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# Children's Audiology

## Hearing tests for children

**The Children's Paediatric Audiology Department is here to test the hearing of all ages of children from birth right through to school leaving age.**

Children are offered an appointment because either:

- there is some concern about their speech or hearing; or
- they have had a hearing screening test in school by an audiometrician (the hearing screener) who has advised further testing.

### Hearing loss

Most babies have their hearing tested shortly after birth.

**Permanent** childhood hearing loss is actually quite rare; around 1 to 2 babies in every 1000 are born with a hearing loss in one or both ears.

**Temporary** hearing problems are very common in childhood, and many factors can contribute including coughs, colds and ear infections. This is the type of problem most commonly found during the school hearing test.

### How to access the service

We accept referrals from GPs, health visitors, school nurses, speech and language therapists and from parents themselves.

### What happens at the appointment?

When a child attends the Audiology Clinic they will have their ears examined and tests will be performed to determine their hearing level. The type of test depends on the age and ability of the child or young person.

#### **From 6 months onwards: Visual Reinforcement Audiometry (VRA)**

Sounds of different frequencies and loudness are played through speakers. When the child hears the sound, they will turn their head and a visual 'reward' is activated, such as a toy lighting up. Little earphones can be used to test each ear separately.

#### **From 2.5 years onwards: Play Audiometry**

Sounds of different frequencies and loudness are played through earphones or headphones and the child is shown how to move a toy (e.g. man in a boat, peg in a board) each time they hear a sound.

#### **From 4 years onwards**

As the child gets older they are asked to respond to sounds by pressing a button.



## After the test

The audiologist (the person performing the test) will be able to explain the test results at the end of the appointment and can give you a copy of the results. You can then talk about any further appointments that may be needed.

## Find out more about children's hearing

### NHS Choices

[www.nhs.uk/Livewell/hearing-problems/Pages/hearing-problems.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/hearing-problems/Pages/hearing-problems.aspx)

### National Deaf Children's Society

Support and information about childhood deafness.

[www.ndcs.org](http://www.ndcs.org)

### Newborn Hearing Screening Programme

What tests to expect, and when.

[www.gov.uk/guidance/newborn-hearing-screening-programme-overview](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/newborn-hearing-screening-programme-overview)

### British Society of Audiology

About the ear, and how it works.

[www.thebsa.org.uk/public-engagement/hearing-balance/](http://www.thebsa.org.uk/public-engagement/hearing-balance/)

## Contact us

### Penrith area

Penrith Health Centre  
Bridge Lane  
Penrith CA11 8HX  
01768 245616

### Whitehaven area

Footsteps CDC  
West Cumberland Hospital  
Whitehaven CA28 8JG  
01946 68618

### Workington / Wigton areas

Workington Community Hospital  
Park Lane  
Workington  
CA14 2RW  
01900 705239/ 01900 705248

### Carlisle area

London Road Community Clinic  
Hilltop Heights  
London Road  
Carlisle CA1 2NS  
01228 608029

### South Lakes area

Kinta House  
Helm Close  
Kendal LA9 7HY  
01539 718157

### Furness area

Ulverston Community Health Centre  
Stanley Street  
Ulverston LA12 7BT  
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We promise to use your information fairly and legally, and in-line with local and national policies. You have a right to understand how your information is used and can request a copy of the information we hold about you at any time.

For further information contact the Information Governance Team on 01228 608998 or email [Information.Governance@cumbria.nhs.uk](mailto:Information.Governance@cumbria.nhs.uk)

## Feedback

We appreciate and encourage feedback, which helps us to improve our services. If you have any comments, compliments or complaints to make about your care, please contact the Patient Experience Team.

Email: [PET@cumbria.nhs.uk](mailto:PET@cumbria.nhs.uk) Tel: 01228 602128 Freephone: 0800 633 5547

If you would like this factsheet in another language or format, for example Braille, large print or audio, please call: **01228 603890**  
E: [communications.helpdesk@cumbria.nhs.uk](mailto:communications.helpdesk@cumbria.nhs.uk)

Or write to Engagement and Communications  
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