TOD, in a resource provision and/or in a special school or college not specifically for deaf children or young people ³²	5.2 (0%)	0 (0%)	2.6 (2%)	1.8 (3%)	9.6 (1%)
Working mainly in a special school for deaf children	292.44 (24%)	18.4 (39%)	17.4 (11%)	n/a	328.24 (22%)
Total	1,222.525 (100%)	47.2 (100%)	165.57 (100%)	62.1 (100%)	1497.395 (100%)

Figures for TODs in cochlear implant programmes across England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales were collected in a separate short survey. Responses were received from 15 cochlear implant programmes. There were at least 25.5 fte fully qualified TODs reported in post, and 1.2 fte vacancies reported. This means there are 26.7 fte posts, of which 4% were vacant. There were no TODs in training for the mandatory qualification or not in training, or people who have not qualified as a teacher reported.

The following tables look in more detail at numbers and proportions of TODs in different roles or settings.

³¹ In the CRIDE survey, we use the term 'resource provision' to include all schools with a resource provision, base or unit, specifically for deaf children and young people, regardless of whether staff in the resource provision are employed by the local authority or by the school.

³² In Scotland this category also includes TODs working in special schools for deaf children and young people (i.e. respondents could include any TODs who worked flexibly between settings, including to/from a special school for deaf children).

Table 19: Number of full time equivalent (fte) peripatetic or visiting TODs in employment

	England	Northern Ireland	Scotland	Wales	Total
TODs with the mandatory qualification	575.305 (91%)	24 (93%)	63.89 (70%)	34.8 (100%)	697.995 (89%)
Teachers in training for the mandatory qualification or intending to train within 3 years	50.4 (8%)	1.8 (7%)	25.4 (28%)	0 (0%)	77.6 (10%)
Qualified teachers without the mandatory qualification and not in training	6.7 (1%)	0 (0%)	2.08 (2%)	0 (0%)	8.78 (1%)
Total	632.405 (100%)	25.8 (100%)	91.37 (100%)	34.8 (100%)	784.375 (100%)

Table 20: Number of full time equivalent (fte) TODs in employment in resource provisions

	England	Northern Ireland	Scotland	Wales	Total
TODs with the mandatory qualification	221.53 (76%)	2 (67%)	31.6 (58%)	23.1 (94%)	278.23 (75%)
Teachers in training for the mandatory qualification or intending to train within 3 years	56.65 (20%)	1 (33%)	16.6 (31%)	1.4 (6%)	75.65 (20%)
Qualified teachers without the mandatory qualification and not in training	12.3 (4%)	0 (0%)	6 (11%)	0 (0%)	18.30 (5%)
Total	290.48 (100%)	3 (100%)	54.2 (100%)	24.5 (100%)	372.18 (100%)

Table 21: Number of full time equivalent (fte) TODs in employment working in a special school for deaf children and young people³³

	England	Northern Ireland	Scotland	Total
Teachers of the Deaf with the mandatory qualification	163.23 (56%)	6.6 (36%)	9.2 (53%)	179.03 (55%)
Teachers in training for the mandatory qualification or intending to train within 3 years	35.4 (12%)	2 (11%)	8.2 (47%)	45.6 (14%)
Qualified teachers without the mandatory qualification and not in training	72.31 (25%)	9.8 (53%)	0 (0%)	82.11 (25%)
People not qualified as teachers ³⁴	21.5 (7%)	0 (0%)	n/a	21.5 (7%)
Total	292.44 (100%)	18.4 (100%)	17.4 (100%)	328.24 (100%)

There are no special schools for deaf children and young people in Wales.

Table 22: Number of full time equivalent (fte) TODs in employment working in a special school or college not specifically for deaf children or young people

	England	Northern Ireland	Scotland	Wales	Total
TODs with the mandatory qualification	2 (100%)	0	0	1 (100%)	3 (100%)
Teachers in training for the mandatory qualification or intending to train within 3 years	0 (0%)	0	0	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Qualified teachers without the mandatory qualification and not in training	0 (0%)	0	0	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Total	2 (100%)	0	0	1 (100%)	3 (100%)

³³ Please note that the figures for Scotland in this table are taken from the CRIDE Scotland survey whilst the other figures are taken from the separate survey of special schools in England and Northern Ireland that was carried out by CRIDE.

³⁴ This category was included in the separate survey for special schools for deaf children in England and Northern Ireland carried out by CRIDE. It was not included in the CRIDE survey for Scotland which included questions on special schools for deaf children in Scotland.

Table 23: Number of full time equivalent (fte) TODs in employment working flexibly between the peripatetic service, resource provisions and/or a special school or college not specifically for deaf children and young people

	England	Northern Ireland	Scotland ³⁵	Wales	Total
TODs with the mandatory qualification	4.2 (81%)	0	1.6 (62%)	1.8 (100%)	7.6 (79%)
Teachers in training for the mandatory qualification or intending to train within 3 years	1 (19%)	0	1 (38%)	0 (0%)	2 (21%)
Qualified teachers without the mandatory qualification and not in training	0 (0%)	0	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Total	5.2 (100%)	0	2.6 (100%)	1.8 (100%)	9.6 (100%)

Changes in numbers of TODs

The following tables look at changes in numbers of TODs over time.

Particular caution is needed in interpreting these figures because of variation in response rates from year to year. For example, the surveys have not consistently asked about TODs in special schools for deaf children over the years.³⁶ For this reason, figures looking at long-term changes in TODs since 2011 exclude TODs in special schools for deaf children.³⁷ There are also different tables looking at short-term changes since 2024, that both include and exclude TODs in special schools.

It must also be taken into account that there are different response rates to the surveys in different years in different nations, and for the separate survey to special schools for deaf children.

³⁵ In Scotland this category also includes TODs working in special schools for deaf children and young people.

³⁶ The Scotland survey to services has included questions on TODs working in special schools for deaf children since 2017. Figures for TODs in special schools for deaf children have been collected from these schools in England since 2018, and from the school in Northern Ireland since 2019.

³⁷ Additional caution is needed with the Scotland figures. From 2017 the CRIDE Scotland survey started to explicitly ask about TODs in special schools for deaf children. However, feedback suggests that they may have been included in previous years also. If this is the case, then a long-term comparison of TODs with the MQ, including those in special schools for deaf children in 2025 would show a 36% decline rather than a 41% decline, and long-term comparison of TODs in Scotland with the MQ or in training, including those in special schools for deaf children in 2025 would show a 24% decline, rather than the 33% decline shown in the relevant tables.

Additional caution is also needed with changes in England figures this year as one service did not provide a complete response to the survey and the data was not included in the analysis.

Table 24: Long-term trends in number of qualified TODs (excluding TODs in schools for deaf children in 2025)

	England	Northern Ireland	Scotland	Wales	Total
2025 total (fte)	803.035	26	97.09	60.7	986.825
2011 total (fte)	1,062.11	34.9	165.3	71.95	1,334.259
Difference (fte)	-259.074	-8.9	-68.21	-11.25	-347.434
% change	-24%	-26%	-41% ³⁸	-16%	-26%

Table 25: Long-term trends in number of qualified TODs **and** trainee TODs (excluding TODs in schools for deaf children in 2025)

	England	Northern Ireland	Scotland	Wales	Total
2025 total (fte)	911.085	28.8	140.09	62.1	1,142.075
2011 total (fte)	1,153.71	37.3	208.5	73.95	1,473.459
Difference (fte)	-242.624	-8.5	-68.41	-11.85	-331.384
% change	-21%	-23%	-33% ³⁹	-16%	-22%

Table 26: Short-term trends in number of qualified TODs (excluding TODs in schools for deaf children)

	England	Northern Ireland	Scotland	Wales	Total
2025 total (fte)	803.035	26	97.09	60.7	986.825
2024 total (fte)	803.54	21.6	104.88	60.8	990.82
Difference (fte)	-0.505	4.4	-7.79	-0.1	-3.995
% change	0%	20%	-7%	0%	0%

Table 27: Short-term trends in number of qualified TODs **and** trainee TODs (excluding TODs in schools for deaf children)

	England	Northern Ireland	Scotland	Wales	Total
2025 total (fte)	911.085	28.8	140.09	62.1	1,142.075
2024 total (fte)	934.84	27.4	144.88	61.8	1,168.92
Difference (fte)	-23.755	1.4	-4.79	0.3	-26.845
% change	-3%	5%	-3%	0%	-2%

³⁸ From 2017 the CRIDE Scotland survey started to explicitly ask about TODs in special schools for deaf children. However, feedback suggests that they may have been included in previous years also. If this is the case, then a long-term comparison of TODs with the MQ, including those in special schools for deaf children in 2025 would show a 36% decline rather than a 41% decline

³⁹ From 2017 the CRIDE Scotland survey started to explicitly ask about TODs in special schools for deaf children. However, feedback suggests that they may have been included in previous years also. If this is the case, then a long-term comparison of TODs with the MQ, including those in special schools for deaf children in 2025 would show a 24% decline, rather than the 33% decline shown in the relevant tables.

Table 28: Short-term trends in number of qualified TODs (including TODs in schools for deaf children)

	England	Northern Ireland	Scotland	Wales	Total
2025 total (fte)	966.265	32.6	106.29	60.7	1,165.855
2024 total (fte)	962.27	28.4	116.38	60.8	1,167.85
Difference (fte)	3.995	4.2	-10.09	-0.1	-1.995
% change	0%	15%	-9%	0%	0%

Table 29: Short-term trends in number of qualified TODs **and** trainee TODs (including TODs in special schools for deaf children)

	England	Northern Ireland	Scotland	Wales	Total
2025 total (fte)	1,109.715	37.4	157.49	62.1	1,366.705
2024 total (fte)	1,129.01	36.2	161.28	61.8	1,388.29
Difference (fte)	-19.295	1.2	-3.79	0.3	-21.585
% change	-2%	3%	-2%	0%	-2%

Additional qualifications held by TODs

Table 30: Number of TODs (FTE) with an additional qualification in early years support⁴⁰

	Number of TODs	Percentage of TODs in post in each nation
England	38.05	4%
Northern Ireland	0	0%
Scotland	10.5	6%
Wales	2.5	4%
UK	51.05	4%

In 2023, the number of TODs with an additional qualification in early years support stood at 65.25 fte. The 2025 figures there has been a 12% decline since then.

⁴⁰ Not including TODs in special schools for deaf children in England, Northern Ireland or Wales. Including TODs in special schools for deaf children in Scotland.

Table 31: Number of TODs (FTE) with an additional qualification in educational audiology⁴¹

	Number of TODs	Percentage of TODs in post in each nation
England	52.3	6%
Northern Ireland	2	7%
Scotland	2.1	1%
Wales	1.2	2%
UK	57.6	5%

In 2023, the number of TODs with an additional qualification in educational audiology stood at 63.3 fte. There has been a 9% decline since then.

The 2025 CRIDE survey included questions about the BSL language skills of TODs, and whether TODs were themselves deaf.

Table 32: Number of TODs (FTE) that use BSL as a first language OR have a level 3 qualification or SCQF 6 (or equivalent) or above⁴²

	Number of TODs	Percentage of TODs in post in each nation
England	245.6	26%
Northern Ireland ⁴³	9	31%
Scotland	56.14	34%
Wales	20.9	34%
UK	331.64	28%

Table 33: Number of TODs (FTE) that are deaf⁴⁴

	Number of TODs	Percentage of TODs in post in each nation
England	96.8	10%
Northern Ireland	5	17%
Scotland	15	9%
Wales	7	11%
UK	123.8	10%

Some services reported that they did not provide, or did not hold figures on TODs who are deaf, so the figures in the table above should be used with caution.

⁴¹ Not including TODs in special schools for deaf children in England, Northern Ireland or Wales. Including TODs in special schools for deaf children in Scotland.

⁴² Based on information provided by heads of services, not based on looking at certificates or any independent assessment of BSL skill levels. Not including TODs in special schools for deaf children in England, Northern Ireland or Wales. Including TODs in special schools for deaf children in Scotland.

⁴³ In the Northern Ireland survey this question asked about BSL or ISL.

⁴⁴ Not including TODs in special schools for deaf children in England, Northern Ireland or Wales. Including TODs in special schools for deaf children in Scotland.

Other specialist staff

There were 678.72 fte specialist staff, other than TODs, in the roles specified in the table below, who are directly employed by services across the UK⁴⁵. At the time the surveys were completed, there were 52.38 fte vacant posts. If the number of vacant posts is added to the numbers of other specialist staff in employment, this means there were 731.1 fte other specialist staff posts, of which 7% were vacant.

The following table provides a breakdown of other specialist staff in employment, directly employed by specialist education services for deaf children by type of role.

Table 34: Number of full time equivalent (fte) specialist staff in post, directly employed by services⁴⁶

	England	Northern Ireland	Scotland	Wales	UK
Teaching assistants/Pupil support assistants/Classroom support assistants/Learning support assistants etc	339 (58%)	0	34.99 (53%)	21.75 (81%)	395.74 (58%)
Communication support workers etc	127.83 (22%)	0	23.75 (36%)	3 (11%)	154.58 (23%)
NRCPD/SRLPDC registered BSL/English interpreters	6.6 (1%)	0	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	7.6 (1%)
Deaf instructors/Deaf role models/Sign language instructors etc	57.27 (10%)	0	4.4 (7%)	0.87 (3%)	62.54 (9%)
Educational audiologists/Audiologists in Education who do not also hold a qualification as a TOD	3.48 (1%)	0	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3.48 (1%)
Technicians et al	34.18 (6%)	0	0 (0%)	1 (4%)	35.18 (5%)
Speech and language therapists	5.7 (1%)	0	2 (3%)	0.1 (0%)	7.8 (1%)
Family support workers/Liaison officers	11.8 (2%)	0	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	11.8 (2%)
Social workers/Social workers for deaf children	0 (0%)	0	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Total	585.86 (100%)	0	66.14 (100%)	26.72 (100%)	678.72 (100%)

⁴⁵ The figures for staff in post were calculated by subtracting the vacant posts reported by services from the total posts reported by services.

⁴⁶ The figures for staff in post were calculated by subtracting the vacant posts reported by services from the total posts reported by services.

In the 2025 survey services were asked to report other specialist support staff in post, in roles other than those specified in the table above, that were directly employed by the peripatetic services. Services in England reported 44.11 fte other posts in employment, and services in Scotland reported 6.4 other posts in employment. No other posts were reported by the services in Northern Ireland or Wales.

In terms of changes since the 2024 survey to the UK figures for the two most common roles:

- there has been a 3% fall in the number of teaching assistants (or similar) that are directly employed by services, from 409.55 to 395.74 fte
- there has been an 8% fall in the number of communication support workers that are directly employed by services, from 167.46 to 154.58 fte.

It should be emphasised that these figures relate to other specialist staff that are directly employed by the peripatetic services. The survey did not ask about other specialist staff that may be employed by schools or other services.

PART 3: Support provided

Table 35: Where specialist education services are based

	England	Scotland	Wales	Total
Based in the local authority	121 (92%)	22 (73%)	13 (93%)	156 (89%)
Based in a school with a resource provision	4 (3%)	3 (10%)	0 (0%)	7 (4%)
Based in a special school for deaf children	1 (1%)	3 (10%)	0 (0%)	4 (2%)
Based in a special school not specifically for deaf children	1 (1%)	2 (7%)	0 (0%)	3 (2%)
Provided by another body or organisation	5 (4%)	0 (0%)	1 (7%)	6 (3%)
Total	132 (100%)	30 (100%)	14 (100%)	176 (100%)

As there is one service covering the whole Education Authority in Northern Ireland, this is not included in the above table.

Number of resource provisions

In the CRIDE survey, we use the term ‘resource provision’ to include all schools with a resource provision, base or unit, specifically for deaf children and young people, regardless of whether staff in the resource provision are employed by the local authority or by the school.

Table 36: Number of specialist resource provisions for deaf children

	England ⁴⁷⁴⁸	Northern Ireland	Scotland	Wales	Total
For primary-aged deaf children	122.5	1	8	9	140.5
For secondary-aged deaf children	92.5	1	9	10	112.5
Total	215	2	17	19	253

⁴⁷ The England figures for resource provisions include one resource provision for both primary and secondary aged children. We have reported this as 0.5 in each age group.

⁴⁸ One service in England reported two resource provisions in their area in the past, whereas this year they appear to have not obtained this information for their survey response. Additionally, one service in England did not provide a full survey response this year but reported one resource provision in 2024.

Table 37: Number of resource provisions reported by responding services over successive years⁴⁹

	England	Northern Ireland	Scotland	Wales	Total
2025	215 ⁵⁰	2	17	19	253
2024	220	2	16 ⁵¹	19	257
2023	227 ⁵²	2	15 ⁵³	19	263
2022	230	2	16	19 ⁵⁴	267
2021	237	3	14	20	274
2019	246	3	22	24	295
2018	240	3	22	25	290
2017	251	3	15	25	294
2016	260	3	No survey	24	287

Table 38: Population of deaf children covered by each resource provision

	Average ratio
England	211:1
Northern Ireland	764:1
Scotland	214:1
Wales	113:1
UK	208:1

This is intended to indicate the spread of resource provisions across each nation, relative to the overall population of deaf children. It shows that there was one resource provision for every 208 deaf children across the whole of the UK.

This is **not** a measure of the number of places available in or individual deaf children enrolled at each resource provision; figures for places or deaf children enrolled will vary from provision to provision. It should be noted that this figure may be influenced by a range of different factors, including, for example, the number (if any) of special schools for deaf children in each nation and how urban/rural different areas are. It should also be noted that the information services are able to provide on the numbers of deaf children in their area varies in terms of gaps and known issues.

⁴⁹ 2020 data not included because of lower response rate to the survey.

⁵⁰ One service in England reported two resource provisions in their area in the past, whereas this year they appear to have not obtained this information for their survey response. Additionally, one service in England did not provide a full survey response this year but reported one resource provision in 2024. Assuming these are all still open, this would mean a total reduction of two resource provisions in England since 2024 instead.

⁵¹ A resource provision in Scotland was reported as opening since the 2023 survey.

⁵² One service in England stated that two previous resource provisions merged into one resource provision since CRIDE 2022.

⁵³ We believe this apparent decrease in Scotland from 16 resource provisions in 2022 to 15 in 2023 is due to a special school for the deaf being reported in error as a resource provision in the previous survey.

⁵⁴ In one area in Wales, two resource provisions that were recorded separately in 2021 were recorded by the service as one in 2022, following both moving to one site.

PART 4: Support following identification of deafness

We asked services how many referrals they received over the calendar year of 2024.

Table 39: Referrals

	England	Northern Ireland	Scotland	Wales	Total
Number of referrals for children identified as deaf through the newborn hearing screening programme	1,090 (13%)	30 (25%)	81 (16%)	41 (8%)	1,242 (14%)
Number of referrals for children identified as deaf outside of the newborn hearing programme and before they had started statutory education	1,967 (24%)	19 (16%)	115 (23%)	78 (15%)	2,179 (23%)
Number of referrals for children identified as deaf outside of the newborn hearing programme and after they had started statutory education	5,214 (63%)	72 (60%)	304 (61%)	385 (76%)	5,975 (64%)
Total	8,271 (100%)	121 (100%)	500 (100%)	504 (100%)	9,396 (100%)

The total number of referrals across the UK has increased by 7% from 8,784 received by services in the calendar year of 2023.

We asked services about arrangements for first TOD visits for referrals made during the summer holidays.

Table 40: Services arrangements to provide TOD first visits for referrals made during the summer holidays

	England	Northern Ireland	Scotland	Wales	Total
Cover arrangements are in place to enable a TOD to provide a visit during the summer holidays within the same timescales as if referred during term time	76 (58%)	1 (100%)	1 (3%)	1 (7%)	79 (45%)
Cover arrangements are in place to enable a TOD to provide a visit during the summer holidays but not necessarily within the same timescales as if referred during term time	20 (15%)	0 (100%)	2 (7%)	5 (36%)	27 (15%)
A TOD visits as soon as possible after the school holidays	12 (9%)	0 (100%)	21 (70%)	4 (29%)	37 (21%)
Other	24 (18%)	0 (100%)	6 (20%)	4 (29%)	34 (19%)
<i>Total</i>	132 (100%)	1 (100%)	30 (100%)	14 (100%)	177 (100%)

Details on 'other' arrangements that services have for arranging first TOD visits for referrals made during the summer holidays in each country are available in the reports for each country.

PART 5: Background and methodology

CRIDE is a consortium bringing together a range of organisations and individuals with a common interest in using research to improve the educational outcomes achieved by deaf children. At the time the survey was sent out, representatives included: British Association of Teachers of Deaf Children and Young People, British Association of Teachers of Deaf Children and Young People Cymru, Frank Barnes School for Deaf Children, Longwill School for the Deaf, National Deaf Children's Society, Royal School for the Deaf Derby, UCL, University of Edinburgh, former heads of services or consultants with expertise in deafness, and specialist education services for deaf children in Cambridgeshire, Camden, Kent, Leeds and STARS Sensory Support Service (Middlesbrough, Stockton, Hartlepool, Redcar and Cleveland).

This is the ninth year that a CRIDE Scotland reference group has been in place. Members of this group have worked to improve how the CRIDE survey fits within the Scottish education context, whilst ensuring the data collected can still be compared with the rest of the UK. At the time the survey was sent out, representatives included: National Deaf Children's Society, Scottish Sensory Centre, University of Edinburgh, British Association of Teachers of Deaf Children and Young People, Ayrshire Hearing Impairment Service, West Lothian Hearing Impaired Service and Highland Deaf Education Service.

The survey alternates from year to year between a standard survey and a survey with a mix of core and thematic questions. The 2025 survey was the version with a standard survey. The survey was disseminated to services in February 2025 by National Deaf Children's Society staff on behalf of CRIDE.

Analysis of the results using Excel and drafting of this report was largely completed by the National Deaf Children's Society, with guidance and clearance from members of CRIDE.

CRIDE would like to thank the services for taking the time to complete this survey. The results from this survey will be used for research purposes, to influence government policy and to campaign to protect funding and services for deaf children.

If you have any feedback or questions on the results, please contact cride@ndcs.org.uk.