LET'S HEAR IT!

NEWSLETTER OF
DORSET DEAF CHILDREN'S SOCIETY
AUTUMN 2026

Dorset Deaf Children's Society

FAMILY FUN DAY AND HOG ROAST 2026!

We had an amazing day on Sunday 28th June! We held our annual Family Fun Day Hog Roast and BBQ at The Orangery Suite, Merley, Wimborne. This is one of our most popular events and it did not disappoint. The sun was shining and thankfully it was not too hot especially after the extreme heat we had all experienced during the week. With such wonderful weather all the families were able to relax and enjoy the day whilst the children played and had fun!



The Orangery is such a great venue for our Fun Day with games and activities such as Mini Golf, Badminton, Beach Volley Ball, Basketball, Table Tennis, Giant Chess, Football Table, Climbing Net and a giant Connect Four. We also hired the very popular inflatables which this year were Vertical Drop Slide, an Assault Course and Dino Bounce & Slide. For the smaller children we had an area of soft play and of course face painting from Jo and Julie.









Jamie Jigsaw joined us this year to entertain everyone greeting the families on his stilts, and then circus trick workshops and his show. We had some excellent food from Ben and his team from Hog Roast and BBQ and ice creams and ice lollies from Big Chief Ices. Deb Fullbrook from Hearing Dogs for the Deaf also brought along Shadow and Elmo to meet the children.

We were also joined this year by Advisory Teachers Ken Tucker, Ursula Murley, Sam Bealing, Melissa May, Jemma O'Rourke and Teresa McCabe from the Hearing Support Service. It was great to see them all and they were able to chat to parents. We had three volunteers from Audiology to help supervise the inflatables. Thank you to Lara Goodwin, Careen Gould and Emma Dixon.









We have to give a massive **THANK YOU** to the **FISHER CHARITABLE TRUST** who gave us an amazing grant of £4000 to fund this event. Without their help this year we may not have been able to have our Fun Day. This event is so important for the families and children to meet each other, exchange stories, get support and help and also have a day of fun. Thank you so much for supporting us!

It was a great family day with loads of fun!

National Deaf Children's Society

Hi,
I'm Amy Perry

I am your community connector for the National Deaf Children's Society in Dorset.



I'm here for you – offering support, sharing my experience, and helping you access local resources and services, including those from the National Deaf Children's Society, while also connecting you with other parents and deaf children in your community.

As a parent of a deaf child, I know how important it is to have the right support and people around you.

Our connection is on your terms – at your pace, in the way that works best for you. Whenever you need support, I'm here, and I look forward to connecting with you.

Email address:
amy.perry@ndcs.org.uk

Phone number:
07483 917780





Complete our contact form and your local community connector will get in touch to discuss how they can support you.

DDCS GRANTS

DDCS has funds available for grants and will consider contributing towards our member's costs or partial costs for deaf related equipment, activities or learning.

We regularly contribute towards signing classes and provide literature to support signing. We also provide specialist alarm clocks for children to become more independent at getting up in the morning!

We may also be able to offer grants in certain circumstances for financial support with a deaf related project.

Please contact us in writing or by emailing info@dorsetdcs.co.uk with details of what you are asking for, how it will help your child and the costs. Please give as much information as possible.

Each case is considered on its individual merits.



Would you like to be more involved with your Society and maybe join the Trustees? We have a great team but we need some more help. Don't be put off by thinking it would be too much work, everyone does whatever they can commit to and we always have fun!
We usually have about six meetings a year and you always get a cup of tea and biscuits or cake!

CAN YOU HELP DDCS?

We are appealing for help from anyone who might be able to do some fundraising for us.

This summer our funds decreased and we were very lucky to be able to receive a grant from the Fisher Charitable Trust for £4000 to fund our Family Fun Day and Hog Roast. Without the grant the Fun Day might not have taken place.

There are many ways you can fundraise to help us. A sponsored run or event, car boot sale, cake sale, donations instead of gifts for a birthday or anniversary, a raffle at work, quiz night, bingo evening or a school mufti day. These are just a few suggestions.

Why not give it a go!

DO YOU HAVE AN EXPERIENCE YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE WITH OTHER FAMILIES?

We are always looking for articles for our newsletters. It really helps to read what other families have experienced, or maybe you just have a story to share?
Please contact Shirley on 01202 571089
We would love to hear from you!

NDCS HELP LINE

If you need any help and advice about DLA claims or education for your child please call the NDCS help line 0808 800 8880 or Email: helpline@ndcs.org.uk

BH Coastal LOTTERY

Support DDCS by buying a lottery ticket from BH Coastal Lottery, If you buy a £1 ticket, 50p goes directly to DDCS!

There is a one in fifty chance of winning each week (that's better odds than the National Lottery and People's Lottery) and the top prize is £25,000!

So if you want to get lucky and also support Dorset DCS then please log on to: www.bhcoastallottery.co.uk

Select buy tickets and then select Dorset Deaf Children's Society.

Thank you!

HELP AND CONTACTS

CHAIRMAN – Kevin Forbes, Hamilton Court House, 1-3 Alum Chine Road, Westbourne, Bournemouth, Dorset, BH4 8DT 01202 769890

VICE-CHAIRPERSON, TREASURER & MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY - Shirley Sorbie, Touchwood, 9 Oakland Walk, West Parley, Ferndown, Dorset, BH22 8PF 01202 571089

SECRETARY – Julie Hansford, 34 Fernside Avenue, Poole, Dorset, BH14 0PN 07973 737687

Website – www.dorsetdcs.co.uk E-mail – info@dorsetdcs.co.uk

NDCS FREEPHONE HELPLINE 0808 800 8880 (voice & text)



For more information, news, pictures and future events please visit our website.
www.dorsetdcs.co.uk

THE JENNY BARRETT DEAF CHILD ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS 2026

Every year, at our AGM, we present the Jenny Barrett Deaf Child Achievement Awards. The awards set out to reward achievements of children with a hearing loss and they are split into two categories, the junior category which is for eleven years and under and the senior category which is for twelve years to seventeen years old. In 2026 there were a total of fourteen children nominated.

The winners were announced at our AGM held on Saturday 10th October 2026 at Bournemouth Deaf Club. The awards were presented by Robin Barrett and the two overall age group winners received shields, certificates and cheques for £100 each. The winner in the junior category was **JACK PILGRIM** and the winner in the senior category was **OWEN BRAY**. All other nominees received £20 vouchers and certificates.



Jack Pilgrim
Junior Winner



Owen Bray
Senior Winner

SENIOR NOMINEES

Please note that the nominations below are a short summary and only a part of the nomination as the nominations can include confidential and personal information.

Owen Bray was nominated by Dawn Wrench, Advisory Teacher Hearing Support Service for his resilience, attainment and extraordinary positive attitude to all aspects of learning and for being selected as Deputy Head Boy at his school. To be selected as Deputy Head Boy is an extraordinary achievement and great honour. He is a great ambassador and support to his SMT Teachers and he met with prospective parents and pupils for school tours. He was selected by school SMT to be in the Bournemouth Echo school photo in the Summer Term 2026. He has also achieved outstanding academic results for all of his Year 10 GCSE mock examinations. He has also studied for his GCSE Spanish examinations in his own time and achieved an excellent mock examination result. This reflects his above and beyond commitment to his academic studies. He has also had to adjust throughout his Year 10 and into his current year 11, attending numerous additional medical hospital appointments to check his right ear for recurrent painful ear infections, with regular suction and assessments by medical consultants. He may possibly require future surgery. He has taken all this in his stride and even though it has been challenging he has responded positively, without complaint and with good humour. He is inspirational, thoughtful to others and extraordinary in every way.

Dominic Dziubinski was nominated by Sam Bealing, Advisory Teacher Hearing Support Service for the amazing progress he has made, for his increased confidence and raising deaf awareness in his school and being a fantastic role model. He has made significant progress with his language skills and has persevered to improve his levels and knowledge and in the last two school years he has made three and half years' worth of progress, which is a huge achievement and demonstrates how hard he has worked. He has been keen to learn BSL. He has much more recognition and confidence in his own abilities. He has worked hard to understand his deafness and share this with other students and adults, In the summer term he lead an assembly for Deaf Awareness Week where he planned, prepared and delivered the assembly to his entire year group explaining about deafness and teaching some BSL signs. He is growing into a delightful person, polite, keen to chat and is willing to work hard.

Frazer Kellaway was nominated by Jamie Bartlett, Advisory Teacher Hearing Support Service for the determination and perseverance he has shown in managing his hearing loss. Over time he has tried several different types of hearing aid fitting, moving from standard ear moulds to skeleton ear moulds, and more recently to hearing aids with a thin wire and a soft dome in his ear. Getting used to new equipment and different sensations can be really difficult, but Frazer has kept trying to find something that works for him. He finds school challenging, and wearing his hearing aids regularly has not always been easy. Even though he has really struggled at times, he has not given up. He continues to try, even when progress feels slow or things do not go as smoothly as he would like. He also finds audiology appointments quite anxiety provoking, but he keeps attending and working through them. This takes a lot of courage, especially when appointments can involve tests that he feels uncomfortable with. His resilience and willingness to keep going make him a very deserving nominee for this award.



JUNIOR NOMINEES

Please note that the nominations below are a short summary and only a part of the nomination as the nominations can include confidential and personal information.

Ebony Barnes was nominated by Sarah Joyce, Advisory Teacher Hearing Support Service for the progress she has made with learning BSL. Ebony cannot speak. She has only been learning BSL for 18 months and she is now able to communicate more effectively and is less frustrated. She has surprised us all at her willingness to learn and the progress she has made has been fantastic.

Barney Bell was nominated by Dawn Wrench, Advisory Teacher Hearing Support Service for his excellent ability to explain his hearing loss, how his aid helps him and why. He has become more resilient and independent and is able to articulate how wearing his hearing aid in school helps him. This is a huge personal achievement and he helped to deliver a joint INSET to his new Year 6 class teacher and TA. He has also impressed with his commitment to his Park Runs. He has raised money for charities with his runs demonstrating thought, care and. He is an excellent role model.

Mila Harvey was nominated by Teresa McCabe, Advisory Teacher Hearing Support Service. Two years ago Mila would completely refuse to wear her aid for any length of time. Over the past two years she has shown immense perseverance and determination. She pushed through her initial resistance gradually increasing the time she wore her aid. She has worked so hard to develop her listening and attention skills. Her dedication meant that she didn't just learn to tolerate her hearing aid – she learned to thrive with it. Where communication was once a hurdle, Mila developed the confidence to express herself and clearly advocate to adults whenever she had an issue. This September she has transitioned to 'big school'. Today she is a proud, self-assured little girl who actively advocates for her own hearing needs.

Fraser Perry was nominated by his parents Amy and David Perry for his outstanding self-advocacy and the peer support he has provided despite being only six years old. Prior to school he was a shy boy who found it difficult to speak to unfamiliar adults. Over the past few years he has become increasingly confident and now advocates for himself at school. He has developed a very positive deaf identity at school. Most impressive was the kindness and support he showed to another child at school when she was fitted with a hearing aid. Her mother said he was a tremendous source of encouragement to her daughter. He has shown great maturity, confidence and empathy for his age by advocating for his own needs and helping another child. He has become a positive role model.

Kelsey Picket was nominated by her father, Matthew Pickett for continuing to grow in confidence, independence and determination and overcome obstacles and challenge herself in many different areas. She completed her Audiology Curriculum and achieved Bronze and Silver Audiology awards. She is starring in Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat with Phoenix Musical Theatre. She has been selected by her trampoline class to begin training to represent the Seaside Squad in competitions. She has also competed in her Gym Stars Gymnastics competition where she achieved third place in vault. One of her biggest achievements was having the confidence to cycle to and from school showing maturity and independence.

Jack Pilgrim had two nominations. He was nominated by Sarah Stobart, Advisory Teacher Hearing Support Service and his mother Natalie Pilgrim. He has been nominated for his determination, perseverance, resilience and positive attitude. He was diagnosed whilst he was at preschool and underwent surgery for cochlear implants at the age of 4. At the start of school he had only a few clear words. As his speech and understanding of language developed his confidence grew. His teachers constantly remark upon his friendliness, caring attitude and willingness to give everything a good try. He has made fantastic progress since the early days but his educational journey has not been easy. As well as coping with the challenges of being profoundly deaf he also has dyslexia. However despite these difficulties he has always worked hard, done his absolute best to achieve and has overcome many hurdles. Last year he took his Year 6 SATS and achieved almost full marks in the arithmetic paper.
Jack looks out for others and helping out with anything for neighbours and friends. His greatest achievement is getting into Mary Hare School for the deaf. He was very excited when he found out he had been accepted but it soon became an emotional rollercoaster. He had never been away from family for more than one night but his bravery and determination has shone through. His teachers and care workers all say how good he is with looking after and helping others who are also away from home, dealing with loneliness.

Reuben Sewell was nominated by Sarah Joiner, Advisory Teacher Hearing Support Service. Reuben has had such a positive start to his first year at school. He can find transition to new places unsettling but he has really thrived in his new school. He engages with every aspect of school life and tries his best in everything he does. He is the most amazing, friendly and kind pupil and it is lovely to see him grow in confidence and really shine.

Jesse Smith was nominated by Sarah Joiner, Advisory Teacher Hearing Support Service. In the autumn term 2025, Jesse was fitted with two processors at the Auditory Implant Centre. Ever since, he has been implanted, he has done so well at school. His developing listening skills have been excellent and he has engaged with many activities to support this. He has achieved so much in the last academic year, learning to listen again through his new processors as well as being fully involved in school life despite many challenges. He has achieved so much in such a short time.

Amy Toms was nominated by Sarah Joiner, Advisory Teacher Hearing Support Service for making such a great start to her first year in school. She has been able to advocate for her needs and will inform teaching staff when her BAHA is not working or has run out of batteries. She has grown into a caring, sociable and incredibly kind pupil and it has been lovely to see her grow in so much confidence.

Charlie Toogood was nominated by Caroline Wood, former headteacher, family friend and current tutor for his kindness and compassion. He has faced significant challenges throughout his schooling. He finds reading, writing and mathematics particularly challenging. He never complains or uses his difficulties as an excuse. He is gentle, compassionate and accepting of other people. He is curious about the world and is passionately interested in history and science. There is a thoughtfulness and sensitivity to him that cannot be measured in a test or captured in a school report. What is admired most is that the difficulties he has experienced has never diminished his enthusiasm, curiosity for compassion for other people. His achievements are found in the challenges he has overcome, the determination that he continues to show and his curiosity about the world and the way he treats other people.

Maggie Withey has been nominated by Dawn Wrench, Advisory Teacher Hearing Support Service for her excellent ability to explain her specific hearing loss, her new audiological equipment, and support that helps her and why. Also for successfully trialling a BCHA (USAIS) and all the travel that entailed to Southampton; and persevering, with chronic ear infections and pain. Throughout such external medical circumstances, coupled with daily oral/aural fatigue and physical fatigue and pain management she maintained at all times a "joie de vivre", kindness to her peers, and politeness to all staff; and positive approach and application to all her academic studies and extra curriculum activities. She was congratulated for being articulate explaining to her new Year 6 teacher and TA during a bespoke INSET delivery on how her new MEDEL Adhear Sound Processors work. She is an excellent role model.

HAPPY RETIREMENT



At the end of the summer term Ursula Murley retired from the Hearing Support Service. Ursula qualified as a teacher of the deaf in 1991 and after working in Somerset she joined the Dorset Hearing Support Service 26 years ago.

She became Principal Advisory Teacher for the Hearing Support Service and led the team with enthusiasm and professionalism for several years and made a real difference to the lives of deaf young people. Whilst working as an advisory teacher, she specialised in working with deaf children who had complex needs as well as supporting their families. She also managed training and resources to provide British Sign Language for those who needed it.

As well as working for HSS she volunteered and became a Trustee of DDCS from 2007 until 2012. During this time she spearheaded the first ever DDCS PGL residential activity weekend for children with a hearing loss aged 10 – 18 years old. Her contribution to DDCS was invaluable. For a long time, she was the 'bridge' between Dorset Council's Hearing Support Service and the Dorset Deaf Children's Society, forging powerful and beneficial links to support deaf children which continue to this day.

Ursula was also the chair of the Dorset Children's Hearing Services Working Group (CHSWG). This group meets twice yearly bringing together all the charities and services that work with deaf children (including NHS, Local Authority, local and national charities) to ensure a joined-up approach to supporting deaf young people and promoting the best possible outcomes for them. Ursula's depth of knowledge of special educational needs generally, and deaf education in particular and her sincere dedication to improving the lives of Dorset children over a long and impactful career will be missed by all of the Hearing Support team and also DDCS.

We wish Ursula a long, happy, healthy and well deserved retirement. She will be missed!

DISCOUNT CARDS

Have a look on the DDCS website News and Information page for information on Cinema discount cards, Rail discount cards and free Bus passes.

www.dorsetdcs.co.uk

THANK YOU TO SWANAGE CARNIVAL AND CUMULUS OUTDOORS

Swanage Carnival have again awarded us with a donation of £2000!

Thank you to Sam Thompson for nominating us and all the Cumulus Outdoors staff who took part in the parade supporting us.
Thank you to Swanage Carnival for choosing us as one of their charities again this year!
This was a fantastic donation and is much appreciated!





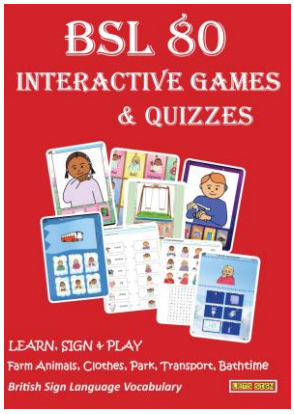
Sam, Yasmin, Obi and Iris were part of the carnival procession.



The Fisher Charitable Trust once again came to our aid this summer. They gave us an amazing £4000 donation to fund our Family Fun Day and Hog Roast & BBQ! We cannot thank them enough as this year it meant without their donation we may not have been able to hold this popular event.

BSL 80 INTERACTIVE GAMES & QUIZZES LEARN SIGN & PLAY

Farm Animals, Clothes, Park, Transport, Bath time



An innovative inclusive resource that all children and adults can access to learn British Sign Language (BSL) basics in a fun and interactive way - with a range of formats to develop skills - sign vocabulary, word recognition and spelling. Signs, descriptions, words and pictures with the unique added value of QR links to 80 wonderful interactive activities that you will want to play again and again

Available from Let's Sign or Amazon