

## Submission from Debbie Aitken

As a deaf teacher of the Deaf, I have to express my horror at the news that Education is not going to be included in the BSL Scotland Bill. There are many issues that affect the Deaf community- access to services, Education, care facilities etc etc. I feel very strongly that ALL issues must be considered on the BSL Bill. There are many, many issues within the education of the deaf alone that need to be addressed by the government as a matter of urgency. It is all linked together..... Poor education = difficult future prospects = difficulty obtaining jobs, difficulties accessing services! difficulties with numerous issues. A large part of the problem in my view is that people who are tasked with making decisions which affect the deaf community, often have no real understanding of what it is like to be deaf, and the actual barriers that deaf people face everyday in a society . The government need to start listening, I mean REALLY listening to deaf people. In terms of education, the government need to listen not just to deaf people's experiences but also to deaf teachers who have been through teacher training and who know where the many difficulties lie. There is a small handful of deaf teachers in Scotland, perhaps the government would like to set up a meeting with deaf teachers, and allow us to give you a valuable insight into what really needs to change. You cannot just have a narrow view on the BSL Scotland Bill, it needs to include ALL areas that affect the deaf population of all ages.