

Soundfield Gets Top Marks!

What happens when a child cannot hear well in the classroom? We'd like to believe that they'd tell their teacher. It's more likely that because the child hasn't heard what was being said, they aren't aware that they didn't hear it!

Hearing loss is invisible and often ignored, underestimated or undetected. This is especially true where children have permanent or temporary hearing loss, such as often accompanies glue ear.

Soundfield amplification can make a profound difference to a child's ability to hear well in the classroom. A Soundfield System reduces ambient background noise in the classroom, discretely spreading sound evenly so that all students can hear the teacher equally well, no matter where they are seated.

Soundfield Systems provide complete freedom of movement for the teacher. A headworn radio microphone transmits to a receiver/amplifier that connects to speakers strategically placed around the room, projecting the voice at a discreet level.

Case Study: St Mary's School – Bexhill-on-Sea

St Mary's School provides daily and residential education for up to 144 young people with speech and language, and social communication difficulties, from KS2 to College.

Hearing loss affects 16 children at St Mary's, alongside many other

conditions including autism, Aspergers Syndrome and attention deficit disorders, (e.g. ADD & ADHD) to name a few.

Initially introduced for pupils experiencing hearing difficulties, Soundfield has made an enormous difference for all pupils at St Mary's. Soundfield has been particularly useful for pupils with attention disorders and sensory integration problems, by raising the pupils' listening to a level higher than other distractions and holding their attention, allowing them to be more engaged in the lesson. Soundfield also encourages children to adopt a better sitting position through auditory stimulation because the vestibular labyrinth within the ear plays a key role in providing good muscle tone.

David Mardell, Teacher of the deaf at St Mary's is enthusiastic about the positive effect that Soundfield has on school life: "most significantly, Soundfield engages the children in a very relaxed way. It involves the children more in the lesson; they are more attentive and more alert. The teachers notice the difference when Soundfield is not there because it takes more effort to keep the children on board! As well as the benefit of less voice strain, teachers can use different voice levels to gain attention; a whisper can become a very effective voice for gaining attention!

Although complex internally, Soundfield requires little user



Soundfield plays a valuable role during circle time at St Mary's

experience, switch on and you're away, the whole class is immediately involved – a simple solution to an age-old problem of engaging all of the children all of the time.

In the USA, recent studies on raising standards show a 15% increase in academic achievement where Soundfield has been used in the classroom. Statistically every class group in the comprehensive system will have a child with special needs (identified or otherwise) who would benefit from Soundfield. If our children are relaxed and more receptive because they are enjoying an easier listening experience; and the relationship between student and teacher is more relaxed because there's no need for raised voices, then this must also be true of the mainstream environment."

Most importantly pupils comment upon feeling relaxed and more involved "it makes me hear better, so I know what I'm doing" and "it's nice that Mr L. doesn't have to shout anymore!"

Case Study: Stonehenge School – Wiltshire

Stonehenge School provides mainstream secondary education for 650 pupils. Seven hearing impaired children are integrated across the year groups, with support from an on-site Hearing Impaired Specialist Centre. A number of these pupils in the school also have other special needs including language and communication difficulties, dyslexia and attention

deficit disorders (e.g. ADHD.)

A Soundfield System is installed in nearly every classroom, which has opened new horizons for teachers and pupils. Teachers report calmer classes and more relaxed lessons, where pupils' attention is held better. They also report reduced absence from sore throats and vocal strain. Less able children feel more included. Hearing aid wearers using fm radio aids (fmGenie) gain further benefit from Soundfield via direct input. KS3 students with hearing difficulties say "Soundfield makes things louder and clearer so I don't have to struggle to hear the teacher. I enjoy my lessons more and feel more involved" and "I can sit anywhere in the classroom now and still hear the teacher – even at the back with my friends instead of having to sit at the front."

Head teacher Andy Packer said, "Our Soundfield Systems help us to create a climate for learning that benefits all students, especially those with a hearing impairment."



Mrs Busby enjoys teaching a relaxed English lesson at Stonehenge

Further information from:

CONNEVANS LIMITED

54 Albert Road North,
Reigate, Surrey, RH2 9YR.

Tel: 01737 247571

Text/Minicom:

01737 243134

Fax: 01737 223475

Email:

soundfield@connevens.com

Website:

www.connevens.com.