

Impact report 2017–18



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About us

Founded by parents of a deaf child over 35 years ago, The Elizabeth Foundation is a national charity supporting young children with all degrees of hearing loss to learn to listen and talk. Having a hearing loss can significantly affect a child's ability to communicate. However, with modern technology and appropriate intervention during their early years, most deaf children can – and do – learn to communicate clearly and effectively using spoken language. We provide our services to offer young children with hearing loss the best possible start in life.

At The Elizabeth Foundation, we are committed to the 'Multi Sensory Oral Approach.' Through this approach, we encourage deaf children to develop speech, language and listening skills using all of their senses in a natural, fun, child-centred environment.

About this Impact Report

This Impact Report provides a summary of our activities during the year from August 2017 to July 2018, encompassing our 2017–18 school year.



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Message from our Chief Executive

I can't believe another academic year has come and gone! However, as I look out the windows in my office, the trees have lost all their leaves and the temperature is dropping, so winter is definitely upon us. It has been an eventful year for the charity, to say the least.

In 1981, our founders Shirley and Dave Metherell had a vision to support as many parents of very young deaf children as possible. With the advent at the time of improved newborn screening technology, they believed that diagnosis should always be followed by good, strong, educational, early-intervention.

Over the past 37 years, their vision has remained constant and has become a reality. However, the needs of families are continually changing, and as a charity we remain committed to finding ways to provide flexible family-focused services in a changing world.

In our purpose-built test centre and family centre, babies are now getting their hearing aids at about six weeks of age and early intervention services can start immediately.

We run weekly nursery sessions, with baby, toddler and preschool programmes, that include parent and family support. For those children who may not need that level of input, but still do require support, we run monthly 'Listen' groups, highlighting the skills necessary for the children to become good listeners. For those families who can't get to us on a regular basis, we run our unique online Let's Listen and Talk family support programme. And for those families who prefer more intensive input and live further afield, we have our Summer Programme.

Of course, this is only possible through the hard work, dedication, loyalty, commitment and absolute determination of our wonderful team of staff, Trustees and volunteers who work tirelessly to make this all a reality. A huge 'congratulations', 'well done' and 'thank-you' to all the people who have contributed to the continued success of the charity. We are so grateful for your support and couldn't do the work we do without you!

Julie Hughes
Chief Executive



Our core services

We provide our services to offer young children with hearing loss the building blocks they need to develop their listening and spoken language skills.

We are able to support each family from the point of diagnosis and continue to support them throughout their child's preschool years. As most deaf children are born to hearing parents, who have no experience with deafness, the early years can seem very daunting and challenging, with many decisions to make around technology and communication.

The Elizabeth Foundation provides families with information as well as practical activities, so parents feel able to support their child with communication development and they feel confident to make informed decisions on behalf of their child. Our team of Teachers of the Deaf, Teaching Assistants, Specialist Speech and Language Therapists and volunteers provides specialist support, tailored to meeting the needs of each individual child attending our programme.

Baby groups

Who we helped and how:

During the year, we supported a total of 20 different babies and their families through our weekly nursery sessions, offering information, guidance and support to parents about the ways they can help their child develop their communication skills. The support parents get from meeting other parents is also invaluable.

As a direct result of attending our baby nursery sessions, parents tell us that they particularly benefited from the demonstration of listening and language games in the sessions, the support from being with other parents and the advice, help and information they received from the staff. In addition, parents reported that they felt more confident with their child's hearing technology and felt more positive about the future.



“Coming to our sessions is one of the highlights of our week – and the reason we moved back to this area. Our son loves it and has grown in confidence so much. It is a place where he feels happy and relaxed – our whole family has benefited from attending!”

Toddler and preschool groups

Who we helped and how:

66 children attended our toddler and preschool programmes during the 2017–18 academic year. Families travelled from 14 different authorities to participate in sessions at our Family Centre in Hampshire.

The children benefit from sessions being taught by a Teacher of the Deaf, with specialist Teaching Assistants and trained volunteers. The children were taught in acoustically treated nursery rooms, equipped with sound-field and fm technology. They benefited from small class size and enhanced visual cues throughout their sessions. They also received one-to-one support from a Specialist Speech and Language Therapist. The nursery followed the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum, with particular focus on listening, language, speech and communication in all activities.

During the year, 15% of the children had additional physical, sensory, health or learning needs (compared with 25% in the previous year) and 14% of the children were learning English as an additional language or had a bilingual home environment (compared with 30% in the previous year).



“Watching the continual language development of our son throughout his time at The Elizabeth Foundation has continuously filled us with hope for his future and enhanced his and our confidence in a positive future.”

‘Listen’ support groups

Who we helped and how:

This year we ran two ‘Listen’ support group sessions each month. One group was for children with unilateral hearing loss, mild hearing loss, and / or chronic conductive hearing loss. We ran a second group for children with Down syndrome and fluctuating hearing loss. During the 2017–18 academic year, we supported 19 families within the two groups and ran 20 sessions throughout the year. We did not run a group for children with complex needs this year because there was no demand for it. We will re-start this group when there is sufficient need.

“I have really struggled with my son’s hearing aids and the staff and the other parents in the group have given me more advice and support than anywhere else. The groups are such good fun and a lovely way to learn and I always learn something new to work on at home.”

How we change lives

Language skills

Hearing babies start to respond to sound even before they are born. They learn to recognise and understand sound, gradually developing language by learning from listening to those around them. Deaf children miss these opportunities, which impacts on learning.

During 2017–18, there were 49 children for whom we carried out at least 2 assessments. Of these, 42 (85%) started the year with delayed language skills (compared to their hearing peers).

Over the year, 37 children (88%) made 'significant progress'. This included 20 children who had maintained or achieved age-appropriate language skills by the end of the year. We also included 12 children whose language progressed at an accelerated rate (i.e. they made more than 1 month's progress for each month that passed) – as they have begun to close the gap with their hearing peers. In addition, we included 5 children whose language skills, whilst still delayed, had progressed at a steady rate (i.e. 1 month's progress each month) – i.e. they had not fallen any further behind. Although still delayed, we feel this represents significant progress.

The remaining 12 children had 'started to experience progress' with either receptive or expressive language (i.e. the language they can hear / understand and the language they can use). Six of these children had additional health, physical and / or learning needs – such as Global Delay, Cerebral Palsy, genetic conditions or social communication difficulties. Four were learning English as an additional language or were being raised in a home where another language (spoken or signed) was primarily used.

Clarity of speech

Deaf children need help to learn to understand words and further encouragement to begin to use words independently. When children with hearing loss finally try to start using words, a lack of clarity can mean they aren't understood.

Often, this quickly knocks their confidence, making deaf children reluctant to try again and affecting progress with language and social skills.

87% of children who attended our programme made progress with their speech clarity, with 62% making significant progress, through an increase in the percentage of sounds they were able to produce correctly in words. Only eight children had yet to show progress. Four of these left part way through the year, two had only recently received their cochlear implants and so assessment was not appropriate and two were awaiting a diagnosis to explain broader learning, cognitive and / or social difficulties.

Relationships with peers

While we think of language as the basis of communication, there is much more to it – anyone who visits our nursery observes the many ways the children communicate: eye contact, smiling, gestures like pointing or pushing things away.

The children who attend our nurseries are usually very keen to communicate and use all the methods available to them, but without language their interactions and relationships can only progress so far.

We monitor all the children using the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework (EYFS) published by the Department for Education, which includes a score for 'Making Relationships'. We also used observations and feedback from families to evaluate the children's progress.



84% of children who attended our nursery services made progress with their peer relationships. 57% made 'significant progress' with their social skills, working within an age-appropriate band on the EYFS framework by the end of the year.

We counted 10 children as 'yet to experience progress'. This included 4 children who left part way through the year, so we were unable to assess their progress over the year and 4 children who started in the summer term and so were

unable to show measurable progress.

It also includes two children who were awaiting diagnosis to help parents and professionals better understand how to help them.

Moving on to school

In July 2018, 18 children left our preschool programme to go to reception year at primary school. All of the children transitioned into a mainstream setting with appropriate classroom support, 8 of which included a resource base within the mainstream setting.

Growing demand

Analysis of usage of our core services shows a 56% increase in numbers of children attending over the past 5 academic years.

September Intake	2013–14	2014–15	2015–16	2016–17	2017–18
Babies	10	14	19	12	11
Toddlers	8	11	16	17	17
Preschool	27	23	24	34	37
Total growth during academic year	45 / 58	48 / 60	59 / 70	63 / 74	65 / 82

During 2017–18, children attended our baby, toddler and preschool groups from across the south of England.

County / local authority

Hampshire 24	Dorset 4
Surrey 14	Wiltshire 3
Southampton 12	Hertfordshire 1
Portsmouth 10	East Sussex 1
Isle of Wight 2	Berkshire 1
London 3	Oxfordshire 1
West Sussex 5	Kent 1
Total 82	



Blake's story

Blake arrived into the world extremely prematurely, weighing just 2lb 5oz (a little over 1 kilo). Three months later – still in the care of the Special Care Baby Unit (SCBU) – his newborn screening tests were performed.

He did not pass the initial screening test and so one month later, the day of Blake's follow up audiology appointment arrived. Blake was diagnosed with profound bilateral sensorineural hearing loss.

A short while after this diagnosis, Blake was fitted with hearing aids which sadly did not appear to give him access to sound. We were told Blake was a candidate for Bilateral Cochlear Implant surgery. If my child was to receive Cochlear Implants, he would require as much focused speech and language assistance as possible.

That was when I had the realisation that The Elizabeth Foundation offered all the focused support I would want him to receive, to help him make sense of any sounds he gained access to and develop his speech and language.

As soon as I stepped through the doors of The Elizabeth Foundation there was no question – I wanted Blake to attend the

baby nursery immediately. It truly is such a warm and welcoming group of people and a wonderful place.

When we joined the baby nursery sessions and progressed through the toddler sessions, I discovered an additional support network in the wonderful parents, all facing relatable challenges to our own. Blake's listening, attention and speaking skills were developed in an environment which felt like play rather than the reality – where focused and consistent work was taking place.

Until starting in the preschool classes, Blake had been a reluctant speaker. However, his speech began to emerge during preschool. As time progressed, Blake's speech increased in clarity and – as others began to understand his spoken language – his confidence in his ability grew which led to him choosing to stop signing.

Blake has progressed beyond all expectations while at The Elizabeth Foundation, from a quiet child to the now anything-but-quiet, funny, confident little boy who seems fully prepared and very ready for his next big adventure... school!

Christina Byers





Katie then (left)



Katie now

Katie's story

I was born profoundly deaf with sensorineural hearing loss in November 2000. I attended The Elizabeth Foundation when I was little.

My parents decided that the most important thing for me was that I should be able to understand what was going on in the world around me and that I could communicate. They decided to use a mix of BSL and oral communication as the BSL would allow me to join in with the conversation whilst orally talking would model speech. Currently, I use speech most of the time, but if the environment is difficult to hear in, if I am tired, or if the subject matter is complicated, I use BSL in addition.

I have always loved swimming. It gives me a sense of achievement and I feel successful at it. My training de-stresses me and is probably the reason I never miss a training session!

When I was selected for the Team GB Deaf Swimming Club I was so happy about it, and I knew that I would have to give it my all. There was only 3 weeks between finishing my GCSE exams and competing in Poland. When I was in Poland doing the European Deaflympics it was a very nerve-wracking experience for me. Although I was nervous, I was also very excited. They used a light

system for the start and it was brilliant – I would highly recommend it to everyone in swim competitions.

Swimming is a huge part of me and it has shown me what I can do and what I am capable of. I have always loved it and I always train so hard to achieve what I want to achieve – like to break records, worlds, Deaflympics, the list goes on and on. My next aim is to better my times so that I can break records at the World Competitions in Deaflympics in Brazil.

Deep down, I will never give up anything that I am passionate about. It is harder for me being deaf, in a local hearing swimming club, but this has shown me what I can do and has given me huge confidence and determination – I can be quite stubborn! Because of this, I will stand-up for myself and prove to people, and myself, all that I can do.

Many people might have given up over time, thinking my goals were too difficult to achieve. But for me, although it is hard sometimes, it is not hard enough for me to consider giving up. I will never do that... it is not who I am.

Katie Taylor

Reaching out

It's not only families in the south of England who benefit from our services. During the 2017–18 academic year, we reached out to families throughout the UK with our Summer Programme and our online Let's Listen and Talk programme.

Summer programme

Who we helped and how:

In August 2017 we held our third Summer Programme here at our family centre in Hampshire, with families attending from Northern Ireland and from across England. Eight children with a wide range of language and listening levels attended the preschool sessions.

We also supported four children (ranging in age from 4 to 8 years) in the sibling programme.

14 parents participated in the intensive parent education programme, receiving advice and information from an Educational Psychologist, Speech and Language Therapists specialising in hearing loss and sensory impairment, speakers from the University of Southampton Auditory Implant Service and Teachers of the Deaf specialising in the use of music and in literacy skills. One particular highlight of the week for the parents was a Q&A session with young deaf adults.



Let's Listen and Talk

Who we helped and how:

Let's Listen and Talk (www.letslistenandtalk.org) is an interactive online learning programme enabling families to support their deaf child to listen and to speak clearly and confidently.

At the end of 2017 we launched the third main element of the website – the Preschool Programme – which complements the already-launched Baby and Toddler Programmes.

Let's Listen and Talk combines a structured online series of home lesson plans with individual support tailored to the needs of each child and their family. All of this information and advice is intended – and currently used by families – to complement and supplement the support they receive from their local services.

During 2017–18, 7 babies and 4 toddlers completed their programmes and 12 toddlers and 8 preschoolers continued to receive support on their respective 'Let's Listen and Talk' programmes.

"I particularly liked listening to clips of other parents and their journeys. I found this very reassuring and supportive. I also liked the clips of the activities, as I found it very reassuring to know that I was doing the 'right' thing. The play ideas centred around the home were really useful and helpful. All of this information complements that given by my local Teacher of the Deaf."



Working together

With all the challenges that families of deaf children have to face, it is critical that individuals, professionals and organisations work together to provide the best possible support for deaf children and their families. During 2017–18, we:

- Hosted 3 collaborative training days with The Ear Foundation.
- Attended an international meeting on rehabilitation sponsored by Advanced Bionics.
- Attended a training session by Cochlear, UK.
- Attended Speech and Language Therapy Clinical Excellence Groups for hearing impairment.
- Attended and presented at the AG Bell international conference in London.
- Provided regular articles for Cochlear Implanted Children's Support Group (CICS) magazine.
- Presented two lectures to students at the University of Portsmouth on communication development in children.
- Presented at the Hampshire Screeners team meeting, Basingstoke.
- Attended Children's Hearing Services Working Group (CHSWG) meetings.
- Provided two articles for the British Association for Teachers of the Deaf (BATOD) magazine.
- Presented at the University of Southampton Auditory Implant Service team meeting on the work of the charity.
- Presented to the Training Teachers of the Deaf, University of Hertfordshire at Mary Hare.
- Continued to work closely with the Portsmouth Hospitals NHS Trust Audiology team.
- Hosted visiting professionals, trainees and students at our Family Centre including: Teachers of the Deaf, Health Visitors, Nurses, Speech and Language Therapists, Occupational Therapists, and students on a wide variety of courses.

Funding

Every year, The Elizabeth Foundation has to secure all of the income it needs to meet its charitable aims and objectives. The charity receives no statutory core funding and so we rely largely on the support of families, friends, grantmaking trusts, businesses and the community.

Our sources of income during 2017–18*

Donations and gifts

26% **£247,446**

Contracts and fees

19% **£184,542**

Grants

24% **£226,357**

Fundraising events

8% **£75,112**

Legacies

22% **£216,825**

Investments and interest

1% **£6,880**



How we spend your money

For every £1 donated:

68p goes directly to helping deaf babies and children learn to listen and speak

19p goes on raising funds and awareness

13p goes on governance and support costs



*We have based these summary figures on the audited figures in our Annual Report and Accounts 2017–18.

Fundraising highlights

Here are just a few of many wonderful fundraising activities that took place during 2017–18.

Family fundraisers

Families play an integral part in raising funds. This year we focused on helping families organise fundraising activities within their local communities to raise awareness of our services we offer as well as raising money.

Parents Hannah Elson and Cheryl McGrath organised a fabulous family fun day and raised over £7,000 shared between The Elizabeth Foundation and CSSEF.

“We had such fun organising the day and our cheekiness grew with confidence when asking businesses for their support. The responses from local businesses and friends and family were incredible. We couldn’t believe what an incredible day we had – it wasn’t as much work as it seemed and we really enjoyed it. We would encourage everyone to participate in or organise an event of their own to support The Elizabeth foundation.”

Jo Thomas organised a Five Sense Challenge on her local village green in July 2018, raising more than £1,400 in the process. Jo didn’t know at the time she would be up against the very hot weather and the World Cup Final! Not to be deterred she wheeled in a TV and ensured there was plenty of water on hand! Teams tackled a range of fun activities covering sight, taste, touch, smell and of course hearing!

Community Fundraising

Raising funds and awareness in the local community continued to be a key objective. We are extremely grateful to Rotary Clubs, Freemasons, church groups and social groups for their support. During 2017 members of our team gave talks and hosted visitors from local community groups to our Family Centre.

The Lord Mayor of Portsmouth’s Appeal

The Lord and Lady Mayoress of Portsmouth 2017-18 Cllr Ken Ellcome and his wife Jo (below) chose The Elizabeth Foundation, as one of three charities to support during their mayoral year. This partnership afforded many opportunities to raise the profile of the charity within the city and amongst local councillors. Ken and Jo’s tireless fundraising work during their year resulted in a total of £19,000 being raised for the three charities.



Corporate support

We have continued to invest additional staff and volunteer resources in engaging with businesses not only locally but through the contacts we have with our families who come from further afield.

- During the year we received ongoing support from several Sainsbury's and The Co-op stores around our Family Centre as well as participating in various Waitrose and Asda green token schemes.
- Portsmouth Marriott staff continued their tradition of supplying gifts and entertaining the children at Easter and Christmas, as well as providing staff to clean and tidy the children's play equipment and garden.
- Stagecoach South kindly brought a bus for the children to learn about during Transport Week, and also arranged for a bus and stall at our Summer Fayre after advertising the event within their buses.
- Parent Sam Windridge arranged for us to hold a bucket collection during a London Irish rugby match at the Madejski Stadium in Reading, show a video about our work on their big screen and have a whole page advertisement within the match programme. Thirty one volunteers collected over £1,000.
- Rose Currens, manager of Gallery 21 in Salisbury, organised an auction of artworks kindly donated by the gallery's artists, and raised a phenomenal £6,000. Thank you to everyone who purchased art and to the artists for donating their work.

Grantmaking trusts

In March 2017, The Elizabeth Foundation was delighted to receive a 4 year grant of £15,000 per annum from The Leathersellers' Company Charitable Fund.

The charity's Deputy Chief Executive Karen Vaughan BEM said:

"By recognising the importance of awarding multi-year grant funding, The Leathersellers' Company Charitable Fund is helping us to sustain priority services. This much-needed support also gives assurance to other potential grant and corporate funders that a partnership with The Elizabeth Foundation is highly valued by our supporters."

Other grant funders in 2017-18 included: BBC Children in Need; Masonic Charitable Foundation; Garfield Weston Foundation; GJW Turner Trust; The Screwfix Foundation; The Graham High Charitable Trust; The D'Oyly Carte Charitable Trust; The Fence Club; The Barbara Ward; The Ovingdean Hall Foundation; Peter Harrison Foundation.

For more information on how your Trust, Foundation or company can make a difference please get in touch.





Future plans

During the forthcoming 2018–19 school year we plan to focus on:

- Maintaining and continuously improving our Ofsted ‘Outstanding’ baby, toddler and preschool nursery programmes that support deaf children and their families.
- Building our reach of support and mentoring for students to include Teachers of the Deaf and Speech and Language Therapists, gaining experience through placements at our nurseries.
- Engaging more families and professionals through our Let’s Listen and Talk online programme, supporting the communication skills of deaf children across the UK.
- Setting up a pilot to test the most effective ways of using the Let’s Listen and Talk programme to complement and support statutory service providers; then analysing feedback from this pilot and adjusting the programme accordingly.
- Creating supplementary material to add to the Let’s Listen and Talk Programme – information about cochlear implants and advice about using music.
- Increasing awareness of our charity and our services across the UK.
- Maintaining and building on our partnerships with Portsmouth Hospitals NHS Trust and the University of Southampton Auditory Implant Service, providing wrap-around care to deaf children and their families in the region.
- Completing construction work to create new state-of-the-art testing facilities in our Ovingdean Building Test Centre to support future partnership working opportunities.
- Enhancing and expanding music therapy to include smaller group sessions to meet individual needs within the nursery.
- Continuing to build and diversify our fundraising portfolio, with particular focus on corporate awareness and corporate fundraising.
- Auditing our policies and procedures within the charity as a whole to ensure they remain robust, appropriate, relevant and accurate.
- Facilitating the charity’s growth and development without compromising our core values of being ‘family-focused’, ‘family-centred’, and ‘family-first’.

Thank you!



The Elizabeth
foundation

To donate or support our work please
visit our website or get in touch.



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[@elizabethfoundation](https://www.facebook.com/elizabethfoundation)



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The Elizabeth Foundation, Southwick Hill
Road, Cosham, Hampshire PO6 3LL

Tel: 023 9237 2735 Fax: 023 9232 6155

Email: info@elizabeth-foundation.org

Website: www.elizabeth-foundation.org

The Elizabeth Foundation – helping deaf
children learn to listen and talk.

Registered Charity No. 293835.

A charitable company limited by
guarantee, No. 1960980, registered in
England. Registered office as above.

***“Coming to The Elizabeth Foundation has helped not
just my child, but me also. It is an amazing place.”***