Submission from Fiona Kane

I am a parent of a child who has a hearing impairment and can only hear through the use of a Bone Anchored Hearing Aid. Please find the following points/suggestions with regards to the inquiry on "Attainment of School pupils with sensory impairment".

• Individual Education Plans for each individual sensory impaired child, targeting and tracking their educational needs, requirements and developments. Thus pinpointing where the additional support is required, (i.e. identifying the Childs strengths and weakness). These should be tailored to the individual and not generic and have parental involvement.

• Better individual support mechanisms put in place, so children do not feel isolated i.e. more active guidance roll.

• Education for all teachers, for their development and ensure that they have a degree of understanding of the challenges faced by sensory impaired child in a classroom environment. Also highlighting the impact a sensory impairment has on simple every day tasks, which people with no impairment take for granted.

• The realisation that if the child is not engaging in class, then the reality is they do not feel they are being engaged with. Education for teachers on how they should be supporting sensory impaired children in the classroom environment, therefore ensuring the individual child can feel part of the class.

• Education for pupils the no sensory impairment on challenges faced by their class mates who have sensory impairments.

• More direct involvement of deaf centres and audiology departments in schools.

• More sensory impairment specific teachers, who have more time to work with the individual child on a one to one basis, although sensory impaired children “cope” in a mainstream classroom environment they still require one on one help and support to back up and affirm what is being taught in the class.

• I think a better understanding for all on how children cope in a classroom environment and education is key, if we do not understand the challenges faced by the individual child then how can we ensure the correct help and positive influences are being applied.

• Schools should speak to the parents, be proactive and contact the parent with progress updates and ask the parents to step in a help with additional support. If the parents are not aware their child is failing then what can they do to help, get them involved before the child fails.

Kind Regards & Good Luck

Mrs Fiona Kane