There are lots of things that can be done in the classroom that can help deaf/hard of hearing children learn. Here are some simple things that can improve listening conditions in a classroom:

• Avoid sitting a deaf/hard of hearing child in a noisy part of the classroom. For example, make sure they are away from noisy equipment, such as air conditioners or computers.

• Close the classroom door when the corridor becomes noisy or close the windows and perhaps draw curtains when there is a noise outside.

• Use wall displays to cover and soften large flat surfaces and carpet floors where possible, as this will help to reduce echoing.

• Place felt on the bottom of pencil containers or on the bottom of chair legs that scrape.

• Encourage children to maintain a quiet working atmosphere and try to make hearing children aware of various noises that, for example, a hearing aid can amplify, such as chairs scraping, doors banging, general chatter, shouting, and dropping objects.

• Get into the habit of repeating the questions and answers other children say. Children have soft voices and are often sitting behind the deaf/hard of hearing child.

Where a child sits, lighting, and where a teacher is positioned in the class are also important:

• In the classroom a deaf/hard of hearing child should sit near to and facing the teacher. However, it is also important that they can see the other pupils. Sitting in a circle on the carpet is sometimes useful.

• If you walk around when you are talking a deaf/hard of hearing child may not be able to follow what you are saying. Identify a few key places to stand in the classroom where a deaf child will be able to see you clearly.

• Make sure that your face is evenly lit (for example, facing a window, not with a window to your back) as this will make lip reading easier for children.

• Make sure that when you are writing on the white board, that you face the children when you are speaking. This will help them to lip read, and to see your facial expression.

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**Top Ten Transition Tips For Families**

**Starting Primary School**

1. **Talk to your child about starting school.** What is the name of the school? Let them know the ways that school is different from kinder. Talk about how exciting it is to be starting school.

2. **Talk with your child about their school uniform (if there is one) for the following year.** Have a practice putting on the uniform. Practice putting on and taking off their school shoes – doing up buckles or laces.

3. **Read stories about starting school.** Eg. *The Transition to Primary School* story book; ‘Blue Bear Gets Ready For School.’

4. **Show your child their lunch box and drink bottle and practice making lunches together.** Let your child have a go at opening any packaging that may be difficult eg. A cheese stick wrapper, mandarin skin. Ask the school what they call morning recess time eg. Play lunch, snack time or little lunch. Make sure your child is familiar with all the terms used and what they might eat at each break.

5. **Look at the ipad / iphone app ‘starting school’ in the Transition to Primary School kit.**

6. **Take your child to visit the school on a weekend,** get familiar with the play equipment and where things are like the office, toilets and the drink taps.

7. **Have your child attend all the orientation sessions that the school offers.** Ask for more orientation for your child if you feel they need it.

8. **Introduce yourself to your child’s classroom teacher.**

9. **Label your child’s belongings – school bag, lunch box, drink bottle, FM system, clothes etc.** Can they read their name? Can they recognise their own belongings?

10. **On the first day let your child know you’re leaving but you’re coming back to collect him / her later. Don’t forget your camera!**