

# LET'S HEAR IT!

NEWSLETTER OF  
DORSET DEAF CHILDREN'S SOCIETY  
AUTUMN 2023



## WE ARE BACK! PGL OSMINGTON BAY ACTIVITY WEEKEND

The PGL Osmington Activity weekend has always been one of our most costly events, hence that is why it is usually biannual. It started out with the children and young people attending on their own without parents or siblings and it was a great disappointment that these weekends came to an end as we would need to be Ofsted registered to take the children away without parent/carers. We then asked PGL if we could have a family weekend where the parents are responsible for their children and they said yes!

This is our seventh visit to PGL Osmington and our third family weekend. Unfortunately there has been a 5 year gap since our last visit. We were due to go in 2020 but it had to be cancelled because of COVID. Then this weekend was in doubt when we found out that Osmington was not doing family weekends anymore, just schools, Cubs, Brownie groups, etc. The centres that could have families were not feasible for us due to travelling time to the centres. So we then asked PGL if all our parents are DBS checked could we attend and they said yes. It was a bit of a daunting challenge to get done but we did it! Big shout out and thank you to Katie Bray our Safeguarding Officer for all her work in getting this done!



**With all the checks completed on Friday 14<sup>th</sup> July 2023, fifty four members travelled to PGL for a fun packed weekend!**

The weather on Friday was dreadful, torrential rain most of the day but luckily by the time families arrived late afternoon it stopped raining (although Shirley did get pretty soaked during the day setting up for the weekend ☺). We all met Isabella our PGL 'Buddy' who would be with us for the weekend and once everyone had moved into their rooms we had a quick fire drill and then into the evening meal. Everyone then went back to the Beach House for the evening entertainment of Balloon Splash, which comprised of team challenges and races to earn equipment to build a carrier to protect a water balloon. This was a great ice breaker and loads of fun. Especially the lost shoes! ☺

Saturday morning and everyone was up early ready for the great breakfast which set everyone up for the day's activities. Our group was split into five activity groups and over the weekend they took part in Climbing, Zip Wire, Giant Swing, Abseiling, Aeroball, Archery and Buggy Building. The weather was not ideal as it was extremely windy and being on the cliff tops for the activities was a challenge but everyone carried on and had a great time. It was wonderful to see everyone working together and some overcoming and conquering fears but most of all having fun! After the evening meal it was then time for the evening entertainment 'Passport to the World'. The children were put into teams by Isabella and had great fun running all over the site to answer questions; goodness knows where they got the energy from as it was very competitive and fast! Parents relaxed by the accommodation and some very brave parents joined in the game. Afterwards we adjourned to the bar and the children played pool, darts and played football in the activity hall. Everyone eventually went to bed to get some sleep ready for the next day.



Waking up on Sunday morning the weather was not as windy as the day before and after a hearty breakfast it was time for the activities. The timetable over the two days allowed for every activity group to do all seven activities. At the end of the day it was time for a quick get together in the Beach House for everyone to say goodbye, have the evening meal and return some very tired children/young people (and parents) home!

This weekend again exceeded all expectations and more! To see all the children making friends and having so much fun and the parents making friends and really enjoying themselves as a family and getting the chance to bond with other families was brilliant. Some parents came on their own with their hearing impaired child and were anxious about how it would be, but were soon at ease and making friends.

**It was a very special weekend!**

For more pictures please go to our website [www.dorsetdcs.co.uk](http://www.dorsetdcs.co.uk)



### Some comments from the families:

"Great visit – loved having the chance to meet other deaf children and parents of deaf children. It's always really lovely to connect with other families and create a great community. Kids all had a great time and nice for the adults to have fun and act like kids too. Organisation of this year's event was immaculate.

"We have had the best time. Lovely bonding with my son that was amazing making memories"

"It's been the best weekend. Lovely memories made, new friends and so lovely for the kids to play, try new activities and build confidence in such an amazing setting! Shirley thank you for what you do for us all. It's such an amazing charity that supports us all.

"What an amazing weekend! My son and I had the best time! We loved it. Thanks to DDCS. My son made loads of friends and we don't want to leave. You do amazing – we love you!!!!"

"We had a fantastic 1st time at PGL, thanks for being so welcoming. A massive shout out to Shirley for organising such a great weekend and for all that you do for DDCS, we appreciate it all so much"

## Welcome back Sam!

Hello, I'm Sam Bealing and I've just joined the Hearing Support Service – for the second time! As some of you may remember, I previously worked there as a Teacher of the Deaf from 2002 and then as Educational Audiologist from 2009. More recently I spent nearly 8 years working at the University of Southampton Auditory Implant Service with children and families who have cochlear implants, bone conduction aids and as part of the Auditory Processing Disorder team.



However, I decided that my time driving on the M27 had run its course, and it was time to return to sunny Dorset. Having started out almost 30 years ago as a primary school teacher, it's great to be back where my journey in deaf education began, working with the wonderful team of dedicated teachers and technicians, and of course the fabulous DDCS. I hope to meet many of you soon, both new families and some I have known for a long time!

## DDCS FACEBOOK GROUPS

DDCS has a public Facebook page which we would love all our families and their relatives, friends, work colleagues and in fact anyone who is interested to follow us as this helps raise awareness of our charity.

We also have a private members Facebook group, only for our members. The Parent Forum group is private so that parents can keep in touch with each other, ask for advice or get information. If you wish to join this group just send a request to [info@dorsetdcs.co.uk](mailto:info@dorsetdcs.co.uk)



**Some members follow the public page but are not in the Parent Forum group and vice versa. Please join both.**

If you would like to join the groups they are easy to find just type "Dorset Deaf Children's Society" and "Dorset Deaf Children's Society Parents Forum" into your search bar.



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.bhcoastalottery.co.uk](http://www.bhcoastalottery.co.uk)

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

Thank 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 provided 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](mailto: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.**

## 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!



**If you would like to make an online donation or fundraiser for us with a sponsored event please go to our website [www.dorsetdcs.co.uk](http://www.dorsetdcs.co.uk) for details on how to do this.**



## What is the Buzz?



It's the only website for deaf young people aged 8 to 18 in the UK. This safe, online space, created by deaf young people, is entirely theirs. They can read inspiring stories, connect with other deaf young people, find the latest information and support, sign up to events, ask questions and get involved.

Explore the Buzz now!

For advice and answers to your questions, email NDCS at [youngmember@ndcs.org.uk](mailto:youngmember@ndcs.org.uk) (monitored 9 to 5pm weekdays).

If you're 18+, check out the great websites for information on college, work, mental health, money and more!

[www.ndcsbuzz.org.uk](http://www.ndcsbuzz.org.uk)

## NDCS HELP LINE

Do you need help and advice about DLA claims or education for your child? If so please ring the NDCS help line number 0808 800 8880 or Email [helpline@ndcs.org.uk](mailto:helpline@ndcs.org.uk)

## HELP AND CONTACTS

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

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

Website – [www.dorsetdcs.co.uk](http://www.dorsetdcs.co.uk)

E-mail – [info@dorsetdcs.co.uk](mailto: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](http://www.dorsetdcs.co.uk)



# THE JENNY BARRETT DEAF CHILD ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS 2023

Every year, at our AGM, we present the Jenny Barrett Deaf Child Achievement Awards. The awards set out to reward achievements of hearing impaired children 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 and above. In 2023 there were a total of sixteen children nominated.

The winners were announced at our AGM held on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> October 2023 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. **FINN TRUEIECK** was the winner in the senior category and the winner in the junior category was **BEN STAGG**. All other nominees received £20 vouchers and certificates.



**Ben Stagg**  
Junior Winner



**Finn Trueieck**  
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, HSS Advisory Teacher, for his excellent, mature and enthusiastic start to transition to secondary school. He achieved excellent end of year exam results, culminating in him being placed in top sets for Year 8. He has been a support/greet for a new HSS student, which reflects his empathy as a role model. His ability to encompass change, develop strategies to access the school curriculum is highly commended.

**XAVIER GOLECKI** was nominated by Dawn Wrench, HSS Advisory Teacher, for his all-round brilliance in accepting and being willing to offer a day and be an outstanding ambassador at the HSS annual activity day. He is acknowledged for being a kind, enthusiastic, warm and inclusive role model. He is also praised for his successful transition to secondary school.

**BAILEY HEAD** was nominated by Michelle Christopher, HSS Advisory Teacher. He has always been a fantastic hearing aid wearer and role model. He has a brilliant 'can do' attitude and always tries his best. His hearing is gradually deteriorating and he recently made the very mature decision to refer himself for an assessment for cochlear implants. He has completed his silver Duke of Edinburgh award, is active in the Sea Cadets. For his D of E award he completed an expedition with a unit of sea cadets he had not worked with before, showing courage and focus. He has worked hard at school attaining a silver award. He volunteers every week at Weymouth and Junior Parkrun. He also won joint first as part of a team in the Jurassic league gig rowing

**RIVAH OZMOND** was nominated by Dawn Wrench, HSS Advisory Teacher, and her father James Ozmond for her attitude to overcoming adversity and demonstrating resilience. Also for her all-round enthusiasm in being an outstanding ambassador at the HSS annual activity day. She is wonderfully supportive, kind enthusiastic, inclusive role model. She was diagnosed with Cholesteatoma in her left ear but her operation did not go to plan which resulted in more operations. Due to this trauma medical appointments were traumatic resulting in panic attacks. After therapy she was able to have an operation which was not successful but she was then able to wear hearing aids. She took all this in her stride and helped others with hearing loss. She is a member of a football team, is doing well at school, started to learn sign and attends a TV and film group SWISH not letting her hearing loss stop her.

**POPPY PERKINS** was nominated by Dawn Wrench, HSS Advisory Teacher, for her excellent positive start to secondary school. She has excelled in all aspects of the academic curriculum culminating in being awarded the 'Subject Science Award and Special Parry Cup'. She is a primary link ambassador to welcome and facilitate the smooth transition for pupils at her previous school. She has embraced change with flexibility developing strategies to access the school curriculum and make positive new friendships.

**JENNIFER-MARIE ROE** was nominated by her mother Sadie Roe for overcoming so much in her school life from first school. She was surrounded by building work during her years at first school and middle school. Because of COVID she did not have the proper transition to upper school. She has done amazingly with all that has confronted her and after passing her GCSE's has been accepted to study A levels. She had a job at a café doing many roles and done this with her own willpower and determination. She has just had a referral for a cochlear implant assessment.

**FINN TRUEIECK** was nominated by Teresa McCabe, HSS Advisory Teacher, as despite his own challenges he is a true inspiration in advocating deaf awareness to others, supporting those who need help even when needing it himself. He has shown incredible determination, resilience and drive to overcome many obstacles in his path. The isolation from COVID had a huge impact on his confidence and self-esteem. His stress and anxiety increased and he was up against a lot of misunderstandings about his deafness. This escalated when his teachers and teaching groups suddenly changed which had a massive impact on him and he started to have anxiety attacks. He found it difficult to engage with his much loved Badminton and enjoy trips with the family. It has been a gradual process to develop greater confidence and build coping strategies. He has worked relentlessly to raise deaf awareness in his school, including a Power Point presentation. Despite his own struggles and insecurities he is always ready to help and support others. At the HSS summer activity he offered support, encouragement and understanding to his peers. He impressed adults by his 'can do' attitude. He has embraced the challenges that have faced him and although incredibly tough has overcome them.

**MACKENZIE WEBSTER** was nominated by Sarah Joiner, HSS Advisory Teacher, for excelling in his academic work. He started his GCSE's last year and has shown such maturity and focus. He strives to achieve his best in every lesson and works hard. He has also been a fantastic role model to other younger deaf peers at school. He is transforming into a confident, resilient hard-working young man.

## 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.

**RONNIE CHESTER** was nominated by Dawn Wrench, HSS Advisory Teacher, for his all-round enthusiasm to all aspects of school life. He has an excellent independent approach to the introduction of his hearing aids. His vocabulary and comprehension has 'rocketed' over the last two years. He is empathetic and kind to a new hearing aid wearer in his class and is congratulated for his successful transition to junior school.

**FINLEY DAVIES** was nominated by Dawn Wrench, HSS Advisory Teacher and Linda Higgins, HSS Teaching Assistant, for his superb consistent development of attending, and refining listening skills. He is enthusiastic, happy and exuberant student. He is commended for his developing confidence in speaking out in class and telling adults if there is a problem which reflects growing maturity and resilience.

**HARRISON GREENHAM** was nominated by Yasmin Brammer-Thompson, Instagram follower, for establishing himself as a fantastic role model with the deaf community. He makes videos to raise awareness of deaf people. He also does sign language videos to help people communicate with BSL.

**ALFIE HIRIART** was nominated by Helen Whalley, School Learning Support Assistant and Pat Saunders. He is a happy, funny energetic intelligent boy who always tries his hardest even when he knows he is struggling. He has many friends, attends lots of clubs and never lets his deafness get him down. He is enjoying sessions learning BSL, taking part in signed stories and songs. He is doing well with his phonics.

**KELSEY PICKETT** was nominated by her parents Samantha and Matthew Pickett for her ability to not let her hearing loss hold her back. She is top of her class for reading and writing, a member of the school council, competed in county gymnastics taking home 2 bronze medals. She also performed a solo poem completion taking 3<sup>rd</sup> place. She is a Brownie and enjoys accompanying her mum to her work with the elderly and she has also conquered her fear of water slides.

**REUBEN SEWELL** was nominated by Sarah Joiner, HSS Advisory Teacher, for his engagement with BSL. His speech and language is delayed and learning BSL has been vital for him. He is now using BSL more confidently. His skills and understanding of using BSL to communicate have been fantastic.

**BEN STAGG** was nominated by Sarah Stobbart, HSS Advisory Teacher, as despite much anxiety and uncertainty he has made a successful transition to secondary school. He now walks to school and home independently, uses the school cafeteria system and his teachers are very pleased with the work he is doing. He is making new friends and developing positive relationships with several staff. He has faced significant challenges and shown determination and courage. Although many young people find transitions difficult, for Ben this has been especially challenging and represents a significant achievement worthy of recognition.

**JOHN STAGG** was nominated by Sarah Stobbart, HSS Advisory Teacher. John is always kind, thoughtful and puts others before himself. Despite his hearing loss he never makes a fuss or expects special treatment. He recently helped a younger child when older children were being unkind. This shows empathy and courage. He is a quiet boy who 'just gets on with it'.



All the nominees have done exceptionally well to be nominated.  
Congratulations to all of them!



# Meet Yazz our Youth Volunteer!

Hey! I'm Yazz, I'm 16 and currently in year 11 studying my GCSEs, English, maths, triple science, geography, sports studies, food tech and business studies. I have been coming to DDCS events since 2013 and I'm now a youth volunteer for DDCS! I have lots of favourite events I've been to including the family PGL weekend, the Harry Potter studio tours as well as the beloved Christmas party and summer family fun day and hog roast!

I'm moderately deaf in both ears and wear bilateral hearing aids (hearing aids in both ears) and also make use of an EduMic radio aid at school. I remember back to when I joined DDCS and started coming along to events, it made me feel like I wasn't alone with my deafness. Over the years I've made so many genuine connections through DDCS and I couldn't be more grateful. Shirley and her team are truly amazing! This is me with some of my friends from DDCS! My friendships I made at DDCS also found me some of my best friends at school such as Abi and Helena in the Barbie photo booth below.



DDCS have done so much for me I thought it was time I start giving back so my mum and I decided to join the committee! I'm now a youth volunteer and my mum, Julie, is a trustee. Shirley and the other trustees all kindly welcomed me and I have attended a few meetings where I get to have a say, as a young person on what events we put on!



I attended my first event being a youth volunteer when we went to Circus Starr and it was great fun! I cannot wait to attend more events and get to know more of you! I am always up for a chat with anyone of any age whether you'd like to chat about experiences being deaf or would like some advice catch me at one of our next events! I'll be in a red fleece!



Great to see Yazz growing up into a fantastic young person and becoming our youth volunteer. Thank you Yazz!