**To do’s / not do’s when working with SEN/D individuals particular those who are Hard of Hearing**

Generally speaking, when working with these young individuals you would aim to:

* Speak clearly and with appropriate language that is easily understandable.
* Always be facing those that you are working with when giving verbal direction. This allows the individual to lip read if necessary.
* Those with different levels of hearing will hear different things easier than others. Be conscious of this and always ask questions to ensure they are in a space that works well for them and their needs.
* Never be afraid to ask a question access related. Much better to get it right rather than wrong!
* If you know any BSL / Makaton, whether that be numbers, letters or basic greetings, these are always welcomed in such spaces and provide another communication method to support.
* An individual may have more than one access need beyond what we are aware of. This is normally the case, especially so with young people. Where possible speaking clearly, with language that is relatable is always a good approach. Be kind and check in with all young people in the room to ensure they are okay, enjoying the workshop and have all the support they need.
* Be prepared to repeat instructions, sometimes with the need to simplify.
* Be careful not to mumble, cover your mouth or speak too fast. Speaking at a regulated slightly slower pace helps everyone understand better any instruction.
* If an individual communicates with sign language primarily and you don’t, be sure to speak at a slower pace in front of their interpreter, allowing plenty of time for the information to be relayed.
* Get the attention of deaf students before you start to speak. This could be by flashing a light, tapping the desk, waving etc
* It is acceptable in deaf culture to gently tap on a student's shoulder to get their attention.
* Consider using pen and paper to communicate
* Ensure that there is adequate lighting in a room for ease of communication. Avoid strong lighting (such as a window) behind you if you are speaking as this makes lip reading more difficult.
* When working with BSL interpreters it is important to note that they are language professionals with their own set of regulations and ethics - they are there to facilitate communication and are impartial.