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### *Parents' and teachers' perceptions of hearing impaired children in primary schools*

Linda Robinson

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PARENTS' AND TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF HEARING  
IMPAIRED CHILDREN IN ORDINARY SCHOOLS

Volumes 1 and 2

Volume 2

Linda ROBINSON

Thesis submitted in fulfillment of the  
requirements for the award of M.A. (Ed.)  
University of Durham, School of Education.

1989



17 JUL 1989

VOLUME TWO

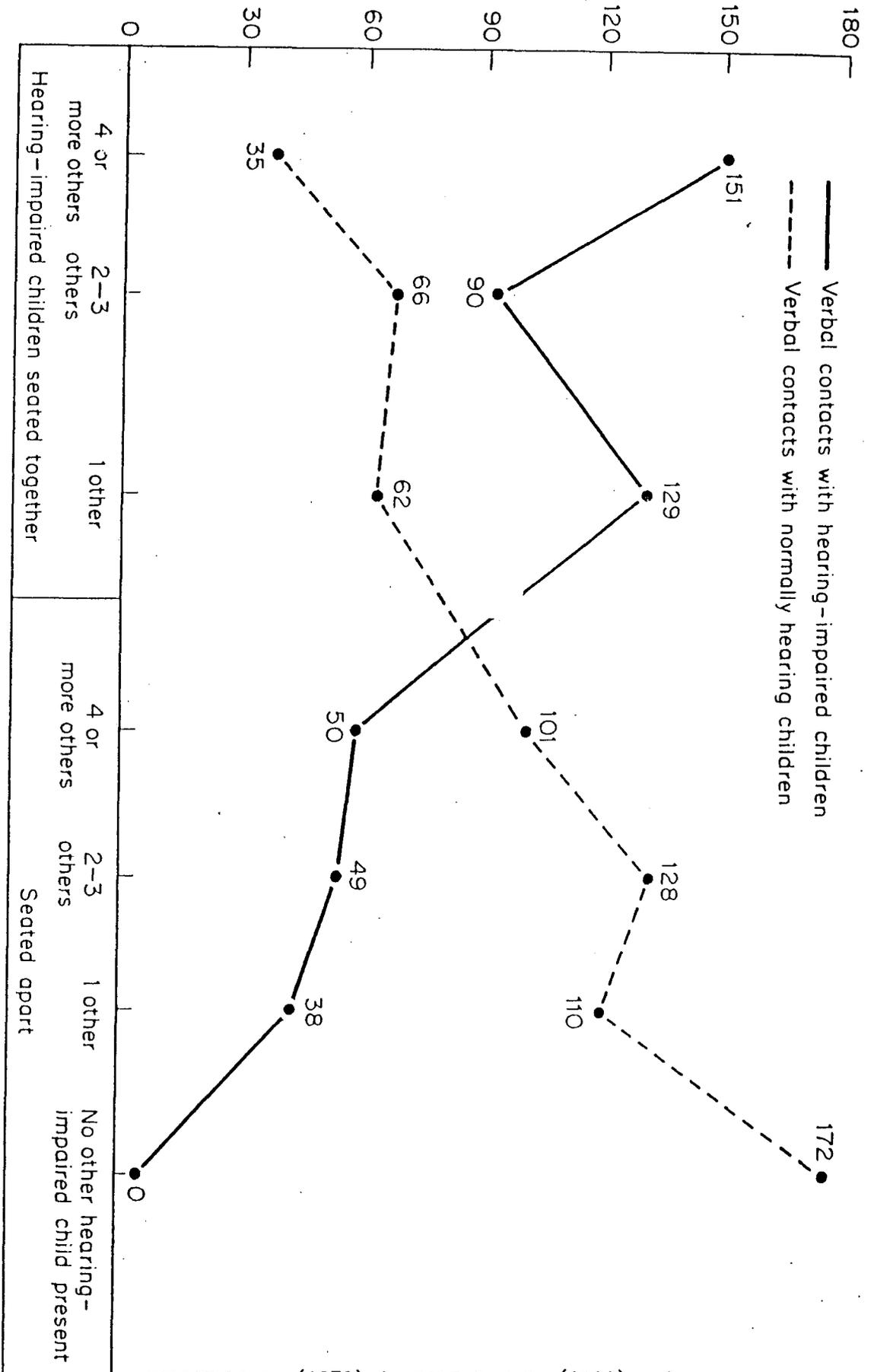
APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1.	Interaction of Hearing Impaired Children with their hearing and hearing impaired peer groups .....	1
APPENDIX 2.	Prompt questions for parents' interview .....	2
APPENDIX 3.	Prompt questions for teacher's interview .....	4
APPENDIX 4.	Teachers' questionnaire .....	6
APPENDIX 5.	Audiograms .....	11
APPENDIX 6.	Examples of free writing .....	16
APPENDIX 7.	Teacher ratings of children compared to peer group .....	20
APPENDIX 8.	David : Parents' interview .....	24
APPENDIX 9.	David : Teacher's interview .....	41
APPENDIX 10.	John : Parent's interview .....	52
APPENDIX 11.	John : Teacher's interview .....	60
APPENDIX 12.	Mark : Parent's interview .....	71
APPENDIX 13.	Mark : Teacher's interview .....	89
APPENDIX 14.	Philip : Teacher's interview .....	97
APPENDIX 15.	Simon : Parents' interview .....	110

APPENDIX 16.	Simon : Teacher's interview .....	133
APPENDIX 17.	Peripatetic teacher's interview .....	142
APPENDIX 18.	David : teacher/peripatetic teacher notes on malfunction of radio aid .....	160
APPENDIX 19.	David : Number work record sheet .....	163

APPENDIX ONE

Verbal contacts in five hours



HEMMINGS I. (1972) in DALE D.M.C. (1984) p.8



APPENDIX TWO

PROMPT QUESTIONS USED FOR PARENTAL INTERVIEWS

Can you just describe ..... to me, just give me a picture of how you see him.

How old was he when you found out that he was hearing impaired?  
(if necessary) - Did you suspect beforehand?

How did you feel when you were told?

What kind of support did you get at the time?

What sort of reaction did you get from your family and friends?

Were you ever told the cause of his hearing impairment?

Have you had to bring him up differently from his brothers/sisters?

Did he go to playgroup?

What sort of things did you look for when placing him in school?

How does his hearing impairment affect him educationally?

How far do you think it has affected him socially?

How do you feel he's doing at school?

What does he like doing best at school?

What does he like doing best at home?

How does he get on with the other children in the family?

To what extent do you think he relies on lipreading?

Do you correct his speech when he is at home?

How long has he had his phonic ear? How did he get it?

Are there any problems with his aids?

Does he ever meet any other hearing impaired children? Do you meet other parents?

How do you see the role of the peripatetic teacher?

Do you have any anxieties about the future?

What advice would you give to parents of a child who had just been diagnosed as being hearing impaired?

What advice would you give to teachers?

If you had a magic wand, but you couldn't cure hearing impairment, for what would you wish?

These prompt questions were not necessarily used in the above order for each parent/ parents. The interviewer adapted the style of questioning to the response of the interviewee/s. Where it was considered appropriate, more questions were asked to tease out more in-depth responses, but this was only necessary with one interviewee in particular.

APPENDIX THREE

PROMPT QUESTIONS USED FOR TEACHERS' INTERVIEWS

Can you just describe ..... to me, just give me a picture of how you see him?

How far do you think his hearing impairment has affected him educationally?

How far do you think his hearing impairment has affected him socially?

Do you expect the same level of functioning as you do from the other children?

How do the other children view him?

Does he have one special friend, or is he a member of a group of friends?

Some people think hearing impaired children are difficult to handle. What do you think?

How much support does he get from home?

How do you think his parents view his being in this school?

How much knowledge and experience did you have about hearing impairment before ..... was admitted to your class?

Have you attended any In-Service courses on hearing impairment?

Has your attitude changed or been adapted since ..... has been in your class?

Have you adapted your teaching strategies?

Does ..... always understand what he has to do?

Has the whole programme been beneficial? To whom?

What has been the greatest difficulty?

How would you feel about having another hearing impaired child in your class at the same time as ..... ?

What do you think needs to be considered before a child is placed in ordinary school?

What support do you get?

What advice would you give to another teacher who was about to have a hearing impaired child in her class?

A similar procedure was adopted as for parental interviews ie. some extra questions might have been asked to focus the interviewee more specifically on issues.

APPENDIX FOUR

TEACHERS' QUESTIONNAIRE

INTEGRATION OF HEARING IMPAIRED CHILDREN INTO ORDINARY SCHOOLS

1. Age of child

6 7 8 9 10 11

2. Sex M F

3. Age of diagnosis (if known)

4. Are aids worn in school?

At all times Sometimes Never None issued

5. Are aids worn at home?

At all times Sometimes Never Don't know

6. Is child placed in local school?

Yes No

7. If no, how far does child travel to school?

2 miles or less 2-4 miles 4-6 miles  
6-10 miles Over 10 miles

8. Length of teaching service

0-5 years 6-10 years 11-15 years 16-20 years Over 20 years

9. Before the child was admitted to your class, were you given specific information about him/her?

Yes No

10. How was the information given?

Verbal Written Both

11. By whom was the information given?

peripatetic teacher headteacher parent  
other teacher others (please specify)

12. Did you feel the information was adequate?  
Yes      No
13. Is additional help available to the child and the class teacher?  
Yes      No
14. From whom does this help come?  
Other teacher in school      Peripatetic teacher  
Others (please specify)
15. How often is this help received?  
Once a week or more      Once a fortnight  
Once a month      Once a term
16. What form does this help take?  
A Working session with child  
B Consultation with teacher  
C Advice to teacher  
D Combination of two or more
17. Do you feel the help is sufficient for the child's needs?  
Yes      No
18. Do you feel the help is sufficient for your needs?  
Yes      No
19. How much effect does the extra help the child received have on his/her ability to cope in class?

20. How do you rate the hearing impaired child's performance compared to his/her peer group?

Comprehension of speech

- A almost normal understanding of speech
- B fairly good understanding of speech
- C moderate understanding of speech
- D some, though limited, understanding of speech
- E little or no understanding of speech

Use of speech by child

- A almost normal use of speech
- B fairly good use of speech
- C moderate use of speech
- D some, though limited, use of speech
- E little of no use of speech

Intelligibility of speech of child

- A normal
- B slightly defective
- C moderately defective
- D considerably defective
- E very considerably defective

Participation in class/discussion

- A frequent participation
- B considerable participation
- C occasional participation
- D little participation
- E no participation

Group Discussion (graded as class discussion)

- A B C D E

Written language (factual)

- A very good
- B good
- C average
- D weak
- E poor

Spelling

- A very good
- B good
- C average
- D weak
- E poor

Written language (imaginative)

- A very good
- B good
- C average
- D weak
- E poor

Fluency of Reading

- A very good
- B good
- C average
- D weak
- E poor

Understanding of mathematical concepts

- A very good
- B good
- C average
- D weak
- E poor

Mathematical reasoning ability

- A very good
- B good
- C average

- D weak
- E Poor

Sociability of child

- A always friendly and outgoing
- B usually friendly and outgoing
- C sometimes friendly and outgoing
- D rarely friendly and outgoing
- E never friendly and outgoing

Acceptance of child by peer group

- A very well accepted
- B usually well accepted
- C accepted
- D not very well accepted
- E not really accepted

Parental attitude to child

- A overprotective
- B concerned, but well adjusted
- C unconcerned, indifferent

Educational potential of home

- A much above average
- B above average
- C average
- D below average
- E much below average

APPENDIX FIVE

— EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

HEARING IMPAIRED SERVICE

HEARING ASSESSMENT

Name DAVID

School

D.O.B. Address

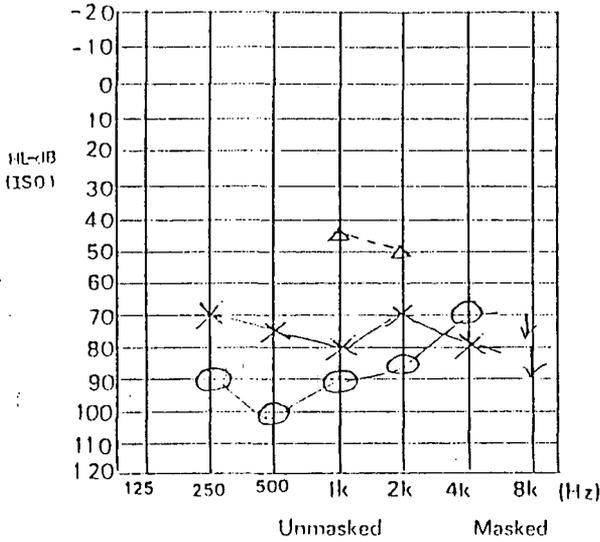
Tested by

Date 9-6-89

Pure tone audiogram

Thresholds (dBA)

*A on L unmasked.*



Air R — O — L — X —  
 Bone R — X — L — X —  
 L — Δ — L — □ —

Distraction tests

voice \_\_\_\_\_  
 drum \_\_\_\_\_  
 h/rattle \_\_\_\_\_  
 "s" \_\_\_\_\_

Performance tests

"go" \_\_\_\_\_  
 "s" \_\_\_\_\_

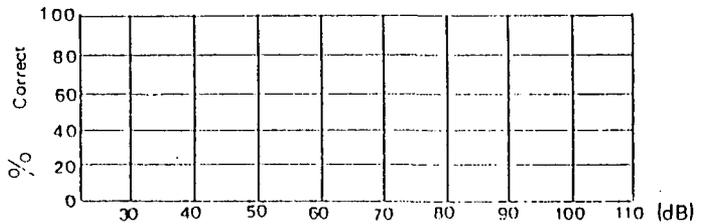
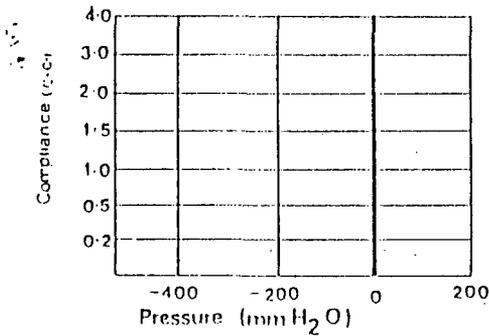
Speech tests

Kendall T.T. \_\_\_\_\_  
 M.P.T. \_\_\_\_\_

Speech Audiogram

Impedance tests

Material: A.B., M.J., M.P.T.  
 Method: tape/live voice  
 Presentation: headphones/free-field



R — O — L — X — With/without aid

Reflexes (dB):  
 250 L. \_\_\_\_\_ R. \_\_\_\_\_  
 500 L. \_\_\_\_\_ R. \_\_\_\_\_  
 1k L. \_\_\_\_\_ R. \_\_\_\_\_  
 2k L. \_\_\_\_\_ R. \_\_\_\_\_  
 4k L. \_\_\_\_\_ R. \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: *Very variable hearing*

*levels due to frequent conductive*  
*overlays*

HEARING IMPAIRED SERVICE

HEARING ASSESSMENT

Name JOHN

School .....

D.O.B. ....

Address .....

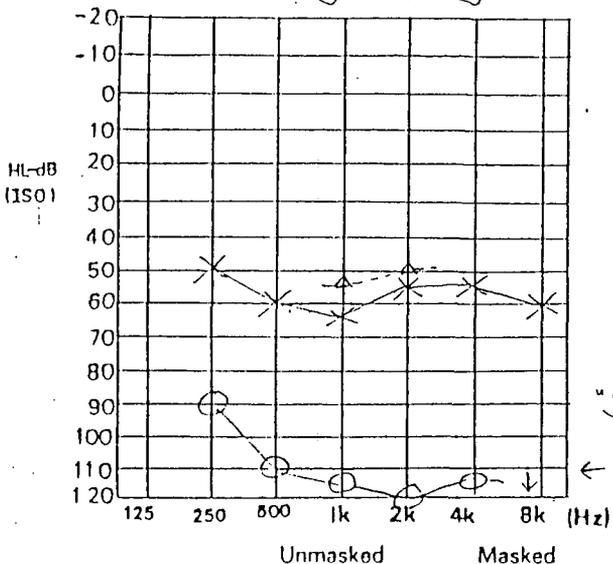
Tested by .....

Date 21-10-86

Pure tone audiogram (8-10-86)

(21-10-86)

Had cold and cough early October '86



"Shadow" audiogram

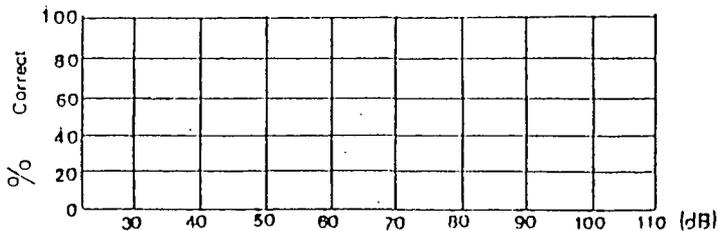
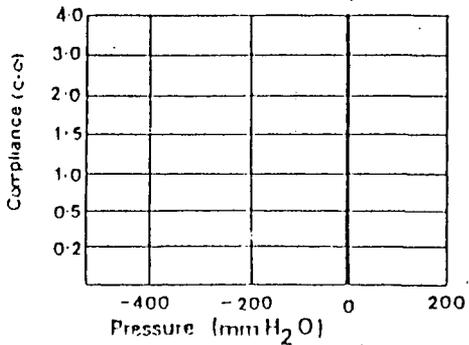
Distraction tests	Thresholds (dBA)	
	L.	R.
voice	---	---
drum	---	---
h/f rattle	---	---
"s"	---	---
Performance tests		
"go"	---	---
"s"	---	---
Speech tests		
Kendall T.T.	---	---
M.P.T.	---	---

Air R — O — L — X —  
 Bone R — Δ — L — □ —

Speech Audiogram

Impedance tests

Material: A.B., M.J., M.P.T.  
 Method: tape/live voice  
 Presentation: headphones/free-field



R — O — L — X — With/without aid

Reflexes (dB):	L.	R.
250	---	---
500	---	---
1k	---	---
2k	---	---
4k	---	---

Comments: now rejects Phonak  
 "in right ear says it is 'not working'  
 deterioration could be due to  
 "conductive overlay" - but seems  
 very severe in effect if so.?"

— EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

HEARING IMPAIRED SERVICE

HEARING ASSESSMENT

Name ... MARK

School ...

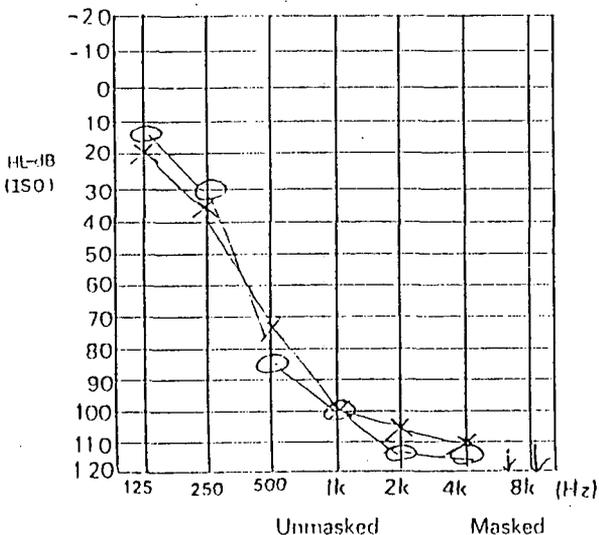
D.O.B. ... Address ...

Tested by ... Date 28-1-87

Pure tone audiogram

Thresholds (dBA)

Audiogram for review 12-2-87  
No reliable "bone conduction" response.



	L.	R.
<b>Distraction tests</b>		
voice	-----	-----
drum	-----	-----
h/f rattle	-----	-----
"s"	-----	-----
-----	-----	-----
-----	-----	-----
<b>Performance tests</b>		
"go"	-----	-----
"s"	-----	-----
<b>Speech tests</b>		
Kendall T.T.	-----	-----
M.P.T.	-----	-----

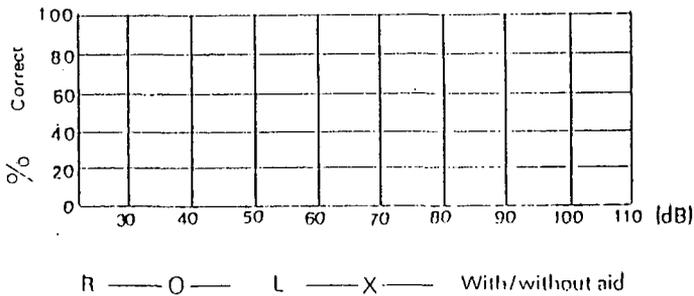
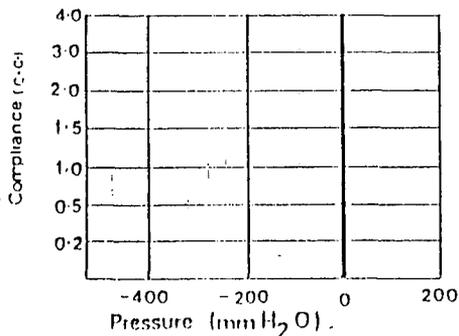
Air R — O —  
L — X —  
Bone R ) — Δ —  
L ) — □ —

Speech Audiogram

Impedance tests

Material: A.B., M.J., M.P.T.  
Method: tape/live voice  
Presentation: headphones/free-field

} See attached analysis



Reflexes (dB):	L.	R.
250	-----	-----
500	-----	-----
1k	-----	-----
2k	-----	-----
4k	-----	-----

Comments: intended progressive  
sensory-neural bilateral high frequency  
hearing loss currently deteriorating  
more rapidly than older sisters  
loss, at this age



EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

HEARING IMPAIRED SERVICE

HEARING ASSESSMENT

Name ..... SIMON .....

School .....

D.O.B. ....

Address .....

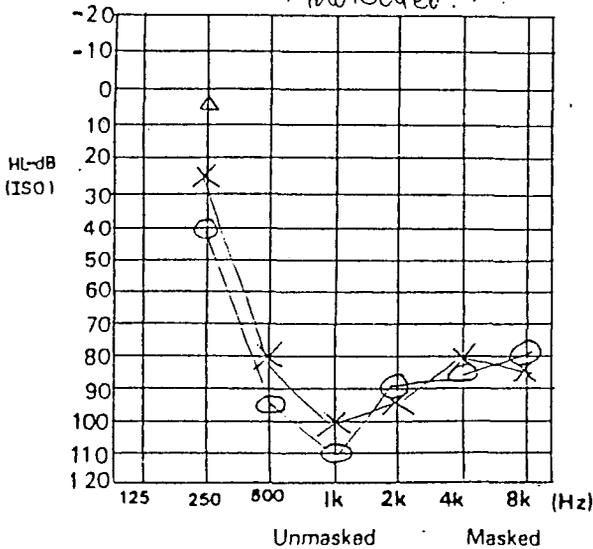
Tested by .....

Date 31-3-87

Pure tone audiogram

Thresholds (dBA)

Single reliable response on bone conduction indicated. A.



Distraction tests

Distraction tests	L.	R.
voice	---	---
drum	---	---
h/f rattle	---	---
"s"	---	---
_____	---	---
_____	---	---
_____	---	---

Performance tests

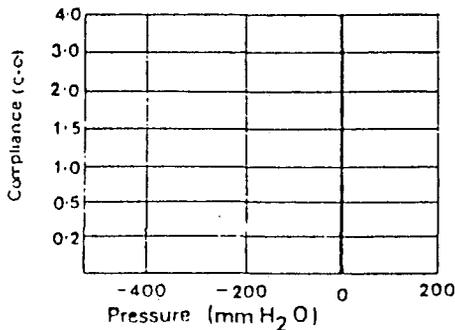
"go"	---	---
"s"	---	---

Speech tests

Kendall T.T.	---	---
M.P.T.	---	---

Air R — O —      — ● —  
 L — X —      — X —  
 Bone R ) — Δ —      — [ —  
 L ) — [ —

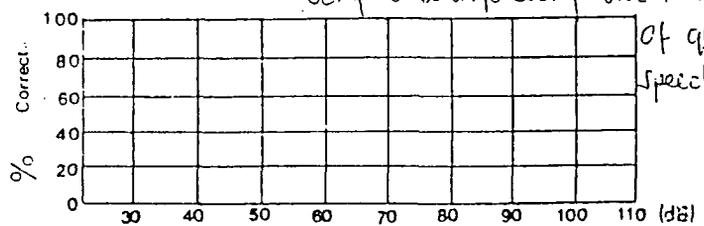
Impedance tests



Speech Audiogram

Material: A.B., M.J., M.P.T.  
 Method: tape/live voice  
 Presentation: headphones/free-field

① Radio aid + Siemens  
 - U satisfactory  
 speech discrimination  
 ② Viewmaster -



Very unsatisfactory discrimination of quiet speech

R — O —      L — X —      With/without aid

Reflexes (dB):	L.	R.
250	---	---
500	---	---
1k	---	---
2k	---	---
4k	---	---

Comments:

A bilateral sensor-neural hearing loss, mild in the lowest frequencies but deteriorating sharply to severe/profound levels thereafter. Left ear marginally superior to right.

APPENDIX SIX

EXAMPLES OF FREE WRITING OF SAMPLE GROUP OBTAINED FROM CLASSTEACHERS

1. David: Sample of free writing

We went to New Zealand farm. Mrs Ward was very kindly gave us a drink and a biscuit. We saw the cows being milked. We saw Tims mum and Simon. It was smelly at the farm. Mrs ..... said get used to it. We saw the milk tank, We saw the blind calf. One of the calf was chewing may jumper and my verst. The calf was chewing Mrs ..... hand. It was muddy at the farm. There was 55 cows.

2. John: Sample of free writing

The adventure of St gorge

Once up on a time there was a famous dragon killer. He went all around the world killing Dragons. He went to a contry called Silene there was an dragon the poeple had to give him some sheep evrey day he asked for more sheep after a wile he ate all of the sheep up so they said to the King what do dragon eat he said well they eat children so they gave him children they we in a horrofide mood. So they gave the dragon there children he a them all up so there were none alive exsept the prinsess. So the prinsess wanted to be like all the rest. So the king sent the prinsess to the dragon the prinsess was tied up and put out side the dragon's den the dragon was a sleep then a few minitse Later the dragon woke up and he neilie ate the prinsess up. When St. George came an said why are you eating poeple why don't you eat anything else so the dragon started on other things. But Just then he killed the dragon and untied the prinsess an all the pople cheerd and toold the King was a cheerful man every after.

### 3. Mark: Samples of free writing

#### My teacher

Mrs ..... is tall, thin and a bit stout. I don't think she is very tall. I think it is her hair that makes her tall.

Her face is a bit like a cubeoid. She has glasses which are egg shaped her eyes are blue. Her nose is dainty kind of, and when she grins or laughs her lips look kind of curl up. Her hair is wavy.

Mrs ..... has sandy coloured shoes, a colourful dress and a pink whatever you call it (that was when I started on this work, didn't know you called that pink thing). She usually wears colourful dresses like violet and red materiel.

When Mrs ..... is angry her voice grows harsh. Sometimes if she doesn't know who to blame she goes on and on until they stop talking or something like that.

#### Snowstorms at .....

At about two o'clock on a Sunday morning I was riding my motorbike 'Oh, heck' I said it was snowing and I had to turn because the snow would stop me from going too far. 'Come on, Freddie, boy. Gotta go' I said so I did fourth gear back up the hill and jumped over the planks that Dad had left for fixing up in the morning and I did a serious (awful really) trick underneath them. 'Hup up again' I yelled. So I put my foot down and as quick as lightning I was up again 'Brillo, Freddie, you're a genius' I said. Breakfast was not a merry meal. All things were as bad as been drowned in the Atlantic Ocean. Dad was going mad because ..... went wrong at milking. So I went out and searched for a ball I lost during the Autumn.

#### 4. Simon: Sample of free writing

##### The Carpet Ride

\*Some funny things happen when my friend is around. Take the time we were in the adventure playground sliding down a ramp on a bit of old coloured matting. Ranjit found it in a trunk belonging to his grandfather.\* We were just starting really fast and I was holding on to Ranjit for grim of death. When he said 'I wish we were on a magic carpet, flying somewhere really hot where the sun never stops shining'. Then bingo. Before we knew what was happening, the playground began to fade away, and the next minute Ranjit and I were on a magic carpet flying across a lovely desert. We saw a few camels with Arabs on their backs. Ranjit and I talked how amazing it was what we saw. Then Ranjit said 'How are we going to stop' I said 'I don't know' So we thought what we would have to do. At last I had an idea. I said 'Shall we say a magic rhyme' So I made a magic rhyme up and said it. The desert was fading away, the next minute we were in the playground. Then we told everyone about the adventure.

The beginning of this passage \* to \* was dictated by the teacher to all the children and they had to complete the story. Simon wrote his piece of writing using the program 'Writer' and corrected it with the help of one of his peer group.

5. Philip: Samples of free writing

My Bike

My bike is a Team Murray and it used to be my brother's and I had another bike which was a Peugeot. I don't used it much now. I used my Raleigh Winner which is a racer. It has got five gears. The frame it black and the wheels are thin. Last year I passed my Cyclng Proficiency Test on my BMX. We had to go round some blocks and stop at the traffic lights.

The River

The river rushing down  
Splashing and whirling  
Collecting sand from the bank  
Making the river murky  
The river is very noisy  
Then it becomes calm  
And almost transparent.  
Seeing the scenery round the banks.  
Reflecting on the river.  
Like a mirror.  
The water is sparkling  
Like silvery diamonds.  
It suddenly cascades and the riverbed rotates  
It looks like a raging torrent,  
With boulders pointing,  
Out of the water.

This second piece of writing was written using the program 'Folio' and choice of words was discussed with the class teacher.

APPENDIX SEVEN

RATING OF CHILD BY TEACHER IN COMPARISON TO PEER GROUP

	COMPREHENSION OF SPEECH	USE OF SPEECH BY CHILD	INTELLIGIBILITY OF SPEECH OF CHILD	PARTICIPATION IN CLASS DISCUSSION
DAVID	B Fairly good understanding of speech	B Fairly good use of speech	B Slightly defective	B Considerable participation
JOHN	B Fairly good understanding of speech	A Almost normal use of speech	A Normal	B Considerable participation
MARK	C Moderate Understanding of speech	C Moderate use of speech	C Moderately defective	C Occasional participation
SIMON	B Fairly good understanding of speech	A Almost normal use of speech	B Slightly defective	B Considerable participation
PHILIP	A Almost normal understanding of speech	A Almost normal use of speech	B Slightly defective	A Frequent participation

	PARTICIPATION IN GROUP DISCUSSION	WRITTEN LANGUAGE (FACTUAL)	WRITTEN LANGUAGE (IMAGINATIVE)	SPELLING
DAVID	A Frequent participation	B Good	A Very good	C Average
JOHN	B Considerable Participation	B Good	B Good	B Good
MARK	C Occasional participation	C Average	C Average	C Average
SIMON	B Considerable participation	B Good	B Good	B Good
PHILIP	A Frequent participation	A Very good	C Average	A Very good

	FLUENCY OF READING	UNDERSTANDING OF MATHEMATICAL CONCEPTS	MATHEMATICAL REASONING ABILITY	SOCIABILITY OF CHILD
DAVID	B Good	C Average	B Good	A Always friendly and outgoing
JOHN	B Good	B Good	B Good	A Always friendly and outgoing
MARK	B Good	D Weak	D Weak	B Usually friendly and outgoing
SIMON	B Good	B Good	B Good	A Always friendly and outgoing
PHILIP	B Good	A Very good	A Very good	A Always friendly and outgoing

	ACCEPTANCE OF CHILD BY PEER GROUP	PARENTAL ATTITUDE TO CHILD	EDUCATIONAL POTENTIAL OF HOME
DAVID	A Very well accepted	B Concerned, but well adjusted	B Above average
JOHN	A Very well accepted	B Concerned, but well adjusted	B Above average
MARK	D Not very well accepted	A Over-protective	A Much above average
SIMON	A Very well accepted	B Concerned but well adjusted	A Much above average
PHILIP	A Very well accepted	A Over-protective	C Average

APPENDIX EIGHT

DAVID: PARENTS' INTERVIEW

INTERVIEWER

Can you just describe David to me? How do you see him?

MOTHER

Simple, it's quite easy to describe him, because he's bright and cheerful, which helps him greatly. He's very determined. If he thinks he doesn't want to do something, he can be quite determined and can have a bit of a temper. Mainly, he's got such a cheerful, happy, outgoing personality, and he's a very sociable child. All those factors were things, that, we feel, made it important for him to be in normal school.

FATHER

The impression that we have had, certainly up to now, is that the problem is not his hearing, his lack of hearing, but the fact that we can't make ourselves understood. He gives the impression that it's almost our fault that we can't make him understand, and that's where problems arise and he gets cross. He sort of puts it on to us almost.

INTERVIEWER

How old was he when he was first diagnosed as having a hearing impairment?

MOTHER

We suspected things weren't right fairly early on, but you know, we didn't want to - that's not exactly true - we had so many people saying, "Oh, a lot of children at that age, you know, seem as if they don't hear things, but it's just because they're concentrating hard and so on," and he's so sharp to pick up indications with his other senses that an awful lot was covered up. In fact, he was actually picked up at the screening at nine months. Even then we were told it was a temporary problem. He wasn't actually confirmed, the degree of his hearing impairment wasn't confirmed until he was about eighteen months, I suppose. It was the Health Visitor who first picked it up. But, you know, before the nine months we realised that there was something wrong.

INTERVIEWER

Has anybody been able to tell you why this happened?

FATHER

It was a genetic throwback, a combination of genes.

MOTHER

There was nothing obvious, because there was no history of hearing impairment in the family.

FATHER

Well, there was on my side, great aunts and this sort of thing.

MOTHER

Oh, your parents said that, but that was only in later life. It wasn't any genetic thing. When we went to see the specialist, he said it could lie dormant in many generations, so there was no other obvious cause, no problems in pregnancy or anything like that.

INTERVIEWER

How did you feel?

MOTHER

Oh, I couldn't tell you - absolutely shattered. There was our perfect baby, and, although you try not to, I think the fact that he was a boy, (AT THIS POINT THE MOTHER BECAME VERY UPSET)

It was absolutely shattering. I remember being in the Hospital and the specialist telling us conclusively. Although we have got on well with him since, I don't think he handled that interview particularly well. He just seemed to want to get it over.

INTERVIEWER

What support did you get then?

MOTHER

Very good. We went to Ealing, and that was good. We needed that. It was a Family Support Unit, and we found that was very helpful. David would be about two. We met other families in the same position, and we were shown how to help David. We've got a video of that. You may find it very useful. It shows David at that early age. It was awful. They did a video and you knew you were being watched. They made a video of day-to-day activities. I shall be screwed up with embarrassment, but it might give you some idea of what it was like.

INTERVIEWER

How did your family react?

MOTHER

Shattered obviously - in a similar way to ourselves, really, I suppose. Very upset initially. I mean he is such a positive personality, you know. They tried very hard to understand. I think my mother found it particularly hard. When he was born, my father had just died, and she

looked to David, you know. She used to say, "Oh he's a perfect baby!" Those sort of words stick in your mind.

INTERVIEWER

Do you think you have had to have a different approach to bringing David up than to the girls?

MOTHER

Hmm.

FATHER

I think he's got away with, I think we have made allowances obviously.

MOTHER

I was very concerned that certainly it meant just the practical details of having to spend more time with him, than you need to with a hearing child, and it certainly affected our middle one. She did tend to resent that.

FATHER

I think she would have done anyway. Being the middle child, she would have resented another younger child coming along, but that, combined with the time spent with him, led to her disenchantment initially.

MOTHER

Once we knew the degree of the problem we spent a lot of time talking to David, consciously providing vocabulary. We were very aware of the necessity for language.

INTERVIEWER

Did you have any particular problems you had to face?

MOTHER

Not really, although he did have some tantrums early on. We had a horrendous time when he got his aids.

FATHER

He didn't like them.

MOTHER

No, he didn't like them. He couldn't appreciate the difference they made, whereas now he goes for his hearing aids first thing in the morning.

INTERVIEWER

Did he go to play group?

MOTHER

He went to an ordinary playgroup initially. He mixed and got on fairly well, but I didn't feel he got the language he needed, purely because

the people who ran it, didn't understand. I think they found it difficult. You see the first hearing aids he had, were designed not for his particular hearing loss, and the background noise affected him badly. So he used to complain about it being too noisy. The aid couldn't cut out that background noise. You know if you listen to a hearing aid, everything is amplified and is just so loud.

FATHER

There was a clock striking next door and we didn't notice it, but with a hearing aid it's totally amplified. This one is much better.

MOTHER

Well, not only that, but the hearing aids he was given, are ones which are designed to cut out the noise - peak clipping - it's called. That certainly helps him with his different type of hearing loss. With his degree of hearing loss, there is no way he would be able to cope in normal school without his aid. Then we heard about another nursery and we made arrangements to go and see that. Because he was a child with special educational needs he had priority, and that was an excellent nursery.

FATHER

He didn't like going initially.

MOTHER

Well, no, it took some time.

FATHER

Yes, as we were driving him over and getting near, he would go pale.

MOTHER

No, that was his playgroup.

FATHER

No, I used to drive him there. As we used to get near, he would go pale, and then when we got there, he would throw up. The teacher was quite used to it as one of her own children had done that. He was very reluctant to go initially. He didn't like it.

MOTHER

We'd just started up in business, and it was all very hectic. It only lasted for days. Many children do that when they're only three. David has had other problems as well, which are totally unconnected with his hearing. He was allergic to various things. He had a very nervous tummy and he was sick very easily. That was almost as much a problem, him being sick, because of what he'd eaten. In practical terms, it was

almost as great a problem as his hearing problem.

INTERVIEWER

When it came time for school, what did you look for?

MOTHER

Well, there are certain practical details. He obviously needed an understanding teacher with some knowledge of a child with special educational needs. We took a radius of fifteen miles round our home, and we realised it had to be a small school. In our local school the classes were very large and we thought the atmosphere was wrong. It needed to be a small school where he would be in a small class. So we started going round and looking for a small school with small classes and we found the school he's at now. When I mentioned it to ..... (peripatetic teacher), she asked me who the head was. She remembered her from other work she had done with children with special needs and she said we can't do better than that. It just stood out a mile.

FATHER

We went and looked at other schools, where they talked about how he would fit in, and the impression we got of some, although they were very lively schools, and all the rest of it, the impression was they thought how David would fit into the school, rather than what they could do for him. It was more what David could do to fit in with them.

MOTHER

The very first thing the Head said, was, "I don't view David as a special child, every child is special to me - every child has their own special needs." And I was just very impressed with her.

FATHER

The main thing was, we wanted him to go to ordinary school rather than the Unit.

MOTHER

The problem was, because of the geographical nature of the county, it presents problems which you probably wouldn't get in a large city. He would be travelling long distances. Although he would have had very much more individual attention, it was with other children whose disabilities were greater than David's. Their individual disabilities were much greater. I don't feel that special units are not desirable, but there are particular reasons why he would gain far more from being in an ordinary school, because of his nature, and the fact that he can communicate. I think you have to judge every single child on his own

merits.

FATHER

You see he doesn't really view himself as deaf, which I rather feel, if he'd gone into a Unit, he'd have gradually realised that there was something special or different about him. If he's going to integrate later in life, he's got to get over the fact he's got special needs, that he's not set up on a pedestal and has to be cushioned all the way through. We would like him to fit in as a normal hearing person, which I think he has got every chance of doing, if his nature and his attitude goes on.

MOTHER

Certainly having the use of the phonic ear helps. ....  
(peripatetic teacher) said that if it had been a few years ago when they were not so readily available, then she would have had a different viewpoint to David being in an ordinary school. Certainly these technological advances have made a great difference.

FATHER

Yes, they're improving all the time, they're improving so rapidly that they are going to help more and more. The hearing aid he has got now, is so good, compared to five or ten years ago.

MOTHER

The sort of problems that you expect to have to fight about, you know, practical details, of school, being statemented, seemed to be easier once we sorted out school and his phonic ear helped in that.

INTERVIEWER

How do you think his impairment has affected him educationally?

MOTHER

Well, it has obviously affected his language. There are always complexities of language, there are things he doesn't understand, that he attempts to put in the wrong context. There are so many different concepts which you have got to go over.

FATHER

Which are normally just absorbed, you have to work so hard with David.

MOTHER

You have to break things down.

FATHER

It's like using a computer keyboard. You thump all the keys to make sure the information gets in.

MOTHER

And it's got to be reinforced.

FATHER

And you do it again, and again, and again.

INTERVIEWER

Do you think it has affected him socially?

MOTHER

No, not really

INTERVIEWER

Do you think that's because of his placement?

MOTHER

No. I don't think you could say that. I think he has normally got a sunny nature. We're a sociable family anyway, there's always lots of people, coming and going. He's very drawn towards older people. He absolutely adores his grandfather. He latches on to older people, very much so.

FATHER

He will go and start a conversation.

MOTHER

We did worry when he was beginning to be independent and would talk to anybody. I did worry because he would walk up to anybody. I don't think, in fact, he has some of the reserve that a hearing child has. I think his hearing loss has stopped him being as cautious as perhaps he might have been. With a child who is very outgoing, it does put you in a difficult position as a parent. The other practical problem, when he was that age, was taking him near roads. You really did have to watch him carefully, because of the problem that he was unable to hear traffic.

FATHER

But, he does have, as a plus, amazing visual ability. He will spot things.

MOTHER

Even though he's only got one eye, he spots things long before anyone else.

FATHER

Planes - when he was very small he could spot a plane - a tiny little dot in the sky, and David could see it.

MOTHER

It certainly does sharpen up the other senses.

FATHER

Yes, he's taught himself to lip read.

MOTHER

Earlier, when he was very tiny, he would pick up things by religiously watching.

FATHER

But now, if he misses anything, he will actually come round in front of you and turn your face. If he misses the first sound he will concentrate, and you can see he is watching your mouth.

INTERVIEWER

How much do you think he relies on lip reading?

MOTHER

Quite a lot.

INTERVIEWER

I noticed that in the car, while I was taking him to school - we were talking.

MOTHER

Oh yes, that was quite useful for you.

INTERVIEWER

Yes, and he was watching me in the mirror. He was concentrating on the mirror, watching me, because I didn't know whether to talk to him while I was driving because he obviously couldn't see my face, but we had a super conversation.

MOTHER

Which is amazing, because, in fact, we have tried the hearing aid in the car and the interference from the engine crackles in the hearing aid, so he is having to hear over that. When he was doing a lot of travelling in the car, we used to angle the driving mirror so he could see.

INTERVIEWER

Well, he had obviously got himself in the right position, which I thought was quite amazing.

FATHER

That's him completely on his own. We have not directed him in that at all.

MOTHER

He's very resourceful.

FATHER

Oh, yes. Occasionally, now, if he misses something, he'll say, "Look at me." If he's engrossed, and he misses something, he'll say, "Pardon?" He might miss something twice, and then he'll say, "Look at me, watch my face," and then he picks it up straight away, so he gets extra reinforcement that way.

INTERVIEWER

What does he like doing best at school?

MOTHER

Reading. At the moment he adores it. And it's nice, because he realises he has been successful at it, so that reinforces it.

FATHER

Before he went to school it was quite interesting. He was very numerate early on, and we felt this was because that was quite an easy language. There wasn't a lot of language doing merely number work. It was easy for him to cope with that, because there wasn't a lot of language involved. Wherever we went, we would count things, but his Maths has gone off a bit since he went to school.

MOTHER

But there again, that is because he is meeting the language of Mathematics, which is hotting up now. It still comes back to language. The hearing impaired teacher spent a lot of time, pre-school time, working on his basic language.

INTERVIEWER

What does he like doing best at home?

FATHER

Again, he reads. You're getting him ready for school in the morning and he disappears, and you find him with his nose in a book instead of getting dressed. He just goes off. Once he's got his nose in a book, he's lost.

MOTHER

Whether it's because the girls don't do it, I don't know, but he's not very keen on constructional things like boys tend to do. He's never been one to spend hours with Lego, but he is very imaginative. He loves dressing up. Imaginative play, he loves that. It's different since we moved here, because there are a lot of children here and they can just play out. He can just ride around on his bike. There's a safe area they can just ride around. He loves to make up plays. He and his sister have

made this cardboard television. They play a lot together. They had great fun making that.

FATHER

I like the little details, the little bottle tops for knobs. They'd have weather forecasts.

MOTHER

Yes, he'd get in behind, and he would be the newscaster, or the weather man, or whatever. He used to play with puppets a lot. We encouraged things like that when ..... (peripatetic teacher) used to come, to get him talking.

INTERVIEWER

Do you feel that you need to correct his speech?

MOTHER

Oh, yes.

FATHER

Yes, you can see that at certain times he may get a word wrong and you may work on it. Sometimes he'll go through it with three, four, five repeatings. Other times, he just doesn't want to know with two. A lot of it depends on how tired he is, what he has been doing, what he is engrossed in. So really, that's something we just have to take as it goes. It's difficult, because you don't want to stop the flow. It's the same with reading at the moment. He is reading so quickly that he's reading ahead, and he tends to jump bits and misses endings, s's and that.

MOTHER

We do tend to pick him up, particularly on endings of words, because he doesn't realise. That point was made this week. He does go to a Speech Therapist, and she said that he doesn't realise that we don't hear, because he thinks he's said it.

FATHER

Again, we take that as the mood he is in at the time.

MOTHER

Yes, that's right. If he's particularly receptive to it, we do reinforce it.

INTERVIEWER

Some parents have said they have problems with the phonic ear. What about you?

MOTHER

Oh, you must know what the answer is to that (much laughter). Yes, we arrived at a solution to what has been causing all the problems, we think, because twice David's phonic ear has been away. The problem is, it's away for such a long time, and this Authority is, if you like, very poorly equipped. The Hearing Impaired Service is incredibly short staffed, and this year it has been away, both times, for about six weeks which is terrible. ....(peripatetic teacher) managed to get one through the Goodrick Appeal, the only one which was available from the local authority. Last time it wasn't available, so he was without it for quite a long time. He doesn't like wearing it at home. We don't push it because we can be in a one to one situation here anyway. The car would be all right, but he doesn't like it there. He seems to accept that he needs it at school. He was very bad about wearing it at home, but what we discovered was the problem, was that he tends to dribble a lot. Each time it came back from being repaired, they said it was water damaged.

FATHER

The funny thing was, that the microphone bit that his teacher wears was also supposed to be water damaged (laughter), and .... assured us that she didn't dribble at all.

MOTHER

Yes, for all the wonders of modern technology, that is quite a problem.

FATHER

There's lots of simple little things like, on the phonic ear, there's no way of actually knowing whether it's working. It's not got a little green or red light. It's probably so easy, with all the technology that is there, if there was a little green light, that when you switched it on, you would know whether it was working. There's always the problem of charging batteries up. Some eventually go off. They hold the charge for a couple of hours, and then they've gone.

MOTHER

It is difficult. Obviously, we are fairly clued up and conscientious about it. You get many families where the parents can't accept the problem at all, and they can't cope with it. They can't cope with charging the batteries and all that sort of thing. Also I think there are better designs. It's not really a new design.

FATHER

It's not robust enough.

INTERVIEWER

Did you have problems with David, initially, in wearing his aid?

MOTHER and FATHER

He didn't like it.

FATHER

I think basically because it was different. It just made it obvious that there was something special about him.

MOTHER

But also it was the fact that he found it irritating as well as the practical reasons. He hated to wear it at first.

INTERVIEWER

Where did his original phonic ear come from?

MOTHER

It was from a charitable trust. It was from the Lions actually, because we were told that he wouldn't be able to go to school without it.

INTERVIEWER

How do you see the peripatetic teacher? As a friend, counsellor or teacher?

MOTHER

All three. She's a very, very good friend. Very supportive. We're so lucky to have somebody of her calibre. She's great. She does all the things she is expected to do, and way over and above that.

FATHER

Yes, she's very good. We rather feel that she and David have got a special relationship. She may be like that with all the children. All the parents may say that, but certainly, David, for her, seems special.

MOTHER

But she has, in this area, again, you can quote me on this, because it irritates me. She has had to be social worker and all sorts, because there isn't sufficient backing from the local authority. Her responsibility is far more than it should be. Ideally, to get the best and the maximum out of every child, there ought to be at least one other teacher in this area. It's one hour a week. She's very pushed. The fact that David is in such a supportive school helps, but he needs more. Sometimes she can't come because she has to do testing and case reviews. I also think the work is vital with pre-school children. I relied on her so much before David went to school.

INTERVIEWER

Did you know her when David was first diagnosed?

MOTHER

Yes, she came when David was about two.

INTERVIEWER

Did you feel she was more of a counsellor and support to you, than David's teacher at that time?

MOTHER

Both really. When she first came, she brought a mother who had a hearing impaired boy, and he was coping very well. That encouraged me. She was very aware of the emotion that I was going through.

INTERVIEWER

What about the future? Have you any particular worries?

MOTHER

Oh, yes, obviously. There are a lot of things that he won't be able to do. He won't be able to be an airline pilot or anything like that, but I feel very encouraged from having seen other children succeeding. I look on the black side. What's going to happen with education generally, Government policies etc.? I think it's very important not to plan too far ahead, because situations change. I mean, we were shattered when we heard Mrs ..... (previous Headteacher of school) was leaving. In fact, that hasn't affected David at all, because he wasn't in her class. We are quite concerned about what the new Headteacher will be like, because David will be in her class after the summer. It does boil down to personalities. I think things are better now, because we do have some say as to what type of education we see fit for our child and where we want him to go, but, of course, there isn't that much choice here.

FATHER

It's a very poorly funded authority, and the geographical nature of the county - everywhere is far flung.

MOTHER

But its provision is not good.

FATHER

Yes. If we lived in a big urban conurbation with a much higher population of children, concentrated population of children who are hearing impaired, then it's obviously easier. Here, the children are spread throughout a wide area, and it's not so easy to have a support group for each other.

MOTHER

Except that very quickly we were put in touch with the National Deaf Children's Society, but again the geographical area makes it difficult.

INTERVIEWER

Do you find it helps being a member of the Society?

MOTHER

Yes, just to know that if we have got a particular problem there is someone we can talk to. It's difficult for people to be as supportive as they would like to be because we are so far apart.

INTERVIEWER

Has David met other hearing impaired children?

MOTHER

Yes. We go on their outings.

INTERVIEWER

..... that's the next one, isn't it?

MOTHER

Yes. Would you be interested in coming along?

INTERVIEWER

Yes. That would be lovely. You mentioned that you had met another mother who had helped you. What advice would you give to parents whose child had just been diagnosed as hearing impaired?

MOTHER

I think the best you can do, really, is to let them see a child who is a few stages further on, and has been able to cope with the disability quite well, to show them it isn't the end of the world. There is hope. You need to show them that you understand how they feel. It is a terrible problem. Some families break up over it. No two families are the same. No two children are the same, so you can only really tell them how you coped. There are practical details you can tell them. It's very important to put them in touch with organisations who can help. This is why we feel very strongly about the fact that there wasn't, in our area, a Social Worker for the Deaf.

FATHER

Yes, it's important for someone to help you get over the shock as quickly as possible so that you can become positive. It's easy to say that. It's less easy to do. We know, we've been through it.

MOTHER

You know, one of the things somebody totally unconnected, just a

neighbour, said to me that really hit home, and it's so obvious now I can look at it, but I needed it spelling out. "Well, he's still the same child. You still love him the same. It's just the fact that you know. He's not any different than he was before. It's just that you know." It's such an obvious thing, but it does alter how you feel, and I think that is quite a useful thing to say to someone. I mean it's still the child that you love, and it's your fear of the unknown that's the problem. There are other practical details. We didn't have very much trouble with David. Some children have awful tantrums and frustrations, and that's very difficult. Just to be able to understand why, would be helpful. It was helpful to hear a tape of what a hearing impaired child would be actually hearing. It's very easy to forget that, because they can answer in a similar sort of way to a hearing child. It's easy to forget that they're not hearing the same. It staggered me when I first heard the tape.

FATHER

Having heard that, it amazes you what hearing impaired children can do, that they are hearing and coping with that, all the time - the exaggerated noise and distortion. The more you think about it, it's amazing that David has got to the stage that he has with his speech, knowing that all the time he's hearing that sort of thing. He's got so much to cope with.

MOTHER

Yes, you know, it's such a very difficult disability for most people to understand. It's very difficult to appreciate what it means. Sometimes people think a phonic ear cures the hearing impairment.

FATHER

You also get the other sort of thing when you say he's got a hearing problem, and people say, "Oh, glue ear - he'll be all right. My little boy had it and he's fine now." And people say, "Is he going to get better, is it going to improve?" And you have to say "No, it's nerve deafness. It isn't." "But he can have an operation," they say.

MOTHER

Yes, you get an awful lot of unwanted advice.

FATHER

All well meant.

MOTHER

Yes, very well meant.

INTERVIEWER

What would you advise teachers?

MOTHER

To look beyond the hearing disability, really, to the child. To be aware of the obvious practical problems. To be aware because there are so many things, positioning yourself in relation to the child, which is very easy to get used to, once you are aware of it. Certainly, there are various things like that, that a teacher who is having a hearing impaired child needs to appreciate. But, once those things have been appreciated, to treat the child according to his personality as you would do with a hearing child. I think it's important for the teacher to explain to other children in the class exactly what the problem is. If you explain, it might stop them singling the child out and being horrid to him.

INTERVIEWER

Have you ever had that with David?

MOTHER

Yes, occasionally they do.

FATHER

We had a bit of an upset recently, when he came back and said someone had been nasty to him.

MOTHER

It's usually children he's not with very often. You do get the odd child at the school.

FATHER

But, in the main, there, when he walks into school in the morning, it's "Hello, David," and what Mrs ..... (teacher) says is that they all admire him because he can lipread.

MOTHER

But I certainly think a lot of the credit is due to the teacher's attitude there. She's marvellous.

INTERVIEWER

If you had a magic wand, but you couldn't cure David's impairment with it, but you could do anything else, what would you do?

MOTHER

Probably to make technology such, that it will make him able to cope normally in a hearing group.

FATHER

And the other one would be that there would be such a greater awareness about deafness that a child is not deaf and dumb, and it shouldn't be a stigma at all. It tends to be, because it's not an obvious disability. The only signs of it are a phonic ear or hearing aids. There are a lot of prejudices and misconceptions about deafness. The other thing would be for the finances and the backing to be there. I mean, we work very hard to do what we can to help him.

MOTHER

It shouldn't be down to parents.

FATHER

No, immediately it's diagnosed, the resources should be there. You can imagine the parents who have not had the benefit of the education that we've had. They may not ask the questions, and they may not get the back-up that we've had. If it's true for David, it's true for all hearing impaired children.

APPENDIX NINE

DAVID: TEACHER INTERVIEW

INTERVIEWER

Can you just describe David to me, just give me a picture of how you see him?

TEACHER

Well, David reminds me of one of these Snoopy characters - the one that carries the blanket around with him, and he's followed by a haze of little flies, you know, because he carries around endless things, precious things. His drawer is like a jumble sale, and he's always got a bag full of stuff that will spill out all over the place. He's a real hoarder, but then apparently his parents are as well, so he probably takes after them, but he's so enthusiastic at school. He wants to join in with everything and do everything. He's absolutely delightful - he has been a real treasure to teach. I shall be sad to see him go into the Juniors. When he first came to us his speech wasn't very clear at all, but we have made a great play on increasing his vocabulary. We have long talk times and we speak clearly to him, and all the children know that he is very good at lip reading. I think they envy him being able to do this, and they are all very supportive towards him if he forgets to put his hearing aids on. They'll say, "David, don't forget your hearing aid." We have a morning routine, where, when he puts his hearing aids on in the morning, he pops in to the next room, and we say a word quietly to him just to check that it is actually working, because he uses his phonic ear, which is extremely temperamental and very often goes wrong, and then it has to be away for weeks on end to be repaired. Obviously it is very much better when he is wearing it. But if it's not working at all he has to rely on lip reading a lot, although he has an independent hearing aid. So we do this little game every morning just to check that he can hear, and this is always done just after doing the register and the usual morning routine. He's the baby of the family. He's got an older sister ..... and another one ..... But he's not really babied, they talk to him all the time, they're very patient with him. He's used to talking to strangers quite a bit, because his parents have a shop in town, and he's often around the shop helping to weigh out and things like that, and so he's quite used to talking to strangers, and he doesn't appear to be at all embarrassed or inhibited by his hearing

problems, and they are really pretty severe. He has extra help from ..... the peripatetic teacher for the hearing impaired, who comes in once a week and he gets about an hour, if he's lucky. Sometimes, if she's got hearing tests and things to do, she can't come, but it's usually about one hour a week. We keep a note book, and if we come across any problems during the week, we jot down his problem in the book, and then ..... (peripatetic teacher) reinforces anything that we have had difficulty with during the week. For instance, it might be some vocabulary that he hasn't really understood, and I just use ..... (peripatetic teacher) really to check that our extra work has paid off, and that he has really understood what we've been doing. We also find that he is very well advanced with his reading, but his number work is slightly behind his peer group, probably because we gave him lots and lots of practical experience to start with, weighing and measuring and that sort of thing, to make sure that he really did understand all the vocabulary that is involved before we went on to actually recording the work. There's absolutely no problem in his understanding, but it's just that we have just been extra careful to make sure that he really did understand what we were talking to him about before we went on. So he's a little bit behind the others in number work but he's getting on very well with reading and thoroughly enjoys reading. His writing is rather big and untidy, but this is something to do with the fact that he can't see very well as well. One eye, well he's almost blind in one eye, and the other eye is reasonable. For a while, he had to wear a patch on the good eye to make the lazy eye work, and we were advised that he should wear this patch, when he was doing close work to really make the eye work, but it became almost impossible to find a suitable time to use it, because if he was doing some written work, he had to hold the book so close to his face that he really couldn't cope. It was making him very upset. If he was doing things like jigsaws he was having to almost get his nose on to the pieces to be able to see them. There really wasn't a suitable time when he could use it, and so it was causing him so much distress. He never objected to actually putting it on. His mum and dad said he used to have terrible tantrums at home when they tried to get him to wear his patch at home, but he never, ever objects to anything in school, and when ..... (peripatetic teacher) said "Come on, David, let's have it on just for an hour," he would always have it on, but he just could not

see. So, in the end, we decided that the very little benefit that there was to be had from wearing the patch, wasn't worth causing him so much upset in school, so we stopped using the patch after a while, so this is one of the reasons why his writing is rather big and uncontrolled. If you get chance to read some of his writing in his books, do, because he writes now at great length and with great enthusiasm, very good use of vocabulary and a lot of humour as well. You see his humour coming out a lot.

INTERVIEWER

So you don't feel that socially his impairment has affected him?

TEACHER

Not at all, not at all, no. He does have a little speech therapy help as well. He goes to the clinic about once every three weeks or so, but he doesn't go very often, because obviously she is so very busy and a lot of kids are far worse than David, so he doesn't go very often now. And, as I say, we make a deliberate effort to emphasise the vocabulary that we are using. He has problems sometimes with word endings - ed and s endings - he misses them off, or forgets them, and so we emphasise that as much as possible.

INTERVIEWER

What about the other children? How did you prepare them for David coming? How well do they cope?

TEACHER

We didn't prepare them. No, he more or less came along as soon as it was suggested that we might try him. We didn't prepare them at all. We did actually, sort of, when he came, explain to the other children why he was wearing a hearing aid and why I was wearing a microphone. I did talk to the children about the lipreading when he wasn't there. I didn't want to labour the point too much. He was away one day, and so I had a chat to them about the fact that he was so clever because he could lipread so well, and I explained to them why David watched you so very carefully, and if he hadn't got his hearing aids on, if they faced him, then he would understand what they were saying to him as well. These children in this school are just used to being with children with problems, and they don't treat it as a problem. They accept that all children are different. Nobody has ever said or treated him as anything different from any other child in school.

INTERVIEWER

Some people think that hearing impaired children are difficult to handle from a behaviour point of view. How do you feel about that?

TEACHER

Well, I've never taught a child with hearing impairment before, so I can't compare David with any other child, but we have had absolutely no problems with David whatsoever, other than to say that we are very much aware that we make things as clear as possible for him. We make sure that he has understood and always just check, "Do you know what you are doing?" Little things crop up in his understanding of vocabulary. For instance, there was one day when he was doing some number work and his work card said, "Make a pattern with several kite shapes" and he came and said "What's several?" But then, another child of his age, may have equally not understood what several was. So he doesn't present any different problems than any other child really.

INTERVIEWER

How much support do you think David gets from his parents?

TEACHER

A lot of support, they're very patient. They do everything they possibly can to let his life be as any other child's life. He joins in a lot with all their activities. For instance, Dad used to do Morris Dancing and Mum goes off on marches to Menwith Hill and things like that, and he goes with them. They have a very hectic lifestyle, because they both work in the shop and they both have a lot of outside interests, but the children go along with them a lot. It seems a bit of a disorganised sort of a life. He loses his books amongst piles of other books at home, but he's obviously got his love of books from home. His mum is a trained teacher and his dad is very keen that he should learn as widely as possible. For instance, we took the children to the Nature Reserve which is over in that direction, and it's a private Nature Reserve, but we got permission to go and the warden showed us round, and his dad took time off from the shop and brought them all up, and they go cycling together and they go down the river, and he often comes in loaded with wild flowers and anything he's found. He's a real hoarder, as I mentioned before. He's got drawers and drawers and drawers of stuff, and bags of stuff which he carries around, and he won't throw anything away.

AT THIS POINT THE INTERVIEW WAS INTERRUPTED AND WAS CONTINUED THE FOLLOWING DAY.

INTERVIEWER

How do you think his parents view David being in this school because it's not his local school?

TEACHER

Well, they chose this school because, first of all, because the peripatetic teacher knew the Head, who was extremely supportive, and because it was a small school, and he would be in a group of, I think it was about twelve, when he came. The alternative was for him to go to a special unit for the hearing impaired, where he was going to be with twelve year olds, and there was no-one anywhere near his age range and, really, they didn't think this was at all suitable, and so they wanted to get him into a small unit. And I think it was because ..... (peripatetic teacher) knew the Head that she contacted her, and said, "Do you think you could take David?" and they had to transport him to and from home (about ten miles away) which was a problem in winter sometime. And so, it was the fact that it was a small unit and the people involved, although there were two of us working together in one classroom at the time, and they didn't actually know us, but they knew of us. Now I think all along they've been very pleased with the way he settled down, and we've all worked very much together, and any problems that have cropped up we have all solved together, and I think they have been very, very happy with the placement and, at the last review, which was a month ago, they expressed the view that they would like this placement to continue. There is going to be another meeting very shortly after the new term has started to see how he adapts to the Junior room situation, because he is moving into a much, much larger room, much, much larger group, totally new faces with a new Head, and it's debatable really how he is going to react. So, we did sort of say that perhaps another meeting would be held at, say, the end of October or November, just to see how he's met the transition. He's looking forward to going into the Juniors. He's going to cope with Junior work fine - it's just the acoustics, the personalities involved, and whether he can slot into a much larger group.

INTERVIEWER

What about yourself, before you had David in your class, how much knowledge did you have of hearing impairment?

TEACHER

None, whatsoever.

INTERVIEWER

Nothing at all in your training?

TEACHER

No. The only thing I ever had any experience of was a very brief visit when I was a student at College, and we went to a Hospital School and we went to a boarding school for the Deaf. So it was a very, very limited knowledge of children with hearing impairment. I've never taught a child with hearing impairment before.

INTERVIEWER

So you've picked up your knowledge on the job?

TEACHER

Yes, and I must say that the help from ..... (peripatetic teacher) has been absolutely invaluable. Because you don't, just simple little things like, she said that sometimes it's necessary to do a resumé of the story before you start. Because, if he's trying to pick up the language, trying to follow the story and all that at the same time, he's not really going to enjoy the story. Whereas, if you give him some idea of what the story is going to be about, possibly how it might end, then that's something he's starting on a sure footing with, before he's actually listening to the story - decoding the language - as it were.

INTERVIEWER

Do you think your attitude has changed towards hearing impairment, as you have become more acquainted with a hearing impaired child?

TEACHER

Well, I must say, I was very apprehensive to start with, because I hadn't had any experience at all but, I mean, the whole school's policy here has been to treat every child as normal. So our two children in school who have special needs, we haven't made any particular difference between them and the other children in the class situation. We've probably made extra provision for them as we've gone on, but we don't single them out at all or treat them any differently than all the others, so I don't think my attitude to children with hearing impairment has changed, because I don't treat him any differently than the others.

INTERVIEWER

Do you think David sometimes has difficulty in understanding what he has to do in the classroom situation?

TEACHER

Depends on his hearing level. It's very marked actually, when he's got

an ear infection or when his general state of health is low, he doesn't pick up very much at all, and, of course, when his wretched hearing aid goes away to be repaired which is quite frequently, there is a marked difference then. For instance, when he's not very well, he's very clumsy and he doesn't hear very well at all, and then when you give all the children the instructions what to do, and then he'll perhaps linger behind, "Do you want me to get my book?" So it's obvious then that he hasn't actually heard. But, I think in a very small room and I've got quite a strident sort of voice, that he usually picks up most of the instructions. When you're working with a small group, you can easily pick out any child who is unsure of what to do, so I don't think there is anything different from any other child, to be honest.

INTERVIEWER

Do you think you have had to adapt your teaching strategies in any way? You mentioned, for example, doing a resumé of the story.

TEACHER

Yes, I probably wouldn't have done that so much. I can't think of any other examples of how I might have changed though. I mean we've always had a lot of emphasis on language, talk and discussion, before anything has gone on so, I still use that same sort of approach with the children. I don't honestly think so.

INTERVIEWER

Do you think David being placed here has been more beneficial to him, rather than being placed somewhere else?

TEACHER

Well, this brings up the whole discussion, doesn't it, of whether special needs children should be in a special unit or whether they should be integrated into the mainstream school? I, myself, feel that David has got a tremendous lot out of it. I mean, I think he's got three parties booked this week, for a start, with people inviting him to parties and they are all going to his as well. Now, that sort of thing wouldn't have happened if he'd gone to a special unit with children much older than him, and from a much wider area as well. He gets on very well with all the other children, and the fact that, that happens, I think, is well worthwhile to getting into a mainstream school, and I don't think he has missed out at all. I think he definitely did need that support from the peripatetic teacher, that's absolutely invaluable, but I think he's gained a lot. I'm sure he has - he's progressed very well

indeed.

INTERVIEWER

What do you think needs to be considered before you place a child in an ordinary school?

TEACHER

Things like class size, size of classroom, and whether it's the sort of room where sound is going to echo. I mean, we've got very low ceilings and we've also got that carpeted room, so sound doesn't echo too much. It depends very much, doesn't it, on whether the member of staff is going to be prepared to put themselves out? I mean we've never had any behaviour problems, for instance, with David. He's got an absolute thirst for knowledge, and wants to do everything that everybody else is doing. He is tremendously curious and wants to know, and he won't be fobbed off by a flippant answer, "Oh, you know, David." "No, I don't know, tell me." He reads very well, and wants to read, but perhaps you might have a child with hearing impairment who has behaviour problems as well, and if you've got a large and very busy class, it might be an added problem that you feel you just can't cope with on top of all the other problems. So I can't really compare the situation with David with anybody else, because I haven't experienced any other child with hearing impairment. I don't really feel qualified to do any comparisons like that.

INTERVIEWER

If you were a Head-teacher and you were approached to take a hearing impaired child, what sort of things would you think about?

TEACHER

I would discuss with the member of staff who was actually going to do the work with the child first, and then, as I say, I would think about class size and then about the physical environment, and I would also meet the parents because I think their attitude counts an awful lot. For instance, I was talking to somebody else who had a child with hearing impairment in his school, and they said they got absolutely no support from the parents at all. They didn't even check the batteries in the morning. Now I think if I had to go through all the rigmarole of checking the batteries, the earmoulds and all that sort of thing every single morning, then perhaps I might think that that was a chore, but as it is, I know what the procedure is, if I need to do it. But David's parents will always make sure that the batteries are checked and as far

as possible the equipment is working, and so all I do in the morning is just a quick check, mark the register, and then David goes into the next room, I say a word, and it's just a quick check. It's not a problem.

INTERVIEWER

What do you think has been the greatest difficulty that you have had to face?

TEACHER

Well, I think it's probably this business that the hearing aid, the phonic hearing aid, goes wrong so often. It's so marked how much his life is improved by the use of it, that if only he had a spare, or if there was a local repair service instead of it having to go to London, and it's away for three or four weeks on end. When you look through the notebooks that we keep, the notes that have been put in there about the hearing aid not working, or the lead is broken, or the ear piece is broken, or something. They're just not robust enough for a little boy. He's fairly careless and clumsy anyway. I mean, for instance, about four times when the hearing aid has been away to be repaired, it's come back with a report that it has been water damaged, and we've been very particular that he never wears it when he's drinking, because he dribbles a lot. He's a bit careless that way, and so when it happens, I just don't know. If only somebody could design something which is a bit more robust for a small child, all these sort of physical problems would be overcome. I think that's the biggest difficulty. It's no problem to actually wear the microphone.

INTERVIEWER

How would you feel if you were asked to take another hearing impaired child?

TEACHER

Now I would immediately, for myself, for my own class, I would say, "Fine", because, for myself, I would feel more confident about tackling it, having a lot more knowledge now that when I first met David. But I think the Governors, at least, the Governors would have to be consulted at first, and I say that, because there was a possibility that we might have a third child with special difficulties in this school. We had two in a group of thirty-eight children altogether, and everybody was very happy about that happening. They were both regarded as successful placements, and they were all very friendly and it worked very well. Now when there was a possibility of a third child to be integrated into our

school, people were not happy at all and we started getting comments like, "..... (naming the school) is going to end up like a dumping ground for misfits." Totally irrationally you know, and unsubstantiated, but nevertheless this was the sort of comment that was made, and in discussions at Governors' meetings and what not, "Well, that's going to mean three children in one class with special needs. Is that fair to the others?" And all that sort of thing. So I think if this situation happened, and I was asked to have another hearing impaired child, yes, I would myself, but I think you would have to consider the numbers of children with special needs in school compared with the numbers of other children, unfortunately.

INTERVIEWER

What advice would you give to other teachers?

TEACHER

Well, blasé, sounds very blasé, treat them like any other child, but maybe be a bit more patient sometimes, and maybe at the back of your mind each time you sort of are giving instructions, or explaining something, or introducing something new, just think to yourself "Have I said that clearly enough? Have they been looking at me as I've said it? Have I made sure that the child has seen the picture, or seen the equipment, or knows where to find the equipment?" Possibly, I'm a bit more careful about making sure that he really has understood what I've really said, but I think that's the sort of thing that you have to do with all children, anyway. When you work in this situation, you've got four to seven year olds, you make sure that each level, each age range, each ability range understands what you want them to do. So I don't think the fact that he has got a hearing impairment means that he is any different from - you treat all children like that, don't you? You can't just issue bland instructions to all the children, and expect them to know what they've got to do. You have got to treat them as individuals. Possibly be a bit more thorough when you are planning, so that you do take into account the fact that he might not have picked up everything, but you see David is very bright, and so you might get a child with hearing impairment who is not as bright, and you may have to be prepared to spend a lot more time, than I've had to do with David.

INTERVIEWER

Why do you think this placement appears to have been so successful?

TEACHER

I think because David is so bright that he wants to learn. He's an absolutely delightful child, and because he's been in a small group we've had time to spend time with him with fabulous support from ..... (peripatetic teacher) of course, and he's got the sense to always ask - he doesn't let anything slip by, nothing at all. He'll come and say, "What did you mean by so and so?" I mentioned before to you when he picked up a work card and I read it through with him, and he went away, and then he came back about five minutes later and said, "What does it mean by several?" He had to make a pattern with several kite shapes, and I had assumed that he knew what several was, but he actually hadn't met it before, so we just went over it, and I told him some alternative words that meant the same and he was fine then.

INTERVIEWER

That's very good that he does ask, isn't it, because some children wouldn't, would they?

TEACHER

Yes, this is it, he doesn't let anything go by. That's another point which reminds me as well, that whenever he has been speaking to us, we've always made sure that if he makes a mistake we correct it there and then. We don't let anything slide at all. He often misses off word endings - ed and - s. That varies again according to his hearing level on the day, but when he misses it off, we make sure he is facing us and we say the word skip....s and just emphasise the endings. We say it there and then, not afterwards, and also to try and remember at the end of the day to jot it down in ..... 's (peripatetic teacher) book, so she can do it again when she comes. I suppose that sort of thing is difficult when you've got a great big class to deal with, but it's been possible because I've got seventeen, so that sort of thing is possible to do.

APPENDIX TEN

JOHN: PARENT INTERVIEW

INTERVIEWER

Can you just describe John to me? How do you see him?

MOTHER

He's a very happy little boy, full of fun, just a normal little boy.

INTERVIEWER

Can you remember when he was first diagnosed as being hearing impaired?

MOTHER

Well, it would be when he went to the Speech Therapist. She said it wasn't his speech but his hearing. He'd passed the test, you know, that the Health Visitor did, so, after a time, we took him to see Mr..... (consultant) in .....(nearby town). Then he had grommets put in his ears, but that didn't do any good. He would be about four. I can't remember. We had to wait some time for the appointment because he only comes once a week.

(At this point of the interview, the electricity supply failed and the tape recorder did not work, so until power was resumed, the interview was conducted using field notes.)

John's mother was quite vague about the time lapse between initial appointment and diagnosis, and was unable to remember exactly when she had been told that there was a hearing loss. The parents appeared to have accepted the hearing loss fairly easily. They felt that John had normal speech and was a normal little boy. They have no idea what caused the impairment. When asked what support was given after diagnosis, John's mother said that the family doctor wasn't particularly bothered. She didn't think he knew very much about hearing loss. Reaction of close family was very accepting. Again the mother emphasised John's normal speech patterns, and stated that close relatives were very understanding. John's mother did not appear to have treated John any differently to any of the other children, although she said that she talked more loudly to him. John had gone to playgroup and had mixed very well with other children and went on with them to the local school. His placement in his local school was viewed most positively by his mother. She spoke of the patient understanding of the infant teacher, and the

good relationships within the school. She had been told by the present class teacher that John was the best boy in the class academically, and this obviously pleased her. When John had first gone to school, he had been very slow to read, and they had to work with him at home. Now that John was eight, his mother considered him to be a good reader, but, although he brought his book home regularly, he read it on his own and rarely wanted them to listen to him. His mother said they would be more concerned if the teacher told them he was falling behind. When asked what she would have looked for in a school for John, had he not been able to go to the local school, his mother said she did not know. They were happy with him where he was. She didn't feel that John's impairment had affected him in school, and it certainly hadn't affected him socially, "He's very popular and very lively." However, she intimated that there had been some problem with two older boys, who had teased John, when he had first got his phonic ear. When asked how she had handled this, John's mother said, "I rang.. .. (peripatetic teacher) and she got in touch with the Headmaster and he sorted it out."

The relationship with the peripatetic teacher was very strong. John's mother spoke of her as being someone at the end of the telephone to whom she could turn if she had a problem. John was visited in school once a week by the peripatetic teacher. His mother thought that extra work was done with him then.

When asked about hearing aids, John's mother stressed the growing dependence her son had on his one post-aural aid. Having lost his hearing totally in one ear, only one aid was being used. She said that she would even go upstairs at night and find John asleep with his hearing aid, still in place, buzzing. She commented on how John and his two brothers used to lie chattering at night, and this is why he would put it back in, and, although she believed he switched it off, she thought that moving about in bed might have switched it on again. John had some difficulty accepting his aid initially, but as he became aware of its value, he began to rely upon it. His mother had often suggested that he needn't wear it when they were going out, to which John replied, "I need to wear it, I can't hear without it." She stated that she had his hair cut so that the aid was not so obvious. John apparently notices

older people who are wearing aids and will point them out to his brothers, sisters and parents.

(At this point, power was restored, and a return was made to taping the interview.)

INTERVIEWER

We were talking about his hearing aid and how much he relied on it.

MOTHER

Yes, he does rely on it a lot.

INTERVIEWER

What about lip-reading? How much does he rely on that?

MOTHER

Yes, he does, because .....(peripatetic teacher) did a test on him not very long ago, and she was stood behind him to see if he had lost his hearing altogether out of that one ear, and she was standing behind him talking to him, and he couldn't hear what she said, and she stood in front of him and talked to him and he knew what she was saying, so she said he does lip-read a lot. He does anyway with his hearing aid. I think he's got used to our voices. Now, you see, somebody different, he probably finds hard to understand and you can tell he's actually watching them.

INTERVIEWER

So you really haven't had too many problems, other than being worried about a couple of lads at school?

MOTHER

No, not really. He just seems to take things in his stride. You know, just at first, he didn't want to wear his hearing aid, but he got used to it. I think it was more that it hurt his ear at first, when he had it in a long time.

INTERVIEWER

What about his phonic ear that he just uses at school? Does he have any problems with that?

MOTHER

He just wears it in the classroom, when the teacher puts it on when he wants to put it on, you know, such as more in class discussion and things like that, I think.

INTERVIEWER

Do you think it helps him in class?

MOTHER

Yes, I think so. You see he doesn't use it at home. We don't find any use for it at home, you see.

INTERVIEWER

So does he leave it at school?

MOTHER

Yes, all the time, except in holidays, he brings it home then. It is actually handier because the batteries have to be charged, and the teacher actually said he would charge them up for him, and leave it on at night, and he would put them back in next morning.

INTERVIEWER

What about the future? Have you any worries about the future?

MOTHER

Yes, I think secondary school, that's what I worry about.

INTERVIEWER

Why?

MOTHER

Well, I think when they get to secondary age, if he moves to a new school, I think he will probably get teased an awful lot, just at that age. Whereas the children at ..... (primary school) School have grown up with him from playschool, in school, whereas moving to a different school, ..... School (the local comprehensive school), I think he'll probably have to go into a different school, because I don't think they'll actually have time to bother with him like they do at ..... School.

INTERVIEWER

Do you think that's because it's a small school, or do you think it's because of the people there?

MOTHER

Because it's a small school, but also because the teachers are very good with him. He first started using it in Mrs ..... 's class (Infant teacher). She was very good with him, very patient, and then Mr ..... (present teacher) he's good with him as well. He's a friendly little lad and always happy he seems to be.

INTERVIEWER

So you're a bit anxious about what's going to happen? Maybe it's a bit

early to be thinking about other alternatives, if he didn't go to the local school. What sort of things would you be looking for in a school?

MOTHER

Well, a school that would help him with his work, and would have patience with him. I suppose I wouldn't want him to go to a school where they didn't bother, if they found that he was behind in his work. I find the bigger the school, such as ..... (local comprehensive school) has about 700 children, and also they move from class to class, don't they, whereas at his school now, they have the same teacher. And I feel that some teachers probably would help him and others couldn't be bothered, you know.

INTERVIEWER

Do you think teachers know enough about what it means to have a hearing loss?

MOTHER

I don't know, I don't think, probably not. Such as you see, I find the teachers at ..... School(present school) help him a lot such as Mr ..... , the Headmaster. His friend has a child who's deaf and actually wears one of these hearing aids with boxes. I think that actually helps when the teacher understands, you know, what he's going through.

INTERVIEWER

What about other people? Do you think people generally understand what it means?

MOTHER

Close friends do. Yes, I think they do. People never notice any difference in him, see, he just talks like a normal child. It hasn't made any difference to his speech, because often totally deaf people can't quite pronounce the words, whereas he can hear a little bit.

INTERVIEWER

You said he went to Speech Therapy. Has that helped?

MOTHER

Well, no, he went to see the Speech Therapist, but he actually didn't do anything, because she said it was actually his hearing that's the problem, not his speech. Well, his speech was a problem but it was through him not hearing properly that it was causing his speech.

INTERVIEWER

So he didn't actually go for Speech Therapy.

MOTHER

No.

INTERVIEWER

So how did his speech improve? Was it with the hearing aid?

MOTHER

Yes, a lot.

INTERVIEWER

Do you find that you have to correct some words that he says at home.

MOTHER

I still have to do, some things. He still doesn't hear properly if you happen to be at, I think it's his left side is his hearing aid. If you happen to be at his right hand side and you say something to him, he doesn't always hear.

INTERVIEWER

And does he sometimes get words wrong?

MOTHER

Yes he does.

INTERVIEWER

And do you stop then, and say it with him?

MOTHER

Yes I do. I correct him. Because he'll say words wrong, you know. I'll correct him, and tell him what the word actually should be, and he knows, so he does say it straight away. He watches you when you say it. You know sometimes other children maybe say something to him and he gets the words, similar words, but not exact. Then you have to correct him, you see.

INTERVIEWER

Do you find everyone is very patient with him?

MOTHER

People that know about it, yes.

INTERVIEWER

What about folk who don't?

MOTHER

Well, we don't really come across it. I find that I tend to - since I've found out about his hearing, I talk a lot louder. And if you're talking to him, I find that I talk loud. Sometimes you're walking along the street and you'll find, probably, he'll go running on in front, and I have to shout at him higher than what I normally do, and people tend to

look and think, as if you can read their minds, "Poor kid, fancy her shouting at him like that." But you have got to do, and the looks sometimes from strangers as you are walking along the street, or anything like that, and you happen to shout at him, because you have to do for him to take any notice. You have to shout, so he can hear, you see.

INTERVIEWER

Can you remember where his phonic ear came from?

MOTHER

..... (nearby town). Mr ..... (consultant), I think it was.

INTERVIEWER

Did you have to pay for it or anything?

MOTHER

No, it was the Goodrick Appeal.

INTERVIEWER

Do you have contact with other families who have got a child with a hearing loss?

MOTHER

No. We've had actually a letter from some Deaf Children's Society I think it's one from ..... (nearby town), but we've never done any thing about it. We probably should do. It were just recently, I should think, it were a couple of months ago they wrote to us about it. I think if we were having problems with him we probably would do, probably we should do, but we haven't. You see, I've got four other children to look after.

INTERVIEWER

Has John ever met any other hearing impaired children?

MOTHER

Yes, the other week, ..... (peripatetic teacher) fixed up for him to go and meet a little girl over at ..... (next village) school. She wasn't too happy, and was having problems and ..... (peripatetic teacher) thought that it would do her good to meet John and see somebody else with a hearing aid.

INTERVIEWER

Did it do John good?

MOTHER

Well, he wasn't bothered. I think he felt good because he thought it had made her feel better.

(At this point, the power supply was again interrupted.)

John's mother spoke of how sensitive she felt the consultant was to John. She was surprised when the peripatetic teacher told her that the consultant was himself deaf, but believed that might explain his caring approach. When asked what advice she would give to parents, she said she would tell them not to worry, that John was doing well. She felt that teachers should be advised to be caring like the teachers at John's present school. When asked what she would do if she had a magic wand which couldn't cure John's impairment, but could do anything else, she replied that she didn't know.

This interview was conducted in rather difficult circumstances, apart from the intermittent power supply. John's mother was very apprehensive initially, and the interview took place in the presence of two other children, the other two boys in the family, one aged 13, and other 3. The mother's very positive attitude that there were no problems at present, and that there had not been any, made it rather difficult to tease out the issues. However, as the interviewer left, the mother then broached the problem of secondary provision again, and began at great length to seek the interviewer's opinions on the subject.

APPENDIX ELEVEN

JOHN: TEACHER INTERVIEW

INTERVIEWER

Can you just describe John to me? Can you just give me a picture of how you see him?

TEACHER

John, he's all boy, very jolly, very happy-go-lucky, very carefree. He's popular, he's well-liked, enjoys school. He's got the world's worst memory when it comes to possessions, objects, knowing where his own things are. He can never find a thing. He's just gone home now, left his plimsolls all over the floor. He loses his tie six times a day, but he's a very happy-go-lucky, carefree little lad, you know. The fact that he is tied to his hearing aid, he's not really conscious of it. He's just accepted it.

INTERVIEWER

Do you think his impairment has affected him educationally?

TEACHER

Well, I've taught him for the whole of this year, and, with me, the progress he has made, I consider it has been quite good. I've found it hard myself to put my finger on anything that has really held him back, anything that he has really suffered to get. He always seems to me to be able to get on fairly well with whatever work we are doing, because out of the ten boys in the class, well there are nine now, actually one's left. Out of the nine boys in the class, to me, he's the best listener. And it sounds perhaps an odd thing to say. Because he's conscious, not self conscious, he's aware that he needs to listen hard to succeed. And it has made, him, John, a better listener. I know he's a better listener than the other boys in the class. When we are working in a class situation, in the classroom, and we are talking over Maths or language points, or what did they do over the weekend or in the holidays he's there, listening. And he doesn't often give in to distractions when I'm talking to the whole class. Occasionally he does a little bit, but not a lot.

INTERVIEWER

Do you think it has affected him socially?

TEACHER

Well, socially, with the other children, he, himself, doesn't seem to

feel different in any way. And the other children treat him well and accept him. And I've never yet in a year, no, I've been here three years, and John has obviously been here longer, over three, I've never yet heard of another child mocking him or hurling any kind of abuse at him at all to do with his hearing - never called him deaf. They've never actually said, "You're deaf" or anything at all really. They're very tolerant towards him and he seems to be tolerant towards them. They have a relationship that works for them as it does with me.

INTERVIEWER

Do you expect the same level of functioning from him as you do from the other children?

TEACHER

In a class situation, in the 3 R's, basically yes. Well, I work on the basis of expecting him to do well because I know he's got quite a lot of ability. I mean he's not just average, he's not below average, and his efforts and the fact that he does use what hearing ability he's got, to me, anyway, helped him to succeed and to do well and I expect, therefore, him to continue to do well. His standard of writing in his language book for instance is very good. His spellings, generally speaking, are quite good, are good, in fact. He writes some good stories, got a good imagination. He uses that and he is able to get involved with class discussion and things at quite a reasonable level. When someone like yourself, or ..... (peripatetic teacher), when we isolate John in conversation, when we are talking and discussing him, I find it difficult to see him differently than any of the others, because to me he's in the right situation for him and he's succeeding. And although we are all concerned about any further detriments to his hearing, whether there is any further fall off with his hearing, we've got to bear that in mind and of course keep him on a test and so on. And I'm sure he's going to do as well as any other boy of his ability.

INTERVIEWER

Were the other children prepared for John? Did he come as a hearing impaired child?

TEACHER

Now, that's a difficult one for me to answer. He wasn't in my class three years ago. It was only in Mrs ..... 's (Infant class teacher) class, which was about two years ago, the fact that he was hard of hearing and so on began to come to light, and affect how people were

going to deal with him. Prior to that, he seemed to have been getting along reasonably well. .... (peripatetic teacher) will tell you that. His hearing in one ear has deteriorated quite dramatically about seven, eight months ago. I think it was November time, there was a falling off, and she's had him assessed by somebody down at ..... School, who is in charge of hearing impaired children, and a specialist as well, National Health Service specialist, I suppose, if I remember rightly, and of course she's very concerned that there might be further deterioration. But going back to what you were saying. Three years ago the lack of hearing, his impairment wasn't known, I don't think. I think that's right. I've not got his records out, but it came to light in Mrs ..... 's (Infant class teacher) class.

INTERVIEWER

How do the other children cope?

TEACHER

Well, you see, when Mrs ..... (Infant teacher), Oh! How do my children cope now?

INTERVIEWER

Yes.

TEACHER

Well, as I say, we've got this working relationship, and of course we're at the end of a year now when half a class are moving up. He doesn't really seem - he can lip-read you know, and this is how he was tricking his way through apparently. He was quite a good lip-reader and still is. And he's very good at picking up clues, as you saw in that game. He looks around all the time. "Am I doing the right thing?" And it's because he's got these other skills, which compensate for his lack of hearing, that he's made up so much and he does do well. But, as far as other children go, to me, they accept him for what he is, without making any real allowance, because I think they repeat things to him as I repeat things to him sometimes. Obviously, it's difficult to talk to John if they're behind him. If they're behind him, and they're trying to impose themselves on a group situation, he might be working, or just catch him on the off chance. Then they will usually either touch him or something, if it's like that, say they're working in Science or Art, pottering about, measuring. Some of them do raise their voices to him as I do, to a degree. I think that's because I'm emphasizing. I never shout at him. You know down there on the Rec. there was something I was trying

to say, "Now watch what I'm doing, John, you put the quoit" and one does that, sort of consciously let the words come out and some of the children do that as well. Some shout, some raise their voice to attract John's attention. Mind you, ....., (a girl) to attract anybody's attention, she'll raise her voice, but she's not making him that much different from anybody else, and I don't think any of them really do, you know.

INTERVIEWER

You said he was very well accepted socially by the rest of the class. Does he tend to have a best friend or is he in a group?

TEACHER

Oh no, he's very much a group boy. In fact, I think you find that with boys. I think that boys are very much more prepared to move about from one to another in a group and exist as a social group, instead of having one best friend. But John doesn't live in the town, you see, so once he goes home from school the greater part of his time is spent with his brothers and sisters on the farm, and it isn't often I hear him say he's been to visit children in town, but it does probably happen. He does go to parties and so on, but his mum and dad are super with them all - very much a loving, close-knit family. Oh, John does visit another family in school, who are his cousins ..... (naming cousin) and ..... (another cousin) and their brother who has left. They mix quite a lot. Both mums do a lot for all the boys, and John has some sisters, but in the playground and so on he'll play and mix with any lads. He'll muck in with anybody. He's not seven, he's just eight, and he tends to play with boys of his own age, or younger, rather than the other way around. There are one or two of them who are a little bit more confident, and they tend to mix up with the older ones in the other class, but John tends to play with the boys from my class and the younger ones.

INTERVIEWER

Some people think that hearing impaired children are difficult to handle.

TEACHER

Well, this is where one does not notice that John is a different boy. He's marvellous really. He's an absolute case. He can have us in stitches, you know. For instance, I said to him a few weeks ago, I said - he'd lost something, I can't remember what it was - a sandwich box - no, he'd left the sandwiches at home because he has packed lunch. And I

said, "And what did your mother say when you got home and you'd left your sandwiches and she'd had to bring them in at lunchtime and all that?" and he looked me and said, "She said, - By, you're a rum 'un'," and that's just how he is. He's broad ..... (naming accent), so carefree, and he'll accept anything coming at him without batting an eyelid. In the classroom, in all aspects of the work we do, he'll have a go. He does the work, tries hard, he listens so well, and behaviour wise he's never a problem. As I say, like all children in the classroom situations that we have in Art and Activity Maths, and Science where they are moving about, occasionally he ends up jiggling about like they all do, but no more so than the others.

INTERVIEWER

You mentioned his parents and the family atmosphere. How much support does he get?

TEACHER

He gets 100% support from his parents. I'm sure about that. Whenever he's to take to the clinic or whenever ..... (peripatetic teacher) wants to be in touch with parents she's had the warmest of welcomes. They've been very open. Mum's very open with me. She comes in and explains if he's off, or anything like that, or whatever's going on, if there's anything new cropping up. For instance, going back to when we had that assessment November time, they're a very caring family, and his little sister's in the school - she's about a year and a half younger than him - in fact two years younger, and the whole family is so close, and he, himself, gets all the support that he could possibly wish for.

INTERVIEWER

So they view it very positively his being here in his local school?

TEACHER

Yes, I hope, I'm sure that they do think that he's making good progress. I think he is, I think he is and, as I say, I arranged, oh, it will be before Christmas. I was chatting with them and I said, "Does John wear the box at home - is it used at home?" and she said, "Oh no, he manages perfectly well with just his hearing aid" and so, I said, "Well, is it all right if you leave the box at school?" because, as I say, John forgets everything. It was left in Auntie's car and whatever. So I took that on and she said, "Well, yes, that seems a good idea if you're prepared to do it." With having spare batteries, it only means popping them on charge once or twice a week, so that's the only concession, the

only thing they've been stuck on and given over to me, because it wasn't used at home, and it wasn't really being, I mean, if it was used outside on the farm, it would probably end up broken or whatever. As I say, I use it 75% of the time I should be using it with him. I think I am. I've read all the pamphlets ..... (peripatetic teacher) gave to me and occasionally we do pass it round the class. When we were having a Look and Read T.V. serial and we read books round the class, we passed it round then and we do occasionally, but I think - I mean, obviously what's in the books is the ideal, and if you did that all the time, you would be forever fiddling about with it. But he does get by so well. He does get by a lot without it in general.

INTERVIEWER

What about yourself, before you had John in your class, what about your own knowledge of hearing impairment?

TEACHER

My own knowledge of hearing impaired children was nil, I'm afraid. I've had handicapped children before, Spina Bifida. I've had Epileptics, and I've had a Spastic child whom I coped with, well, I thought I coped with very well. But hearing as such, no, I wasn't geared for that.

INTERVIEWER

In your own training, did you have any lectures on hearing impairment?

TEACHER

Going back about how many years now? None really, nothing at all about any child who had any impediments, incapacities. As far as I can remember I'm sure there weren't. Well, what you got, of course, was the disruptive child, the disruptive, the backward ESN - you know backward and ESN were the words bandied about a lot then, but not so much now. The child was, the remedial, that was the normal. Physically, the child was perfectly normal, but not with anything like hearing.

INTERVIEWER

Do you think your attitude has changed and been adapted since you had John in your class?

TEACHER

Well, that's a difficult one, that is. For me, I find it difficult to outline any way in which I changed my ways to suit him, because I don't think I have had to. I don't think I have had to. I have been aware of it and I have talked to ..... (peripatetic teacher) about it, and I say he's a good steady worker, you know, he's fair. I'm going to have to

do something next term when I get the girl from ..... (naming other school). I don't know whether you have heard about her.

INTERVIEWER

No.

TEACHER

Well, this is a girl with problems not unlike John's, in a way, because it's a communication problem. We've got a little girl coming to us who has been at ..... (school) for three and a half years. She will be a second year junior, and she has been there since she virtually started school, and she has got a palsy in the mouth, vocal muscles, and the salivary gland and all this area (indicating his own face). I forget what it's designated as, so when she speaks it's very difficult to interpret what she says. It requires from the listener a real conscious effort. So, if she said, for instance, I went to see her three weeks ago and I asked her whose painting was on the wall next to hers and she said, "Andrew" - it comes out as, "Anoo", like that, and she has a dribbling problem.

INTERVIEWER

She's in the Language Unit, is she?

TEACHER

Yes, a special unit. I don't know. They obviously do all sorts with her, but her parents we've met, and we're meeting again next week. This is getting away from John. My view is, had I not been really keen on having her, then she might not have been coming. I'm perfectly willing to have her in my class, and she's coming next Thursday to school. In fact we've got puppets on that day, so I don't know whether you'd been interested in coming in next Thursday, but you'd have to sit through the puppet show as well, but ..... (naming girl) will be in then, and I think that might be interesting for you to see her.

INTERVIEWER

Yes, it would be.

TEACHER

But I, as I've said, with John, no, because if you look at John and you speak to him, 90% of the time, no, well that's a bit high, 80% of the time, he'll have got what you are talking about. Now the average boy in my class, and they aren't all together a bright bunch, you know, they're not all that much better than that themselves, you see.

INTERVIEWER

So really what you're saying is that it's the communication. You can see there might be problems with the little girl because of that, but with John, there isn't, because he can communicate with you and with the other children?

TEACHER

Yes, you see he's always been able to, John's problems aren't like hers. Whether John is blessed with having a slightly above average intelligence - I think he's about 110 or 115 - I'd have to look at my records. We've done a NFER with him this year, you see. Now that's made all the difference to a boy like John. Had it been someone else in my class, and I've got two lads who come out 85/90. If they had had that same lack of hearing, that same disability, then I'm sure they would be further behind by a long way. But John has managed to use his innate abilities to compensate for them and do very well. I mean he isn't really producing, I'm sure he's not producing far below his capabilities, for a boy. Because, for a boy, he's good, you see. I only have to think of the differences between girls of 110, and boys, and the girls will always effortlessly give more, whereas the boys aren't interested in the 3 R's. You know the number work isn't so bad, but when it comes to topic work - they love the pictures, they love making the knights and all the rest of it, but when it comes to the written work, they're not altogether that desperately keen, are they? They'll do the minimum. But John's a good 'un.

INTERVIEWER

Can you think of some instances where John has had difficulty in understanding what he has to do?

TEACHER

What tends to happen, is that, occasionally in Activity Maths, when he's doing his SPMG, and it's perhaps weighing, there's an example given, and it's sometimes rather vaguely set out. It'll be rather vague what object they want you to compare with. You've got to choose an object and things to weigh to compare it with, but then it goes on from there, and occasionally he does question that kind of situation. He likes to be sure he's got his stall set out, you see. I think it's as much, "Am I doing it right before I start?" type of thing, rather than off he goes and leaps in at the deep end. But, yes, I can accept that there are certain situations where he needs to be re-assured that he's getting it

right from the start, if possible. Written language work and that kind of work I don't find he has too much of a problem with. He's generally able to take part in the class in any language work and get on quite well with that. And again, when working from interest cards, or work sheets, or work cards, or whatever, it might be a text book he generally works from, well, you just have to go over it briefly. He's usually up to normal with that. But sometimes with a more sort of mature choice of activity that arises in Maths and Science and Topic, he does come out and ask, or he asks somebody else to check in case he does go wrong and do things wrong. He sometimes relies on pictures, you see. Now he can read quite well, and again he looks round at others, and he sometimes makes a mistake at seeing a child at work, glances at the book, and thinks "I'm doing the same thing", and he copies them, and they're not quite on the same actual topic. But it doesn't happen very often.

INTERVIEWER

What you seem to be saying very strongly to me is that this is the right place for John.

TEACHER

Oh, I'm absolutely sure. If he were stone-deaf then I'd have a problem, because I'm in no way qualified in communicating with a boy who is deaf, but he isn't, and I hope he never will be, because as I have said earlier, he uses the facilities he's got to succeed.

INTERVIEWER

What do you think people should be considering before they place a hearing impaired child?

TEACHER

Well, the level of impairment straight away, and John needs to be considered here, because one ear is worse, getting on to be fairly useless even with a hearing aid, so he's down to one ear with a hearing aid, and a very low level in the other. But I think you're talking about a situation where there's a child in a special unit or a rising five. "What are we going to do with this child - is it going to stay in the school, or is the child going to go into a special unit?" And I think one would obviously have to consider the physical level of hearing, what % it's down, and then one would have to say, "Well, how well does this child communicate - how well can this child carry out certain everyday normal tasks?" If they're pre-school, you know, hopefully, fortunately,

things will have come to light before school, and if they're in a special unit, "Well, how does this kid cope with verbal instructions, written instructions, can he read, can he get on through reading as well as conversation?" If the child is able to make progress through working with a teacher just using normal conversation, obviously there's a certain amount of lip-reading, and a level of reading which is not too far below his chronological age, or whatever, then I think they would be able to be admitted. One has to consider that some children who are hard of hearing are not very well adjusted. Now that is just not the case with John, he's the most well-adjusted boy you would ever meet. He's marvellous, you never see him sulk, you never see him cry unless he's walked into a wall. You never see him snatch, kick, very occasionally, just as boys are, but nothing out of the ordinary. But as far as his adjustment to coping with other children and school life, he's happy-go-lucky, that's the expression to describe him. Yet, at the same time, he does take his school work quite seriously, you know, just as seriously as a boy, he's so happy-go-lucky. He leaves stuff lying all over the show. He's so funny when he tells you, you can't get annoyed. "I've left it in my Auntie's car", you know. That's John, but you must have come across the child, the maladjusted child. For instance, the little girl at ..... (naming nearby village) she's not at all happy with the situation she's in, very conscious of her hearing aid, and being a girl, although she's got long hair and it doesn't show. You see John has got short, cropped hair, but you don't notice them. None of the kids do. But if the child is not, you know, is disruptive, if he's given to tantrums, you know, one doesn't see anything like that with John. I think it's something you've got to think about. If you've got a child who's removed from a Special Unit with a qualified teacher of the Deaf, how many children, five, six, on their own a lot of the time, to throw, to put that child in an ordinary class situation of 25+, then there's a lot of discussion, a lot of talking to be done, with parents, with the teacher who is going to get that child. How much help can County offer? Now, as it happens, what ..... (peripatetic teacher) does when she comes in, really, if she saw him a little bit more often, fair enough, but we'll maybe talk about this next year. She'll maybe want to, usually she takes him in the library, maybe she'll want to be in the class with me.

INTERVIEWER

If you'd got a friend who was a teacher and they were about to have a

hearing impaired child in their class, what advice would you give them?

TEACHER

Well, if they were shaking their head in despair, because somebody had thrust a child on them who maybe is a threat to the peace of the classroom, I don't know. If it was a child who was quiet, not too moody, didn't sulk too much, and anyone like John, I'd say, "You've nothing to worry about." I mean you don't have to go out of your way. If the child is about average, and has coped, learned, picked up the rudiments of reading and number, and so on, in a normal primary school, then I don't think there's anything to worry about. But you see, you've come and seen me today and you've come to see me about John, and John isn't a problem hearing child, a problem hard of hearing child. He's very much an ordinary member of our class, and it's nice that he is that, and that his parents know that he's in there with everybody else, and the fact that he's quite deaf hasn't really caused him any sleepless nights. It's all in hand. But the girl we get next year - you see, I'm not the least bit bothered about this child coming next September. I'm looking forward to having her in, and seeing how we all get on with her, and hoping that she'll begin to do well. She's been about one in a group of eight, and she's top dog, so far her Dad says, and she's the most able, because her intelligence is normal, but she dribbles all the time, you see. She's not the most wonderful thing to look at when she's eating apparently, but I've only experienced that to a small degree and she has this difficulty in actually speaking. She reads. She can handle a computer. She can do number, writing, but she's going to be a much more interesting case than John.

APPENDIX TWELVE

MARK: PARENT INTERVIEW

INTERVIEWER

Can you just describe Mark to me? How do you see him?

MOTHER

Well, in one sentence, he's just happy-go-lucky. I think this is why he's coping with the two schools so well. As you know, he's ten years old, eleven at the end of October, the 21st. of October. What, how would you describe him? He loves food and football.(laughter) I don't know whether I have got them in the right order. I don't know which is his priority. He's just happy-go-lucky.

INTERVIEWER

How old was he when his deafness came on? Was he prelingually deaf?

MOTHER

No, he was born with perfect hearing. As a family, we picked up there was something not quite right when he was round about three. I don't think he was quite three years old when we felt there was something wrong, and, again, as you know, we have an older daughter. She's now twenty, and also has a hearing problem, and I honestly thought it was my imagination. I thought there can't be two children in the same family. I thought it was my imagination. I did express to Health Visitors I wasn't very happy, but on a one-to-one basis, in a quiet room, doing tests, they felt there wasn't a lot to worry about. I asked the family doctor. He said he wasn't too happy, but it could have been because it was a strange environment that he was in, and he was about three and eventually I did ask to see a consultant. It would be just after Mark's fourth birthday and he said, "Yes, there is definitely something wrong, and we will just keep an eye on him." And when he was five, just after he started school, he was given his hearing aids.

INTERVIEWER

And so there was a year gap between you actually thinking and expressing that you felt there was something not quite right, and actually seeing somebody?

MOTHER

Yes, Yes. Well, no, not in actually seeing somebody. People just felt it could have been one of these things. Well, I'm wrong in saying it could pass over. It wasn't enough to worry about. There wasn't enough of a

hearing loss to worry about. He was coping, and there just wasn't enough there to worry about. We got to .....(nearest large city), and they felt there was something wrong, but again not enough to start giving him hearing aids straight away, not enough to worry about. And when we went the following year, he had to start wearing aids. He started off with a very low powered aid. It's a progressive hearing loss. It gets progressively worse and worse. I should be able to tell you the decibel loss and I can't. I hope someone else has filled you in on details.

INTERVIEWER

No, that's all right. So, can you remember how you felt at the time when you saw the consultant, when he agreed with you?

MOTHER

It took me a full year to accept it, a full year exactly. We were told in the January. Although I knew, and I'd been going on for over a year beforehand, and we were told in the January. Yes, he definitely had a hearing loss, and it was actually the following December when I was in .....(city where consultant practised), and somebody asked me how the children were getting on. It was the first time I really felt that I had accepted that Mark had a hearing loss, when I was in the middle of .....(city previously mentioned), and somebody asked, "How's he getting on, this little lad of yours?" and I said, "He's going deaf like ....., " (sister) and I broke down in the middle of the street. And that was almost a full year. Yet I knew in my own heart that he was, there was a hearing loss.

INTERVIEWER

Did they know what's caused it all?

MOTHER

It's nerve deafness, and they believe it must be hereditary. When they did diagnose that Mark was definitely losing his hearing, they asked us to go into the genetic family tree, but both .....(sister), and now Mark, have a deformity of the bone structure of the jaw, which means a lot of orthodontic treatment, and at the time we were going to ..... (city) with him with the hearing aids or whatever, maybe every three months, and I was going to ..... General Hospital every six weeks with .....(sister), and I said, "Not another hospital, not at the moment," and we talked about it, and we decided when ..... (sister) was older, and maybe had a boyfriend, or even considering getting married, that would be soon enough to go into the genetic family tree.

INTERVIEWER

Have you any other children?

MOTHER

No, just the two.

INTERVIEWER

So, when this consultant said to you there was something wrong, what support did you get from medical people, first of all?

MOTHER

Oh golly, that's a difficult one. I just went round asking for the support. Everybody was sympathetic, but to be perfectly honest I don't think we got a lot of support. I think it was more a worry that he was going, my biggest worry was he was going to be ignored. Again, going back to .....(sister), I knew how difficult it is living in this area. You know, there are not a lot of children, really, with a hearing loss in the area, and the children that there are, there's one way over at ..... , there's another down here on the ..... border, and there's others way over in ....., and they are expected to be covered by the same people. And that was my biggest worry, that we weren't going to get the support, and we had to keep asking and knocking and insisting. And again, knowing .....(peripatetic teacher) from the days of .....(sister), you know, it was nice to be able to ring her up and say, "What's going to happen?" and get help from her. I don't know what I would have done without .....(peripatetic teacher) at times. I'm sure you've had that said from other people. Again, as you know, we have no Social Worker for the Deaf, not in this area. We hope we will have one very, very soon. I know they have been advertising for one, I don't know whether anyone has answered the ad., but we're hoping because that will help. Professionals in Social Services that know, the social workers that we do have, if I've gone to them with a problem, or what I've felt was a problem, they've actually said to me, "You can tell me more than I can tell you", which doesn't help the problem.

INTERVIEWER

How about your family? How did they react?

MOTHER

Hmm. This is going to sound nasty, but I think my in-laws thought I was very careless to have two with a hearing problem. Reaction? They don't understand. To be quite honest, I sometimes wonder whether I do. None of them really understand, and this is immediate family who don't

understand what a hearing loss is. You know, they think they wear hearing aids and that should cure the problem, which, of course, it doesn't. I suppose, again I'm in the wrong, by not insisting that they understand and they take more time, but it's easier to not let them understand, and then not let them bother having them for an afternoon, or a day, or a weekend, or what have you. It's easier to keep the children at home, than to try to make them understand. I suppose I'm in the wrong to let them carry on in ignorant bliss.

INTERVIEWER

It's sometimes quieter, isn't it?

MOTHER

It's easier on life. There's enough problems, as I say, with the immediate family circle with the children.

INTERVIEWER

Do you feel that you've had to bring the children up in a different way than you might have had to, had they had normal hearing?

MOTHER

Not exactly a different way. You've had to take more time with them. I suppose it's me that's had to be different, you know. I can't stand at the bottom of the stairs and scream at them, "Hurry up and get ready." You've got to go upstairs and tell them to hurry up. You've got to make sure they are looking at you. Where a "normal" child is walking out the door, you can say to them, "Have you got so and so?" and they hear you, and they can come back and say, "Yes, I've got it." With a child with a hearing problem, you have got to go after them, and make sure they have got it. I think that's the only thing that's different, making sure the ear moulds are clean and that they are not blocked, that they've got new batteries in if they're going anywhere, and that they take spares with them.

INTERVIEWER

Was Mark able to go to playgroup, and how did he get on?

MOTHER

Yes, he went to playgroup. He got on very well. You see his hearing loss wasn't so bad when he was at playgroup. Because, by the time he'd finished playgroup and was going into school, it was just the time he was getting his hearing aids, so he started playgroup at two. He didn't really have a hearing loss that was noticeable. You know, as I said earlier, he's happy go lucky, he gets on with anybody and everybody, and

if he thinks that someone is talking to him, even a child, or even a great big 6'6" hulk, if they're talking to him and they turn away, he will give them a tug, or even a thump, and say, "I'm deaf, you know, will you look at me?" which I think is great. And that's something he hasn't been taught to do or told to do. It's just something he does.

INTERVIEWER

So he uses lipreading quite a bit.

MOTHER

He uses lipreading about 90% of the time. He relies on lipreading more so than on his hearing aids.

INTERVIEWER

When it came time for school he had just got his hearing aids. Was it automatic that he went to the local school, or did you consider any other schools?

MOTHER

Well, at the time again, his hearing loss wasn't that bad to consider going to a special school, you know. The term before he actually started, which was the Easter to July term, he didn't have his hearing aids, when he did an hour in the afternoons. He didn't have his hearing aids, and we didn't have the Headmaster, then, that we have now, and I will be perfectly honest, I didn't tell him that Mark had a hearing loss. We had so many problems with .....(sister) with that Headmaster in that school. I'm not going to tell you because it will only create problems. I dropped the bombshell on the new Headmaster, when he arrived, and it was a bombshell, I'm afraid, for the new Headmaster, when I went in when they started back in September, when Mark went in sporting his little hearing aids. I made the appointment to see him the first morning of term, and I said to him that he's got a hearing problem not enough to worry about, and the new Headmaster said, "Oh, don't worry, don't worry, we can soon get him put into a special school." And I said, "No way. We shall manage here for a while and we'll see how it goes with peripatetic help." But he was a brand new Headmaster. He'd never been a headmaster before. He was coming into almost a brand new school. I don't think he wanted brand new problems. But about six months after that, when I did see him, I said to him, "You worried me to death, when you said we'll have him put in a special school." He put his arm round my shoulders, and he said, "Mrs ..... , when you walked into my school, my new school, and said you'd got a son with a problem, you

worried me to death." And he has been absolutely marvellous since then, he couldn't do any more for Mark than he's doing. In fact, I think he does more for Mark than he need do.

INTERVIEWER

If it was time over again, and you were choosing a school, what would you look for?

MOTHER

With a child with a hearing impairment, I would look for a small school, preferably small classes as well. This is going to sound funny but I'd look for a school that also had men on the staff. I think they have a little bit more sympathy, are a bit more sympathetic than the females. I'm sorry I said that. Why I feel that, I think the menfolk seem to have more time. Probably female members of staff, this is going to sound terrible, are thinking, you know, "What am I doing for hubby's tea tonight?" rather than wanting to spend that bit more time. I'm not saying that they haven't got time and patience, because every one of the teachers in Mark's school have taken time out with reading. When they have book clubs they take the time out to choose books with Mark, suitable books with him. But yes, definitely a small school, preferably small classes.

INTERVIEWER

What do you mean by a small school?

MOTHER

I would think no more than 200 children, and I'm saying 200 children with somewhere in the region of no less than seven or eight classes. You see I think Mark is in too big a class now. They have over thirty. I think a child with a hearing problem would be better in a class of no more than a dozen children. Again, if that dozen children were normal hearing children, and he was one of them, I think that would be ideal. A small class where the teacher has time to spend that little bit more time and repeat things. When you get larger classes, there's not just that child with a hearing problem wanting things repeated, there's other children who've maybe been sat in a corner, chattering, and they haven't heard what's said and they want it repeating, and a child with a hearing problem wants it repeating again, because he's not sure he heard right the first time.

INTERVIEWER

How do you think Mark's impairment has affected him educationally?

MOTHER

He was, I should say he is, very bright. He had quite a fantastic reading ability age, which I think, when he was about six, he had a reading age of about eight, which you would have thought would have kept going up, and up, and up, but it's not. It's now starting to come down. I know last February when they did the assessment, he had a reading ability age of about eleven. Six to eight is two years - nine to eleven - it's coming down more or less on par. We spend a lot of time reading with him. He's a great dictionary buff, which I think helps. Now, if he wasn't sure of a word, or sure what it meant, or he got a word in a sentence which was wrong, it sounded right, but the actual word was wrong, we've always made him go to a dictionary and look that word up, if we've felt it was important enough. You know, if he said, "Jelly" instead of "Jam" that wasn't important enough, but if we've thought a word has been important enough, we've made him go and look it up in the dictionary to get the right dictionary definition, and to put it in a sentence. We've always made him go and look that word up. We would play games, they were always educational games. He's said on more than one occasion, "Can't we do something just for fun?", which has made you feel quite rotten. If we play games in the car it's usually Hangman, you know, or I Spy which is educational. "Can't we count bridges?" "Right, we'll count bridges." "Just for fun," he'll say. I think you are conscious all the time that they've got to be learned, you've got to keep them on a par. It's helped going into the Unit half-a-day, every day, because he's had that personal help from .....(Unit teacher) when he's gone in there with his Maths, and what have you. He could do his tables before he actually went to school. I'm not talking about his twelve times, but the simple tables, his twos and fours and tens. He was able to reel some of them off before he actually started school. I think he has come down with his sums. He likes to work things out. His work may look like a spider's web when he has worked things out, but when you ask him, "What's this?" he'll start up at the top of the page, and then he goes back to the bottom, and then into the middle, little lines all over, with little lines pointing where he's gone, but he does get there in the end. We've had to stop him using a calculator. I say he can work the sums out first, then he uses the calculator to check his answers. I don't feel I am answering your question very well here. I feel he is very bright, and if he hadn't had a hearing loss, he would be a lot

higher up in the scale than he is, but I suppose all mums would like to feel that, even if the child hasn't got a problem. If they're not as high up the scale where they feel they should be, they look for a problem, you know. You see why they give an excuse of why they're not.

INTERVIEWER

What about socially? Has it affected Mark socially?

MOTHER

No, because he is quite sociable. He will look for friends. I suppose one or two get fed up of him, having to repeat things over, and if they're playing football, they can't scream at him from across the other side of the pitch, "Pass it," and they get a little bit fed up, which I suppose, why not, you know they want to get on with the game. He's not somebody that bothers if somebody is fed up of him, and they go off and play with somebody else, Mark will go and look for somebody else. He doesn't sit in a corner and get upset about it. Now this is what we found with .....(sister). I know we're not talking about her, but she would click on to one person, and that would be her friend. Now if that friend got fed up of her because she was sick of repeating things, or she wanted to do what .....(sister) didn't want to do, .....(sister) would end up on her own, and get very upset and withdrawn into herself. The whole world hated her, whereas Mark doesn't. He'll look for somebody else and get on.

INTERVIEWER

How do you cope with living out of the village then, from the point of view of Mark playing with other lads?

MOTHER

It's transporting people in, or transporting him out. Being out of the village, and being on a farm, people tend to want to come here, rather than him go and play in their garden. When they come here they bring motor bikes up. They're all motor bike fiends at the moment, so they'll come from the village. Their dads will bring their motor bikes up on the backs of the pick-ups or whatever, and they'll ride round on motor bikes which is lovely, because nobody can hear what anybody is saying when motor bikes are revving up. When there's three or four motor bikes racing by or they're stood in this little group with all the engines revving, Mark has the advantage because he can lipread the others, and the others are saying, "You what?" And Mark is way ahead with that.

INTERVIEWER

Of course you would have had to do that, had he not been hearing impaired. You'd still have the problem of living out of the village.

MOTHER

Yes, we would be still transporting out, or in. I still feel the other children would have tended to have wanted to come here more, because there's more for them to do, even if it's only stacking bales in the barn, or making a den, which they quite often do. They'll get themselves some bales and end up making a den and sitting on them. We've got a caravan out there, and sometimes the caravan is the den. If he has more than two or three, they'll go in the caravan, and they feel ever so grown up, because they are having their meals out in the caravan. They're just getting out of my hair, you know, but they think it's a treat.

INTERVIEWER

Do you think there are any particular difficulties that Mark has to face?

MOTHER

Not at the moment. In the past, it's been getting people to understand. I've been into school on a couple of occasions when he's changed classes. You see, this year he's been going through school, from starting, virtually with the same group of children, so I started, I went into school not long after he started. We sat one afternoon just talking to the children about hearing aids, and how important they were, and how they weren't to be played about with, with that group of children. Then Mark became about the youngest in the class, so he stayed in class five for an extra year, so he came across a new group of children, when we went into school again, and had a chat to them about hearing aids, and why Mark was wearing them. That isn't really a difficulty, just having the children know that hearing aids aren't something to be played with. We did have one incident, and it was in the new class actually. I don't know why, but we didn't make a big deal of it. Mark got some new earmoulds which were these fancy skeleton things. They weren't very good. To be quite honest, I was glad it happened, because I got what I wanted. But one of the boys had seen this earmould on the desk, and he'd actually put it on the floor, and stood on it, which cracked it. We got over that, it wasn't you know, it wasn't, we didn't make a big deal out of it. I just said to him it was a silly

thing to do. Mark could have been without, for two may be, three weeks, without being able to wear a hearing aid, and he would have missed a lot. The boy said it was an accident. It fell on the floor and he stood on it, so we just passed it over as being an accident. We had earmoulds that did Mark for the time being for those couple of weeks, while we got new ones. That's the only real problem we have had.

INTERVIEWER

When was the decision made that Mark would go part-time to the Unit, and why was that decision made?

MOTHER

I think it was, he started the Unit last September, it was a year gone February we started to talk about it, the peripatetic teacher and myself, even the school teacher. They felt the class was so big at the school now, that he wasn't getting the attention he ought to get. He started to fall just that little way behind. Where he was ahead of the other children to start with, he was falling behind. He was having to do more and more work at home, which really wasn't fair to him when he'd had his day at school. He'd only be eight or nine. He'd had his day at school, and was coming home and having to spend another hour doing homework. He wanted to be outside kicking a ball and playing with friends. "Can so-and-so come to play?" "No, you've got your homework to do." So it was decided he needed some social life, that was one point. It was going to be a very big class, and so he couldn't get the attention that he needed. It was thought he didn't need the Unit full-time, but he needed something extra in school, and, again, as has already been said, it's such a wide area to cover, it was going to be difficult to get extra peripatetic help. So we said we'd see how the Unit went for half-a-day, the Unit in the morning and the school in the afternoon. I objected at first. I thought there was going to be too much travelling. It's a long way, over twenty miles. It's about three quarters of an hour travelling, morning and lunchtime, and I did object. I said, "Well, surely he'll get more out of two full days at the Unit than he would five mornings?" Again, there was a lot of talking, and a lot of discussion, and they said, "Well, no, they do the academic work in a morning, and it's more or less Art and Craft, or play, or Gym work in an afternoon." So he needed every morning, so I did agree, under protest, that he went every morning. I said, "Well, if the travelling doesn't suit him, I want it changed". It's worked out absolutely

fantastic. He's actually only setting off from here, ten minutes, or a quarter of an hour earlier than he was to go to school. They've arranged lunch. He leaves the Unit dead on 12 noon. They've arranged lunch, so he has his lunch as soon as he gets to .....(own school). He doesn't get much of a playtime at lunchtime, but he gets his afternoon play, so he can socialise with the others. But people say, it was the educational psychologist who said, "It just shouldn't be working the way it is." It's going to be helpful, hopefully, for other people and other children. Nobody thought it would work out the way it is working out according to two schools, so he's getting his academic work at the Unit in a morning and he has friends out at .....(school to which Unit is attached). He's also keeping his friends and his social contacts here. We couldn't ferry his friends, children from ..... (Unit school) backwards and forwards here, with it being so far away. Okay, we could have invited them for a weekend, he just wouldn't have any friends. As it is, he's got friends here and friends out at ..... (Unit school). It's the best of both worlds.

INTERVIEWER

What do you think he likes doing best at school?

MOTHER

Football.

INTERVIEWER

What about at home?

MOTHER

Riding his motor bike. He loves his motor bike.

INTERVIEWER

How does he get on with his sister?

MOTHER

They are like chalk and cheese, they really are, and they do not get on together.

INTERVIEWER

There's quite an age-gap isn't there?

MOTHER

Yes, there's nearly ten years age gap. When he was a baby he was the best thing on earth to .....(sister). When he started walking and when he got a mind of his own, then she couldn't boss him about. They just don't get on, which doesn't help actually, trying to keep harmony in the household. I suppose it's easier being such a big age gap,

because .....(sister) can go and do her own thing, and Mark does his. They're not wanting to do things together.

INTERVIEWER

Do you feel you need to correct Mark's speech at home?

MOTHER

Yes, quite often. I'm going to try and think of an example and I can't. He says words as he reads them. As I said earlier, he is a very good reader, and he'll say words as he actually reads them, rather than how they should be said. My brain is going round for an example and I'm sorry I just can't think of one. And you correct him with the correct pronunciation whatever word he's said. He'll say it, maybe after two or three times, he'll say it correct, but he goes back to his way of saying it. It's obvious you've got to sit and correct over and over again. He still says words like "lickle", he doesn't hear t's. You can get him to say little, but if he says, "I'm looking for my little ball," it's always, "I'm looking for my lickle ball" and it doesn't matter how many times you correct him, it will still come out as lickle, which again, it happens in normal hearing children.

INTERVIEWER

What about his radio aid? How have you coped with that?

MOTHER

Mark had the big old phonic aid until March of this year. Well, we've still got the big phonic aid, but he will not wear it, and I shall explain why in a few seconds. He loved his old phonic aid. Then they said, "Well, you know, he's ten, and he's wearing smarter clothes," which he was. His big phonic aid did look ugly, when he was all dressed up and looking nice with his trousers and shirt and tie, with this great thing stuck there. The ..... Appeal were purchasing a lot of new ones to come out on trial, so they put Mark's audiogram into the computer, and they came out with this Viennatone, which was going to be right to suit his hearing loss. We got a brand new one from the maker at the end of March, and .....(peripatetic teacher) took it into school, and she thought it was working. I'm afraid I was in school at the time, and I thought it wasn't, so I got him home and checked it. And it was not working, the transmitter was not transmitting. Mark's part of the aid was working perfectly, but the transmitter wasn't transmitting. That was £1300 of radio aid that wasn't working. It had to go back. We waited about eight weeks for a replacement. Now what worries me is, if that was

the only aid Mark had, he was without his radio aid for eight weeks. The replacement arrived with exactly the same fault. I just blew my top. It would be May time. Now you'll have heard of the Blue Peter Appeal. I'd just got some information through the post about the appeal. The N.D.C.S. Information Technology Information Centre was set up for this Blue Peter Appeal, and I just got a list of aids that they had at this Information Centre, and I rang them out of desperation and I said, "Look, you've got this Viennatone 2000 FM system. Have you had any problems with it?" And she said, "To be perfectly honest, it's never been out, so I don't know." I said, "Can you check it out and let me know?" Anyhow, they checked it out, and she rang me back and said, "It appears to be working perfectly. Would you like a loan of it?" And that is the aid which Mark is using at the moment, thanks to Blue Peter. Now that was in May, and he's refused to go back to his old big one. I'm not happy with it, it hiccups, but if we part with this, we still haven't the one we sent back in May replaced. So you could say from March, we're now into July, nearly half way through July, he would have been without a piece of vital equipment. I don't know who's to blame, whether it's the makers, whether it's the people that have them, or whether it's because they cost so much. We just can't have spares. I don't know why, nobody can tell me. You see, over in .....(neighbouring L.E.A.), being just on the border, you get to know what's happening, they seem as if they have hearing aids locked away in little cupboards for school children to use. The minute one goes off, they can produce another one that's working. I know they have more children in a smaller area. I know they have the schools there. I know they have the staff. Well, if they're lucky they have the staff there, and I do know they do have an actual technician who repairs the aids, you know a full-time technician, who is going to make a difference from having to send the aids away to be repaired. All that's going to help, which we just haven't got these facilities in this authority.

INTERVIEWER

How do you see the role of the peripatetic teacher? Do you see her as a teacher, a counsellor, or a friend, or what?

MOTHER

As a family, first and foremost, a friend. She's been a great friend to us. Secondly, I suppose a counsellor, because we go to her with problems, if we feel anything is wrong. I know it sound funny but as a

teacher at the bottom of the list. I feel she's a person who's there to go into the school to do that little bit of teaching if it's needed, but I think she should be there telling them what is needed, and where he should be, or shouldn't be. I suppose if he was getting a long way behind in a certain subject and he needed that little bit extra to catch up with the other children - yes, a teacher then. But I think a friend, someone if you have a problem. She's my link with the problem with aids, anything wrong with aids. If I feel something is not quite right, she's my link who usually gets things moving. I've known her for a long time which helps. I suppose any new mum with a child with a hearing problem would think she is more of a teacher. Or maybe a pre-school child, they will feel she's more of a teacher than a counsellor or a friend.

INTERVIEWER

Does Mark ever meet other hearing impaired children?

MOTHER

Yes, of course, being in the Unit, he's got the hearing impaired children there. We are part of the National Deaf Children's Society group. In fact, a week on Saturday, we're all going to have day out to ..... , where we'll get children that he doesn't see, you know, that go to other schools. They'll all be there. Nobody will know what anybody is saying, but they'll have a good day.

INTERVIEWER

Have you found that helpful, to you, to be a member of that society?

MOTHER

Yes, because with .....(sister), we weren't. We weren't a member of the society with her, and she did not come in contact with other hearing impaired children, and she thought she was the only one in the world. She was convinced she was the only one in the world. Now Mark knows that there are other hearing impaired children about. It's helped .....(sister) since we became members of the group and started going there with the group, and getting among the hearing impaired children. She now realises there are little two year olds and three year olds as well as her, a teenager. In fact she's past a teenager now, she's twenty, a very young twenty, I hasten to add. But she realises that there are little tiny ones who have very great difficulties. She got over those tiny years. She got over the difficulties. Although she had a real hearing problem, she has fairly good speech. Now she comes into contact with the little ones who have very poor speech, I think she

feels quite good, and I think it has helped her being in contact with them.

INTERVIEWER

What anxieties do you have about the future?

MOTHER

Yes, comprehensive school. What's happening next? He's due to go to comprehensive school a year come September. We have nothing in the immediate area. In fact we have nothing in this L.E.A., no special units for him. It's felt among the professionals that he's bright enough to cope in a normal hearing school. I feel the nearest comprehensive to us is not a suitable school, again, from my experience with .....(sister). It's far too big a school, there's well over a 1000 pupils there, they do not get the attention. I know it's different staff, different headmaster, and everything to when.....(sister) was there, but she was in that school two years with the peripatetic going in twice a week, and I went and had a chat with the headmaster and he didn't even know he had a child in the school with a hearing problem. And I said, "Let's have her out, if he doesn't know she's there, let's have her out." And that's when we talked about having her moved. They said there was nothing in .....(L.E.A.) and that's why .....(sister) went over to .....(neighbouring L.E.A.). I don't know whether Mark will go there. We haven't really discussed that yet. I had problems with .....(sister) being out of county. You know, she was a ..... (L.E.A.) child in a school of another local authority, and we had problems there. I would like Mark to stay within the county. It's a matter of waiting. At the moment, I feel it's an anxious time for me, because I'd like an answer of what's happening.

INTERVIEWER

What would you like?

MOTHER

I would, to be quite honest, I would like him to go away to a school for the hearing impaired, but, as I said, professionals feel he can cope without going away, and I'm not sure that he will. I think that he would be better in a school for the hearing impaired. If it meant him staying away five nights a week, or four nights, or whatever, I'd be prepared for that. I think he would get a better deal. I feel .....(sister), although she hasn't done too bad, I feel she had a raw deal and we moved her too late. She could have gone straight over to .....(neighbouring

L.E.A.) at eleven, rather than waiting until she was thirteen.

INTERVIEWER

What's .....(sister) doing now?

MOTHER

Well, she would dearly love to work with horses. She did a YTS with horses which she did very, very well on, and she did one of these TOPS training schemes after her YTS. She did six months work with horses, just round about, some hunters and some racehorses. And she felt she wanted to go further. She got two certificates when she was on her YTS, and she wanted to do the third part of her certificate and the teaching exam. So she got herself on one of these TOPS training schemes, a full year's course it was, but, unfortunately, she didn't get through her exams. And that was prejudice. Actually, she sat her exams three times. The first time she failed because she'd done something wrong, the second time she actually failed because she was deaf. Although they didn't put that in writing, they put they had difficulty in understanding her at times, and this was due to a hearing loss, and she may have problems in a sudden crisis, and that was the only reason she was failed. And I wanted to create, but .....(sister) said, "No, no, I want to get through the exams, they won't pass me." And she sat her exam the third time and still didn't pass. So we had a talk to her, and said why didn't she keep her own two horses as a hobby and look for some thing else. And she actually went down to the garage for petrol, she asked the girl in the garage did she know where any jobs were going either with horses or that she could do, and the girl said, "There's a job going here." The lady came up that night, interviewed her, and she started the next week, and she's as happy as Larry serving petrol. So she has her horses and ponies as a hobby. She occasionally goes and sees people that have got horses and ponies and mucks them out. She's in her element. I'd be quite happy doing other things than mucking out horses and ponies but .....(sister) is happy to do that - she's quite happy with that interest. And I suppose, I shouldn't look at it this way, but she earns more in the garage working four days a week, than she would have earned seven days a week, had she had her own business with horses. We thought if she got through her exams, we have a little field down by the village. It has a shed on and a pen for the horses and ponies. We were willing to set her up, just a little riding school of her own to keep her going. She can't do it without a certificate, she's got to have a

certificate on the wall. I think when youngsters have a problem, they have got to prove they are better than the normal, and she needed a certificate and she hadn't got it. But now she's got this garage job, she's as happy as Larry, touching wood with both hands. I'm hoping it will stay that way.

INTERVIEWER

What advice would you give to other parents?

MOTHER

Take each day as it comes, but think ahead. I think that's the only thing I can say. Don't worry about tomorrow, but think about what might happen tomorrow. I'm worrying what's happening to Mark next September. If nothing has happened by this time next year, I'll be frantic. I'm worrying about it, but I'm not letting it get on top of me, and I don't think it would help Mark if I let it get on top of me, especially where he was, if I was saying to people, "Look what's going to happen?" He just knows he's going to comprehensive school. He's asked me if he's going to .....(local comprehensive school) and I have said, "No", because I am determined that he will not go there. To be quite honest, and this is going on record, if they say he has to go there, I'll burn the school down first.

INTERVIEWER

What advice would you give to teachers?

MOTHER

To be aware, and remember that they have a hearing impaired child in the class, and not to let that child forget that he or she has a hearing problem, because they like to. They don't want to be sat near the teacher's desk, so they can see her face and lipread and know what's happening, they want to be at the back corner with the others. You've got to make them remember, and not let them get away with murder which I think they tend to do, on occasions, which all children would like to do.

INTERVIEWER

If you had a magic wand, and you could do anything with it, but you couldn't cure Mark's impairment, what would you do?

MOTHER

I'd wave that magic wand, and I'd hope the whole world would be aware how difficult it is to have a hearing problem, because they are not aware. They think hearing aids will cure the problem. They think you can

pop hearing aids in the child's ears and that has cured the problem, but it doesn't. It could be parts of words that are missed out because that happens with Mark, words that he has missed, and we have to make other people, the whole world, aware.

APPENDIX THIRTEEN

MARK: TEACHER INTERVIEW

INTERVIEWER

Can you just describe Mark to me? How do you see him?

TEACHER

What now? Or as he has been?

INTERVIEWER

Now.

TEACHER

He's a very happy individual, quite used to working with children, and, at times, being quite solitary. He's adapted to his new situation, part-time in the Hearing Impaired Unit, and part-time here, rapidly. We thought we might have a few problems, but as usual, Mark's happy, cheerful self helps him take everything in his stride. He seems to adapt very, very quickly to anything new, and, in fact, positively enjoys it, I would say. Basically that's it, really, in a nutshell. He seems a lot happier this year, than he did the previous year when he seemed to be very, very frustrated.

INTERVIEWER

How far do you think his impairment has affected him educationally?

TEACHER

Well, it's got to have affected him somewhere along the line. It's a job to equate anything with normal children. You don't know what he would have been like without his handicap. I would say that because his mother has put in a heck of a lot at home, that's obviously got to be in his favour. Well, in the normal setting, in the normal school, I would say that it does have an effect. That was quite obvious to me last year. Although I tried to let him work on his own, he wanted to work with his peers obviously. Then, the classes were large, and he was put in a group of, say up to eighteen children for Maths, smaller groups obviously for Language, and he got to the stage where he was trying to compete with other children, and he couldn't, and he easily got frustrated. Now, the situation he's in at the moment where he's working virtually on his own, he seems to be coping very well indeed

INTERVIEWER

What about socially? How do you think it has affected him socially?

TEACHER

Socially, yes. I don't know whether he would have been a loner, with or without his handicap. He doesn't seem to be bothered about being on his own, he joins in with other children when he feels the need to, and I've noticed him on outings. On a couple of outings we've had this term, he was sitting entirely on his own, quite happily munching through his sandwiches, and yet, on another outing, he made, you know, a point of going and sitting with the boys, and joining in with their conversation and games and whatever, so it's just when he feels the need.

INTERVIEWER

Do you find you expect the same level of functioning in the classroom situation, as you do from the other children?

TEACHER

Well, unfortunately, you haven't got the time to treat him really much differently, although you would like to. That's why I found it frustrating myself last year. I found that I was having to give him extra tuition, if you like, because he'd got upset and didn't understand things, during a lunch-time or at playtime, and I realised that this was just not on. It wasn't fair on Mark, it wasn't fair on the other children, and not every teacher would do that, and could be expected to do that.

INTERVIEWER

What about the other children? How do they see him? How do they cope?

TEACHER

Well, quite a number of the children have been with him right through the three years. They let him really get on with it to a large extent. There are one or two that are born naturals for helping other children. Generally speaking they're girls, who will go out of their way to explain things if they see there's a need, but, by and large, they leave him to his own devices.

INTERVIEWER

You've said that he's quite happy being on his own. Boys tend to relate to a group rather than have a best friend, does he have a friend, or is he in a group, or do you feel he's quite happy on his own?

TEACHER

No, not really. He seems quite happy sort of drifting really. He doesn't seem to have a particular friend. I asked his mother about this, actually, how does she cope with that side of things, particularly as

they live on a fairly isolated farm from the village, and she says she just rings up his friends and invites them for the day, not just for tea, but for the day, not just one, but maybe a selection of boys, which is a very good thing to do obviously. So she copes with that side of things.

INTERVIEWER

Some people think that hearing impaired children are difficult to handle from a behaviour point of view. How do you feel about that?

TEACHER

I think he was, actually, when I first had him, when he was, what? 7+. I found him difficult to manage then, very boisterous, and quite stubborn at times, but he seems to have grown out of all that. Now whether that would have been a natural stage that any lad would have gone through, it's hard to say. I haven't the knowledge or the background to make any firm statement on that.

INTERVIEWER

How much support does he get from home?

TEACHER

A tremendous amount, and always has done. She goes out of her way to find out what topic we are doing in advance, she goes to bookshops with him, gets him to send away for leaflets etc. She doesn't have to push him, he enjoys doing it. She's always done tables with him at home, any extra Maths work, she's always constantly doing work at home with him.

INTERVIEWER

So that's helped him tremendously.

TEACHER

Oh, I'm sure he would have been quite lost without the backing he's got from his mother.

INTERVIEWER

How do you think the parents view his being here in the ordinary school?

TEACHER

Well, I've only spoken to his mum, and she's just very happy to go along with anything that we suggest, and that she thinks that Mark will be happy with. She's very, very easy-going, she hasn't got any set ideas about where he should go, what he should do, and part of the deciding that Mark would go to ..... (naming the Hearing Impaired Unit), was with her thoughts and views on it, and she felt like all of us really. She felt that he wasn't coping in a normal environment, and she just

wanted whatever was suggested really.

INTERVIEWER

So when he goes to the Unit, how often does he go?

TEACHER

Every morning he goes, and he's back here by roughly about quarter to one, and he has to have his dinner on his own, because it's sandwich children in by then, but he sits down and scoffs his dinner, and then he's ready for a one o'clock start. There are occasions when perhaps they are having an outing or something like that, and his teacher will ring me and say, "Could I have Mark for the day?"

INTERVIEWER

How much contact do you have with the teacher there?

TEACHER

Well, I had a visit to the Unit for half-a-day to see what the set-up was there, and I met the teacher. Fortunately he was doing the same Maths scheme as we were in this school which does help, and they were doing similar Language. They've got the same Language scheme, in fact, but not to as full an extent as we do it here. We said we would try and keep in touch on a weekly basis, although it's not always possible to do that, but generally speaking he rings me up once a week just for a little chat, just five or ten minutes, about how we feel Mark is progressing.

INTERVIEWER

Before you had Mark in your class, what knowledge of hearing impairment did you have?

TEACHER

None, whatsoever. There was no mention of it in my training, and really it's only been in the last few years that these children have been integrated into the ordinary school, so he's the first boy that I have ever come across. So I've picked it up, and .....(peripatetic teacher) has told me bits as well.

INTERVIEWER

Do you think your attitude has changed and adapted, since you became acquainted with a hearing impaired child?

TEACHER

It's hard to say really. I try, as I say, not to make him any different from the other children. I am inclined - yes, I suppose I do - I do spend a bit more time - if he's not heard me, I will go and touch him

and get his attention in that way. So I suppose there are little things like that, that I would do, and also sort of things, like anything that has happened in the morning that I feel he has missed out on, any notices, or anything like that, I always try and make certain that he's received the information. Like football, he's very, very keen on his football, so any notices like that, that have gone round in the morning, I always make certain that he receives these, you know, from me, rather than just a note going round the classrooms.

INTERVIEWER

But do you think that since you've had Mark, your attitude has changed? Did you have a pre-conceived idea what it was going to be like?

TEACHER

If I'm honest, I felt that it was a bit much for a class teacher to cope with a boy like Mark, who is virtually stone deaf in both ears, and I've had to fight that I suppose, if I'm honest. Yes I do, perhaps even now, feel it is asking, particularly from somebody who has not had any training - I feel, not exactly resentful, he's quite easy to deal with. He wasn't in the very early stages, so yes, I've had to fight my own feelings.

INTERVIEWER

Do you feel that he sometimes had difficulty in understanding what he has got to do?

TEACHER

Yes, yes, I do. We found that before he went to the Unit, I was having to touch him an awful lot to get his attention all the time. That was creeping up more and more. Yes.

INTERVIEWER

Do you think you have adapted your teaching strategies?

TEACHER

Well, you can't do to a large extent, because of all the other children that you have got in your class, to be honest. So, as I say, I found that this was the place where I had to take him out of the classroom situation, to try and explain what I had already explained to his group, that he hadn't caught on. And that, I don't think is on.

INTERVIEWER

Do you think the whole exercise of Mark being in his local school has been beneficial to him?

TEACHER

Well, you've got to go on the time. It seemed right for him earlier on, it might not always be right for him. We did feel that if he went all day to the Unit, that he would be missing out on the social side of things, and particularly since he lived on an isolated farm, that he would lose contact with the children from the area. It would be difficult to form a good relationship with children from an area that he wasn't familiar with. So, yes, I think that he's got a good balance, well, as it is at the moment. That might change, I don't know, if his hearing gets really worse, or he might be better off permanently in a smaller unit, but at the moment, he seems to be coping. That might change. I don't know, but it means that if he does have to go into a special unit all the time, he has had a good few years in an ordinary, sort of school. Let's face it, he's going to work in a world with ordinary people with no hearing difficulties and so on, so at least he's got a good background of that.

INTERVIEWER

What do you think needs to be considered before a hearing impaired child is placed in an ordinary school?

TEACHER

Well, I must say that it must be part of the training of a teacher nowadays. If they're going to be infiltrated into ordinary school, there has got to be quite an extensive training for the student when she goes to training college, and then you've got to think of the aspect of people like me that were trained years ago, so there's got to be some sort of training within the county for people like myself.

INTERVIEWER

Has that facility been offered to you?

TEACHER

No, I have had to pick it up really as I go along from .....(peripatetic teacher), and a little bit from his mum as well.

INTERVIEWER

If you were a Headteacher, what sort of things would you consider, before you would accept a child in ordinary school?

TEACHER

Well, I'd like to know how the child had coped up to that point. If he'd been to a playgroup I would have a word with the playgroup leaders. I'd have a good talk with the parents involved. I wouldn't rush into it.

Obviously, you have got to have the backing of your staff as well, not just one teacher, but the whole range of teachers, because the child's going to go through the whole school, so it's not just a matter of, "We'll let him into our school." One's got a whole range of people to talk with. I think really if a child has been there from the word go, there generally isn't that much to talk about. Children are very, very adaptable.

INTERVIEWER

What have you found to be the greatest difficulty?

TEACHER

Well, thinking that they have understood your instructions, and ploughing on, and then realising from the length of work they have done, that they just haven't understood the very basic instructions that you have given them.

INTERVIEWER

Now if .....(peripatetic teacher) came into school and asked you to take another hearing impaired child into your class, what would your reaction be?

TEACHER

Well, I suppose, really, in a way, it would be more helpful for the other child to be in the classroom, with another hearing impaired child, but perhaps it might be detrimental at the same time, I don't know. I personally wouldn't object now. I might have done a few years ago, but I wouldn't object now.

INTERVIEWER

What advice would you give to another teacher?

TEACHER

Well, in a nutshell, not to assume that the child has understood everything that you have said, not to bombard them with too much in one session. Give yourself time to think, and really watch them, observe them very carefully and notice any changes, because with Mark, you know, there have been quite a number of changes while he's been with us in school, so you've got to watch.

INTERVIEWER

In what sort of way?

TEACHER

Well, he did seem to manage to cope up till really the last year. He appeared to be coping along with the others, but we didn't feel he was

making the strides that he could possibly make, and it was frustration which set in, so there didn't seem to be that frustration before.

INTERVIEWER

Did that frustration show outwardly?

TEACHER

Oh, yes. He would burst into tears and be sobbing all over his work, rather than come to me and ask me to repeat something to him again. He didn't like to perhaps own up to the fact that he didn't understand, that he hadn't heard. Yes. And the times I took him out of the classroom situation to talk to him, to try and find out really what he felt. It was this feeling of everyone else is understanding, I don't understand what you're on about. Simple things like the word isosceles triangle. We've used that word, I remember, a year ago, quite a lot over a period of time, and he hadn't even a clue how to say it, or attempt to say that word, so he hadn't picked up that, or even what an isosceles triangle was.

INTERVIEWER

So you would advise them not to assume anything?

TEACHER

Yes. I would say watch for any change, and any frustration. If they're not particularly doing very well in any sphere of their academic work, then look for reasons why, look for whether they are a loner, happy with being alone, what the other children are like with them. Some of the children can be quite spiteful at times.

INTERVIEWER

Have you found that here?

TEACHER

Yes, I did do, at one stage. Yes, not over the deafness particularly, but they used to get exasperated with him. But they don't now, but there again, they know him now, and have worked with him for several years, you know.

INTERVIEWER

Have you ever felt frustrated?

TEACHER

Oh yes, and I still do, and probably will do. Yes. It's not a very pleasant thing at all.

APPENDIX FOURTEEN

PHILIP: TEACHER INTERVIEW

INTERVIEWER

Can you just describe Philip to me? How do you see him?

TEACHER

Well, he's highly intelligent, not held up really by his handicap. He copes very well with everyday school work. He's lively, interested in everything, brings things from home, participates well in every thing we do in school. He's very keen to do well, highly competitive. He gets on well with other children and participates fully in the daily life of the school.

INTERVIEWER

How far do you think his impairment has affected him educationally?

TEACHER

I think he's been lucky in the fact that he has been in a very small school because this has obviously helped him cope with his handicap. We tend to forget that he has got a handicap and Philip does as well, to a certain extent, and if he forgets his phonic ear, or if it's not working, then he lip-reads and uses the two aids quite effectively. No problems at all.

INTERVIEWER

How much do you feel he relies on lip-reading?

TEACHER

It's difficult to say because when he's got the phonic ear on he watches you very intently. He doesn't want to miss anything. So, it seems to be a combination of the lip-reading and the aid.

INTERVIEWER

How far do you think it has affected him socially?

TEACHER

More difficult to say. It doesn't seem to, in the playground with a small group of children, but, there again, being in a small school, everybody else has been very helpful and supportive, and, in a sense, protective of him, because if he doesn't hear an adult, the others will say to him, "Philip, Philip, so-and-so is speaking to you." They're very helpful towards him.

INTERVIEWER

Do you expect the same level of functioning from Philip as you do from

any other child?

TEACHER

Yes, in fact, I've come to expect it. To begin with, when I was there for the first term, I was perhaps a little more over-attentive, given the fact that he was a handicapped child integrating into a normal school, and I had a lot to read up on him for a start, to try and make sure that he did cope with the work. But now I find that it's all right, it's fine. He coped well, I coped well. I think the difficulty may come in him moving up to the comprehensive school, the bigger classes, a higher noise level and less children that he knows immediately surrounding him.

INTERVIEWER

What about the other children? How do you think they view Philip?

TEACHER

Just as a normal classmate. In fact, I think they've got so used to his handicap, that they don't see him as being any different than themselves. There again, I think other children, who don't know him, might, but he does integrate very well. He sees himself as normal and we do as well. It's his own image of himself which is important.

INTERVIEWER

So they've coped well with him. Do you think they've made allowances?

TEACHER

Oh, yes.

INTERVIEWER

In what way?

TEACHER

As I've said, they'll help him if he misses something. It'll be, "Oh Philip, you've missed that bit." They'll help him with it, not perhaps to the extent that I thought they may have had to. He just copes so well.

INTERVIEWER

Are there any particular areas in which you see him as being different?

TEACHER

Well, it's difficult in football, where he doesn't wear his aid, and he's tearing down the field, and you can't shout to him to pass the ball, because he gets the ball, and he looks down, and he just heads for the goal, and so, on the sports field, then it's difficult communicating with him. I don't think there are any other areas in school in which the

children notice that he is different.

INTERVIEWER

What about his level of emotional maturity?

TEACHER

Well, he's obviously got better over the last year, and he's now quite a mature Fourth Year. The immaturity shows in little bouts of temper, when he can't cope with himself sometimes. It's frustration, and then it builds up, and then he does tend to explode very quickly. He has got a bad temper. It's over very quickly, but it's an emotional aspect of him that he hasn't got quite under control, but then a lot of adults don't either. That's perhaps just normal development. The other children are not given to emotional outbursts as Philip is, just occasionally.

INTERVIEWER

What sort of thing would set that off?

TEACHER

If the others had been teasing him, which they occasionally do, and then that would just trigger it off. He is very quick, very volatile.

INTERVIEWER

So would he be teased about the fact that he couldn't hear?

TEACHER

No, completely different. The names that they call each other, there are no special names for Philip. It's just if they are name calling, that's it. Everybody gets called the same sort of name. The other children would react differently. Philip reacts far more emotionally.

INTERVIEWER

Do you think that is to do with his hearing loss, or do you think that is him anyway?

TEACHER

I think it's a personality thing. I don't see it as connected with a hearing loss, not really.

INTERVIEWER

What about Philip in a social setting? Does he tend to have one best friend, or is he a member of a group?

TEACHER

He's a member of the group. He doesn't identify really closely with any of the other children, and, in fact, the fact that he lives at ..... (village about 4 miles from school), he's the only one who lives there, and the others tend to live in this village, means that his friends are

mainly in .....(village named previously). I think his closest friends are ..... and ....., who live there, and they tend to knock about quite a bit together, whereas he doesn't see that many of the boys from our school, out of school. Just occasionally, he comes down to the village on his bike, now that he's older, and his mother lets him out of her sight on his bike, he comes down and plays with the others occasionally.

INTERVIEWER

Some people think that hearing impaired children are difficult to handle from a behaviour point of view. What do you think?

TEACHER

Well, I've never found that, not with this particular child, simply because you do honestly tend to forget his handicap. He is so well integrated into a normal school, and so capable, and I'm sure this must have a bearing on it. Were he not quite as able and intelligent, then it might have a bearing on it, but it doesn't really.

INTERVIEWER

How much support does Philip get from his parents?

TEACHER

They're very supportive. Perhaps they tend to be a bit over-protective. They've been, I think, quite distressed over the years by the fact that Philip is handicapped, that he's not, in inverted commas, "a normal child." But whatever we've suggested, they've gone along with that. They've worked hard with him, especially on Reading at home, and generally been very supportive. Occasionally, they've been up and down, especially in relation to peripatetic teaching, and also in relation to what Philip was going to do when he reached the age of eleven, because there's no particular hearing Unit locally for him, and they were very keen to have the best possible for him when he went to the local school, which is understandable. But, certainly, over the years, they've been very supportive, and they have a very close relationship with the school. They've popped in and out to discuss any problems, so I don't think misunderstandings have really been allowed to develop. They've always been sorted out in the early stage.

INTERVIEWER

So you feel they view his placement at this school in a very positive way?

TEACHER

Yes. I really can't honestly see how they could fail to do otherwise, because Philip has been in a small group each time. There are only seven Fourth Years, and it's been fairly small all the way through school, and especially in his early years, he had highly individual attention, perhaps, sometimes, to the detriment of the other children, who have perhaps not developed as successfully as they could have done, had Philip not been in the class.

INTERVIEWER

Do you think that is a problem which we have got to consider?

TEACHER

Yes, I think, certainly, if you are integrating a handicapped child into a classroom situation with ordinary children, then you have to give that child extra attention. And it's bound to take away from the other children. It all depends on how much time and attention you can give him or her, but it is bound to affect them in their classroom group. I would say, if you are talking about a class of 25+ children, all the same age, then it may affect them even more. Philip has been lucky, he's been with a small group of children, but I would imagine the effect would be fairly similar. You can't help but give them extra attention, because you see them struggling. And also, given that some children may not have the same capabilities as Philip, they may need more individual attention and peripatetic help. Although it's valuable, one hour a week is not going to make a dramatic difference. It's the everyday work that has got to be done. That's when they need the help.

INTERVIEWER

Do you think some teachers might over-react to having a child with special needs in their class?

TEACHER

Yes, I would think so. I think it depends very much on the individual teacher, and also how the child integrates. If they are having difficulty coping with the work, then you have to give them the extra help and I think probably you feel more obliged to give them the extra help, if you know they have a handicap. You feel you have to help them a little bit more. Also parental expectations, if they are high, may well influence the teacher in the amount of time she gives to that child, and you see some parents want their children integrated into a normal school and some parents don't. They want them to get specialist help in a



special school. But I think this has been the best start for Philip, because of his high intelligence and his learning capabilities. He's very, very keen to learn, he's very competitive. In fact, he came out top of the Fourth Year group, when they did the test to go to ..... (local comprehensive school). He works reasonably fast. The other good children were working much more slowly, and didn't get as high marks. Philip has almost finished the paper and so he came out with a higher mark. But also he's good at that sort of thing. He likes tests. He's good in a test situation. He's very competitive, he's very keen to do well. It's quite interesting.

INTERVIEWER

How much knowledge did you have about hearing impairment before Philip was in your class?

TEACHER

I'd only had one girl, a Fourth Year girl, and her level of hearing wasn't as impaired as Philip, and I did have to plan extra work for her. She was quite bright too, but I had a class of thirty-five, and she didn't have peripatetic help and she struggled a bit. This is why I think Philip has been extra lucky in the amount of extra help he has received. It must have brought him on, whereas ..... (naming girl) was certainly held back previously, and hadn't reached her potential level by the Fourth Year. She came to us as a Third Year child, so we only had her for two years, and she was a fast learner, but she obviously hadn't had a lot of help with the basics to begin with, so that really is my only experience.

INTERVIEWER

So that was your only experience, but what about your knowledge?

TEACHER

Very limited, very limited. Just what I'd read, and not experienced. I hadn't had a hearing impaired child, so I hadn't read up that widely. I'd had handicapped children. I'd had a Spina Bifida child in school, who was, although in a wheelchair, very independent. You know, "I don't need help with this, that, or the other, get on with teaching me," kind of thing. So her attitude was interesting.

INTERVIEWER

So you didn't have anything in your training, or in-service course?

TEACHER

No, the bare minimum.

INTERVIEWER

Do you think your attitude has changed, been adapted perhaps, since you had Philip in your class?

TEACHER

Well, I've certainly learned a lot from having Philip. It makes you more tolerant of hearing as a handicap, because there is this sort of attitude, if you are physically handicapped in a wheelchair, people are far more sympathetic towards you. If you have a hearing handicap, people aren't. They are often very impatient with people with hearing handicaps, so I think it has opened my eyes. And also to find that when you are teaching a child, there are little blank areas, blank spots, that you assume a child knows, and the hearing impaired child often doesn't, areas of comprehension, little bits like that. I've learned quite a bit from Philip.

INTERVIEWER

Do you find that Philip sometimes has difficulty in understanding what he has to do?

TEACHER

Not very often. If he doesn't understand, he asks. He's not the sort of child who will sit and wonder what he's got to do. If he doesn't understand, he asks.

INTERVIEWER

Do you feel that people communicate well with him?

TEACHER

Oh yes, because he communicates well with other people. Within a classroom situation, nothing stands in his way. If he wants to tell you something, that is it, he joins in the class discussions. He's not backwards in coming forwards at all, so he communicates very well, and he reads at school concerts, reads his own work out with no inhibitions at all. He goes bright pink, but no inhibitions at all about having a go at reading aloud, whereas you might actually find some children who would be less happy put in that sort of situation. I've never made him do anything like that, just said, "Who'd like to read such and such a bit out of their work?" and his hand always goes up.

INTERVIEWER

It's a difficult question to answer, but do you think that his apparent confidence has got to do with the situation he is in?

TEACHER

Yes, it could well be. Yes, this is why I am so interested in how he is going to get on in his first year at ..... (local comprehensive) School, and the Year 1 Tutor there has promised to keep in close contact to tell us how he is getting on. Because I am convinced it is the small school situation that has helped him so tremendously, but have we equipped him well enough to cope with the next stage? This is what we can only hope to do. I've turned out all those Fourth Years hopefully to be very self-reliant and independent, and capable of going and finding information for themselves, of working alone, of querying things, not just accepting things, and you try and educate the whole child rather than just teach them things. And we'll see if it has worked with Philip.

INTERVIEWER

Do you think you have had to adapt your teaching strategies in any way?

TEACHER

Not really, no, to be honest. They've been such a good group of Fourth Years, and Philip has integrated so well into that group, that they have all come along to a pretty high level of achievement. So I have just included Philip in the group whatever I have done and made very, very few allowances. I can't honestly think of a time when I've said, "Oh, I must do such and such a thing with Philip." I haven't made an allowance, it's just been complete acceptance all the time.

INTERVIEWER

So you think this placement has been beneficial to Philip?

TEACHER

Difficult to perhaps be objective. You find this in a small school anyway, comparing children. You might turn them out thinking, "Oh they're super," and when they get to the next school, they're not as super as you think they are. I feel, on the whole, it has been wonderful for him. I really do. I think it's just been such a good start, the security, being with people he knows well. Given his own capabilities, we just had to foster that, and nurture it, and I feel the whole experiment has been very worthwhile. If Heads and teachers are prepared to put themselves out a bit, but, of course, not every hearing impaired child would achieve the same level of success. It depends very much on the child and on the situation, but I just think, in Philip's case, all has gone well. I think we have to consider the other children. I believe Philip had extra help very early on. I don't know what standard the

other children would be at if they had perhaps had the highly individual attention that Philip had. ....(naming pupil), for instance, may have been better at Maths. He's very, very poor. ....(another boy), we feel, could have come on a little bit more, but then he's got a sort of a relaxed attitude about things. He's not as competitive as Philip. He doesn't have the urge. There's nothing propelling him forward, like there is Philip. So I think it's very much an individual thing. If a child has got the impetus, and the stimulus, and the desire to learn like Philip has, then give them a good start and they will go. But ..... and ..... haven't got it within themselves. So, had they been given extra attention at the beginning, maybe it wouldn't have made that much difference to their progress.

INTERVIEWER

What do you think has been the greatest difficulty that you have had?

TEACHER

You know, it's very hard to think of difficulties. I think perhaps the physical aspect, the fact that he's a very big boy. He looks like a thirteen year old. He's big and strong and can be quite aggressive, and physically in a P.E. lesson he just flattens the other children. If you ask him to help with anything, to put the P.E. equipment away, you know, a whole display could go before he has realised that he has knocked anything over. Although he is physically well co-ordinated, he wears glasses as well, he doesn't actually see a lot of the damage he causes. So I have found that, really, the only true difficulty.

INTERVIEWER

Have you found any difficulty with this placement, as a Headteacher?

TEACHER

No. I mean, you see, when we have been to other schools with him as part of a group, there have been no problems. We took him to ..... (Outdoor Education Centre) which he thoroughly enjoyed. Oh, he was into everything, couldn't wait to be up and out in the morning, and he had a wonderful time, he really did. And the highlight of the week was the fact that he and ..... (another boy) won the Orienteering, which they've never had any experience of before, and they beat all these other bright children from these big schools, and they were thrilled to bits. That was a good achievement for them both. But there again, they are both of them self-motivated and keen. They started off wrong to begin with. They went on the wrong course, but quickly corrected

themselves, and went faster, so that was a high level of achievement for both of them. But with taking him anywhere, I have never had any problems.

INTERVIEWER

Have you ever had any problems, being perhaps the middle influence between the parents and the authority?

TEACHER

Yes, but I think everything can be handled delicately and tactfully. There was an area of difficulty when we were discussing Philip's future. The peripatetic teacher wanted him to go to one particular secondary school, and the parents objected very strongly on the grounds that he wouldn't know any children there, and the distance, especially in winter. And I had to sort of negotiate between the two of them, and try to make each of them see each other's point of view, which actually was very difficult, because the peripatetic doesn't seem to have a particularly good view of the local school. I think it has improved slightly, since another boy with a phonic ear has been there for a whole year, and he has done very well, and really he has sort of broken the ground for Philip, trying to make her see the parent's point of view and Philip's own point of view. Philip, actually, was very malleable. He didn't really mind where he went. He just wanted to know, and as we had got up to March, without him knowing where he was going, he was a bit worried about it. But then, we really tried to thrash it out, and we decided that we had to support the parents, and it was theirs and Philip's wish to go to the local school. And they have been very good there, trying to fit him in, in a class where he is with two of the other boys. All the teachers have been informed. I don't foresee any problems in that respect. It's just been sorted out that he is going to have five hours help a week. Where they are going to fit it in, I'm not quite sure, but certainly that will be there for the first term. There is a teacher at the school who is a qualified teacher of the Deaf. The headteacher didn't know, but she is going to be used for that purpose, which is ideal, and which should have been happening in the first place. She was engaged in just ordinary teaching. So because there are now three children there with hearing problems, this is what's going to happen. She is going to take them which is good. She has been doing other teaching on a part-time basis. Apparently, the Headteacher didn't know she was a qualified teacher of the Deaf, because that's not what

she was employed for. I just heard that on the last Friday before we broke up. I've had no confirmation of it whatsoever. That is what is in the offing at the moment.

INTERVIEWER

If Philip were staying with you, and you were asked to take another hearing impaired child, what would your reaction be?

TEACHER

Well, you have to look at all the circumstances surrounding it. To begin with, the distance the child has got to travel, any problems that have manifested themselves so far. I'd be quite happy. It wouldn't bother me at the moment. It would depend obviously on how many were in the class. The 1988-89 figures look like being 31 or 32 in the Junior class, which, with your wide age range of 7 to 11, is a lot. The fact that we have only had 20 or 22 in the Junior class means that a handicapped child can get extra attention during the day. If you've got 31, then I don't think you can give them much time. So it would depend very much on numbers. No. I'd have no qualms about it. I think, any handicap, because I do believe so much in the small school situation, and I think you can absorb a child so much more easily into a small school, and help them really to be an individual. If they are quite happy to be in that sort of school, not requiring the specialist help, then I think that wherever possible, yes, place them in a small school. I think it brings them on that bit more.

INTERVIEWER

You've really answered this question in a way, but what do you think you have to consider before you place a child in any school?

TEACHER

I think you have to get everything right to begin with before the child is admitted. You have to involve all the people, parents, Special Needs department, peripatetic teacher, the teacher who will be involved mainly with the child, and you really have to suss out whether they are going to work well together. If you've got any area of doubt, then I think you have got to express it at early stages, before the child gets into the school. It's no good expressing it after. I think they are the main points. I would look at things carefully, but I can see no grounds for turning a request down. It depends. I've always thought of myself as a teacher who can't say, "No", especially to anything that sounds interesting, a bit of a challenge, and also something that enlarges your

area of knowledge. I think well, it can only benefit you as a person, as well, to have the experience. But it could be that I just can't say "No" - it could be.

INTERVIEWER

What advice would you give to other teachers, who were going to have hearing impaired children in their classes?

TEACHER

Read up every single note that you can on the background. Not necessarily read any textbooks, because they can only generalize, and every child is different. But certainly, read up all the notes on that particular child, talk to the parents, talk to the peripatetic teacher. Be as well prepared as you can be. Be prepared to make allowances. I literally haven't had to make that many allowances with Philip, because it's been a different sort of situation. I think you have to be very flexible. You have to be flexible anyway as a teacher, just that bit more so, with a handicapped child. Be prepared for the unexpected, be prepared to be surprised by things, like I said, blank spots that they are lacking. You think, "So-and-so knows that, why doesn't he know it?" Maybe things like that. (Long pause) It's difficult to think of things to say about the child, because he has been an absolute gem to teach, because his own attitude is so enthusiastic and that helps tremendously. If he'd been, well let's say, very much like the other Fourth Years, very ordinary, average, you wouldn't have got so much from it. But, because he's good, he's achieved very highly in Maths and in oral Maths. He's got such a quick mind that he can work out the mental problems very well. His Art work, in this past year, has really developed, and I don't just mean a pot of flowers or anything like that. He can do that, no problem at all, but detailed drawings, where you have got to get your proportion right, and the perspective right, and that, linked up with his Maths, I think he could do well in something like Engineering, or Architecture, or something like that. Because it has come on, just so well, just this past year. You might have noticed that in his projects. But bigger pictures, larger scale things, he did a wonderful large scale picture of a mangonel that was absolutely spot on. He hadn't measured it. He was just looking at a picture and doing it with the eye, the proportions, and it's really excellent. In all his subjects he has just tried so hard. He's very competitive. He likes to come first. He likes to win. In spelling tests, he gets very upset if he doesn't get 20 out

of 20, the same with mental tests, tables, things like that. He really likes to be up there at the front. It's very good, and this will keep him going. He's absolutely self-motivated.

INTERVIEWER

What would you say his potential is?

TEACHER

Well, you see, the difficulty is, are we looking at his potential as a handicapped child, or are we looking at his potential as a normal child? And this is the difficulty. ....(peripatetic teacher) thinks he is absolutely wonderful. She has never had such a high achiever as a hearing impaired child, but he is not going to be judged on that as he is older. He is going to be judged alongside normal children. I think he is great, as well. Is that going to be sustained in the comprehensive school, or is he like many Fourth Years, going to do well for the first year and a half, and then take a nose dive? I think the others might. I'm hopeful that Philip won't, because he is so self-motivated, but it will be very interesting to see what actually does happen. But I think there is a lot of potential there, and, as I say, perhaps with the Maths and the Art link, he could do very well? He certainly won't be a writer,(laughter) although his last piece of work was very well put together, he just doesn't have the way with words. No, it will be interesting to see exactly what he does.

APPENDIX FIFTEEN

SIMON: PARENTS' INTERVIEW

INTERVIEWER

Can you just describe Simon to me? Give me a little picture of how you see him.

MOTHER

In relation to his deafness or as a child?

INTERVIEWER

As a child.

MOTHER

Right. He's just had his eleventh birthday. He is and would have been, he is a very athletic child, and would have been, if he had not been deaf. I think he uses that more so. He has developed that more so than he possibly would have done, had he not been deaf. He's not interested in words, so I see him as an athletic child. I see him as an athletic child. He's quite happy. We live in a small community, which is ideal for him. He doesn't get taunted or teased. He's accepted for what he is.

INTERVIEWER

How old was he, when you found out that he was hearing impaired?

MOTHER

He was diagnosed at fourteen months. We had no idea before then. The Health Visitor came when he was eight months old, and the day she arrived, he had a raging temperature and wasn't at all well. He sat there in his pram, with a red face, totally disinterested in what was going on, and she did all these little tests as you know, and he took not a blind bit of notice. But my natural reaction was that the poor child was obviously very ill, and couldn't be the least bit bothered. They said they weren't happy, and I thought they were fussing, so they said they would refer him for a special test. It took all that time - six months - to get the test, and during that time I never really thought. I never worried. His speech was developing. In fact, his speech was better than most of his peers. Three other girls had babies at the same time, and we used to get together and compare babies once a week, and his speech was as developed as their's, and more so than some, and so I had no cause for alarm whatsoever. He seemed very visually alert and we always looked to that. In point of fact, I never thought, "Oh, he's not hearing properly." He was just a bright, alert, little boy. He

was always looking round, here, there, and everywhere, so it was a total shock, a total shock at fourteen months when he was diagnosed.

INTERVIEWER

How did you feel?

MOTHER

Totally devastated, totally devastated, because I went in, unsuspecting. It was a hot day. I was sort of overdressed for it. As you know, the room, the doors and windows were all closed to make it a soundproof room, and without asking if I, well, I can't remember now if they asked whether I minded, but there was a row of students sat there. It reminded me of a row of monkeys sat there, and then, at the end of all this. To me, it was finicky, all the test. I realise now it wasn't, but the tiniest sounds he wasn't responding to. Even at that stage I thought, "Oh there is something," but there was nothing to get unduly worried about. At the end of the test, the doctor said, "Well, as you see, he does have hearing problems. Can you come back next week for a receiver?" I said, "Pardon, what's a receiver?" He said, "Oh, hearing aids, but don't worry he'll have a perfectly normal life." And I just absolutely crumbled, and all these students just sat there. My entire world disintegrated, and I think that was absolutely appalling.

INTERVIEWER

After that initial diagnosis, what sort of support did you get?

MOTHER

Hmm.

INTERVIEWER

From the medical aspect.

MOTHER

Well, he was, shortly after that, I don't know exactly, he was issued with a Medrasco box, which the thought of that absolutely appalled me, because he was this little, angelic, blonde light of my life with this awful box. So I had difficulty coming to terms with that, and Simon wouldn't accept it, which was even more difficult. I can't remember. The whole period was almost wiped out.

INTERVIEWER

What sort of reaction was there from your family?

MOTHER

Typical, typical. "Oh no, he isn't. They're all wrong. Look, look, he responded to that," which is totally unhelpful. I mean, they're trying

to support you, but it's just so totally unhelpful. There was only one friend that said, "We always thought so," and I was shocked by that, and felt slightly antagonistic towards her, but didn't wipe out her views. But I was shocked that she'd noticed, and we hadn't noticed, because throughout that time we automatically compensated, and without realising it, we were throwing our voices and using our voices to get him. There was a six month, no, four month period, between diagnosis and Simon wearing his hearing aid, and for us coming to some sort of acceptance. It was a terrible pendulum which swung, "Oh my God he's deaf," when he didn't respond to anything, to "Oh no, he isn't!" And the pendulum finally stopped swinging about two to three years after diagnosis. It took so long to settle. Yes, you know, you do, as every parent, your own little test in the bathroom. You try to rule out smell, vibration, draught, anything you could possibly think of. But had I had that tape (a tape illustrating various effects of hearing-impairment), I think it would have helped me understand.

INTERVIEWER

Were they ever able to find out what might have been the cause?

MOTHER

They've never pinpointed it exactly, but in my mind, I'm quite sure it was at the eleventh week of pregnancy, when I had a temperature of 104 and flu. Now, whether it was a virus, or whether it was the temperature. I'm convinced that it was one of those. I did go to see .....(a doctor) at the local hospital. We moved here when Simon was 18 months old, and I said that I wanted Simon to become a statistic to possibly alert other mothers or doctors to the danger. I think he was a Catholic. He said, "Oh no." He wasn't going to do that. He said, "I don't want any mother, who has a cold, worrying that she is going to have a deaf baby." Well, I can perfectly understand that, but, on the other hand, I think somehow that people or doctors ought to be more sympathetic to the possibility. I could see the fine line, but I think a bit more should be done. Now we did have, we were living in ..... (a town) or a village just outside .....(town) at the time. Who's the person who comes before the peripatetic teacher of the deaf? Is it a social worker?

INTERVIEWER

A health visitor?

MOTHER

Yes, it was a Health Visitor, but not my normal health Visitor. Now, it

was very unfortunate. It was a lady who, a lovely lady, who was just due to retire, and she had the methods she had used throughout her career, very old-fashioned methods, which I found particularly demoralising and upsetting. It was (picking up cup) "I've got a cup" and you must do this, and have a session with Simon every day. She used to sit round the table and work with him, and it just depressed me even more. You can't go through life thinking everybody talks like that. Everybody won't talk like that. It was dreadful, and the sessions were so boring for Simon himself, that he used to switch off, and then she suspected epilepsy. It wasn't. It was just total boredom. He would just look away. Dreadful. So I kept on trying, from the fourteen months to the eighteen months, trying to get him to accept this hearing aid in a half-hearted manner, because everytime I went near him with it, he would scream the place down. At eighteen months it was getting so bad, my husband sent me away for the weekend. I went skiing for the weekend, and he pinned Simon to the floor for the entire weekend, and the child screamed, and screamed, and screamed, until he accepted it. Now, I would never have let him do that, but, at the end of the weekend, he accepted it. I couldn't have borne it.

INTERVIEWER

Do you feel you have had to have a different approach with Simon in bringing him up, than you have had with his younger sister?

MOTHER

Well, I worried terribly when I was expecting her. But I had a very supportive doctor at the time, but she had her own problems at birth.

INTERVIEWER

But when she was a toddler, did you have a different practice with her, than you did with Simon?

MOTHER

It took all the enjoyment out of it. All the things that I wanted to do with Simon, you know, as a parent, as a teacher, the things I'd looked forward to. We'd waited for the children, set the house up, all the joys of it, because it was a false thing. Yes it did, it took the pleasure out of .....(daughter) for me, because I had to do it with Simon. It was a shame.

AT THIS POINT SIMON'S FATHER CAME HOME AND JOINED IN THE INTERVIEW.

INTERVIEWER

Did Simon go to a playgroup?

MOTHER

Yes, we took him to two, so he attended playgroup three times a week.

INTERVIEWER

And how did he get on?

MOTHER

Fine, no problem really.

INTERVIEWER

He was able to mix with the other children?

MOTHER

Yes, fine. It was a good idea.

INTERVIEWER

Now when it came time for him to go to school, did he go to the local school?

MOTHER

No.

INTERVIEWER

So, what sort of things did you look for? Was it your choice, or was it much more somebody saying to you, "Simon will go here."

MOTHER

We very much wanted him to go to a normal school, to mix with normal children. We felt that if he couldn't keep up, then we were quite able to give him the extra at home, but that was paramount. We didn't want him to go to a Hearing Unit.

FATHER

Which he'd gone to, hadn't he? He went to a Hearing Unit.

MOTHER

Yes.

FATHER

.....(naming Unit)

MOTHER

Yes, 3 mornings a week, and he went to .....(peripatetic teacher) one morning a week as well, but we both know that they are teased at school, even in a unit. They're the funnies in the corner, so we desperately wanted him to be in a normal school.

FATHER

If he could cope.

MOTHER

If he could cope, but we felt he could cope. I mean .....

(peripatetic teacher) reserved judgement until about six months before he was ready for school. She wasn't sure, but, I mean, it's worked very, very well, but it was a small school.

FATHER

She went round, and she was great, and she sussed all the schools out, and she said which she thought would be the best for him.

MOTHER

And we went along to see the school, and we agreed with her.

INTERVIEWER

What sort of things, if you hadn't had .....(peripatetic teacher) to do that for you, and you two had got to look for a school, what things might you have considered?

FATHER

Small classes, very important.

MOTHER

The initial reaction of the headteacher.

FATHER

Yes, that's right.

MOTHER

Because, when Simon, as you know Simon's school, his last school closed, and we were looking for another school, and I actually went round to the other schools. I had taught in one school that was a possibility, and that wasn't feasible, and I went to another school, and we were asked to go and see that school, and the headmistress, on the surface, said she'd love to have him. "Simon would be very happy here, the children would make him happy." That's what she said. We obviously wanted him to be happy, but we obviously wanted him to learn as well.

FATHER

I think she didn't have a lot of, she didn't have any idea of, what it would involve. Another important thing might have been any history of dealing with hearing impaired children, if they'd already done it before, if they were used to the problems.

MOTHER

She never asked any questions about how deaf he was. He could have had no speech as far as she was concerned. She never asked one question all the time.

FATHER

Yes, that's right, but having said that, I think a family atmosphere is

important, isn't it?

MOTHER

Whereas another school that we went to, the Head was completely different. She wanted to know all about him, what he could manage, very keen to show us what the children were doing and what level they were at, different attitude altogether. But, in the end, we chose the school he is at now, because he's going on to .....(naming secondary school), and the other children will move on with him. And it's proved a good move, actually.

FATHER

Yes, small classes.

MOTHER

Although this class is larger than it would have been at the other school.

FATHER

If it's a large class, it's got to be fairly well disciplined, because what they can't cope with, is a lot of background noise. Small classes, a caring atmosphere, and maybe some idea of what's involved.

MOTHER

A caring attitude by the staff, and caring children. Another school was crossed off early on, because the children had a reputation for being a bit snidey and a bit nasty. So all these factors, children, Head, the building and size of classes.

INTERVIEWER

How do you feel his impairment has affected him educationally?

MOTHER

His vocabulary is way down. That's also affected his spelling, his English. He's not interested in reading, because the written word and words don't hold that much of a fascination for him.

FATHER

Yes, I think he's more switched on to visual things, and he's quite athletic too, which is great in many ways, because it gets him totally involved in other kids, so he's not shut himself off. If he'd been a quiet or introverted child, he might have got into reading and things.

MOTHER

And his vocabulary might have improved.

FATHER

It might have done, but he'd have lost out on other things. It's partly

his personality, but because he's missed out on words, he's gone for the physical, the visual. He likes sports and he likes watching violent movies.(laughter) I mean car chases and that sort of thing, motor bikes.

MOTHER

Action.

INTERVIEWER

How about socially, has it affected him socially?

FATHER

I think it's bound to. Yes, you see, you can't tell, can you, because you regard him as a person as he is now, so you can't really know what he would have been like. It's difficult for him to join in conversations. If you're just talking to him one to one or two to one or in small groups, he's fine. Everybody regards him as normal, but if he gets in a larger group he tends to go quiet, doesn't he? Like this weekend, when we were at the .....(naming another family), and he went very quiet.

MOTHER

In a group that he didn't know.

FATHER

Yes, in a group he didn't know, because he can't follow a conversation if there's a lot of people involved.

MOTHER

But I would say in the village, that doesn't apply in the village, with the village children and his group at school. That doesn't apply because he knows them, but, otherwise he's very quiet.

INTERVIEWER

How do you feel he's doing at school?

MOTHER

I think he's doing very well.

FATHER

Well, we just wish that he would read a bit more. It's very difficult, like before he went to school, .....(naming his wife) pushed and pushed him on the reading.

MOTHER

I don't know whether I overdid it.

FATHER

Whether we did a bit too much then, and got him up to standard, but maybe by doing too much we put him off, I don't know.

MOTHER

I don't know if it was that. We know he's not a keen reader, and still, now, even though you get him all the action books you can, we've got to make a point of it. We've got to sit down for half-an-hour. He would just let things slide and just stare at the pictures.

INTERVIEWER

Isn't that pretty natural for a boy of his age?

MOTHER AND FATHER

No.

MOTHER

No, it's not. ....(naming another hearing impaired child of same age) loves books. Friends of ours, some of their children are boys of the same age, who are really heavily into books.

FATHER

The trouble with him is, that it is more important for him to read, that's the problem.

INTERVIEWER

What do you think he likes doing best at school?

MOTHER

P.E. and Games.

INTERVIEWER

What about at home?

MOTHER

When he's in the village with his friends?

FATHER

Playing on his bike, on his motor bike or playing football.

MOTHER

Playing out.

FATHER

He's out all the time in the summer.

INTERVIEWER

How does he get on with his sister?

FATHER

Terrible. (laughter)

MOTHER

Usual brother/sister relationship.

FATHER

Yes, I don't think it's affected that at all, except it's made her very

loud.

MOTHER

Yes, she's very loud.

FATHER

Yes, she shouts as well.

MOTHER

But she has hearing problems, now and again.

FATHER

Yes.

INTERVIEWER

Have you found that with Simon you have had to correct his speech at home?

MOTHER

Yes, but once he's got a word, it's very, very difficult to. Once he's latched on to a word and he's mispronouncing it, I try and try to correct it, but it's very difficult. One word in particular was, "of a course - of a course." He always says that, and .....(sister) says it, because when he learned it, he heard "our course", so I over-pronounced it "of course", so he thinks it's "of a course", and so this is now a family word. (much laughter)

INTERVIEWER

Have you had any problems with his radio aid, with his phonic ear?

MOTHER

We never stopped having problems. At first when he had a loop system, at school it was never working. It was always sustaining accidental damage to the point that .....(Head of Hearing Impaired Service) and .....(peripatetic teacher) thought it was deliberate damage. But the point was that Simon just didn't value it, he wasn't getting, it wasn't feeding through, it didn't work as well.

FATHER

So he was missing l's and v's.

MOTHER

But he didn't value it, once he got his little hearing aids. I mean he never valued his Medrasco, he never valued it. That was always breaking down, but once he got the post-aurals, it was again a massive change. He realised what he was getting from them. I think it was the shock of this very noisy world. He valued them, and they hardly ever broke down, and it was the same with the phonic ear. That was never away from being

repaired, but when he swapped to the - was it the T position? Suddenly, overnight, there was hardly any problems at all. Although, having said that, it was away for repair at the beginning of term, and when it's away, it's away for a long time. He was without it for half-a-term when he desperately needed it. He desperately needed it, and it was such a long time. Had that been at the Secondary School, it's going to be even more vital then, you know, as he's learning French and all the new vocabulary that's going to be thrown at him, it would have been catastrophic. So I think it would be good if it was at all possible for a secondary school to have a spare. It would be extremely good if it were possible.

FATHER

I've just thought of this. When we were talking about the children, whether he mixes well. There have been one or two occasions where he's got the wrong end of the stick from something someone's been saying. He's got really upset, and it's been way over the top for what's happened, because he hasn't picked up on something. He's thought he's been picked on for something and he hasn't really. But maybe they've all been talking to him at once, and he can't quite hear what they are all saying, and he feels he's being picked on, and he's come home in tears. But, I mean, it's happened about two or three times, that's all. Most of the time he gets on with everybody.

MOTHER

One of the good things particularly, is that we live in such a small village, where no one gets away with anything.

INTERVIEWER

How do you see the role of the peripatetic teacher? As a teacher, a counsellor, a friend?

MOTHER AND FATHER

All three.

MOTHER

.....(peripatetic teacher) is particularly good. She works very hard.

FATHER

She's been a good teacher for Simon. She's helped us. She's explained things.

MOTHER

She started off more as a counsellor.

FATHER

Well, no, she was teaching Simon at home at the same time. I mean, she helped you a lot.

MOTHER

She'd come for an hour, and she'd counsel me for forty-five minutes, and teach Simon for fifteen. It was me. She dragged me from the edge of a nervous breakdown, because I was so upset about it all, especially with the first social worker. The difference we've had with treatment between .....(naming county) and .....(present county) is phenomenal, in approach and everything.

INTERVIEWER

Do you put that down more to personality rather than to policy?

FATHER

Yes, I think so. I think it's really,

MOTHER

No.

FATHER

Well, it's both.

MOTHER

No.

FATHER

Come on!

MOTHER

No, because there are so many people in .....(county) and so many deaf children, it's just another run of the mill process. Here's another deaf one, go to the cupboard and get out the Medrascos. Whereas here, there aren't as many deaf children and they are all treated individually, and so,

FATHER

Yes, that's true. But on the other hand, I think the counselling part as .....(naming wife) says, is as important, if not more important, for parents to come to terms with it.

MOTHER

Had I been handled carefully and with sensitivity in the first place, I'm sure I would have got over it a lot quicker. It's obviously the shock effect but it's also the way it was handled. Certainly I had almost a nervous breakdown. I was on the edge of it, and it was .....(peripatetic teacher) who dragged me back from it. I mean they

said almost when he was diagnosed, "We must consider the ..... Boarding School for the Deaf." We'd already decided before we knew about Simon being deaf, that we didn't want to send a child away to boarding school. If we were having children, we wanted to bring them up. So it was a terrible blow, and then to say, "Well, send him away." So that's why we are most grateful that we have moved here, and for the treatment that we have received here. I asked and pressed for the post-aural aids, and he was the youngest child in .....(county) to be given them, and he did benefit from it.

FATHER

And she was supportive, wasn't she?

MOTHER

Oh .....(peripatetic teacher) was fantastic.

FATHER

Yes, she obviously advised on different things, and when we came to a decision, she supported our decision.

MOTHER

Only if she believed in it. She would never support it, if she didn't believe in it.

FATHER

Yes.

MOTHER

But we, all along the line, by the peripatetic, and the doctors we were treated as individuals. Not, - "Here's your Medrasco and go along the line," - Medrasco, then the boarding school and whatever. Our wishes were taken into consideration.

FATHER

I think that's important, because it's a terrible thing to come to terms with, isn't it?

INTERVIEWER

Well, only someone who has been through it, could appreciate that.

MOTHER AND FATHER

Yes, Hmm.

MOTHER

Yes, well, I would say that the role of the peripatetic teacher is first as counsellor, support to the parents, secondly as a teacher and guide. She is necessary in school as well for backup, in Simon's situation, very much so.

FATHER

Yes, teachers are obviously not experts, and they are the expert, so they've got to advise the teachers on the problems the child is likely to have, what special provisions to make.

INTERVIEWER

Do you have any anxieties about the future?

FATHER

Yes, next stage, Secondary school. We don't really know - it's an unknown quantity - we don't really know how he's going to get on. I mean, he's enjoyed his first visit, which is great. I mean, it was a big thing. I was thinking about it all day on Wednesday, because he had to take his phonic ear with him, and go in a class with all the other children, but, he, on his own, had to go up to the front and present him with this thing, and it's quite a big thing to do, isn't it, in front of everybody else? But, obviously, he coped with it, didn't he?

MOTHER

He was thrilled. He said it was fantastic.

FATHER

The teachers obviously handled it quite well. Some of them did, anyway.

MOTHER

They all handled it naturally. We were particularly fortunate in the school had already had one child there with a phonic ear, and I had wondered whether to let him off for the day visit, and to present it the first day of term, but, no, everybody else will be nervous, so this is the best day to present it and get it over with. And I'd carefully explained to Simon that he must politely ask each teacher would they mind wearing it. But the problem didn't arise. He did that, and he said he felt very nervous presenting it to the first teacher, but from then on, it was taken out of his hand, as the next teacher took them to the next classroom, and it was automatically handed on. One teacher made a joke of it - the P.E. teacher said, "This is my medallion," and Simon thought it was great. It went really well, and he's got over it now, so there's no problem.

FATHER

You know, if they handle it sensitively,

MOTHER

It makes a tremendous difference.

FATHER

But I mean he's still got to go there full-time, so it's a big step, is that.

MOTHER

Because he did have a tremendous hang up about his phonic ear when he got it. He would never wear it outside. If ever they went on a school visit, he wouldn't wear it as he thought everyone would stare at him. When he moved to his present school, if he went on an errand down into my classroom, he would even take it off for that. Now he's walking around school with it on quite naturally. I still don't think he would wear it on a school trip on a day out somewhere, and he's still very sensitive about it. If he asks me to change the batteries in public, and I switch it on to test it, and he hears it with his other hearing aid, he pounces on me, "No, no, switch if off quick!" and he looks furtively around so he feels quite embarrassed about it.

INTERVIEWER

How long has he had phonic ear?

FATHER

Since he started school.

MOTHER

No, he didn't. He didn't have it straight away. No, he didn't.

FATHER

Well, it was shortly after.

MOTHER

Perhaps a year or two, I can't remember.

INTERVIEWER

How did Simon get his phonic ear? Who paid for it?

FATHER

It was the Round Table at .....(naming nearby town).

MOTHER

The local peripatetic teacher contacted the local Round Table. She approached them, and she sorted it all out, and she presented him with it. She did everything. If the Local Authority, if it isn't high profile, and there isn't a lot of money, then nobody's going to put money into that.

FATHER

If hearing impaired kids are to be integrated into a normal situation, then money should be available to provide a phonic ear, because they

can't be integrated without it.

MOTHER

Money where from?

FATHER

It should be Government funded, because they have a list of priority areas, and if they want to integrate, which they do, because they're closing down special schools, aren't they, but there has to be special provision. It's Parliament, it's got to come from Central Government, DES. The money has got to be there.

INTERVIEWER

Are you members of the National Deaf Society or anything like that?

MOTHER

No, I felt right against it. I didn't want to be in a club for the deaf.

FATHER

I think we are a bit individual.

MOTHER

I don't like clubs at the best of times. We're not club people, so why be in a club for the deaf? That's how I feel.

FATHER

Well, they do do some good things.

MOTHER

Yes, they do some good things.

FATHER

We work more as a family.

MOTHER

I don't want to go along every week, and talk about deafness, for a night out, or whatever. That's not my scene, and we get all the support from the peripatetic teacher. Had we not, it perhaps might have been different.

INTERVIEWER

So what about the future?

MOTHER

I'm very much worried about Secondary school. This year has been plain sailing, and the peripatetic thinks so as well. She obviously feels he doesn't need the back-up this year, but she's going to have to work twice as hard next year, mainly I think with the big input of vocabulary that he's going to fall down on. That's going to be the stumbling block and things are going to get more difficult, certainly for the next few

years. As to the future, employment, of course we worry about it.

FATHER

We're encouraging him like mad. We keep saying to him that he really has to work harder than all the other children, to get over his difficulty, just to get employment. Well, obviously, at his age, he doesn't realise that, and we still tend, we're so used to him talking normally and things now, that we just regard him as being normal. That's a bit of a danger, maybe we don't make enough allowances for him.

MOTHER

But I think we will go further than most parents in getting a job. If he can't get one from his own endeavours, I think, we said this at one time, that we were quite prepared to set him up in something, even if it meant selling the house, and all that effort just to get him employment. We couldn't leave him unemployed. So what he can't do by his own endeavours, we'll step in.

FATHER

I think, I mean, there are a lot of plus factors that he has got, that we have to just build on, and the fact that there'll be a lot of jobs that he won't even be eligible for, with his hearing impairment. We'll just forget these, and concentrate on what he might be able to do.

MOTHER

But we are very fortunate because he's quite a bright child, no genius, but over average.

INTERVIEWER

What advice would you give to parents of a child, who'd just been diagnosed as being hearing impaired?

FATHER

Don't think it's the end of the world.

MOTHER

If I was going in with .....(peripatetic teacher), I would tell them to listen to her. She's so good, because I think automatically you are against the one that tells you, but with ..... , it's a different matter. I can't think off hand.

FATHER

Push for everything you can.

MOTHER

Oh, yes. Fight.

FATHER

Fight for everything you think is best for them, because there's money available, help available. Get everything you can to compensate for the disadvantage, because they need it, some advantage, don't they, for being born with a disadvantage?

MOTHER

And I would say, depending on the parent, obviously it depends on the parent, or to parents of a similar ilk, trust your own instincts. Well, accept that the child is deaf, once it's proved to you, but as for handling him from then on, trust your own instincts. That was a big stumbling block with me, with this first Health Visitor saying, "You must do it this way, you must do it this way," and I didn't feel that was right.

INTERVIEWER

What would you say? (to father)

FATHER

Go for the thing positively, go for all the plus factors, build on them. We've given Simon the confidence in his physical abilities, and have made him more so, and more outgoing, to compensate. Build them up, build them up, and give them confidence in the things they can do, the things they are good at.

MOTHER

And try and get your family and friends, perhaps with something like this tape on hearing impairment, to understand. I think my father went to his grave, thinking it was all a big mistake. He just couldn't come to terms with it, or understand.

FATHER

People still say to us, "Is he getting any better?"

MOTHER

"Oh, he's better."

FATHER

"Is Simon getting any better?" and they don't realise that he's always going to be the same, but he appears better, because he's learned to handle it.

MOTHER

And they're always confused when you say, "No, he never will." "Oh, but he's talking so much better. Well, he seems to hear so much better."

FATHER

And don't give up on things. Results sometimes are slow, aren't they, to come, when you're teaching them reading and speech? It seems a long time. Don't give up on it. I think there are rewards in the end that are worth it.

MOTHER

I think it started off with Simon. Once I moved here and I got out of this silly "I've got a cup" routine, I started speaking to him in very limited language. You know, "Go here, do this" as limited as I could, and I built up a small vocabulary, and then it reached the stage where I felt he could cope with more. And I said to .....(peripatetic teacher) "I'm throwing the lot at him." It seemed to work. Who can judge if it worked, I don't know?

INTERVIEWER

Well, his speech has improved so tremendously.

FATHER

Yes.

MOTHER

Yes, but his vocabulary is still years behind. I'm very concerned about that.

FATHER

We've found we've got teletext on the television, and that helps, because that was another thing, he would only watch visually exciting things like I was saying earlier, because he couldn't follow the camera, he couldn't follow the speech.

MOTHER

Cartoons at first, and then action packed films.

FATHER

But now he'll watch things that will have a lot of speech in, because he can read the teletext, and that's helped him enormously with his vocabulary.

MOTHER

He'll go out of his way to look for a teletext programme to watch. I mean, he would never have watched Blue Peter, far too boring. You can imagine the sort of, but now he will look forward to it, so that obviously has had a double effect, because it's affecting his vocabulary and his reading. It was the best thing we've ever had, I think, and I really feel that all hearing impaired children should have teletext. It

should be provided if the parents can't afford it.

FATHER

The Rowntree Foundation helped us to get that for him which was great.

MOTHER

Once he could read.

FATHER

Oh, and being able to use a telephone, with the volume thing on the telephone so, again, it's what normal kids can do, talk on the telephone. And he wouldn't be able to without that.

MOTHER

And the medical side, they've been particularly sensitive here. Simon was only three, I think, when he got the post-aurals, and Mr..... got him a tiny one, which he's still got after all these years. It's just about to be changed, and I was worried about him giving him a whacking great one which will force his ears out, and they've been ever so sensitive. He's got two tiny ones, and they've now issued him a third, which he uses to link up with his phonic ear, because the little Viennatone doesn't have a T position, or it has a T position, but you can't link up to the phonic ear. So they've been extremely sensitive, so that child has got three post-aurals.

FATHER

Obviously, you know, every case is individual, and there are degrees of hearing impairment, but as far as possible, I think the kids should be made to regard themselves as normal. We saw a kid at ..... Show a few years ago, and he was sat there, with his huge hearing aids on, with a yellow jacket on.

MOTHER

With a signpost on his back,

FATHER

"I am deaf written on his back." I'm sorry, I think that's awful, that's terrible. I mean how can you integrate somebody who has got that written on their back.

MOTHER

Obviously you want to educate the public to be aware of the situation, but, I mean, what would you do if it was your child? We've treated him as normal.

FATHER

He's got a hearing aid, and he has to wear them, and he knows he has to

wear them, but we've taught him to regard them a bit like glasses, you know. People have to wear glasses, they need glasses to focus their eyes, so he needs hearing aids to improve his hearing.

MOTHER

That's why I wanted him to go to a normal school. We wanted him desperately to be regarded as normal.

INTERVIEWER

What advice would you give to teachers?

FATHER

Don't be fooled if they've learned to speak fairly normally. Don't be fooled into thinking they can hear normally, and make sure that they are sitting near the front of the class. Make sure that the hearing aid or the phonic ear is working, because Simon often wouldn't say if his hearing aids or his phonic ear weren't working, and the teachers maybe wouldn't check up on that, unless they were being particularly vigilant, and noticing whether he was paying attention, or not, I suppose.

MOTHER

It's very, very difficult, and it's only a small percentage of teachers, I think, who are really interested. His present teacher wants to help him, but isn't really interested in the deafness at all, or really tries to understand it, and in so many cases, it's a case of, "Well, you hear when you want to, don't you?"

FATHER

Yes, they think he switches them off, or he's not listening, and he's doing it on purpose, which is not true. I think it would be useful. What we had once was a tape-recording, oh, you've got it there, (as wife indicates tape interviewer has brought) of what it sounds like to have hearing loss. It really strikes you then, doesn't it? That's what it sounds like to them. No matter how good the hearing aid is, they'll never hear the same as we do.

MOTHER

It's a common problem with all deaf children, and adults alike, in pubs, when you're talking. Hearing aids are not ears. They pick up the conversation behind you, not the one that's going on in front. And people think, that's how they think, "Oh you can hear that, can't you?" or, "You can hear what you want to."

FATHER

It's amplified everything, hasn't it?

INTERVIEWER

If you had a magic wand, and you could do anything with that magic wand, except cure Simon's impairment, what would you do?

FATHER

I would want somebody to invent, and I'm sure it's not beyond the bounds of possibility, a hearing aid, that can be implanted in his ear.

MOTHER

Well, they do that now, don't they?

FATHER

That is as effective as the ones he wears outside, that are also waterproof.

MOTHER

That's a big thing.

FATHER

That isn't going to be affected by water, because, you know, you've got to take them out if he goes in the bath, or if he goes swimming, or anything like that, or if he goes out in the rain.

MOTHER

Sailing - we were having water fights in the garden last week.

FATHER

The same hearing aid, again, I don't know, could also work in a situation where there's a lot of background noise, but somehow, the wearer, without being too obvious, can actually control what it was picking up. It would be more directional. Also that he could maybe amplify the voices he wanted to hear. You could do that, and it would cut out this problem which they all have, of not being able to hear one person in a crowded situation, and it would cut out the need for wearing a phonic ear. How the hell you'd do it, I don't know.

MOTHER

With all this technology today, for some reason, hearing aid technology just hasn't progressed as much as all the other types of technology. Why is it so low-profile?

FATHER

Yes they can do, because if you think about National Health spectacles, - how they used to be, and how they are now. Well, hearing aids are still where the National Health spectacles were ten years ago. Some poor kids still have to wear some huge box on their front.

MOTHER

Not many.

FATHER

And they're ugly, aren't they? And with those ugly cables they're bound to stand out. I mean it's not vitally important, but,

MOTHER

It is important.

FATHER

It is important, because it sets them out from the crowd, doesn't it?

APPENDIX SIXTEEN

SIMON: TEACHER INTERVIEW

INTERVIEWER

Can you just describe Simon to me, just give me a picture of how you see him?

TEACHER

Hmm. He's a perfectly normal boy, enjoys football, running about, has a good sense of humour, and, for me, anyway, he has no inhibitions at all about his hearing, as evidently he did, before he came to me. (Aside to interviewer - Is that all right?)

INTERVIEWER

Yes, fine. Just try to imagine that's not there, (indicating tape recorder) I know it's very difficult.

TEACHER

Well, you can cut out what you don't want afterwards, can't you?

INTERVIEWER

How far do you think his impairment has affected him educationally?

TEACHER

Mainly, I think with English, because of the words he doesn't know. There are lots of words that we take for granted, and he doesn't understand them at all, like prey this morning, and, (pause) I just can't think of another one. There was one, a week or two back. I took for granted that he would know, and he doesn't, but ..... (peripatetic teacher) is very good. She goes through it with him and explains to him. But, hmm, - if only he would read a bit more. He doesn't seem to understand that if he would read more, but being a normal boy he likes to be out. He's got a motor bike, and he likes to be out riding the moor on this, or he's in a football team, so he doesn't have any time for reading. It's a pity really, because if he did read, I think he would be more or less normal, you know, with regard to that.

INTERVIEWER

How about socially? Do you think it has affected him socially?

TEACHER

Not in this school, it hasn't. I think it did in his previous one, because I met him one night when his mother was here. She was giving me a lift up home, and Simon was in the back of the car, and I'd forgotten that he was deaf, and I turned round, but he didn't make any

communication at all. The little girl, his little sister, was talking away, but not Simon, but since he's been here, he gets on very well with the other children. With me, he'll come up and tell me things, and things like that, you know. It doesn't seem to bother him at all here. Now, when he goes to his next school, I've already asked some of the teachers there. I said to them, I said, "This little boy's coming who's deaf and has hearing aids. I hope your children won't be making fun of him or anything like that." And they said, "Oh no, they won't." But I think that if anybody does, that'll be, you know, do a lot of damage to him. You see, here, they haven't, and I didn't tell them not to. I just told them that Simon was coming, and that he was deaf, but they've always taken him for granted. They don't treat him any differently, and he gets on. He joins in sports of all kinds.

INTERVIEWER

So you feel the other children have coped well with him?

TEACHER

Oh yes, yes. And he seems to, he seems to hear a lot more than we think he does. But then you only find out what he doesn't hear, when you come across a perfectly ordinary word, and he hasn't a clue what it means.

INTERVIEWER

And that's something that you find out, quite often, incidentally?

TEACHER

Yes, yes.

INTERVIEWER

Do you feel that you expect the same level of functioning from Simon as you do from the other children?

TEACHER

Oh yes. I've done that from the very beginning. I've treated him exactly the same. ....(peripatetic teacher) said if his desk could be facing me. It is now, but before that it was turned round the other way, and I turned it round because he was talking to ....., (another boy) and so I turned it round. But even with his back to me, he seemed to catch on very quickly. Well, he's got the ability now to cope with his impairment. I don't really know. He doesn't seem to miss out on very much, and I've never had to take him separately for anything. I mean, this morning when I was doing English with him and the dictionary, I mean, that's what I'd do with any child. I did it with a couple more. There's .....(a boy) there. He's slow, and I was doing exactly the

same with him. But I've never taken him by himself, say for half-an-hour every week.

INTERVIEWER

So you really see Simon very much as a normal little boy, who has a specific difficulty?

TEACHER

Yes, and the phonic ear helps of course, although this morning he was managing quite well without it. But I should think that another child, who hadn't got the back-up at home from his mother and father, would probably find it more difficult.

INTERVIEWER

Do you think he lipreads quite well?

TEACHER

That I've never discovered. His mother said he didn't, and he says he doesn't, but whether he does or not? He probably has done as a child. I don't really know, and he certainly doesn't know any sign language. I was telling him about a boy I met, who was doing sign language, and he doesn't know anything about that.

INTERVIEWER

Would you say that Simon had one special friend, or that he was accepted by the whole of his peer group and didn't have one particular friend?

TEACHER

Hmm. No, he plays football with .....(a boy) and .....(another boy) at the weekends. In school, he tends to cling to .....(second named boy) and .....(another boy). He does play with the whole group.

INTERVIEWER

Yes, I noticed at playtime that he was really very involved and in the centre of things.

TEACHER

He's very bossy in games, very bossy, because he's good. He's good at football. He's good at running, and he's very, very bossy. He tells them off, you know, when they do the wrong thing in football, or cricket, or rounders, and, in fact, last week I said to him, "Come on Simon, you can be the teacher now." Anybody who did anything that was wrong, he was on to them, so I mean he hasn't any inhibitions, has he? But I think before he came here he might have done, because we took him along with us last year to the sports, the Inter - School Sports, at .....(nearby town). All the .....(area named) schools get together and have

sports, and he was a bit apprehensive there, with all the schools together, because his little school had been too small to join in before, and yet he could have won quite a few races. The teachers knew that he was deaf, so the starting signal, they made sure that Simon knew when it was, "Go". And he did go with everybody else, but he was a bit shy, and we haven't had them this year, which is a pity, because I was counting on him winning for the school.

INTERVIEWER

Some people think that hearing impaired children are difficult to handle in a classroom situation. Some people feel they're badly behaved. What do you think about that?

TEACHER

No, he's perfectly normal. I mean he talks, and that, but don't they all? No, I've never had any trouble with him. I just treat him like everybody else. He gets told off if he's talking when he shouldn't be talking, and, of course, he uses his deafness there. He says he can't hear, you know, this sort of thing. But I wouldn't say he was badly behaved, no worse than anybody else. I suppose if he was frustrated, he would be. I could see that happening. But Simon has had a lot of help at home.

INTERVIEWER

His parents are obviously very supportive.

TEACHER

Oh yes, absolutely. You know they really have been good with him. And .....(peripatetic teacher) is very good. With me, I'm supposed to have an hour from her a week, but we don't get it, and she says, "I leave you out because I know he's getting on well," and there are other much worse cases really.

INTERVIEWER

How do you think his parents view his placement in this school? When his other school closed, do you think that was a problem to them?

TEACHER

Well, his mother knew this school because she had been doing teaching here, first of all as a supply teacher, and then she came to us two half days or three half days a week. So she knew us, and she asked me eventually to take Simon when the other school closed. I think she was hesitant at first. She didn't like to put on me. She thought I might find it difficult. So I said, "Well I'll have a go," and .....

(peripatetic teacher) came to see me, and I expected to have a lot more trouble than I've had. And I know when we were doing the review for Simon, you know the review, she's put into that how pleased she is that Simon was coming on so well at this school, she put her appreciation in. I told her, "I've done nothing," because I haven't, you know. With it being a small school, she said, "You have a high standard of work, and I'd love Simon to come here." And he has improved from when he first came. He didn't like working in the afternoons, and we work in the afternoons. Evidently they didn't at the small school. He's gradually got accustomed to that. It was a bit hard at first. I can honestly say he hasn't given me any more trouble than anybody else. In fact, I've got one or two very backward ones that are going to take a lot of trouble. There's one, he's away at the moment, he's a handful, but Simon isn't in any way like that.

INTERVIEWER

What about before Simon came here, what about your own knowledge of hearing impairment?

TEACHER

Absolutely nothing, none at all. ....(peripatetic teacher) gave me some books to read, and I glanced through them, but I hadn't the time to read through them all. She put me in the picture, but I was amazed really. From the very first day I thought I would have had to explain with him separately, "Come here, Simon, and I'll tell you after I've told the others," but I never have, and I think he's taken up nearly everything that I've said. Arithmetic, he's in with the top group. Now he wasn't up to them when he came, but he's an ambitious little boy and he likes to be on top, and he's worked very well with them. Now occasionally there, I've taken him by himself for something. That's because they had done it before, and he hadn't, but anything new he always picks up with the others, and occasionally when I'm teaching them I'll say, "Simon, have you heard that?" and the answer is nearly always, "Yes."

INTERVIEWER

Do you think you've changed your attitude towards hearing impairment, since you've become acquainted with Simon?

TEACHER

Well I've certainly found it much easier, but, of course, that's the only child I've ever come across, that I've ever had to teach, with a

hearing impairment.

INTERVIEWER

So it was a pleasant surprise to you, really?

TEACHER

Yes. I said, "Now what have I taken on?" because Simon's mother thought it was a great favour she was asking, and I wondered a bit, during the holidays, what he was going to be like, but I can honestly say it's not been as much trouble as ..... , or ..... ,(naming boys in class) or ..... ,(a girl) who are very backward.

INTERVIEWER

Do you feel you have had to adapt your teaching strategies?

TEACHER

No. I haven't changed at all. No, no.

INTERVIEWER

Do you think sometimes Simon doesn't understand what he has to do?

TEACHER

Very, very rarely. Arithmetic, yes. I think that's mainly because he hasn't had the same background as the others. He works with the four top ones and they are very able children, and he's not the top of the group, he's the bottom, but he can keep up. No, I can't say that. Now I did tell him, I said, "Simon, you must come to me if you don't hear and if you don't understand." And, of course, his mother has said that he is sensitive, but I've never noticed that, but he very rarely does ask. But three or four months ago, he came up to me, and I was really thrilled. He said, "I didn't hear what you said," and that was a step forward. But I think he's found out whether he's heard or hasn't heard, he's found out from ..... ,(boy sitting next to Simon) or ..... ,(another boy) or somebody else. But I told his mother and we were both thrilled that he had done this. ....(peripatetic teacher) and his mother told me that deaf children never tell you when they can't hear. But he does now, but it doesn't happen very often.

INTERVIEWER

You're obviously very positive about having Simon with you. Do you think the whole thing has been very beneficial to Simon, being able to be in ordinary school?

TEACHER

Oh, yes.

INTERVIEWER

What have you found to be the greatest difficulty?

TEACHER

With Simon? You know I haven't had any, you know, I really haven't. As I say, I expected so much in the way of difficulty, and the only difficulty has been really when he's been off-hand, like he was this morning just before you came. He was in tears. I told him to go and get a litre jug. Now, of course, if I'd stopped before I went on at a great rate, I might have realised. Perhaps he hadn't heard me say litre jug and the smallest millilitre jug he could find, which is a ten millilitre container. But I think it was because he didn't bother to look. You know like the other children will. The little one was hidden behind another piece of apparatus, and I had to go across and get it. And I told him what I thought about him, and then he made another mistake, but that wasn't anything to do with his hearing. Certainly the second mistake wasn't. But that's nothing to do with his hearing, that's just a normal child.

INTERVIEWER

How would you feel if .....(peripatetic teacher) rang you up this afternoon, and said, "There's a hearing impaired child moving into the area, would you have him in your class?" and Simon wasn't going to move on, so you were going to have two at the same time. How would you feel?

TEACHER

As I say, I haven't seen another one, and Simon has been fortunate with his background. I'd rather have those than, say, one or two that I've got in here now. As I say, .....(naming a child) isn't unintelligent, but he's a very difficult child. He's an infant really, but we've had to move him out of there. He does half a day with Mrs....., (another teacher, incidentally Simon's mother) and half a day with me. Now he, and .....(a girl), who is away at the moment, are very backward. She's Junior four, but really Junior one in ability. She, and ....., (the boy previously named) and ....., (another boy) give me much more trouble, and need much more work and effort than Simon does. So if .....(peripatetic teacher) said, "There's another one," I'd be willing to have them. I don't know how I'd feel about having them all in one big class. I don't think that's good for them anyway.

INTERVIEWER

What do you think we need to consider, before we place a hearing

impaired child in an ordinary school?

TEACHER

I don't want to be big-headed, but I think you will need a teacher who will be patient and understanding, but also treat them as one of the group, not make them any different. And I think, that, with Simon, has made him think he's more or less normal. You know, patience and willingness to help them, and of course you've got to be able to communicate with the parents easily.

INTERVIEWER

That's obviously been a very positive thing with Simon's parents.

TEACHER

Yes. You see, Simon, occasionally in English now, there are words that he doesn't know. In that book we were doing this morning, there are some very difficult words, and there was one day, when he hadn't a clue. You see, I can send that book home with his mother, and she will do it, and she does it with him. I think that's very necessary. That was one of the worst days. I think communication with the parents is necessary.

INTERVIEWER

What do you think about the support from people like .....?  
(peripatetic teacher)

TEACHER

I think that's very good. She does the testing, which I wouldn't have time to do. And, again, when we come across these words, I make a note of them. It's not very often. Or, if I've done something new in Maths, that the others have done, say a year ago, that Simon hasn't done, she'll take him for that, and she does a little bit of the French with him. Oh no, I wouldn't do without that. I think it's great, but I don't get very much of that, I can tell you. I get an hour a week, if I am lucky, and I can ring her up if anything goes wrong with the hearing aid.

INTERVIEWER

So what advice would you give to other teachers who would be approached by ..... ,(peripatetic teacher) to take a hearing impaired child? Anything you would say to these other teachers?

TEACHER

(long pause) Well, to make sure that he is understanding, but not to ask him in front of the other children, just in case they are sensitive. And just to watch carefully, then give him a few minutes on his own. If

he can't, and they've got the support, I jot down anything that needs reinforcing, and to keep in touch with his parents. But, to be patient and kind, but I'm like that with all the children. I'm very fierce and strict, in some ways, but they understand, and we always part friends. Like Simon, the tears were beginning this morning, and I said, "It's all right, Simon, you can cry," but he knows that I don't hold it over him or anything like that, really. He was perfectly normal again a few minutes later, but, oh, I think, patience, to be ready to tell them if they are doing anything wrong, and say, "Oh well, he's done it wrong," and go and help him, and tell him he can do it. And indeed, he can. I've learned that.

APPENDIX SEVENTEEN

INTERVIEW WITH PERIPATETIC TEACHER RESPONSIBLE FOR FIVE SUBJECTS

INTERVIEWER

Can you just describe the job you do?

P.TEACHER

That's an impossible thing, absolutely impossible. Every day is different. Shall I tell you what I'm supposed to do?

INTERVIEWER

Yes.

P.TEACHER

Well, I'm supposed to. Oh, I can't manage with that thing, (indicating tape recorder). Well, I'm supposed to, (hesitating)

INTERVIEWER

If you were in a situation where you went on holiday, and somebody said to you, "What do you do for a job?" and you said, "Well, I'm a peripatetic teacher of the hearing impaired," and they said, "Pardon?"

P.TEACHER

Well, I support parents of hearing impaired children from the time of diagnosis onwards, visit the homes and try and help, try and enable them to cope with the problems in any way possible, which is an enormous range of things, isn't it? I give what is called, in inverted commas, "Parent guidance", in the home, from the time of diagnosis onwards. From then on, children who are able to integrate full-time, I can't do it with this microphone, the words just go out of my head. How can I not know what my job is?

INTERVIEWER

Well, once children are ready to go into school, what then?

P.TEACHER

Well, I have a role in advising as to the most appropriate placement, a responsibility in discovering what the local possibilities are, advising on the ones I feel are most suitable, and liaison work, involved in choosing that place, in helping the teachers to understand what they're taking, in forming a bridge between the home and the school, and then, finally, in seeing the child into that school, and in supporting him whilst he's there, visiting him, usually on a weekly basis and all that entails. There's an enormous range of possibilities there as to what one does do. It can involve direct teaching with the child. It can involve

guidance to the class teacher, but what one can do in the time available is pretty limited in that direction. I think, as I said before to you, I think there is a gap in the Service in that direction, because I think we don't give enough time, don't allow enough time for the class teacher to absorb the information. We don't allow them to have the opportunity to sit back and learn about what is involved. I think, too many times, the guidance consists of hurried consultations before the child is taken out of the class, and hurried consultations afterwards as to what has gone on. I don't think this is particularly helpful to the class teacher. I feel there ought to be more opportunity for In-Service training days for class teachers with hearing impaired children in their classes, and I think our Service should provide those sort of In-Service days for class teachers. It's something I have been going on about for a long time, and nothing much has happened about it. It should be done.

INTERVIEWER

What sort of case load do you have at the present moment?

P.TEACHER

I've got a teaching case load, meaning the children I see on a regular basis, be it weekly, fortnightly, or monthly, children who do receive some direct teaching support, of between fifteen and twenty children per week. They're not all weekly visits, some are fortnightly, some are alternate weeks, some monthly. At least I do see them on a regular basis. Then I have a potentially active case load of, I think it's over 200 names of children, whom I have seen with fluctuating hearing problems, who are not receiving any direct teaching support, but whose class teachers need to be aware of the problems, and who need to have their hearing monitored. I need to be aware of whether or not they are currently hearing well, or not, in school. Over 200 names, which is an impossible sort of task, but that is what I am supposed to do. I'm supposed to keep some kind of tabs on these children. In addition to the teaching case load per week, there is an assessment responsibility. I am asked to assess the hearing of children, and I should think about four or five sessions per week are taken up in doing that.

INTERVIEWER

Have you any idea how far you travelled in your job last year?

P.TEACHER

About 9-10,000 miles.

INTERVIEWER

Have you any idea of the size of the area you cover?

P.TEACHER

Not in terms of square miles, no, but I think the longest single journey is no more than about forty miles. That's about the longest hop from one place to another, that I make.

INTERVIEWER

When you are looking for a school in which to place a child, what do you look for?

P.TEACHER

I look for, particularly, first and foremost, I look for atmosphere and the personalities within the school. I always look at the personality of the Head, because I think the personality of the Head permeates down through the school. I think that is what I look for, first and foremost. Even if they don't, they can't positively say they want a hearing impaired child, because really they don't know what they are letting themselves in for, in a way. They can't say they're eager, yes, they want to have a hearing impaired child. At least they have got an interest in having one. Not a superficial sort of interest, but a really detached intellectual interest in having a hearing impaired child in their class, but not too accepting. I think if I go into a school and find a Head who says, "Oh yes, we'll have him," and there are no further questions, I begin to be not happy about that at all, because I can't see how they cannot be curious about what the problems are. They ought to be aware that there are going to be several problems, and some Heads don't seem to be, don't seem to ask beyond the initial first few questions. They don't ask anything else. I think that's wrong. There should be lots of healthy interest and curiosity about what it's all going to entail. But, basically, a happy atmosphere within the school, a caring attitude towards the children. Then, after that, if that isn't there, I don't think there's any point in going any further. After that, it helps greatly if the class sizes are very small, small class size and good acoustic conditions. I must admit that these are fairly secondary considerations, that I could go into the smallest school possible, I could go into the one with the best acoustic conditions, and if there was a Head there who I felt was simply not interested or uncaring, then I wouldn't consider that school at all. It's personality and a caring atmosphere, that comes first.

INTERVIEWER

Do you find that parents want their child to go to the local school, and sometimes, perhaps, the local school isn't, in your opinion, the best place. Can that be a bit difficult?

P.TEACHER

Yes, well, that does cause problems. Sometimes, you have to bow to the wishes of the parents, if they are strong enough, because I feel it would be counter-productive to force the issue. It has happened, sometimes not with particularly good results. Perhaps one should have been more forceful at the time. Again sometimes the parents' views prevail. They feel so strongly about it. As you say, it would be counter productive to go in the opposite direction. Sometimes I have been able to prevail. We've come to an agreement, that maybe another school, not quite so local, not too far, but not quite so local, would be better for the reasons that I have outlined, and usually that has worked out pretty well. I don't always get my own way.

INTERVIEWER

Have you encountered any problems in trying to place a child?

P.TEACHER

Not really, no. It always is a problem to me if I feel that there is parental pressure. Yes, that's the only problem, when parents have really been so strongly for a school, which I felt was basically, not a dreadful choice, but maybe not the best of two alternatives. That's the only problem I've had. In the great majority of cases, we're able to come to an agreement that a particular school is the best one anyway. But no, not other problems.

INTERVIEWER

How do you prepare the class teacher?

P.TEACHER

By, well, the very best way would be for that teacher to be able to go on a course, maybe not immediately, but possibly when they've had the child for a month or so. But preliminarily, they have got to meet the child, and they've got to have some kind of introductory sessions with me, just talking about the child. They've got to have access to as much information about deafness as possible. I don't really think it makes much difference, having said that, giving a class teacher leaflets and that kind of thing. It might help to a certain extent, but the only real teacher is the child, when the child has gone into that school, and

then, it's learning by experience. I think I can help sometimes by pointing out to a teacher when I see certain things happening, that this is an aspect of hearing loss, and I think that the understanding of what hearing loss means, can just grow very gradually from personal experience. But it would help if one could have access before the child goes into school, if the teacher could have access to a one day introductory In-Service training day of some kind, well set-up, well prepared, concerning certain aspects of deafness.

INTERVIEWER

What about preparing other children and other parents? Do you think that is necessary?

P.TEACHER

I think it would be really useful to be able to do that. I think it would be mostly a question of time.

INTERVIEWER

Do you see that as something the Headteacher or the class teacher could do?

P.TEACHER

There again, it very much varies from school to school what is an appropriate thing to do, and from child to child. There are some children who thrive on being made the subject of a lesson and other children who would curl up and die because of that. It needs to be very much tailored to the attitude of the child. Some children just don't want any attention being brought to it. Some children don't mind at all. That's a difficult one.

INTERVIEWER

Do you find that teachers do adapt their teaching strategies?

P.TEACHER

On the whole, no. They don't. They should. I think they don't because they haven't got sufficient insight into the problems of that child within their classroom, and I think they haven't got sufficient insight because, we, as a Service, don't provide enough initial In-Service training for them to gain that insight. I think that it's almost impossible to get across the implications of hearing loss when you are a visiting teacher just going in for a limited period every week. The teacher has always got the demands of the other children paramount. There is only a snatched few minutes before, and a snatched few minutes afterwards, and that's not enough to get across all the implications of

the hearing loss. As I say, you can give as many leaflets as you like, but their value is limited. I think it is personal contact with time to sit and discuss and meet other teachers, maybe in the same situation. In-Service training courses, that's what I think. I keep repeating that, but that's a fact.

INTERVIEWER

Do you find teacher attitudes change, as they become more acquainted with hearing impaired children?

P.TEACHER

I think they may change, but not a great deal. I think a person's reaction towards a child is very much dependent upon their own personality. It doesn't change a great deal. What you see in the beginning is as the way it develops. It doesn't change a lot. There are obviously going to be exceptions to that, but I'm speaking generally. I think that you can see within half an hour. This sounds a bit brash, but within half an hour, you can see what a person's basic reaction to the problem is going to be, and the way that they're going to cope with it. Maybe that's an over-simplification, but I don't think teachers change a great deal in their attitude. I don't think parents do, either. I think if they've got the basic ability to help their child, it's pretty apparent that they've got it, and you can then develop it. But if it's not there to begin with, or they haven't got the basic inclination, there's very little you can do about it. You're not going to have a miracle happen, you're not going to turn an absolutely uninterested parent into a very involved one. I've never done that.

INTERVIEWER

What advice do you give to teachers?

P.TEACHER

I think that the best advice arises out of practical situations. I try and encourage them to tell me what problems they have had, and then work the advice into that. If they can present me with the problems that they've had during the week, then I can try and throw some light on why it is that the child has had that problem, and what aspect of that is just because he is who he is, or what aspect of hearing loss is contributing to that particular problem. I try and deal with things as, and when, they arise. I do give spiel, I do give talks. Sometimes in secondary schools I've given talks to groups of teachers. Maybe that sort of approach works better at that particular age. It seems to be an

economical way of doing it. I don't know what the value of these things is. You just try different strategies.

INTERVIEWER

When you go into school, what is your role then?

P.TEACHER

I can have a direct teaching role. I've had experience of hearing impaired children over a lot of years, so I can deal with specific educational difficulties that that child has had. I can do that, I can teach him. But I don't see that as the main thing that I do. There should be more. I should be able to help that teacher to understand more about it, and that's what is the most frustrating part of it, because I feel that is the most difficult thing to do. Where we fall down most heavily, is not having the time to help the teacher to understand. I'd really like to be able to devote a lot more time to helping the teacher to understand, because they're the person who is with the child for the rest of the week, and the more they understand about that child's problems, the more he is going to be helped. There isn't a great deal that one person can do once a week, is there? The nub of the thing should be to help that teacher, and you can't do it in the time that is available.

INTERVIEWER

Would you say, then, that, generally, most teachers don't understand?

P.TEACHER

Yes. I don't think so. I don't say that as a criticism. It's just the system. There should be far more time built into the system for them to have the time, to take the time to understand.

INTERVIEWER

If I were to ask you to describe to me your perfect teacher, what would he/she be like?

P.TEACHER

Oh, you know who she is.

INTERVIEWER

Well, describe her.

P.TEACHER

Well, she's a warm, caring, cheerful teacher, very highly competent. She's got the caring side, very, very competent teacher in herself. She never misses an opportunity to expand a child's understanding of language, uses every little situation that crops up to illustrate a

point. In terms of her attitude to the hearing impaired child, she doesn't single him out, she's not over-protective towards him, but she's very concerned about him as a person, always asking questions about how she can do better. Actually, she has very little confidence in her own abilities. In the beginning, she was almost appalled by something, because she was apprehensive that she wasn't going to come up to scratch. In a way, that is a rather more healthy attitude than someone who displays no curiosity whatsoever about the handicap. She's a very conscientious sort of person.

INTERVIEWER

Quite a few people have mentioned problems with phonic ears.

P.TEACHER

Oh, yes. Well, that is the bugbear.

INTERVIEWER

Because it seems to me that the phonic ear is the key for these particular children being in ordinary school.

P.TEACHER

It's the critical factor.

INTERVIEWER

Yet so much time and effort is taken up with maintenance.

P.TEACHER

It's absolutely appalling. As you know, they are very prone to breaking down, and most of them are out of action, almost for as long a period, as they are in action. So we, as a Service, spend so much time in trying to keep them operable. I should say that out of a ten week term, maybe we're lucky if we get six weeks in operation. That's optimistic, that is. Some of them are out of action rather longer than they are in action.

INTERVIEWER

What do you think is the answer?

P.TEACHER

The answer would be to have a technician. The Head of Service has been trying to get a full-time technician, so that local repairs would be rather more speedy and less expensive. And we need a large pool of spares. There is a pool of spares available from the Blue Peter Appeal. You can actually send off now to the National Deaf Children's Society and they've got some spares provided by the Blue Peter Appeal, but you have to send off to them. You have to send £10 insurance. It's not

absolutely ideal. It's better than nothing, but what we really need, is a local pool of spares. We desperately need them. The Head of Service has said that the Goodrick Appeal has a spare Connevans, a type of radio-aid. That's no use really when a child has got another type of radio aid, a F.M. personal system. Just one spare Connevans is really no use at all. A child can have a F.M. personal system, a phonic ear from P.C. Werths, and if that goes out of action, it's no use swapping over for a Connevans, because they need different kinds of earmoulds and all sorts of things. It just doesn't work that way. It's very inconvenient when obviously at any one time, say, in this area, I would need a good four or five spares. Some children need a spare every other week. I need a pool of spares, not one.

INTERVIEWER

Do you think teachers should expect the same level of functioning from hearing impaired children?

P.TEACHER

They should aim for it. They should aim for it, but if it's not attained, they should understand the underlying factors, which are preventing the same level of attainment. They should make allowances for it. I don't think that the majority of teachers are sufficiently aware of the effects of the hearing loss to recognize what aspects of a child's performance are being affected by the hearing loss, and whether it's some aspect that has not been affected by the hearing loss. They're not sufficiently aware of the effect of the loss, and how it can affect a child. It's not their fault. It's not in-built into the system enough, for teachers to gain this knowledge. They must have more time to be instructed on it, to be able to absorb it.

INTERVIEWER

There is a great danger in generalisations, but are hearing impaired children more difficult to handle?

P.TEACHER

Some are, some aren't. Severely, profoundly deaf, hearing impaired children, on the whole, would present you with a few more problems than you would expect from a hearing child of that age. Yes, I think the more residual hearing there is, the fewer emotional problems. It's not quite as simple as that, but if you could generalize - yes.

INTERVIEWER

The next question I was going to ask you, was whether you see In-Service

as part of your role, but I think we could miss that one out.

P.TEACHER

Y.E.S.

INTERVIEWER

Could we concentrate more on parents now? How soon after diagnosis do you see parents?

P.TEACHER

As soon as possible. That sometimes isn't soon enough. I think, ideally, one should be present, and should be part of a diagnostic team. Some people would say that wasn't too good an idea, that because of the traumas associated with the actual moment of diagnosis, it's better that you're not associated with that. Sometimes I have been the person who has tested the child and said that I thought that the child was deaf. Because of the grief that is felt at that moment, you know, it's better not to be associated with that. I don't really know what's best, I think it just depends on the parent. I know parents with whom I have been present at the moment of diagnosis, who have accepted me perfectly readily, and even said it was an advantage afterwards, and I've had parents with whom that has been proven a barrier, the fact that I was associated with that particular time in their lives, and it's taken some getting over. On the whole, I think it's better the earlier you are there after diagnosis, the better. It doesn't always happen.

INTERVIEWER

Can you describe some of the different parental reactions?

P.TEACHER

Yes. Usually there is a terrific grief, even if it's expressed or not. There's always terrific grief. Grief, guilt - a terrific amount of guilt associated with that. All the stages of grief associated with bereavement almost. People go through all the classical stages, bitterness, anger, all these sort of things. Very few people don't go through these stages, but one particular reaction, I've seen, was that the parents didn't seem to go through any stages, any of the grieving processes, they seemed to dust themselves down, pick themselves up and say, "Right now, this child is going to need a tremendous amount of attention, and from now on, everything else in our lives is going to take secondary place to this, and we are going to devote our whole lives to this child." That's a very unusual reaction, and those parents did not seem to go through any grieving process. I think it has told on them

later. It has to come out sooner or later. I think the fact that they didn't do it earlier, they are now doing it later. That's the basis of their current problems. That's my pet theory, but they certainly did not grieve at the early stages, they simply got on with the job in hand. That's not usual.

INTERVIEWER

What can you do at this stage?

P.TEACHER

Listen - that's about all I can do. Listen, go in, and if they ask any questions, try and very, very gradually start to clarify their ideas about deafness. They don't always have an idea of what deafness means. Deafness is not something that many people meet with, in the course of their lives, statistically, and therefore, it's a complete bolt out of the blue. They don't understand any of the implications of it, whatsoever. I see myself as some kind of a bridge between them, and an understanding of what deafness means, in relation to their child, and this can take lots of different forms. I can give them information. I can give them leaflets. I can talk to them about decibels and audiograms, but I find that means very little to them, at that stage anyway. I think the only really valuable information I can give at that stage is in relation to their own direct questions. When they are ready to ask about something, I have got to be ready to give them the answers, and they're only ready to receive that information at certain stages. You can't go in and give huge spiels about deafness, and thrust leaflets under their noses, and expect all the information to be imparted in the space of a week or so. It's a very, very long, ongoing process, and you find that people can only absorb a certain amount at a time. Even after a whole year, there are still some very basic aspects of understanding about hearing loss that the parents haven't absorbed. You find it even into adolescence that parents haven't absorbed, but it seems that people have their own rate of absorption and you have got to adapt yourself to it. I think, in the early stages, rather than a lot of talk, or a lot of technical information, meeting other people in the same situation is of use to them, getting them in contact with other parents if possible, although lots of them have an innate reluctance to do this at first. Putting them in contact with other parents if possible, so that they can talk to some one in the same situation, helps a lot if they are able to do it. Going down to the Ealing Family Centre helps a lot, because,

there, they are given leisure in which to sit back and think about things, and the experts to sit back and listen to, and that helps a lot.

INTERVIEWER

What particular difficulties do you think parents have to face, for example, what effect does this have on family life?

P.TEACHER

I think it almost always affects the family quite deeply. I think it almost always affects the relationship between the husband and wife. It always affect the siblings. They seem to suffer because of the extra attention the hearing impaired child, almost without exception, seems to demand, and they suffer. You see all sorts of symptoms exhibiting themselves in siblings. You know, it's a trite saying that they say a handicapped child produces a handicapped family, and I see it happen quite a lot. I'm not saying that it is insuperable, you know, the problems are insuperable, and that families don't find their own strategies for coping, but I think they all go through very, very difficult times because of it.

INTERVIEWER

When it comes time to look for a school, what do you think parents look for?

P.TEACHER

Different parents look for different things. One set of parents might look for academic record in a school, but on the whole, I think parents, their first instinct, is for the child to go to the "normal", in inverted commas, most local school that the other children in the village are going to. I think that's what they look for mostly, but they do appreciate that their child may need, that other conditions may be helpful to the child, and they can be persuaded sometimes, that another, as long as it is a fairly local school with smaller classes, and maybe a different atmosphere, might be the best place. I find that they are fairly willing to consider other places.

INTERVIEWER

Besides the period just after diagnosis which obviously is a very stressful time, are there any other particular stages at which you find parents are particularly anxious?

P.TEACHER

Yes, any change from school to school, and adolescence. Parents who have, until then, not exhibited a great deal of anxiety, not overt

anxiety, can suddenly be devastated round about the time of adolescence. I've got a perfect example of that, at the moment, with a very profoundly deaf and handicapped girl. Her mother was fiercely determined that her child should be absolutely normal, and kept her away from any contact with other deaf children for as long as she could. She always strove for normality, outwardly maintained that she didn't feel any particular anxiety about her child, who suddenly has found herself almost on the verge of a nervous breakdown, as this child is nearing fifteen. The difference between the child and the hearing peers, able to go off to discos etc. is highlighting all the things which her daughter cannot, and never will be able to do. And this particular mum is only really facing up to the implications of her daughter's problems right now, and it's almost proving too much for her. She is very, very distressed about it. It has to come out, sooner or later.

INTERVIEWER

Possibly those parents where it comes out sooner, manage to adjust rather better?

P.TEACHER

Better? Yes, yes, it seems to be that way.

INTERVIEWER

And yet, it's something that everybody obviously has to work through. You can't bring it on.

P.TEACHER

No. You can't even facilitate it, not really. Each person seems to have their own rate of progress towards acceptance, and some people never achieve it. There is a lady, who, in my private opinion, even though her son is now in his early twenties, she has never really come to terms with it at all, and has sublimated all her lack of acceptance, call it what you like, into worthy activities for the National Deaf Children's Society, but, basically, it's because she has never really sat down and accepted the handicap of her own son. I know I'm being a lay psychologist here, this frantic running around, doing lots and lots of work for the Society to the exclusion of your family and everything else, is maybe instead of really sitting down and accepting certain basic things about your own child. I don't know, because I don't have any children. It's easy for me to philosophise about it, I know.

INTERVIEWER

This group of children who have been integrated into ordinary school, do

you think it's a good idea for them to meet other hearing impaired children?

P.TEACHER

Yes I do. I think it is absolutely essential. They can feel so isolated. I've had a perfect example of that just recently. A little girl at a school, whose mum said she was getting quite suddenly and unexpectedly depressed, and when questioned by her mother, said that she was the only little girl in the world who had to wear a hearing aid. She just had never met any other hearing impaired children. So we arranged for her to go on an outing with the National Deaf Children's Society, and I took up another child from a local school with a hearing aid just to meet her. Apparently, it settled her mind a little, as far as one can tell with children, but that seemed to be the basis of the problem at the time.

INTERVIEWER

Do you think it's a good idea for parents to meet other parents?

P.TEACHER

Yes, it's a very good idea. You can't predict how well it will work, and, again, it's very much down to the level of personalities as to whether one person will get on with another, but, on the whole, I think it helps. I do. Sometimes, it works out horrendously. It doesn't work very well at all.

INTERVIEWER

If you had more time available in your job, how would you spend it?

P.TEACHER

The first thing that springs to mind, if it were within my capabilities, I would take part in, and organise In-Service training days for classroom teachers, and for parents, too. Workshops, that kind of thing are very necessary. I just don't think it's possible within the framework of a working day, as it is organised now, for us to impart the necessary insights in the time available. Therefore, we need to organise time to do that in.

INTERVIEWER

What have you found as the greatest difficulty in dealing with parents?

P.TEACHER

Parents. I find that I can deal with all kinds of things, but I can't deal with apathy. I can deal with aggression, grief, and all that sort of thing, but I can't cope with apathy. I have had a couple or so of really apathetic parents who couldn't care less. I've found myself

unable to help them. That's something personally, that's me. I can't do anything with apathetic people. I can't motivate them. Otherwise, maybe the demands of parents sometimes. Most parents who are concerned about their children tend to be very demanding of your time, and they tend to expect a great deal in the way of, shall we say, out-of-hours' consultation, which are fine, if they're coming one person per night, but, if it's three or four per night, you know, it can be very wearing. I find that having a handicapped child tends to make people a bit obsessive, and, in that sense, some of the parents are rather more difficult to deal with, because they are so very anxious about their children, and rightly so. I'm not saying that they shouldn't be. It isn't a natural thing, but it is one of the things that is difficult to deal with at times. I see myself very much as an enabler. I need to enable them to understand all the aspects of hearing impairment and to cope with them. I need to build in my own redundancy and allow them to become more independent. It might be something as small as making them get their own batteries, in the beginning, so that they don't keep running to me for everything, and they rely on me less and less as time goes on. It was wonderful when Mark's mum organised a loan of a radio aid from Blue Peter totally on her own.

INTERVIEWER

What have you found the greatest difficulty with teachers?

P.TEACHER

Yes, being completely oblivious to the real needs of the children, in some cases. Because, although you can choose a school which you feel is the right place, you cannot legislate for a child going into a class, where the teacher is new and uninterested, or not perceptive about that child, or just doesn't want to know. Every child has that type of a teacher, sooner, or later. It is very difficult to stand by and watch a child having to cope under those circumstances, and not to have the time to really try and do something about it, little though you could possibly do with certain teachers. With them, it might not make any difference.

INTERVIEWER

What do you think the general public understand about hearing impairment?

P.TEACHER

Very little. There is very, very little understanding about hearing

impairment in general. They tend to think that deafness is deafness, and deaf is stone deaf, and stone deaf is can't talk, and they can't grasp the variations in hearing loss. They can't grasp the other implications of hearing loss, the linguistic vocabulary, emotional, psychological implications of hearing loss, all the gambit. I don't blame them. There is such a lot that I am still learning about. Education of the public is a very difficult thing to do. It's rather better than it used to be. I think there is quite a deal more in the media about deafness. The N.D.C.S. and the B.D.A. have concerted campaigns trying to raise public awareness, and there are various schemes in operation, the listening ear, for example. There is lots of effort being made, but, my goodness, it's a difficult handicap to get across to the public, to get across to anybody, isn't it? I don't wish to be hypocritical of teachers in general, when I say that lots of them are completely oblivious to what hearing impairment means. Sometimes that's not to do with them, it's just the nature of the handicap. I think I was teaching for three years in a school for the Deaf before it began to strike me, so how can I expect them to grasp it in a term?

INTERVIEWER

Do you ever find yourself in the middle between the school and the parents?

P.TEACHER

In what way, in the middle?

INTERVIEWER

Well, perhaps the school and the parents are at variance, and you might be used possibly by both parties in the middle.

P.TEACHER

I can't think of any.

INTERVIEWER

I just wondered, if we are considering a triangle, very much a three way thing, maybe two sides may sometimes appear contrary to the third.

P.TEACHER

Oh. yes. I can remember a school which had absolutely no understanding whatsoever of the child. This child was already in this school by the time that I got to it. The parent was desperately trying to get across to the school various aspects of the child's problems, and the school didn't want to know, and I was a bridge in the middle, and I don't think I was a very effective one. It didn't work very well, but I can see that

that could happen, but it doesn't happen very often. Lots of these problems arise if you are brought in late in a child's life, but if you have been there right from the beginning, hopefully you find out that kind of a problem before you get there. You haven't chosen that kind of school maybe in the first place. But if you are presented with a fait accompli, and there is a difficult situation exists already, you are a bit of a pig in the middle. I can see that, but it doesn't happen very often though.

INTERVIEWER

What do you think is the secret to successful placement? What are the variables which lead to success?

P.TEACHER

The child has had an early start, early intervention, early support, supportive parents, and the school has been carefully chosen from the point of view of atmosphere, personality of staff, and, very secondarily, physical, environmental conditions. But it's personality and atmosphere of the school. I'm thinking of one particular placement where all those criteria are met. In addition, the educational climate of the school is advanced - the Headteacher was very clued up, and very aware, and everything was perfect.

INTERVIEWER

Few and far between?

P.TEACHER

Yes, they're closing lots of small village schools now, aren't they, which are, on the whole, far more of an apt educational environment for young hearing impaired children than larger schools, and yet, they're closing them now.

INTERVIEWER

If you had a magic wand, and you couldn't cure hearing impairment, but you could do anything else, what would you do?

P.TEACHER

I'd give every person in the world, an instant comprehension of what hearing impairment was, and all its implications. Everybody would understand it, and I think from then on, all the teachers would understand it. The parents would understand what hearing impairment meant. Everyone would understand what it was, with the same degree of clarity that people understand that a child in a wheelchair cannot walk, they would understand that a hearing impaired child is likely to have

all these problems. I would also give the public the ability to understand how to accommodate to hearing impaired children, and the teachers. In other words, a perfect understanding, world-wide. I'd also make phonic ears never break down, but I can't have two wishes can I?

INTERVIEWER

Yes, go on, your magic wand gets a return sweep.

P.TEACHER

That, and technological equipment which would, I suppose it might help if you had hearing aids that could perfectly accommodate to, that would bring hearing up to normal, but that is not technologically possible. To restore perfect hearing by means of hearing aids is not technically possible. That's not on. But, practically, if the media were well enough informed and public awareness could be raised to such a level, it wouldn't be such a problem as it is now. So it's public awareness, and technological advances so the radio aids would not break down.

APPENDIX EIGHTEEN

DAVID: Transcript of specific references made in book, which passes between class teacher and peripatetic teacher, to problems with hearing aid. (Period 10.1.86 to 18.3.87)

C.T. = class teacher

S.T. = student teacher

P.T. = peripatetic teacher

10. 1.86 (P.T.) Checked phonic ear.
24. 1.86 (P.T.) Phonic ear not working. If mum hasn't received new Y cord by Monday, or hasn't got a spare single lead, please contact me.
31. 1.86 (P.T.) Phonic ear not working.
7. 2.86 (P.T.) Phonic ear taken away for general check over. New lead doesn't restore function.
21. 2.86 (C.T.) Phonic ear not working.
22. 4.86 (P.T.) Ordered new insertable disc for hearing aid.
13. 6.86 (C.T.) Problems with phonic ear again - haven't had it all week.
20. 6.86 (P.T.) Session taken up by testing David's current hearing levels and checking phonic ear which is still not operational - taken away again.
4. 7.86 (P.T.) Phonic ear away for repairs at Werths. (London)
3. 9.86 (C.T.) First day at school. (1) Phonic ear not working. (2) unable to wear one hearing aid because of ear infection.
5. 9.86 (P.T.) Phonic ear taken for repair - wearing one aid only, is very dependent on communication at close quarters and lip reading. Am considering asking Head of Service for an 'old' type phonic ear as a spare - very bulky and not liked by David but he cannot be expected to cope for long periods yet again without his radio aid. He will need to have a spare set of earmoulds made if this arrangement is possible, since the earmoulds are of a different type. Reading fine, but intelligibility of speech much affected by lack of radio aid and current hearing levels.

8. 9.86 (P.T.) Brought spare Connevans radio aid but incompatible with David's own post-aural aids. New leads to overcome this, ordered.
19. 9.86 (C.T.) David not very well this week, ear infection and dribbling a lot. Not sure if he understands story because discussion is difficult as he is not hearing much at all.
24. 9.86 (P.T.) Phonic ear working but not sure that clarity is as it should be. Will order new heads.
- 1.10.86 (P.T.) Phonic ear checked, and working!
- 8.10.86 (P.T.) Very good session, phonic ear working
- 14.10.86 (P.T.) Phonic ear out of order - will chase up Connevans spare if Head of Service can't fathom the fault.
- 11.11.86 (S.T.) Left phonic ear not working, tried new battery, still no response.
- 12.11.86 (S.T.) Phonic ear not working, tried new battery, still no response.
- 12.11.86 (P.T.) Phonic ear - left wasn't working, but jiggled it around, and, without changing any parts, it now appears to be fine. Ours not to reason why!
- 19.11.86 (P.T.) Left aid is working today. Phonic ear checked.
- 25.11.86 (P.T.) Phonic ear working.
28. 1.87 (P.T.) Phonic ear not working - time taken in checking out fault. Suspect faulty volume control wheel. Equipment taken for checking.
5. 2.87 (C.T.) Ear piece split.
5. 2.87 (P.T.) Radio aid returned, checked on David's aids. Now fully operational. Earmould and loose tube reconnected.
4. 3.87 (P.T.) Phonic ear checked.
18. 3.87 (P.T.) David's 'right' aid making indescribable noises. Rang mum, and asked her to substitute the left aid which he is not currently wearing due to ear infections.

DAVID: Transcript of specific references made in home / school notebook to problems with hearing aid. (Period 3.12.86 to 20.3.87)

P.T. = peripatetic teacher

P. = parent

- 3.12.86 (P.T.) Phonic ear working.
21. 1.87 (P.T.) Radio aid checked.
18. 3.87 (P) I don't think the batteries you supplied (in now) are very good re. charges. They don't take a complete charge on the tester.
18. 3.87 (P.T.) 2 new re-chargeables put in 'Hearing-aid bag'. Have taken away right phonak and F.M. personal system. I think the fault is in the transmitter. If Head of Service confirms this and it has to go for repair, will explore possibility of Connevans spare.
20. 3.87 (P) David has broken his left earmould somehow - it was beginning to split but he has obviously been playing with and poking it. I've found an old ear mould and hope it's O.K. - a word from you might help to remind him about looking after them.

APPENDIX NINETEEN

AN EXTRACT FROM DAVID'S NUMBER WORK RECORD SHEET

17.10.86 'More than' practice - seems to understand better  
21.10.86 draw 'more than' - bigger numbers to do  
7.11.86 'less than' but first 'more than' questions = revision  
10.11.86 confusion 'more than' concept ..... alternative more  
than cards  
17.11.86 'less than' cards  
draw less than four ducks etc.  
19.11.86 'more / less than' practice  
24.11.86 'less than'

AN EXTRACT FROM HEARING CHILD'S NUMBER WORK RECORD SHEET

17.10.86 'more than'  
a little more practice with concrete apparatus perhaps?  
7.11.86 alternative 'more than' cards  
17.11.86 'less than' cards - confusion - alternative approach?  
19.11.86 'less than'

