



Education & Skills

Postal address:
Coventry City Council
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Council House
Coventry
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www.coventry.gov.uk

Customer reference:
Our reference: REQ06686

04 February 2020

Dear

Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA)

Thank you for your request for information relating to radio aids.

You have requested the following information:

<i>Name and role of person completing this request</i>	Educational Audiologist
<i>Local authority (or authorities if replying on behalf of more than one)</i>	Coventry

Part 1: Radio aids in the early years

1. Does your service provide parents of deaf children aged 0 to 4 with radio aids/assistive listening devices for use within the home? Please tick yes if it is your service's policy to allow this (even if no radio aids/assistive listening devices are currently being provided at this time) (please select one answer)

Yes

No – please go to question 5

2. **Approximately how many deaf children aged 0 to 4 in your area have been provided by your service with a radio aid/assistive listening device to use within the home in the last year?**

One – 3 pending fitting.

3. **Please specify below the make/manufacturer of the radio aids/assistive listening devices that your service normally provides to parents of deaf children aged 0 to 4 to use within the home.**

Phonak Roger Touch

4. **Are there any particular barriers or challenges that are preventing you from making radio aids/assistive listening devices available or more widely available to parents of deaf children aged 0 to 4 to use within the home?**

Establishing consistent hearing aid use and management prior to issuing radio systems.

Part 2: Radio aids for school-aged children

5. **Does your service provide radio aids/assistive listening devices for use by deaf children of school-age within the home? Please tick yes if it is your service's policy to allow this (even if no radio aids/assistive listening devices are currently being provided at this time) (please select one answer)**

Yes

No

6. **Are there any particular barriers or challenges that are preventing you from making radio aids/assistive listening devices available or more widely available to parents of deaf children of school-age to use within the home?**

Ensuring consistent hearing aid use and responsibility for care and management of equipment.

Part 3: Radio aids for deaf young people post-16

7. In what circumstances would your service provide radio aids for deaf young people to use once they had left school? (please tick all that apply)

- Radio aids are not provided to any deaf young people who have left school**
- For use in further education**
- For use in higher education**
- For use in apprenticeships, internships or training**
- For use in paid employment**
- For general use in the home**
- Other – please specify**

Radio aids provided for post 16 if student continues in School 6th Form (16-18)

Part 4: Radio aids for all children – general questions

8. Does your service have a policy which includes the provision of radio aids to deaf children/assistive listening devices for use within the home? (please select one answer)

- Yes**
- No**

9. If yes, please attach a copy of your policy to your response to this FOI or provide a link to where we can find this policy on your website (please select one answer)

- Not applicable – we don't have a policy**
- I have attached a copy of our policy to our response**
- I have provided a link to our response in the box below**

10. Are any of the below factors taken into account in decisions on whether radio aids/assistive listening devices can be provided to individual families to use?

If your service does not provide radio aids at all to any child or young person to use within the home, please skip this question and go straight to question 12.

Factor	Is this a factor?	If you have said yes or sometimes, please outline how and the circumstances in which this factor would be taken into account
Parents required to take out insurance as a condition before radio aids/assistive listening devices can be provided to use within the home	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sometimes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/a – radio aids can't be taken home	It is encouraged rather than demanded as we are not able to enforce it.
Child must be of a certain age	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	
Child must have a certain level of hearing loss	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Moderate minimum
Child must have a statutory plan: (e.g. an Education, Health and Care plan (England), a statement of SEN (Wales/Northern Ireland) or a coordinated support plan (Scotland))	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	
Parents must leave a deposit or make a contribution to the cost	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/a – radio aids aren't provided to parents to use in the home	
Education setting must leave a deposit or make a contribution to the cost	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	

11. Are there any other eligibility criteria, factors or conditions relating to the provision of radio aids/assistive listening devices to use within the home? If so, please outline how and the circumstances in which this would be taken into account.

Consistent hearing aid user for at least 12 months. If an individual is a good hearing aid user and parents manage equipment well and are keen to try R/S we would consider earlier provision on a case by case basis.

12. In your area, are radio aids/assistive listening devices jointly commissioned between health and education? (please select one answer)

- Yes - always
- Yes - in most cases (more than half the time)
- Sometimes but mostly not (less than half the time)
- No

13. Please use this space if you have any comments or if there is anything else you want to tell us about your responses in this section.

We have a policy that allows for individual consideration of each child and there are specific circumstances.

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Should you wish to make any further requests for information, you may find what you are looking for is already published on the [Council's web site](#) and in particular its FOI/EIR [Disclosure log](#), [Council's Publication Scheme](#), [Open Data](#) and [Facts about Coventry](#).

If you are unhappy with the handling of your request, you can ask us to review our response. Requests for reviews should be submitted within 40 days of the date of receipt of our response to your original request – email: infogov@coventry.gov.uk

If you are unhappy with the outcome of our review, you can write to the Information Commissioner, who can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF or email casework@ico.org.uk.

Please remember to quote the reference number above in your response.

Yours sincerely

Project Support & Operational Finance Officer



SENSORY TEAM

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Team Leader:

Radio Aid Policy

‘Every deaf child should be considered as a potential candidate for provision with a personal radio aid...’ QS1 (Quality Standards for the use of personal radio aids, National Deaf Children’s Society 2017).

The Coventry Hearing Impaired Team currently consider providing children and young people (CYP) aged 0-25 years with assistive listening devices (radio aids) according to each child’s needs. This includes pre school aged children at home, those in early years settings and mainstream schools, those in special schools and those who attend the Coventry Hearing Impairment Resource Bases.

The Service aims to meet QS1 through effective management of the specialist equipment budget which takes account of the available resources.

It is *essential* that equipment is looked after and kept safely by the school and the family if used at home.

Under the Equality Act 2010, local authorities and education settings have a duty to ‘make reasonable adjustments’ to ensure that deaf children are not disadvantaged. There is a specific duty to provide ‘auxiliary aids’ when they are needed. A radio aid is an example of an ‘auxiliary aid’.

Pre-school children

- Radio aids are issued by the Service following discussion with the family, Teacher of the Deaf (ToD), health professionals and the Educational Audiologist. The timing of the issue of the equipment will be led by these discussions and will be different for each child
- All children under 3 are fitted with integrated, tamperproof receivers in line with health and safety guidance issued by Phonak so that the younger child is unable to access the batteries in the hearing aids
- The Teacher of the Deaf will support the management of the Radio Aid at home and work with parents to develop their knowledge and expertise in using the equipment effectively, ensuring that it is working optimally
- If the equipment is no longer working or a fault is identified it will be sent off for repair by the Service. A temporary replacement, *if available*, may be given.
- When the young person reaches statutory school age, at the next hearing aid upgrade the integrated receivers will be replaced with ear level detachable receivers. This allows for the continued upgrading of hearing aid models and facilitates the continuity of optimal listening through the radio aid system. The use of ear level receivers ensures the sustainability of provision for all pupils across Coventry as it enables compatibly with any future upgraded hearing aid technology
- For children who have cochlear implants the decision and timing of the issue of a radio aid will be determined in collaboration with the family and the Cochlear Implant Centre

School-aged pupils

- Coventry Hearing Impaired Team consider providing radio aids for pupils in mainstream schools, special schools and for those who attend Local Authority Resource provision
- Pupils who previously had integrated receivers will transfer to ear level detachable receivers at the next hearing aid upgrade as part of the planned management pathway between the Service and Audiology. This enables a seamless transition and continuity of optimal listening with the radio aid
- The school are required to sign a 'Loan Form' to accept responsibility for the care of the equipment on the school premises.
- Schools are asked to ensure they have a procedure for keeping the equipment safe in school and that the young person is able to access their equipment easily at the beginning of the day and are able to charge it at night
- In the event of a piece of equipment no longer working, the Teacher of the Deaf will check and identify any faults and if necessary will arrange for the system to be sent for repair. This may mean that the pupil is without their equipment for a short period of time. A temporary replacement, *if available*, may be given.
- The radio aid may be taken home to facilitate access to extra curricular activities and groups outside school. This needs to be agreed with the school and the visiting Teacher of the Deaf and a home loan form filled in by the family, whereby they accept responsibility for looking after the equipment. The form will be made available by the visiting Teacher of the Deaf

Colleges and Independent Schools

We advise Colleges and Independent schools about options available to them regarding purchase of Radio Aids for students.

Balancing and verifying educational amplification

The Coventry Hearing Impaired Team use the *Quality Standards for the use of personal radio aids, National Deaf Children's Society 2017* as the Gold Standard

QS3 states that

The personal radio aid must be set up with the child's individual hearing aids or implants to ensure that the radio signal provides the desired advantage.

- The Teacher of the Deaf and/or the Educational Audiologist will set up the radio aid and balance the additional equipment to the personal amplification (hearing aids or cochlear implants)
- The radio aid will routinely be verified in the testbox by the visiting Teacher of the Deaf, at intervals recommended in the Good Practice Guide for Radio Aids

QS4 states that

The child's listening response must be checked with the complete system in place

- Radio Aids will be objectively verified regularly using recognised speech testing procedures and subjectively via user feedback

References

Quality Standards for the use of personal radio aids, National Deaf Children's Society 2017
www.ndcs.org.uk

Good Practice Guide for Radio Aids www.fmworkinggroup.org.uk