



What kind of hearing aids do we fit?

Most of the hearing aids we fit are digital behind-the-ear hearing aids (shown in the picture opposite). The hearing aid is the part that sits behind the ear. This is programmed specifically to your child's prescription using their hearing test results and measurements used to take into account the affect of the size and shape of your child's ear on the sound from the hearing aid. Hearing aids come in different colours.



The hearing aid is connected to an earmould by a clear plastic tube. This delivers the sound from the hearing aid into the ear. There are different types of earmould, but for children these are usually made of a soft plastic. Your child will be able to choose from a variety of colours and transfers for their earmoulds.

Helping your child get used to their new hearing aid

Some children are happy to wear their hearing aids home from clinic and continue to wear them all of the time. Other children however take a little time to adjust to the new sound. If this is your child, here are some tips to help:

- At first get your child to wear their hearing aid(s) for short periods, maybe 30 minutes, 2-3 times per day. Try to keep them otherwise occupied during these periods and in environments where background noise is limited as much as possible. This maybe by playing with them, listening to or reading a story together, or watching a film. It is important that when they are using their hearing aid(s) that they are exposed to quality sound, for example using noise makers (with very young children), singing nursery rhymes, or listening to/joining in conversation.

- If your child continues to pull their hearing aid(s) out, which at some stage most children learn to do, this is most often overcome by calmly continuing to re-insert the hearing aid(s).
- The National Deaf Children's Society provides an advice sheet about this written by other parents.
- Sometimes children may pull their hearing aid(s) out for a reason. This maybe because it is causing some physical discomfort, is a loose fit in their ear, falls away from their ear or loud sounds are uncomfortable. If you think this is the case, contact your audiologist.
- Some parents report that their children won't wear their hearing aids after school. You could try giving them a specified break, maybe for 30 minutes, and then start using the hearing aid(s) again. Communication and learning continues at home as well as school and being able to hear conversation at the dinner table or listen to the TV at a normal volume will make life easier for everyone.

Once a hearing aid has been fitted, the aim is for your child to wear it all through the day.

Caring for a hearing aid

A hearing aid is a precious piece of equipment because it helps your child hear. It needs to be looked after carefully and to be put in a safe place when it is not being used e.g. when your child goes to bed at night.

The hearing aid itself doesn't like water. It should be taken out of your child's ear for example if your child is swimming or in the bath or shower.

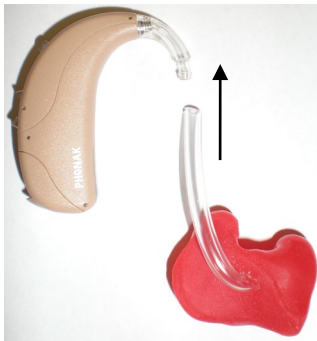
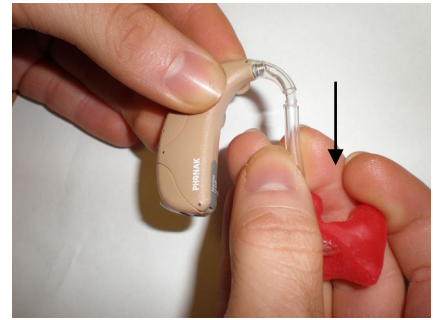
If your child is taking part in PE at school and their hearing aid might come in to contact with anything hard (e.g. if they are doing gymnastics) they may want to take it out to protect their ear and the hearing aid.

Cleaning the hearing aid

The earmould and hearing aid need to be kept clean. You can wipe the earmould everyday with a dry cloth or anti-bacterial wipe (available from the chemist) before putting it in your child's ear.

The earmould will also need to be washed regularly with soap (the kind you would use on your skin) and water. If your child suffers with frequent ear-infections the earmoulds will need to be soaked regularly in a sterilising solution (e.g. Milton) to prevent the spread of infection.

To wash the earmould you need to remove it from the hearing aid. To do this hold onto the tubing with one hand and the hearing aid in the other and ease the two bits apart, as shown. You may need to pull it fairly hard but this should not harm the hearing aid.



After you have washed the earmould it needs to be dried thoroughly before it can be re-connected to the earmould. If there is moisture in the tubing this can be shaken out or blown through.

To re-connect the earmould and hearing aid match the curve at the back of the ear-mould to the curve of the hearing aid and ease the tubing onto the elbow of the aid, as shown.

Replacing the tubing

The tubing of the earmould will need replacing. How often the tubing needs to be changed varies from person to person. The tubing in your child's earmould may need changing because it has become hard or brittle, because it is completely blocked with ear wax, because it has fallen out of the earmould or because your child suffers with frequent ear infections (regular changing of earmould tubing can reduce the spread of infection).

Your Audiologist and Teacher of the Hearing Impaired will be able to change the tubing of the earmould for you. They will also be able to show you how to do it if you would like them to. If this is the case we can provide spare tubing for you to keep at home.

Is my child's hearing aid faulty?

Sometimes a hearing aid becomes faulty or may appear to be faulty. Here is a list of common problems, possible causes and remedies you can try. If you are unable to solve the problem yourself and your hearing aid is still not working properly it may need to be sent for repair. Usually there is no charge for the hearing aid to be replaced or repaired.

No sound from the hearing aid:

- Check that the hearing aid is switched on properly.

- Check that there has been no accidental confusion between new and used batteries and that the battery is in the right way around. If the battery is in correctly and working you should be able to hear a high-pitched whistling sound when the aid is on but out of the ear. Cupping your hand over the end of the earmould can emphasise this whistling.
- The earmould tubing maybe blocked by ear wax. If this is the case you can attempt to remove it using a pin head. If this is not successful try retubing the earmould (If we have shown you how to do this and given you spare tubing). If you are not able to retube the hearing aid yourself contact Paediatric Audiology for advice.
- The earmould tubing maybe blocked by condensation. If this is the case a 'puffer' can used to dry the tubing.
- The hearing aid may be damaged or faulty. If you think this is the case contact Paediatric Audiology for advice.

Sound from the hearing aid is not clear or sounds distorted:

- The battery may be weak. Try replacing the battery with a new one.
- The earmould may not be inserted properly. Try reinserting the earmould.
- This may happen if the earmould is not fitting into the ear well or if the hearing aid is damaged or faulty. If you suspect either of these causes please contact Paediatric Audiology for advice.

Sound from the hearing aid is not loud enough:

- The earmould may not be inserted properly. Try reinserting the earmould using the guide in this booklet.
- The earmould tubing maybe blocked by ear wax. If this is the case you can attempt to remove it using a pin head. If this is not successful try retubing the earmould (If we have shown you how to do this and given you spare tubing). If you are not able to retube the hearing aid yourself contact Paediatric Audiology for advice.
- The earmould tubing maybe blocked by condensation. If this is the case a 'puffer' can be provided to dry the tubing..
- This may also be due to wax in your child's ears, a change in their ability to detect sounds, because the settings of their hearing aid(s) need adjustment or because their hearing aid is faulty or damaged. If you suspect any of these causes contact Paediatric Audiology for advice.

Feedback (whistling) from the hearing aid:

- The earmould may not be inserted properly. Try reinserting the earmould using the guide in this booklet.
- This may also be caused by the earmould being too loose or if the settings of the hearing aid need adjustment. If you suspect either of these causes please contact Paediatric Audiology for advice.

How to contact us

Should you have any questions or concerns about your child's hearing or hearing aids you can contact the Children's Audiology Service 8.30am-5pm Monday-Friday on:

01443 443283 or 01685 728130

If you ring outside of these hours an answer-machine is available.

If you are interested in contacting us by email in future please ask us for a consent form at your next appointment.