

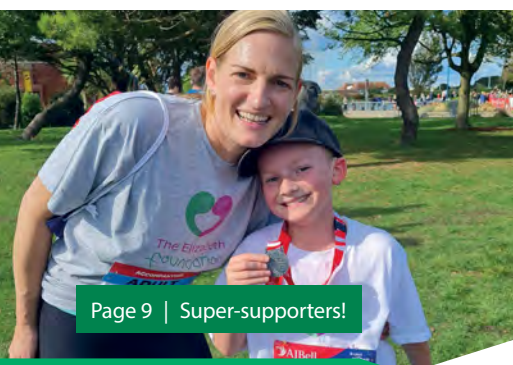
## What's inside?



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## Deaf role models inspire our children

At The Elizabeth Foundation, we know how important good role models can be in shaping the lives of our young deaf pupils whilst also providing welcome support and reassurance to our families. Whether these individuals are people that we know, celebrities raising awareness and promoting a positive attitude towards deafness, or the deaf characters that we meet in books, films and TV programmes, they all play an important part encouraging our deaf children to set their sights high and know that they are a part of a wider deaf family.

## We all need help!

Many of us can think of significant people who have influenced us during our lives. Perhaps they were an important family member that we looked up to, a caring teacher or someone who ran a club we attended. They might have provided inspiration, giving us the courage to try something new; they might have helped us make decisions when we needed a little push; or they might have provided support at a difficult time in our lives.

Maybe these individuals showed a determination we admired, or worked in a role that got us thinking about what we were capable of doing. Or maybe they just listened to us without judgement. Whatever their impact, role models lift our spirits and show us a way forward when we might not be able to see it for ourselves. (Continues over...)

**"Children are great imitators, so give them something great to imitate." Anonymous**

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## Families matter

Each and every day at The Elizabeth Foundation we see the incredible role models our parents, caregivers and families are for their children. In fact, parents are young children's most important role models. They provide vital examples of how to behave, how to enjoy and have fun, how to interact with others, how to respond to different situations, how to manage difficulties and problem-solve, and how to understand and interpret the world.

## Why our children need deaf role models

Yet it is also true that most deaf children (95%) are born to hearing families who may have little or no previous experience of raising a deaf child and this can be daunting for parents. So it is also important that our children and families have deaf role models. They can help to reassure families and encourage them to see opportunities for their children rather than barriers, showing them that they must have high expectations for their children and providing examples of success.

They help the children develop a good understanding and pride in their deaf identity and encourage them to be ambitious for their futures. These deaf role models can come in many forms.

## Those who return to the Foundation...

We are always delighted when previous Elizabeth Foundation students come back to do work experience with us or volunteer. They provide the very best role models for our young children. In the classrooms, it is obvious how our young children look to these young deaf adults with curiosity when

they first see their technology, and then how naturally and quickly they develop connections and seek them out.

Having these young deaf students in the classrooms helps promote questions and conversations around deafness and our families love seeing how far these young people have already come, asking them about their journeys so far and recognising their excitement for their future. These are our alumni role models who we are rightly so proud of!

## Those we see on our screens...

Then there are those role models that we see on our screens that our deaf children can look up to and maybe see their future selves in, if only to see how proudly these personalities discuss their deafness and how it has not prevented them from achieving their dreams.

We are especially grateful for the ongoing interest and support that our former pupil, the amazing Jodie Ounsley gives The Elizabeth Foundation. Jodie, who recently retired as a professional rugby player, featured as Fury in the recent reboot of *Gladiators* on primetime BBC1. Another of our former students, Oliver Pritchard, took part in the Red Nose and Spoon Race televised nightly on *The One Show* in March 2022. Oliver is a successful young triathlete, winning the Sprint Triathlon in his age group in the 2023 Europe Triathlon Championships Madrid.

We also welcome the positive influence other deaf personalities have had by featuring on our television screens. The best known in recent years has probably been Rose Ayling-Ellis (the former *EastEnders* actor who won BBC1's *Strictly Come Dancing* in 2021), closely followed by Tasha Stones (who appeared in the 2023 series of Channel 4's *Great British Bake Off*).

Rose (525,000 Instagram followers), Jodie (196,000 TikTok followers), and Tasha (96,000 Instagram followers) are also highly visible on social media, frequently promoting deaf awareness alongside their other interests and passions.

These high-profile role models help our young children feel seen and understood. Equally importantly, these individuals show wider society what is possible, and encourage other deaf people to take pride in their deaf identity. They talk honestly and believably, shining a light on their experiences of growing up as a deaf person.

## Those who we come across in books or as toys

Deaf role models are not always real – they can also be imaginary! Thankfully we increasingly find deaf characters in books and stories acting well, being naughty, having adventures, getting into trouble, being superheroes and generally living their lives providing fun and focus for our deaf children. We are also starting to see more toys with hearing technology, including Lego minifigures and Barbie. The joy of seeing a character in a book or playing with a toy wearing hearing aids or cochlear implants cannot be underestimated.

## "You can't be what you can't see"

Role models are important for young deaf children, because as Marian Wright Edelman wrote, "You can't be what you can't see." So, whoever our children's role models are, The Elizabeth Foundation celebrates them all, and in particular the deaf role models that help our children look positively at their world with excitement and ambition for their future.

"I'm really lucky as I have incredibly supportive parents. But I did struggle with my confidence because it wasn't until I was in my teens that I became aware of any deaf role models. Now for kids there are so many people, and it means such a lot to have someone to look up to. Now I get sent messages and videos all the time. One five-year-old with a cochlear implant was jumping up and down and screaming, 'I want to be a Gladiator.' That really warmed my heart." Jodie Ounsley (Fury)



"My daughter who is aided in both ears has loved watching you (Fury) on *Gladiators*! She goes to The Elizabeth Foundation, your photo is on the board by the entrance, and she always goes up and says, 'She has ears like me.' Thank you for representing the deaf community and showing children like my daughter that they can do anything and be anyone they choose to be."

Libby Suller, Parent

Credit: BBC / James Stack / © Hungry Bear Media Ltd



# Chief Executive's message

**A**s I sit here and write this, I am listening to the chatter and excitement of some of our alumni who have come back to the Family Centre to take part in the literacy research project with UCL (more about that on p.7).

It is as if they have never been away – the children have picked up right where they left off. Many have remained friends from their time in our preschool nursery. Others are seeing each other after an extended period apart.

This got me thinking about the importance of friendships, and more specifically, having a deaf peer group. For many of the children who leave our services, they are the only deaf child in their class – maybe in their school. Friendships at any age are incredibly important. But for deaf children, having other deaf friends can become a lifeline.

I started at The Elizabeth Foundation over 30 years ago. And the children who were in my very first preschool nursery sessions are still friends to this day ... three decades later! And they have told me through the years how important and how special it is to have friends who "get it".

Social-emotional development is strengthened by having effective peer relationships and developing a positive identity. For deaf children, this is made more difficult by the challenges they face in everyday communication in a busy classroom, regardless of type of technology or modality of communication.

A research study from the University of Copenhagen (Chapman and Dammeyer, 2016) concluded that the ability to assimilate socially to a group impacted positively on mental health and social wellbeing.

Friendship groups are important! To help build their self-identity, children who are deaf need opportunities to interact with and learn from peers who are like them.

In the early years, this requires parents to make extra effort to ensure their child has opportunities to meet up socially with other deaf children. This could mean arranging play days in the school holidays, and / or taking part in social activities run by organisations like CICS and NDCS. But as the children get older, they tend to take on that 'socialising' more independently – keeping in touch through social media, getting together for birthdays and celebrations, etc.

Two of my favourite events of the year are our Christmas Bazaar and the Summer Fayre – and that is because our alumni use these events to meet up with their 'friends from the nursery'. It's wonderful to be able to catch up on their news and hear about their achievements.

I hope you enjoy reading our Listen! magazine, highlighting the charity's news and achievements. Every day is different and life is never dull ... but we wouldn't have it any other way!

With current challenges faced by people everywhere, we are so grateful to all our supporters for their ongoing commitment to The Elizabeth Foundation. We cannot continue to do our work, improve our services and reach even more beneficiaries, without your never-ending presence in every aspect of our work.

Thank you for always being there for us, as we keep supporting young deaf children and their families.

**Julie Hughes,**  
Chief Executive



Listen! | Spring / Summer 2024

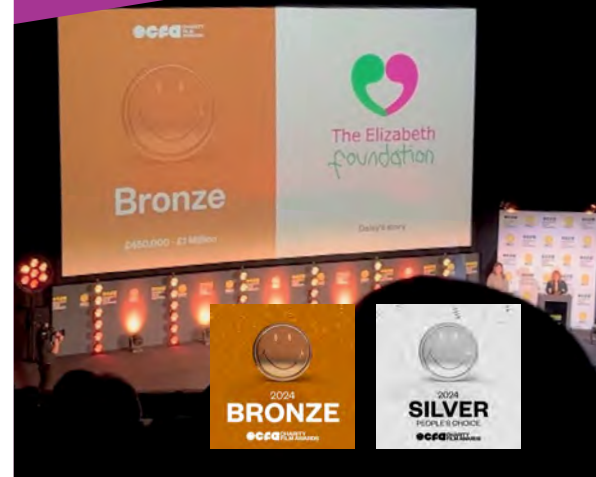
## Daisy's story wins awards

We were absolutely delighted that our 'Daisy's story' film won two awards in the Smiley Charity Film Awards 2024. Known as the 'Charity Oscars', the awards were announced on 20 March 2024 at the Odeon Luxe Leicester Square.

As this was the first time we had ever entered a film, we didn't know what to expect, so we were thrilled when 'Daisy's story' not only won a People's Choice Silver Award in our income category, but also received a Judges' Bronze Award! The film was directed, filmed and edited in-house by Howard Hurd, our Digital Media Manager.

Thank you to the judges and also to everyone who voted for the film – and of course the biggest THANK YOU goes to Daisy – our wonderful star.

If you haven't seen the film, you can watch 'Daisy's story' on our website at [www.bit.ly/daisys-story](http://www.bit.ly/daisys-story) or use this QR code.



## The difference we make

In December 2023, we published our Impact Report 2022-23. Covering the period from August 2022 to July 2023, it encompasses the 2022-23 school year in our nurseries.

You can download the Impact Report 2022-23 from the news section of our website at [www.bit.ly/TEFimpact2023](http://www.bit.ly/TEFimpact2023) or via the QR code.

Alternatively, if you'd like to receive a printed copy please get in touch.



## Tributes

### Ann Rachlin, MBE – President

We were saddened to learn of the passing of our President, Ann Rachlin, MBE.

Ann Rachlin was a British musician and author of children's books. For more than 40 years, she captivated and delighted young minds with her popular 'Fun with Music' sessions, weaving vibrant stories into the music of some of the greatest composers. In 1986, Ann was appointed Member of the Order of the British Empire by Queen Elizabeth II for her services to music and deaf children.

Having previously founded The Beethoven Fund for Deaf Children, Ann was delighted to incorporate the fund with The Elizabeth Foundation in 2003, continuing to share her expertise, passion, and dedication. Ann was President of both charities and devoted herself tirelessly to our mission of helping deaf children learn to listen and talk.

Beyond her official role, Ann remained a constant and inspiring presence, offering her gentle wisdom and thoughtfulness. Her absence leaves a void that will be felt by everyone who knew her, but her legacy will always be remembered.



### Ray Rough – Volunteer

Ray Rough volunteered at The Elizabeth Foundation for over 25 years with his good friend, the late Geoff Boulding. Sadly, Ray passed away at the end of 2023 at the grand age of 97 years.

As a valued volunteer at the charity, Ray didn't mind what job he was given, he was just happy to be a part of our work, chatting with parents and children, and supporting the staff. Ray could usually be found in the front office, cheerfully taking on the role of unofficial 'meeter and greeter'. He helped prepare tombolas for events, organise the art shows we used to run, and administer the 100 and 200 clubs (enthusiastically picking the winners from the hat each month!)

Ray was such a kind and lovely man who always had a twinkle in his eye and a witty line to share. Ray was such a big part of our history, and his kind and gentle presence will be missed by everyone who knew him.



Close friends and much-missed volunteers Geoff Boulding (left) and Ray Rough (right).

## Summer Programme 2024

We are once again offering our Summer Programme in July 2024.

This intensive one-week residential programme is for preschool deaf children aged 3 to 5 years old and their families. It consists of daily sessions for the deaf children, run by our qualified and experienced team, a full range of educational and fun activities for siblings (aged 5 to 11 years), and an informative range of talks, discussions and activities for parents.

Each deaf child also receives individual assessments by a Teacher of the Deaf, Audiologist, Educational Psychologist

and Specialist Speech and Language Therapist. These professionals will each prepare a written report specific to the child, outlining their strengths and needs.

This year's Summer Programme will run from 29 July – 2 August 2024. If you would like more information, please get in touch or visit our website at [www.bit.ly/TEFresidential](http://www.bit.ly/TEFresidential)

**"If someone was to ask me what are the top 10 best things I have done since I found out my daughter is deaf ... this would certainly be high on that list." Parent feedback from the 2023 Summer Programme**

## New resources

### Foundations for communication

'Foundations for communication' is our new series of online resources providing tips, advice and guidance.

Each of the articles looks in detail at a specific topic and enables parents and professionals to support deaf children in developing their listening, speech and language skills.

We have already published three articles on our website: 'Music matters', 'Starting school' and 'Launchpad for language'.

To view the articles, go to our website at [www.bit.ly/TEF-foundations](http://www.bit.ly/TEF-foundations) or use the QR code.



We will publish new articles on our website as they become available.



### British Sign Language (BSL) videos

You can now find videos showing over 130 British Sign Language (BSL) signs on our website for key topic words we use in our preschool classes.

We have recorded these videos as part of our service providing accredited BSL Level 1 sign language instruction to parents with children enrolled in our nursery services.

On our website there are signs for topics including: houses and homes, the farm, all about me, wild animals, Easter, autumn and Christmas.

To see the available BSL signs, go to [www.bit.ly/BSLsigns](http://www.bit.ly/BSLsigns) or use the QR code.



We will be adding more signs for other preschool topics over the coming year – so check our website regularly.



Our nursery services offer each child specialist input to promote his / her language and listening skills, alongside practical advice for parents. We also offer emotional support from our team and other parents. We place the family and their child at the centre of everything we do at The Elizabeth Foundation.

## Providing wraparound care

Our Family Centre in Hampshire ties together early identification of deafness and early intervention services to provide wrap-around care for deaf children and their families.

Local families who come under Portsmouth Hospitals University NHS Trust services, benefit from having their audiology and ENT services on our site for ear moulds, testing and consultations.

Additionally, if a child is referred to the University of Southampton Audiology Implant service, they provide satellite services on-site, allowing for joined up care between the cochlear implant team, audiology services, ENT services and The Elizabeth Foundation support services.

With so many fields of expertise in the building, there are also tremendous opportunities for peer-to-peer training between the staff in different teams.

## Baby groups

Parents can attend our baby group right from the time of identification of deafness, often as young as five weeks old.

The sessions focus on information and support for parents as well as small, natural 'tweaks' to everyday life to encourage their baby's communication development.

Parents report enormous benefit from the support they get from each other in the sessions. They stay with their baby throughout the group, taking part in discussions, language and listening activities, and play times, whilst creating strong support networks and building firm foundations for their child's communication.

## Toddler groups

Our 'little explorers' continue their communication growth and development in the toddler programme.

Each session allows toddlers to investigate their world while also learning to focus and pay attention for longer periods of time, laying strong foundations for language learning.

Parents stay with their child and have group activities with the nursery leader (herself, the mother of a deaf child) and one-to-ones with our speech and language therapists. There is a balance of structured learning and unstructured exploration and play.

And while the toddlers enjoy exploring their world, their parents are becoming more confident with strategies, games and ideas to enhance communication and learning.

## Preschool groups

When children move into our preschool programme, they continue to develop all areas of their communication and learning through the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum. They attend the preschool once or twice per week for a five-hour session, while also attending their local mainstream setting.

Differentiated teaching strategies for deaf children allow them to access sound, embrace hearing technologies, and develop strong spoken language and communication skills.

As well as a balance of structured activities with unstructured learning opportunities, the children benefit from a variety of intervention approaches that are highlighted through observation, and informal and formal assessments.

Our qualified teachers of the deaf, speech and language therapists and specialist nursery assistants work with parents to develop individual learning plans for each child who attends our nursery setting. We have been rated 'Outstanding' by Ofsted for our education programme.

## Speech and language therapy

In our toddler and preschool programmes, each child is supported with one-to-one speech and language therapy input for their communication development.

With a mixture of observation, assessment and therapy, these sessions help to track progress, support development and contribute to each child's individual education programme.

We currently have 'Specialist Accreditation' from Speech and Language UK, their highest level of accreditation for a communication programme.

## Listen groups

Families who attend our monthly Listen groups receive advice, guidance and information about early listening and communication development, as well as practical games and activities that they can do with their baby / child that will support language and learning.

The sessions are engaging, fun and multi-sensory. Learning through music is a central theme, as it is such a natural way to learn and it is fun and motivating for all the family to take part. So, whether we are singing, dancing, listening, or moving – we are learning to listen and forming strong foundation skills for language to build on for future learning.



# Let's Listen and Talk continues to expand

Let's Listen and Talk (available at [www.letslistenandtalk.org](http://www.letslistenandtalk.org)) is a crucial element of the support The Elizabeth Foundation offers to deaf children across the UK, their families and the professionals involved in their care. This online service combined with personal support provides information, advice and tailored guidance to parents, carers and professionals caring for young deaf children from birth to 5 years.

## An increasing impact

Katie Tufnell is Professional Lead for the Let's Listen and Talk programme. Here is Katie's update of the programme's increasing impact:

With the dawn of newborn hearing screening came the early identification of deafness. This has been transformative, resulting in many deaf children having age-appropriate speech and language skills.

The results are staggering but in no way can we or do we overlook the impact this early diagnosis has on families, and the huge undertaking that comes with supporting children with any level of deafness.

Those of us lucky enough to have experienced an uneventful pregnancy will only be transfixed on the arrival date and the planning and preparation needed for life with a small person. We are, therefore, ill prepared for the bombshell when our baby doesn't pass the initial hearing screening test, often only hours after their birth. The euphoric start turns into an emotional rollercoaster and soon a bombardment of information, guidance, advice and a multitude of appointments follows.

Whilst my daughter was not diagnosed at birth (it was not done in her day) she was diagnosed young at 4 months old. I was unprepared for the short term devastation and shock that this caused.

Amongst many of the leaflets we received was that of The Elizabeth Foundation and the services it offered. A visit the following day to the Family Centre and a long-term love affair started which now finds me in my current role leading this incredible online resource, supporting families and professionals up and down the country.

As an online resource, the popularity of the Let's Listen and Talk programme ballooned during the first lockdown, when we were all isolated from each other and our support services. Since then, subscription numbers have continued to grow steadily. At the time of writing, we have more than 1,250 people enrolled – over 750 families and over 500 professionals.

The programme provides resources to help children develop listening, spoken language and communication skills during their crucial preschool years, but who cannot access our face-to-face services at our Family Centre in person.

**"I particularly like the videos that go with the material to show parents ... Explanations are clear and there isn't too much to read. I think the shortness of the activities makes them accessible and realistic to become part of family life."** Specialist Teacher of the Deaf

Let's Listen and Talk enables families of preschool children, and professionals working with them, to access a wealth of information, activities, guidance and games to do with babies, toddlers and preschool children from birth to five.

Let's Listen and Talk highlights good communication strategies that support listening, language and spoken communication which applies to babies as they begin to develop their communication skills. It also focuses on building focus and attention for learning, the importance of visual cues and getting eye contact.

**"This is a great resource with lots of useful ideas and activities ... It is easy to navigate and having the different age ranges helps when looking for appropriate ideas for a particular pupil."**

**Specialist Nursery Support Assistant**

As soon as a family or professional sign up I get notified, and I also get alerted when a lesson has been completed. This enables me to write personally to everyone, offering support and help wherever needed, aided by my experience as a parent of a deaf child (now an independent young adult).

I am not a trained teacher of the deaf or a speech and language therapist, but instead a mum who had to wade through the emotions and learn how best to support my child and where to go for help.

Over my time so far in this role, I have spoken to many families and am passionate to instil the belief that parents can interact and play with their child in the exact same way they imagined they would normally – in fact they MUST. I also emphasise that embarking on the online Let's Listen and Talk programme is not an onerous Open University-style course, but instead 5-10 minute topics enabling busy families to incorporate our activities into day-to-day life whilst enjoying the voyage of discovery that is ... parenthood.

**"The videos are so good – just normal parents doing normal things, which is so valuable for parents to see."**

**Specialist Speech and Language Therapist**

As parents or professionals, we are all working towards one united goal – to support our children and give them the best possible help we can to reach their full potential. Let's Listen and Talk cannot replace face-to-face support, but it can go a long way to providing extra help alongside other things and extend a hug of practical and emotional help to all families of deaf children – wherever they live.

**Katie Tufnell,  
Professional Lead, Let's Listen and Talk**





## Teaching team

"Hi, I'm Vicky and I am one of the newest Preschool Assistants at The Elizabeth Foundation.



"I have lots of previous experience working in primary schools and have a neurodiverse child myself, so have plenty of passion and knowledge in special educational needs.

"I really enjoy working here, it is extremely rewarding and lovely getting to know all the families."

## Speech and language therapy

"Hello we are Kirsty and Anna, the Specialist Speech and Language Therapists (also known as SaLTs) at The Elizabeth Foundation. Kirsty works 2 days, and Anna works 4 days. Kirsty also works at the cochlear implant centre in Southampton the other three days.



"We work with the children in preschool and toddlers, carrying out one-to-one sessions with the children. We help to develop their listening skills, their ability to understand words and sentences, and also how to produce speech sounds.

"We love working with the children and their families to identify how best to support them and develop their speech and language skills, to enable them to make progress. We spend our days playing with the children, chatting and laughing, all in the name of language development!"

## Volunteers

Our wonderful volunteers make such a massive difference in all areas of our work.

We would like to welcome: Lindsey Piasco (featured in our cover photo), a parent of a former pupil, who has joined as a classroom volunteer; Sylvia Wicker, Claire Bonner and Maria Akinmaye who have joined as fundraising and finance volunteers; and Alberto Cuétara who has been helping with IT projects.

We are also delighted to introduce you to Jacob Bavin. Attending The Elizabeth Foundation until he joined school at five years old, Jacob learned to listen and talk at our Hampshire Family Centre.



Now a capable young adult, Jacob is not only busy with his college studies, but is giving back to the charity as a volunteer in our fundraising team!

## Trustees

### Walid Al-Safi

After nearly six years of dedicated service to The Elizabeth Foundation, Walid Al-Safi has decided to formally retire from the Board of Trustees.

Walid was instrumental in the development of and continued partnerships with Audiology, ENT and USAIS. Our wraparound care for deaf children will continue to impact children and families for many years to come, and we are so grateful for the role he played in making this a reality.

Walid's guidance, wisdom and support helped us to navigate the way and we hope to have his continued support more informally for many years to come. He will be very much missed on our Board of Trustees.

## Partnership working

### Research update from Dr Kathryn Mason, UCL:

The Preschool Language and Literacy study based at UCL and City, University of London has been running since 2019. We have been very fortunate to work with the wonderful staff, families and children at The Elizabeth Foundation from the start. They have all played an essential role in our research looking at deaf children's language and emergent literacy in the early years, and we are so happy to continue our work with them.

One of the highlights for us is to be able to visit during the Easter holidays to hold 'mini-reunions' where children taking part in the study (who are now at school) can return and see their friends again. It is always such a pleasure to come back to see how the children have progressed each year.

It has made such a difference to us to be able to see lots of children at the same time and to carry out the assessments in a friendly, relaxed environment. The teachers and staff at The Elizabeth Foundation have also played a very important role in helping to inform our research and their continued input and support is extremely valuable.



### BATOD Magazine article

Julie, our CEO, contributed a 3-page article to the March 2024 issue of BATOD Magazine on "The benefits of a specialist setting whilst learning to listen."

### DELTA presentation

Julie also gave a music presentation for Delta (Deaf Education through Listening and Talking) on "Music matters for deaf children" – part of a series of professional online CPD sessions for qualified teachers of the deaf and other professionals.

# Jack's success story

My third child Jack is the first deaf person I have ever known. His diagnosis was completely unexpected and in the beginning the emotions were overwhelming.

Jack was born with moderate-severe hearing levels and was given hearing aids. Nothing can prepare you for what a challenge hearing aids and a young baby can be!

We first came to The Elizabeth Foundation when Jack was just a few months old and it has been something we have looked forward to every week since.

In the baby group, Jack loved the sensory activities such as drums, chimes and bubbles with a horn. At the same time, I felt supported by Julie and Emma who had so much knowledge, compassion and understanding of everything we were going through.

Being in a room of parents who were on a similar journey felt like I was able to take a breath. I didn't need to explain the ups and downs, the incredible joy of when your child turned to a sound or the tears that came from hearing aids falling off again, they just know and are right there with you.

When Jack was 9 months old, his hearing levels were found to have changed to profound, so we began the journey to cochlear implants. This was no easy route but The Elizabeth Foundation helped us through this journey, teaching us all about the technology, the surgery and rehabilitation.

They also facilitated us meeting children and families who had been exactly where we were.

Shortly after implantation, Jack moved up to toddler group where he thrived and his cheeky character began to emerge. Nicki and Lily were always amazing at fun and exciting activities and songs. Keeping a group of toddlers listening and engaged (particularly Jack) is a sign of their expertise. Being with Jack in toddler group has given me so many fond memories and seeing his communication really emerge with his implants during this time was incredible. From his first babbles to his first words, each small step was celebrated.

When Jack was old enough he was moved into Rachel's preschool class. Jack is a physically active boy and I was worried he would not sit and focus. However, Rachel and Emma have almost magical powers (as well as a huge amount of passion, knowledge and experience) and they have brought out the best in Jack.

His communication skills are amazing and he is absolutely thriving. He talks all the time about the wonderful things he does in the classroom, which is a delight to hear. Being able to observe Jack is such a special part of what the Elizabeth Foundation offers parents, I have on many occasions cried tears of joy at seeing Jack confidently share stories, make people laugh or have a giggle with his friends.

The support network from other parents continues to have a profound impact on me every week and I could not imagine this journey without them.

Jack is developing into a very happy, confident and curious young boy. He is beginning to talk about the fact he is deaf and having deaf peers is such an important part of his life and identity.

You cannot summarise in words what The Elizabeth Foundation is, you have to experience it to truly understand. I encourage all parents of deaf children to be involved in this very special place.

**Kim, mum to Jack**



# Poppy's graduate story

We first featured Poppy's story (as told by her parents) over ten years ago in our Winter 2013 Listen! newsletter. We are absolutely delighted to be able to share with you an update from Poppy, who is now 12 years old and at secondary school. You can still watch the Children in Need film that Poppy mentions on our website at: [www.bit.ly/poppy-video](http://www.bit.ly/poppy-video) or use the QR code below.

## Poppy's update

I was diagnosed as being profoundly deaf when I was just 6 months old. First, they tried hearing aids but they were too weak and I couldn't hear anything. When I was 11 months old, I had a 6 hour operation to be fitted with cochlear implants. I was first able to hear at 12 months.



Fast forward a few years and The Elizabeth Foundation changed my life. The Elizabeth Foundation taught me so much about communication and helped prepare me for school.

The Elizabeth Foundation provided me with so many memories such as the toothbrush train, Christmas parties and support that still benefits me. When I was five, I even starred in a Children in Need film about The Elizabeth Foundation, which helped me to see what I had accomplished.

There is no way I would be where I am without The Elizabeth Foundation's help and support.

Right now, I have gorgeous friends who help me see who I am and they let me be myself, and I hope they can be themselves around me. I have lots of hobbies such as gymnastics, netball and aerial skills.

Sometimes it's hard being deaf, but you need to focus on the positive stuff and I don't let anything hold me back.

**Poppy Perkins**





# Fundraising update

As a much-valued supporter reading this newsletter, we know that you may have been affected by the rising cost of living, just as The Elizabeth Foundation is juggling with rising costs at the same time as increased demand for our charitable services.

We want to thank you for staying with us; your commitment and generosity is hugely appreciated by us all and, as you will have read, continues to make an immensely positive difference to our deaf children and their families.

## Grant funding

Karen Vaughan, BEM, Deputy CEO, writes:

**"As I reflect on the grants we have received this year, I am reminded of how our generous funders help pave the way for transformative change. At The Elizabeth Foundation, grant funding plays a pivotal role in our mission to empower young deaf children and their families as they navigate the journey of learning to listen, talk and communicate effectively.**

**"Over the last 12 months, grant funded projects have included delivery of our face-to-face and online education, communication and welfare programmes, individualised speech and language therapy, British Sign Language (BSL)**

**instruction for parents in our toddler programme, and the much-needed maintenance of our Family Centre and hearing test-centre facilities.**

**"We encourage our funders to visit us to better understand the profound impact of their giving, not simply the immediate benefits experienced by our beneficiaries, but how improved communication skills, enhanced educational opportunities, and strengthened familial bonds have a positive ripple effect that extend far beyond our setting. By supporting early intervention together, we help to reduce the support needed by our beneficiaries in the future and simultaneously meet the evolving needs of the wider community, creating a brighter and more inclusive future for generations to come.**

**"Our sincere thanks to all our funders in this period who include: The National Lottery, Ovingdean Hall Foundation, Generation Foundation, AT & T, Kindersley Foundation, Chloe and Sophie's Special Ears Fund (CSSEF), Hays Travel, Hewer Charitable Trust, The Thomas Curtis Charitable Trust, James Wise Charitable Trust, Schroder Charitable Trust, The Mikado Trust, Churchill Foundation, GJW Turner Trust, EF and MG Hall Charitable Trust, Peter Harrison Foundation, The Nagle Family Foundation."**

## Legacies

Even a small gift to The Elizabeth Foundation in your will can help to build a long-term future for deaf children and their families, so please do get in touch if you would like to receive an information pack. You can read more on our website or download our legacies information at [www.bit.ly/TEFlegacies](http://www.bit.ly/TEFlegacies)



## Write your will for free!

We have partnered with award-winning company Farewill to offer a free will writing service for our supporters.

You can quickly and easily write your own will online by following these 3 simple steps:

1. Think about the loved ones and causes you care about.
2. Go to our free will-writing page on Farewill's website.
3. Write your free will online – in as little as 30 minutes.



Find out more at [www.farewill.com/elizabeth-foundation](http://www.farewill.com/elizabeth-foundation)

# Super-supporters!

We are so lucky that so many fantastic fundraisers have taken on a wonderful range of activities and extreme challenges to raise money for The Elizabeth Foundation over the last year. Here are just a few highlights:

## Having a Ball

We are still on cloud nine after the enchanting evening we shared at the Masquerade Ball in November 2023.

From the glimmering gowns to the dashing suits, from the fantastic Rock Choir to Masquerade Mickey, together we partied the night away and raised an incredible £8,935!



## Hitting the right note

A delightful time was had by all at the West Meon Music Festival in September 2023. Featuring the Primrose Piano Quartet and guests, attendees enjoyed stunning classical performances in a number of beautiful venues around West Meon in Hampshire's glorious countryside. A fantastic total of £568 was collected in buckets throughout the festival!

## Remembering that festive feeling

We're still thinking back to winter last year when things got festive at The Elizabeth Foundation.

We started with our Christmas Bazaar at the beginning of December. There were stalls, games, character meet and greets, a visit from Father Christmas, mince pies and hot chocolate, helping us raise over £3,275. We then ended the week with our first ever special Christmas Quiz Night raising £921! This was such a fabulous way to kick off our festive period here at our Family Centre.

## Pounding the pavements

11 people stepped up to join The Elizabeth Foundation team for the Great South Run in October 2023. They were six supporters, two past parents, two past pupils and a younger sibling, including past pupil, Daniel, and mum, Hannah (pictured). Between them all, they raised a staggering £2,444!



# Super-supporters! Continued...



Mel's Milers 10k Run

## Achieving a milestone

Jess, current mum to one of our preschoolers, took on Mel's Milers 10k run in March 2024, raising an incredible £2,674!

Jess said, **"When Willow first started at The Elizabeth foundation in September, she had no words at all and didn't really even try to speak. Now she can say her name, count to five, say her please and thank yous, and finally say Mummy and Daddy, something I never thought I would hear ... It has changed my daughter's life completely, and so many others that attend."**

## Celebrating in style

To celebrate their one-year anniversary, Secret Alley, which serves authentic Indian cuisine to the people of Cosham and beyond, chose to fundraise while dishing up some incredible food. After the successful evening they presented The Elizabeth Foundation with a cheque for an astonishing £1,700!



## Finding the answers

Thank you to everyone who has attended our increasingly popular Quiz Nights.

Our last Quiz Night in March raised an amazing £965. This support will help us to continue our vital work.

Fifteen teams pitted their skills against each another, but there was one clear winner – congratulations to the 'Hoof Hearted' team (below).

A huge thank you to Equans at QA Hospital for providing a selection of sandwiches and goodies to keep our teams energy up!



## Strumming along

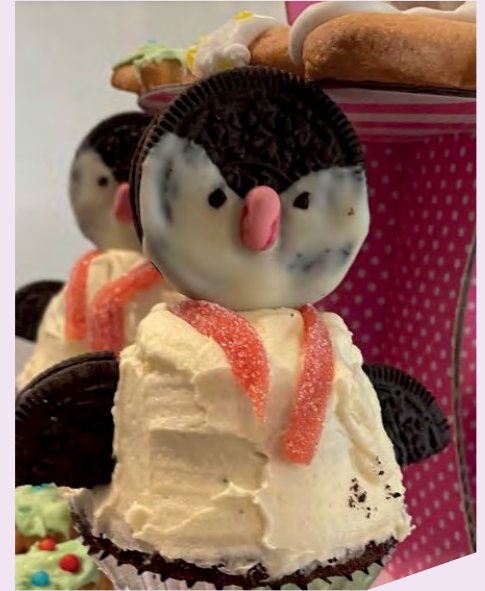
The Wacky Wednesday Ukelele Band have continued their support of The Elizabeth Foundation by raising a wonderful £479 during their community concerts throughout 2023.

They have also helped us at many Summer Fayres by entertaining our attendees with their jolly performances.

## Serving up a treat

In November 2023, our Fundraising Administrator, Kat, and our Toddler Leader, Nicki, visited West Hill Park School in Fareham to take an assembly on deafness and the work of The Elizabeth Foundation.

The children very much enjoyed the interactive presentation and asked lots of wonderful questions. They then decided to hold a Christmas jumper day and bake sale in aid of The Elizabeth Foundation, and raised £402!



## Reaching new heights

Past parent Ingrid took on the dizzying heights of Portsmouth's iconic Spinnaker Tower. She abseiled down all 100m of it in aid of The Elizabeth Foundation, and on her birthday no less!

Ingrid raised a fantastic £1,055 to say thank you for the help and support her children have received while attending our services.





## Making a splash

On Saturday 16 March 2024, four sensational swimmers took on a sponsored swim at the Oasis Centre next to The Elizabeth Foundation.

Each participant set their own distance target, with a couple choosing to keep swimming once they had reached it!

The total raised so far is £1,660 and counting!



## Putting on a show

The brilliant Broadside Mumpers once again hit the road over Christmas and New Year, to fundraise in aid of The Elizabeth Foundation, entertaining the clientele of pubs in and around Portsmouth.

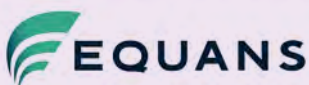
We are so grateful for the support of the Mumpers, the drivers of the minibus, the publicans who welcomed them and all the generous customers who donated.

The grand total raised was £2,855, adding to the astounding amount of £45,000 that the Broadside Mumpers have raised for The Elizabeth Foundation over the last 30 years!



## Caring for communities

As well as providing refreshments for our quiz nights, Equans gave us a donation of £1,000 in 2023.



Local passenger ferry company Wightlink have continued providing generous support towards the transport costs of families from the Isle of Wight travelling to our Family Centre in Hampshire.



## Events during 2024

We have a wonderful line-up of fabulous fundraising events and exciting challenges during the rest of 2024.

Fundraising events in **purple**, challenge events in **green**. For more details about any of these events, go to the Events section of our website at [www.bit.ly/TEFEvents](http://www.bit.ly/TEFEvents)

### Quiz night

**Thursday 20 June 2024**

Join us for an evening of quizzical fun. Tickets are just £10 per person or £40 per table of 4. Snacks provided, bring your own bottle / drinks and enjoy this fun evening with friends.

### Gears for Ears

**Saturday 6 July 2024 (start)**

Our parent-organised charity bike ride 'Gears for Ears' is back and open for entries! The challenge will take place over the weekend of the 6-7 July 2024 and finish to a hero's welcome at the Summer Fayre. The route will be the 60-mile 'Round the Island' route on the Isle of Wight, it will require a basic level of fitness, a road bike in good condition and a sense of humour!

### Summer Fayre

**Sunday 7 July 2024**

Join us at our Summer Fayre from 11am – 1pm at our Family Centre in Cosham. We will have lots of fun-filled activities for all the family.

### Hadrian's Wall Challenge\*

**Friday 12 July 2024 (start)**

This exciting and strenuous marathon distance challenge of 26 miles will have you trekking along this stunning world-famous historic landscape. Hadrian's Wall runs across the north of the UK from coast to coast and remains one of the largest ancient monuments in Northern Europe. You will trek in the footsteps of the Roman Empire and take in some of this extraordinary structure that protected the Roman armies from the Scots.

Duration: 2 days | Location: UK  
Challenge level: Tough

### Giant's Causeway trek\*

**Friday 19 July 2024 (start)**

A tough 1-day challenge trekking a marathon distance along the dramatic coastline of this UNESCO World Heritage Site, the Giant's Causeway Challenge is not for the fainthearted! With the nature of the undulating terrain, you will climb over 1,000m as you explore the stunning Northern Ireland coast.

Duration: 3 days (1 day walking)

Location: UK | Challenge level: Tough

### National Three Peaks Challenge\*

**Friday 30 August 2024 (start)**

Brace yourself for a fast-paced and physically-challenging adventure, as you take on the three highest peaks in England, Scotland and Wales. Considered one of Britain's toughest outdoor challenges, the National 3 Peaks Challenge takes in the dizzy heights of Ben Nevis (1,344m), Scafell Pike (978m) and Snowdon (1,085m) and your challenge is to do all this in 24 hours!

Duration: 3 days | Location: UK

Challenge level: Tough







Mount Everest

## Machu Picchu Trek\*

Friday September 20 2024 (start)

The lost city of Machu Picchu, one of the UNESCO World Heritage Sites, is simply breath-taking. This rewarding challenge follows the spectacular and uncrowded Ancascocha trail, surrounded by snow-capped Andean mountains, raging rivers and remote mountain communities.

Duration: 10 days | Location: Peru  
Challenge level: Tough

## Great South Run weekend

Saturday 19 Oct 2024 (Mini and 5K)

Sunday 20 Oct 2024 (10 mile)

Join our team of runners and register now to take part in the Great South Run weekend to support of the work of The Elizabeth Foundation.

Taking part on a flat course around Portsmouth and Southsea, this popular 10-mile challenge takes place on Sunday 20 October 2024.

For a slightly less strenuous option, on Saturday 19 October 2024 there is the Mini South Run for children and also the Great South 5K.



## Quiz Night

Thursday 24 October 2024

7pm for 7.30pm start. £40 for a team of four, including snacks. Bring your own drink. Medals (and the opportunity to gloat!) for the winners!

## Everest Base Camp\*

Thursday 31 October 2024 (start)

The summit of Mount Everest offers the perfect backdrop for this trek of a lifetime. Starting in Lukla, your route will take you through Sherpa villages, past beautiful monasteries and over jaw-dropping suspension bridges until you reach the base camp of the world's highest mountain. You'll have the option to wonder at the scenery below the highest point of Kala Patthar, before celebrating in mystical Kathmandu.

Duration: 18 days | Location: Nepal  
Challenge level: Extreme

## Christmas Bazaar

Sunday 1 December 2024

Join us from 11am – 1pm for some fantastic festive fun. Stalls, gifts, raffle, bottle tombola, Santa's grotto, mince pies, arts and crafts and much more here at our Family Centre.

## Quiz Night

Thursday 5 December 2024

Join us for our special Christmas-themed quiz. 7pm for 7.30pm start. £40 for a team of four, including snacks. Bring your own drink.

## Portsmouth Coastal Waterside Marathon

Sunday 22 December 2024

The Portsmouth Coastal Waterside Marathon takes place on a challenging but stunning route. Starting and finishing along Southsea seafront, it takes runners around in the entirety of Langstone Harbour. There is also a festive half marathon of 13 miles.

We are looking for experienced runners to take on this challenge! Contact our fundraising team for details.

## 100 and 200 Clubs

We have spaces in our 100 Club and 200 Club prize draw lotteries.

### 100 Club

For just £2 a month you could be in with a chance of winning:

- monthly prizes of £50
- £100 in February
- £200 in January
- £300 in December!

### 200 Club

£10 per month enters you into our 200 Club draw:

- monthly prizes of £200
- £2,000 in November
- £7,000 in March!

**Congratulations to our winning numbers below.** To find out more about the 100 Club and 200 Club please contact us or visit [www.bit.ly/TEFlottery](http://www.bit.ly/TEFlottery)

Month	100	200	Month	100	200
Apr 23	58	9	Oct 23	91	169
May 23	85	193	Nov 23	42	137
Jun 23	19	68	Dec 23	91	100
Jul 23	5	81	Jan 24	67	35
Aug 23	76	184	Feb 24	66	110
Sep 23	80	2	Mar 24	23	118



The Elizabeth  
Foundation

To donate or support our work  
please visit our website:  
[www.elizabeth-foundation.org](http://www.elizabeth-foundation.org)



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

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company limited by guarantee, No. 1960980,  
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as above.

\*Please note: these challenges are operated exclusively by Charity Challenge (company no. 03686692, ATOL 6546) in order to raise funds for The Elizabeth Foundation. The charity is acting as an agent for Charity Challenge and has no involvement or responsibility whatsoever for their operation.