

**North London Deaf Children's Society AGM Committee Report for 2022
Presented to members at our AGM Party held at Summerside School
on 11th March 2023**

The NLDCS aims to offer support by providing accessible events and activities for deaf children and their families in an inclusive, safe environment where ideas and knowledge can be shared and friendships made. Many events are heavily subsidised by the NLDCS and some are free of charge to members. This year we have been delighted to be able to hold a range of activities and gatherings in person and welcome new families and professionals to our growing network.

Our year in numbers	2022	2021	2020
Subsidised or free events for families	9	7	5
Email communications	14	17	27
Newsletters	7	2	2
Mailing list of members, schools, professionals	135	117	100
Families who attended our events this year	37	53	18
Age range of children	0 – 14	0-13	0 -14

Events 2022

February 2022: NLDCS Annual General Meeting (AGM)

At the NLDCS online AGM on 3rd February, members were presented with an account of our activities in 2021, the financial statement for the period 2020 -21 and committee members and officers were elected.

March 2022: Baking with Alison

NLDCS members Harriet and Alison led a wonderful family baking session together online the day before Mother's Day. 5 families attended and children loved the trick of fizzing milk and lemon juice together and glazing scones with egg. Ben Jefferson was our BSL interpreter for the session, teaching us lots of sign vocabulary. Scones were delicious, all munched quickly and scone by Mother's Day. One parent commented, "We had a fabulous time baking and definitely think it should be a regular activitylots of rich language... we loved it"

April 2022: Visit to the RAF Museum

In the school Easter holidays, 11 of us met up one morning with a little bear, Raffi, for a picnic at the RAF Museum, based at the former Hendon Aerodrome in Barnet.

There were lots of indoor spaces to explore, models to climb into and listening posts and touchscreen displays to interact with. And of course planes to spot in all colours, including pink! Children and their grown ups had fun playing tag in the large grassy space around the hangars. The plane themed outdoor playground was a big hit with pilots who could park their grownups at a convenient picnic table to hit the coffee and take off into freedom. Raffi loves outings and is looking forward to more adventures with our NLDCS family!

**May 2022:
Trip to North Finchley Hollywood Bowl**

32 children of all ages with their parents and carers met to challenge each other in the bowling lanes and a shared meal together!

**June 2022:
Picnic in Highgate Woods**

Following the success of picnics in summer 2021, we held another family picnic in beautiful Highgate Woods this year. It was a great chance to meet old and new NLDCS families in a relaxed space and for deaf children and hearing siblings to meet and play games.

**September 2022:
Festival of Books at the British Library**

The Festival of Books at the British Library was a fully accessible Family Day organised by Camden Learning, Frank Barnes School and other deaf friendly organisations, delivered in British Sign Language and spoken English. Families came to make, touch, sign and explore, create, share and celebrate stories and favourite books. Our committee ran a stall, recreating the story *What the Jackdaw Saw* by writer Julia Donaldson, through mask making and story telling. Many people will know that Julia Donaldson is a famous children's writer but not everyone knows that she is hard of hearing. The book *What the Jackdaw Saw* is a story Julia wrote with deaf children about the usefulness of everyone learning some sign language.

**October 2022:
Outing to Harry Potter World**

October 2022 saw a trip to Harry Potter World, thanks to some additionally discounted tickets from Warner Bros Studios. 13 deaf children and their carers took an adventure into the world of wizarding. One parent commented, "What a wonderful trip to Harry Potter studios and tour. We were all mesmerised by the magic behind the scenes. The kids took a broom stick ride through London and the country side fought off dragons, spiders and death eaters. They bagged their riches at Gringots bank, battled the screams from the of the Mandrakes in Professors Sprouts Greenhouse, walked through the famous Diagon Alley and much more. We felt very lucky to be given the opportunity to go to Harry Potter studios and enjoyed every minute. Thank you NLDCS".

November 2022: Disco Party

The hall at Martin Primary was absolutely bouncing with 18 delightful deaf children plus excited siblings. Neon lights, blaring music, shrieks of delight, glow in the dark sticks, bright balloons, crazy brilliant games, funky crafts and delicious selection of party foods certainly kept all our little (and not so little) party animals entertained. On top of all that we had a DJ to make sure the music was loud enough to get our heartbeats skipping and heads spinning (in a good way). Before the music stopped, the children were covered in frothy white clouds spraying from the foam machine. BSL interpretation was provided thanks to Ben Jefferson.

December 2022: Theatre Trip

Nearly 60 of us from age 5 upwards attended Chickenshed's captioned production of Jack! in December and enjoyed a wonderful musical show with integrated sign language. Well done to all NLDCS members who were involved in the production.

Families commented:

"With the generous supports from Chickenshed, and the helpful organisation from NLDCS, we all enjoyed the show after the long Lockdown. The show was enthusiastic, talented, the kids with additional needs on the stage are inspiring, professional. Thank you so much, our special Chickenshed!"

"The show was so brilliant that I had tears half of it. Everything was to perfect, the actors, the interpretation, the energy. Me and my daughter loved it so much that we definitely looking forward to se more of this type of play. In one word was amazing!"
"...incredible show. Both my children were enthralled for every second of the performance and can't wait to see more! I loved it too!"

Committee Activities

The committee elected at the AGM in February 2022 Esther Conway (chair), Donna Apparicio (treasurer) Zibiah Loakthar (secretary), Nosheen Akhtar (safeguarding). Rayan Basma, Denis Coelho, Kam Makram, Suki Gill, Barbara Kasperska, Pari Kotecha, Lauren Rapacioli, Marvi Rauf, Linda Sells, Natali Collins and Jess Robson. We thanked Sharon Webb who stepped back from her role on the committee due to family commitments. In this report, we remember with love and gratitude Jess Robson, who passed away in 2022.

This year we have continued our regular committee meetings online.

Committee members continue to attend both Barnet, and Haringey and Enfield Children's Hearing Services Working Group (CHSWG) meetings with local authority and NHS staff in attendance to establish contacts, represent other families and find out news and information.

The NLDCS website continues to include a resources and information page, deaf specific learning resources as well as other useful online links. Communications to members have included information about NLDCS and National Deaf Children's Society events in addition to information about local services for deaf families. We also share details about other events and news that might interest our members, for instance opportunities to attend discounted theatre events such as Frozen and activities organised by other groups such as Deaf street parties and stay and play schemes for young deaf families.

We have a private **Facebook Group** for members in addition to an **Instagram** account, growing this as a way to share ideas, stories and news. Committee members are up-to-date on safeguarding issues. All hold DBS certification.

As a committee we explore different fundraising ideas and also seek out resources in kind. We were pleased to secure discounted tickets from Chickenshed and Warner Bros Studios. A big thank you to all who have made donations to our charity and to the National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS) for their support.

We consult with other professionals and expert about ideas for our activities. For instance, we invited Caroline Harding from NDCS to one of our committee meetings to discuss possible support for NLDCS parents on good sleep for deaf children and on deaf children's rights.

Plans for 2023

We have a number of ideas in the pipeline for the coming year and as always welcome everyone's ideas and suggestions for activities. Watch out for news via email, our website and social media of plans for activities and outings!

CAN YOU HELP? We welcome new committee members. People of all ages can join our committee at any point in the year. We welcome people with a few hours a month spare to join the team. We can offer support, mentoring and training to people who may be new to being a charity trustee. We are especially looking for people with good organisational skills to help organise events, people with experience in Mailchimp and WordPress to help with our communication, people with fundraising ideas and people with experience of deafness. We hold meetings online with enabled captioning to support our committee members who are deaf. We rotate between Monday and Thursday evenings. Committee meetings are held at 8.30pm, in the hope that by then those of us in charge of young children may have managed to put them to bed! Getting involved on a committee can be a great way to build friendships with families from across different North London boroughs.

A big thank you from the committee and all our families to everyone who has volunteered their time and expertise for the NLDCS this year. Our activities run on volunteer power. Everyone coming together to offer time ideas and resources enables NLDCS to continue to make a difference to the lives of deaf children and their families.