



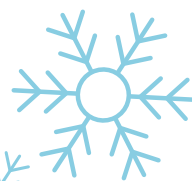
12 Days of Christmas

Ark Start John Archer Nursery

Ark Start John Archer is a new nursery 6 minutes walk from Clapham Junction train station. It was set up by a group of qualified teachers who are committed to making sure that every child has a joyful, engaging and secure nursery experience.

Our nursery is about much more than childcare. Our expert staff have created a nursery where children can play, learn and have fun together. Ark Start John Archer is also a place where families can come together, share their experiences

and build support networks. This week the children have been making their very own salt dough winter decorations and ornaments to take home. Children demonstrated a range of skills across the EYFS areas of learning as they mixed, kneaded and rolled out the dough, all the time having lovely conversations about all things winter. Just one of the many activities planned to celebrate the winter season!
www.arkstart.org.uk



Bridge Lane Nursery

This December, the children at Bridge Lane Nursery have been super busy getting all excited and prepared for Christmas. As well as the young ones' yoga and Stretch and Grow exercise classes, the children have been impressing everyone in their music sessions with their singing and dancing along to their favourite Christmas songs. Every child has been taking part in showing off their unique creative skills as they have been sticking and gluing to produce a wonderful array of decorations to hang on the tree. But sssshhhh! ... There has also been a surprise visit from Father Christmas! What a treat! But of course, this is because all the children at Bridge Lane Nursery are on the good list this year.

www.bridgelanenursery.com

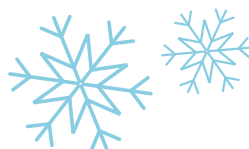


Bright Horizons Northcote Road Day Nursery and Preschool

These are some of the learning experiences that the children have been doing throughout the month of December. The babies have been using both gross and fine motor skills to create this wonderful artwork. Lots of critical thinking has been involved and problem solving. The Children have had a wonderful time creating these.

Have a wonderful bubbly Christmas and Happy New Year. Preschool have been exploring arctic animals and making their own Christmas trees using different materials and tools. They are very excited about Christmas!

www.brighthorizons.co.uk



Wings of Independence

Encouraging children to become more resilient

Do you ever wonder what kind of adult your child will become? Many believe that independence is the greatest gift you can give your child so you may imagine your offspring becoming resilient, self-sufficient, confident and as someone who does their own washing! Hold that image in your head. Now think of three things that will really help to get your primary aged child on the path to independence right now! Here are my thoughts on what might help shape your child as they develop and grow:

1. Start early with the independence training:

aim to foster problem solving skills early and make them practical. By early, I mean from Reception; yes, honestly, it is possible. In my experience, those parents who get their child to pack and unpack their bag independently already get a head start with being independent. Get them to help create a home timetable of what needs to be remembered and what has to be done on each day, and what kit is required. Help them to refer to it regularly. There needs to be plenty of trust in your child, but keep picturing the independent adult you are striving to create! Extend this with simple chores that can be done at home and to promote responsibility – picking up clothes from the floor, putting toys away, getting dressed and putting their own shoes on: these all help. There will be moments of ‘failing’, and you too are part of the independence learning



and a period of just going with them rather than giving up. Remember, none of us were born being independent, they are things we have learned.

2. Give your child strategies to cope when things don't go to plan:

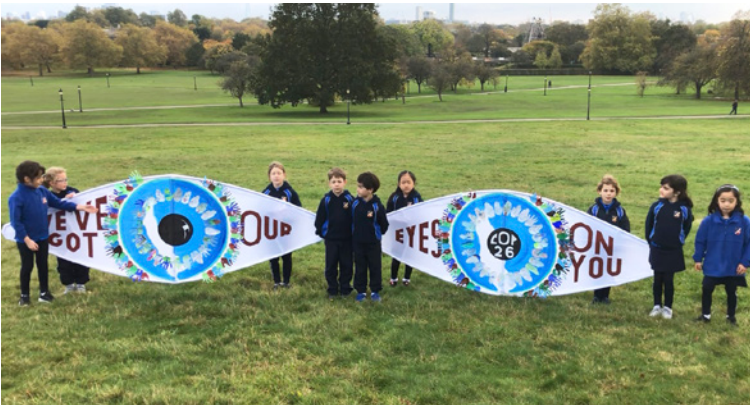
there will be ‘oh no’ moments where kit is forgotten and the wrong items are taken into school. These moments are really important. If you are a parent who rescues and ‘saves’ your child from ‘failure’ then please think carefully about what you are teaching them. This fosters dependency and not independence. Keep that image of your adult offspring in your head and see these ‘mini failures’ as learning opportunities for them to grow their resilience and responsibility.

We have all heard and read so much about helping our children be resilient but how far have you actually gone to help develop this attribute? Do you knowingly let your child ‘fail’ in a safe space? Do you ever let them forget their gym kit? Give it a go and I promise that your child will learn so much more than where the spare kit is kept at school! At Churcher's College Junior School, we are great believers of the acronym FAIL – First Attempt In Learning and even at Churcher's College Nursery, we encourage children to put their coats on and zip them up independently. If you keep helicoptering in to save the day, then they learn nothing!

3. Give them a toolkit and directory of who can help when they are young:

linked to the development of resilience, cast your mind back to your first professional failure; perhaps you were late for work, you fell out with a work colleague or you did not get promoted. How did you deal with this? With mental health issues in young people at a high (1 in 10), let's tackle this together, parents





What will the world look like when I grow up?

The Eyes on You Campaign

In the weeks leading up to the COP26 conference, we, the children and staff at Saint Christina's, decided that we would like to do something to tell world leaders how much the issue of climate change matters to us.

We took CAFOD's 'Eyes On You' campaign as our inspiration and decided to make two enormous eyes. Everything included within the design was put there for a reason: the blue representing the sea and the sky, the brown the earth, and the green, life in all its many forms. The irises were created to echo images that we have all seen of our beautiful blue planet in space, conveying the message that its conservation is our number one priority. Handprints in the three colours were made by the children and placed around the eye in a gesture of 'open-handed' appeal: that we would like humanity's 'common good' to be at the heart of decisions being made by leaders both at the conference.

The making of the 'Eyes' was a real expression of the whole of the School community with the site manager constructing the frames, the canvas being stitched by the nuns in the adjoining Convent, the handprints and artwork being produced by the children and members of staff, and a member of the office team videoing and editing the final message. The aim of the project has been multi-layered. The first lesson has been to show that it is possible to speak up on causes that we are passionate about. It has also been a lesson in how we can all come together on something that matters to us. We can do that within our community or we can do it in an inter-generational way – good for cohesion and wellbeing at a time when we all need this.

Our video message has been an attempt to remind leaders that there should be a recognition that the climate crisis is about the very life and survival of

our richly endowed and unique world. We wanted to challenge them to think about the decisions they are making in a very human and personal way: "Think of me as your grandfather ... your mother ... your son ... Think of me as your grandchild: what will the world look like when I grow up?"

The state of the environment is not something that the children need any urging to take a view on; there is a generation of young people coming through who simply despair of their elders.

As a small Catholic Prep School we have been giving a lot of thought to the 'big job' that we have been given as stewards of the beautiful world we live in. We know that different leaders will have different beliefs and come at the issue from a number of different angles, but we also know that whatever those beliefs and angles are, this is the only world that we have to inhabit.

CLICK HERE TO WATCH THE VIDEO

BY ALASAIR GLOAG, HEADMASTER

www.saintchristinas.org.uk



TURN TO P17 to read about the children's work on climate change at Swaffield Primary School



Saint Christina's
School



*Co-educational prep school for
boys & girls aged 3 - 11*

**Spring Open
Morning**

Thursday 24th March 2022

St John's Wood, London
www.saintchristinas.org.uk



How can we help prevent Climate Change?

A young girl's perspective

COP26.... hundreds of world leaders, the great and the good, gathered in Glasgow, Scotland to discuss the single most important issue of our time. But did they actually achieve anything, or was it a 'cop-out' or as Greta says, just more "Blah blah blah!"? While the global elite bicker in self-interest, it is clear that we cannot leave it up to them alone to fix our problems.

So what can we do? What difference can we make as individuals in the face of these overwhelming challenges? What changes can we make in our behaviour?

Here are some simple things we can do in our homes and in our lives to do our bit:

- Make a conscious effort to consume less meat and dairy produce. Cattle require massive resources to raise and maintain, as the land needed for grazing results in deforestation. In addition, cows are a huge source of methane, a major greenhouse gas.
- Consume less energy at home. When you leave a room, remember to turn the lights off – don't waste electricity! Doing laundry is another

major source of energy consumption in the home. A standard washing machine cycle is 30 minutes, using 250 watts of energy. But even worse, a dryer utilises up to 1500 watts in 30 minutes. Air dry your clothes to help save our planet!

- Walk or cycle to school, or work instead of driving. The more we can limit individual car usage, the more chance we have of reducing our reliance on fossil fuels.
- We have to reduce our consumption of single-use plastics. Stop using disposable bags, cling film and wet wipes. Switch to washable cloths, and metal straws, for example.
- Buy fewer clothes – many modern materials contain microplastics that break down and pollute our oceans and soils. Instead, reuse yours or your parents' old clothes. Vintage clothes are cool!

Ultimately, it is our generation that will inherit this planet. It is our responsibility to spread the word - many people just don't take climate change seriously enough. We can use media such as music or art to help raise awareness.

To watch something I made earlier to let people know that our world is on fire...

[CLICK HERE](#)

Little things can make a difference, and we all need to do our part: it is our world after all. We might each be a snowflake, but together we can start an avalanche...

BY ANIKA DUTTA (AGE 10)

[TURN TO P42](#) to read about the response to COP26 at Bristol University

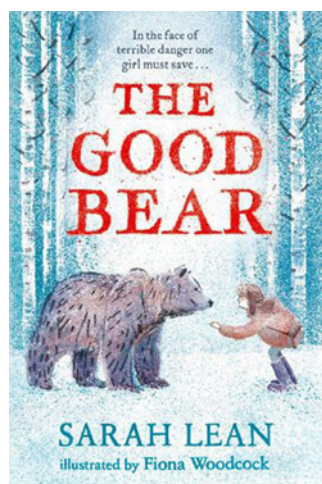


Self-Belief

Overcoming the monster

I used a childhood experience as a springboard to write a story called *The Good Bear*. The part about asking for a typewriter and the disappointment at receiving a pair of wellies instead is true. For the child in the story her particular challenges are imagined, but also true in their own way. Like us, all characters experience difficulties and jeopardy that serve to thwart or inspire them.

Children are encouraged to read books for many reasons, not only to disappear into another world and stand in another's shoes. Stories mimic life, from



the conflicts and unexpected gifts to the tests and triumphs. As well as external 'monsters', represented by things such as orphanages, villains, bullies or bears, it is also the character's inner doubts and struggles that need overcoming too. A belief in ourselves, as far as I can see, is about recognising our skills and flaws, even through stories, seeing possibility and learning to keep going. One day we will find ourselves telling our own story of overcoming those monsters.

The book is dedicated to my mother because of the disappointment she saw in me when I opened that box of wellies. But she now knows it was overcoming my own lack of self-belief that mattered, not the typewriter.

THE GOOD BEAR by Sarah Lean is out now
(Paperback, Simon & Schuster Children's Books)
www.sarahlean.co.uk



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EDUCATION CHOICES PODCAST
INTERVIEW WITH

Marvyn Harrison

Marvyn Harrison, founder of Dope Black Dads and BELOVD, talks about his experience as a father and his work as a diversity and inclusion champion

Dope Black Dads started as a closed WhatsApp group between a handful of fathers in 2018 and has grown across social media and the web, hosting live events (with a Webby Award-winning podcast) and has now become a series of communities. There are more than 250,000 members across the UK, US and South Africa. This is an incredible achievement!

What inspired you to set up Dope Black Dads?

The inspiration for starting was really being challenged by the idea of male parenting. Parenting is probably the only place which is heavily female normative and so the male perspective is relatively unknown and untapped in terms of what kind of things you can do as a parent. I've had some terrible experiences going to baby groups, dealing with the NHS at times or medical professionals, where I'm almost ignored and erased. I always wanted to be this amazing father.

There have been a lot of fear driven boundaries historically, but I wanted to have this really beautiful relationship with my children, so when I had my second child, and I felt I was finding it difficult to connect with her, it really, really impacted me. So, I just wanted to talk to other dads about it really. I think that being Black fathers, knowing the historic and cultural pressures as well as the fatherhood stuff really, really mattered. We just started having really important conversations that I had never had before, even with people who I had known for many years. We had this really beautiful beginning.

Following this, we then told our stories of our experiences, openly acknowledging the challenges we have in parenting. What that's then created has meant that more dads are talking about this thing which we are all going through around the world, every man has the possibility of being a dad, and you have to understand it before you start it, and if you have already started a family you want to know how to keep your relationships with your children pure and supportive.

How did it begin?

The first thing was when we moved from a Whatsapp group of 33 people to a Podcast. We were discussing things that even I didn't understand and nobody else understood. As a result, we wanted to talk about these topics at length. We created the Podcast quite early on after about 3 months. Essentially, it was just a conversation, there was no fancy music with transitions it was more like:

"I think that confidence in parenting for dads is low. It's not a place where they feel powerful: it's a place where they're constantly second guessing themselves; there is a slight imposter syndrome."





EDUCATION CHOICES PODCAST

INTERVIEW WITH AUTHOR:

Simon James Green

You are obviously a very successful and popular UK author with your publications receiving a huge amount of recognition. You have been shortlisted for the Blue Peter Book Awards 2021, featured in Book Trust's Great Books Guide 2021, nominated for Carnegie Medal 2020 and so many more! But what made you start writing in the first place?

For me, it all started at school. My favourite part of English lessons at school was when we were asked to write our own stories. I really enjoyed the process of coming up with characters, thinking of a plot and writing it all down. It's something which I have loved since primary school all the way through secondary school. I loved it, but never thought it was a sensible career choice, even now. In many ways, it seems completely ridiculous, it feels like the stupidest career choice you can imagine! I think that it was always in my blood, it just took me a while to get the courage to pursue it as an actual career.

You have taken on the huge but incredible responsibility of being one of the UK's leading writers of LGBTQ+ teen fiction. What inspired you to start writing about LGBTQ+ topics? And particularly for teens and young adults?

Well, for me, when I was at school in the 1990s, Section 28 was enforced at the time, which was that piece of legislation by the Conservative government at the time, which had the effect, basically, of effectively banning LGBTQ+ books from the school libraries. *So, when I was growing up there was nothing in the school library that had LGBTQ+ characters or storylines within it.* That was still

enforced in schools until 2004, and so something which I was really keen to do was to try and address that and I wanted to try to be one of those people who try to get these LGBTQ+ books into schools, as I think that it is really important for them to be in there. But also, at the time that I started writing, there were quite a few US books that were dealing with LGBTQ+ characters and storylines, but there were far fewer ones set in the UK and in British secondary schools.

I was really keen that we had some books out there that were a happy and positive representation of what it was like growing up as a gay kid today in secondary school. That was really important to me. I loved the idea of writing something funny and bringing out the awkward humour of it. *It was really important to me as I felt strongly that it shouldn't just be tragedy, angst and homophobia.* Unfortunately, all of those things are still prevalent and do happen, but there is another side to the story as well, and I feel that it is really important that that side of the story is told, I think.



What is really exciting is that you have a new book called *Sleepover Takeover* being published on the 6th January 2022. Can you tell us a little bit more about it?

In *Sleepover Takeover* you'll meet 11 year old Otis. He's a classic kind of underdog kid in Year 6, you know, he's only really got one friend, and out of the blue he gets an invitation to the birthday party of the century from classmate Rocco Rococo, who is this rich kid who has the best birthday parties which take place in this massive marquee in his gardens. He's got everything in there: ten pin bowling, a video arcade, all sorts of

Shining a Light

Diversity in Children's Literature

It was November 2017 when my employer at the time shared with members of staff a company who were offering our school an exclusive promotion for purchases from their Christmas catalogue. The English teacher (and bargain hunter) in me saw this as a perfect opportunity to purchase some books for my nieces and nephews for their Christmas presents... because books are great presents for kids, I promise! Even if they don't realise this when they first open them and they are overcome with sadness that Auntie Sarah bought them books yet again instead of the toys they had asked for, causing them to cry in protest, unapologetically throwing the collection to the ground because they read enough books at school. Honestly, children are the cutest, most precious souls!... However, whilst searching this catalogue's book section, I could not find a single book that included a character who was black or belonged to an ethnic minority. I decided to search on some of the major book retailers' websites and had a similar problem; the options were limited. This led me to reflect on the books I read as a child and although I still love so many of them (*We're Going on a Bear Hunt* still lives in my mind rent free)! They did not reflect me or the multicultural society I was raised in.

This inspired me to write a book myself. A book that I wanted my nieces and nephews to be inspired by. A book with a message that I believe all children should learn at a young age. A book I wish I had when I was a child, and one month later, *Shine* was born. *Shine* tells the story of a young boy whose confidence is lowered when he is teased for being different. However, with the help of his parents, he realises that the things that make him different are the things that make him special. He makes the decision to use his unique qualities to 'shine his light'.

The response to *Shine* has been overwhelming. It is currently being read in primary schools across the country to help teach children about



bullying, self-confidence and celebrating diversity. It has also inspired me to write more and last year, I released my second book: a novella for teenagers entitled *Breeze*.

As I reflect on the last three years, I am hopeful. The diversity in children's literature is steadily increasing. Schools and media outlets are making a conscious effort to promote diverse literature amongst children, with books reflecting diversity in race, religion and disability. It's amazing to see and I'm a tad bit proud that I have made my small contribution to this change.



SARAH ASUQUO

www.instagram.com/sarahasuquo/?hl=en

What are schools here for?

St Edward's School stresses the importance of wellbeing when supporting students

The values, attitudes and attributes we are now embedding into our curricular and co-curricular life are enabling our students, we hope, to become self-aware, adaptable, collaborative, resilient and intellectually curious. So, what a good school needs to do is support its students, ensuring they get into the right patterns of organisation, independent and critical thinking, as well as being reflective on all aspects of their lives. But we need to not only be thinking about the content that needs to be covered, but also the conditions in which staff and students teach and learn. This revolves around our environment, the relationships we have, the culture and values of a school and, of course: wellbeing.

Wellbeing refers to many things, but at its core it



is about purpose, belonging and a sense of self and hope. Martin Seligman's PERMA theory of wellbeing outlines those things that allow us to live well: Positive Emotions, Engagement in a task, Relationships, Meaning and Accomplishments.

So, we can draw together learning and wellbeing and argue that they are integrated seamlessly. COVID-19 has been much mentioned as causing many concerns in areas such as education, isolation, financial distress and mental wellbeing. The issue of mental and physical health has always been on the radar in schools, but the last 18 months have brought it front and centre for us all. And, if the last 18 months have taught us anything, it is the relational, social and community value of schools and classrooms. We are now experiencing the best parental attendance at our sports fixtures and coffee mornings, and the greatest number of clubs and societies being attended by our students, as well as the number of activities offered by our staff increasing.

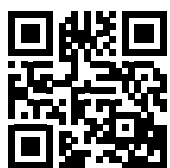
Those of us who have been involved in education for some time already knew about the interconnected nature of wellness, resilience and connection to the world, but now when we talk about being well, we are talking not only about physical, mental and emotional wellness, but also learning, success and fulfillment. It is time to no longer think of learning and wellbeing as separate because they are both so clearly linked.

.....
MATTHEW BURKE, PRINCIPAL
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**VISITOR
MORNINGS**



The Wellington College Competition for Chemistry has been launched!

Naomi and Ollie discuss the motivation behind their competition and some tips for success

Earlier this month, I had the pleasure of speaking to two Sixth Form students from Wellington College: Naomi Tengn and Ollie Tomlino. Currently both preparing for their A Levels this Summer, Naomi and Ollie have also made a bold decision to create a national Chemistry competition referred to as The Wellington College Competition for Chemistry.

The competition is open to students across the country who are in Years 11 and 12 (ages 15 to 17 years old) and wish to further their passion and curiosity for Chemistry.

The essay competition requires applicants to write 2000 words from a choice of the following two questions:

1. How has chemistry helped the way in which we have combated the Covid-19 pandemic?

2. What is chemistry's most significant role in fighting climate change?

Naomi and Ollie recognise that despite Chemistry being known as the 'central science', it is often taught to students within a classroom context in comparison to other STEM subjects that are applied more generously to real-life events and scenarios. Similarly, they believe that the fundamental role Chemistry plays in day-to-day problems is often underrepresented and overlooked by the media or the government and its politicians.

As a consequence, Ollie reflects that *"often the younger generations don't understand how important and fundamental Chemistry is within problem-solving throughout the world."*

In asking



applicants to discuss these questions, Naomi and Ollie's goal is to introduce students to a side of Chemistry that exists outside of the school textbook and school curriculum; to raise awareness of Chemistry when applied to contemporary issues.

Although focusing on the two key issues of climate change and Covid-19, especially with the new Omicron variant, the questions are designed to give enough scope for individual creativity and exploration of such subjects.

Consequently, Ollie and Naomi hope to receive submissions that are innovative in their arguments, yet substantiated in scientific articles and scholarly work (some recommendations being JSTOR and Google Scholar). They stress that it is not supposed to be a case study of current or previous scientific work, but that it is a rare opportunity for students to conduct independent research and take a particular perspective or approach to a problem that they are passionate about, and is original to them.

To this degree, Naomi and Ollie note that the Chemistry behind your answer does not have to be perfectly accurate! As markers of the competition, both Wellington College pupils have also expressed a desire to learn from the essays.

The best to impress Naomi, Ollie and their team, is given the chance to undergo work experience in a lab at Leicester University: an opportunity that is extremely valuable and hard to find amidst a global pandemic.

So, go on!

Deadline: Monday 3 January 2022, 11:59pm. **Email submissions** to: chemistrycompetition@wellingtoncollege.org.uk



TURN TO P43 to read about SOAS and their contribution to COP26

World changers

Bristol students headed to COP26 climate conference



Carlos Shanks, left, and Emily Muir

University of Bristol students at COP26 stated that the conference was “one of the very last chances” to avert a climate disaster. Forty-five Bristol students were in Glasgow for the global event, where world leaders thrashed out solutions to the climate crisis from October 31 to November 12. The students took part in events, shared ideas and joined others in calling for change.

Six of the students received funding to stay in Glasgow all week, where they communicated their experience to the world through blogs, videos, photos and articles. The other 39 were given free travel to the event.

Carlos Shanks, a third year biology student and President of the Bristol University Sustainability Team, stated: “It is now or never. We young people have created incredible momentum. I have met world leaders at COY16 [the youth equivalent of COP26] and COP26 so far, and they provide my last spring of hope for the future. We

have come together from all parts of the world and, unlike global leaders, we are joining forces to tackle the biggest hazard facing our world: climate change. I see COP26 as one of the very last chances we have to stop our world’s turning point. **Are we going to let people in 2050 say that we failed?”**

Funding for the six students came from Cabot Institute for the Environment and the University’s generous alumni community. Bristol SU paid for the students’ bus travel.

Emily Muir, a third year geography student, stated: “At COP26, we are aiming to have our voices heard, as well as hearing and acting on the voices of those heavily affected by climate change yet have been systemically and historically ignored, such as indigenous communities. The People’s Summit for Climate Justice is working to organise system change together, this presents an alternative to COP negotiations which can be unfairly

handled by corporations with outside interests.”

Claire Adamson, who is studying for a Masters in Law stated: “Climate change has been talked about heavily since Greta Thunberg’s infectious determination spread around the world a few years ago. Now, though, COP26 must be about action. **Finding bold and innovative solutions for businesses, governments and consumers to enforce at all levels to mitigate a worldwide, irrevocable disaster is now the focus.**

There are a growing number of environmental activists worldwide, which is brilliant, but it isn’t enough to talk about all things climate change as fascinating as it is.”

The Cabot Institute is a community of 600 experts, united by a common cause: protecting the environment and identifying ways of living better with a changing planet.

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www.bristol.ac.uk

Myths and misconceptions surround deafness

What's the real story?

On the day you read this, three children will be born deaf. Three more will enter the world hearing, but then go deaf during childhood. In addition, for every six babies delivered today, one will go deaf or live with a hearing loss in adulthood. Deafness is quite rare in children, but it affects a sixth of the adult population. It's also widely misunderstood.

We certainly found this when we surveyed adults across Britain. One in five thought most deaf children go to deaf schools – the real number is 3%. Over a third said hearing aids would help deaf children to hear as well as hearing children, but in reality no technology can 'fix' deafness and many would still need ongoing support.

More troubling was that over a third said there were 'lots of jobs' you can't do if you're deaf, when in fact it's just a handful.

Around 15% said deaf children were less intelligent and would never be allowed to drive.

Neither is true.

Countless parents tell us their deaf child is underestimated. Many don't get the support they need at school, which is why they achieve a grade less than hearing children at GCSE. They frequently miss out on career advice, or it's delivered in a way that's completely inaccessible for them. Bluntly put, deaf children are often held back by the limited aspirations others hold for them.

Clearly, this must change and we've been lobbying the Government for years to put more support in place. We also have a national campaign, Deaf Works Everywhere, to raise aspirations for deaf young people and get more of them into the careers they want.

Now most people can't single-handedly persuade the Government to open its chequebook, just like we can't. But everyone can help with something else.

Parents also tell us that their



LIZ HENSON

deaf child gets left out, leaving them isolated and lonely because of a lack of deaf awareness. Deaf children are just the same as hearing children – curious, enthusiastic, eager to be involved and keen to make friends.

So here are some deaf awareness tips for the next time you meet a deaf child. A full list is on our website, but if everyone remembers at least these three, it'll make a big difference.

- 1. Ask them how they communicate – deaf children communicate in different ways. They know what works for them and taking the time to ask will mean a lot.**
- 2. Face them whenever you're talking – almost all deaf children rely on lip reading and facial expressions.**
- 3. Never say "It doesn't matter!" or "I'll tell you later" – if it was worth saying, they want to hear it too. Take the time to make sure they're included.**

.....
ROSIE EGGLESTON, Participation Manager at the National Deaf Children's Society

www.ndcs.org.uk



TURN TO P20 to read about Marvyn Harrison and a father's perspective



PAUL TANNER