

JULY 2026

SOUND WAVE



*Securing the future of deaf
children and young people*

**Celebrating 80 years of
Mary Hare School**
Read more on page 18 and 19

Colour Run in Deaf Awareness Week
See it in action on page 20

Keep Arlington Arts Cool
Help us to raise money for a new
air conditioning system, page 27

maryhare.org.uk



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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WELCOME TO MARY HARE SCHOOL

As we celebrate the school's 80th anniversary since being renamed in honour of the founder, Miss Mary Hare, we not only celebrate the strength of the curriculum but also the rich, diverse and vibrant activities pupils have engaged in during this year.

Our outstanding Social Care Ofsted report from January recognised the inclusivity of our school community and the transformative impact the school has on individual students. This was showcased during the Royal Foundation 'Together At Christmas' concert and our production of 'Paddington Comes to Mary Hare' where pupil talent enthralled audiences.

We continue to develop links with our alumni and encourage them back to share their experiences, inspire future generations and be positive deaf role models. Two notable visitors this year have included James Davies, our guest of honour at Speech Day 2025, who is passionate about breaking down barriers for young deaf people who aspire to work in STEM. His journey, spanning from early hands-on engineering roles to leadership in a global media company, shows that there are many

routes to success and that it's never too late to change direction. We also welcomed back Sarah Adedeji who is now a qualified audiologist and winner in this year's Portrait of Britain. Sarah spoke to pupils in assembly and also joined us for this year's Colour Run, as part of Deaf Awareness Week.

Our affiliation with the Worshipful Company of Lightmongers who support the school both financially and also through their numerous connections remains highly valued. One such connection has led to a continuation of engagement with the Worshipful Company of Plumbers with pupils benefiting from a masterclass, competition and a generous donation of tools from their Upper Warden, Janet Rivers.

Our PTA have also raised significant funds for the school and have supported projects through their 'Pitch to the PTA' initiative.

I hope you enjoy reading and viewing the pictures in this edition of Soundwave. It is a useful reminder of how fortunate we all are to be part of the Mary Hare community and I hope to see even more people engaged in events planned for 2026-27.

Robin Askew
Principal of Mary Hare School

MARY HARE PRIMARY SCHOOL

REFLECTIONS OF THE PAST YEAR



This academic year has been one of remarkable growth and confidence for Mary Hare Primary.

We began the year as a small community of 15 pupils and conclude it proudly with 30 children flourishing within our school.

This doubling in numbers is more than a statistic; it represents growing trust, increasing opportunity, and a strengthening sense of belonging for our deaf children.

As our numbers have grown, so too has the richness of our provision. Mary Hare Primary is thriving, and with increased pupil numbers has come increased opportunity: more shared experiences, more peer relationships and, crucially, more deaf peers with whom to learn, play and grow.

Now four years into life in our new building, we can confidently say that the Primary has well and truly bedded in. Over time, we have refined and reshaped our spaces to

ensure they work for us and, most importantly, for the wide and varied needs of the children we serve. These thoughtful changes reflect our commitment to adapting provision rather than expecting children to fit a fixed model.

This year, the pupils on the School Council have worked closely with staff and the PTA to ensure pupils are listened to and that their school reflects their needs, interests and ideas. Their involvement has helped shape both learning environments and play opportunities. Resources such as the swing, mud kitchen, sensory courtyard and an increased range of bikes and scooters have developed playtime experiences. These spaces offer children opportunities for physical development, sensory regulation, imaginative play and social interaction - learning that is every bit as valuable as that which happens in the classroom.

As we look back on this year, it is clear how far Mary Hare Primary has come - and how exciting the journey ahead is. The growth we have experienced is not just in pupil numbers, but in ambition. We end the year proud of what has been achieved and optimistic about the future we continue to build together.

Rachel Sheen
Head of Primary



COTSWOLD
WILDLIFE PARK



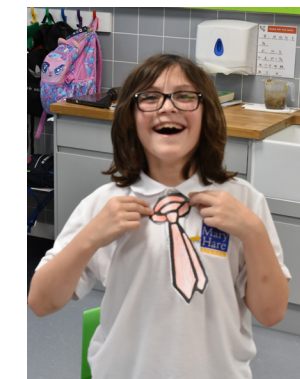
COOKING WITH
A DEAF CHEF



CHINESE NEW YEAR
2026



FRENCH LESSON



PANCAKE DAY



MACMILLAN COFFEE
AFTERNOON





VISIT TO OXFORD CASTLE AND PRISON



FOOD BANK DONATION



PRIMARY CHRISTMAS PLAY



WORLD BOOK DAY 2026



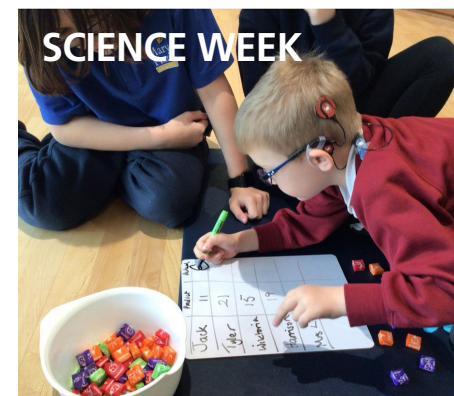
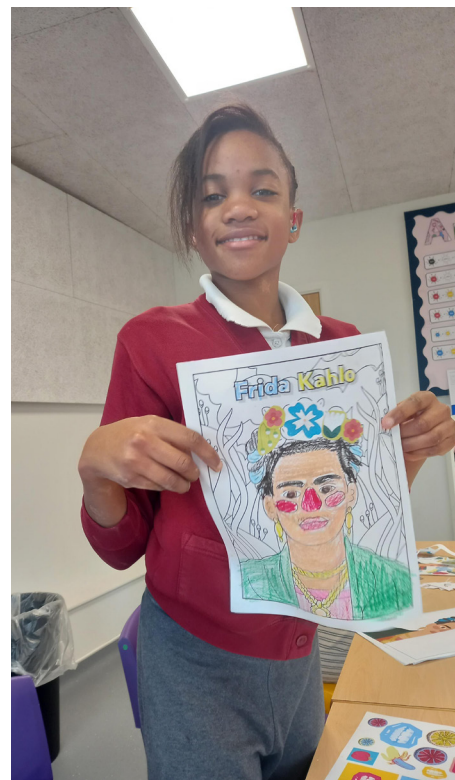
NSPCC NUMBER DAY



POLICE VISIT THE PUPILS



WORLD ART DAY



SCIENCE WEEK



ST GEORGE'S DAY



MARY HARE SECONDARY & SIXTH FORM

REFLECTIONS OF THE PAST YEAR

This year has been another busy year, with lots of fantastic opportunities for our pupils across the Secondary and Sixth Form.

As part of our PSHE (Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education), during the spring term we welcomed staff from the Public Protection Partnership, who delivered workshops on the dangers of vaping to Year 10 and Sixth Form. This included the information on the law around purchasing vapes and the dangers of vaping.

Year 8 completed the NDCS 'Healthy Minds Programme' and Sign Health and Consent workshops were completed with Year 9 and 10. Year 13 recently completed a First Aid training course, giving them vital skills to take with them in future education, training or employment as part of their preparation for leaving Mary Hare this summer.

We also welcomed representatives from The Worshipful Company of Plumbers and the Chartered Institute of Plumbing & Heating Engineering (CIPHE) for an inspiring visit, highlighting the school's commitment to vocational learning and the importance of skilled trades in shaping young futures.

During the day, vocational students took part in a practical plumbing competition, showcasing their developing pipework and pressure-testing skills.

Janet Rivers, Upper Warden and former owner of the plumbing business Girls on Tap, generously donated more than £3,000 worth of plumbing tools and materials to the school. We would like to express our sincere thanks for their continued generosity and commitment to our students.

Eight Year 13 students have successfully applied to universities and have received offers to study from September 2026. Pupils have received offers in a range of courses from English Literature, Politics and International Relations, Law, Journalism and Psychology and Counselling. Well done to all these pupils and to the staff who have supported them so closely.

We wish them and all Year 11, 13 and 14 pupils all the very best of luck in their exams this summer. For those in Year 13 and 14, we wish them the best of luck in the future and look forward to welcoming them back for Speech Day in the next academic year.

Chris Adams
Vice Principal (Curriculum and Achievement)



CHRISTMAS LUNCH AT BLOUNT HALL



THE MANOR IN SNOW



YEAR 9 STUDENTS
VISIT BAYER



APPRENTICESHIP WEEK



YEAR 9 GIRLS VISIT AWE





CARDBOARD
RAFT RACES



TASKMASTER



JOCELYN MEETS
OUR CHILD
DEVELOPMENT
STUDENTS



AUTHOR LUCY SHEPARD
VISITS STUDENTS



REMEMBRANCE DAY



CHESS
TOURNAMENT



A VISIT TO
DONNINGTON
CASTLE



CLAIRE CAMPBELL AWARD FOR
CHILDREN AND YOUNG PERSON
OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT



EXPLORING
DEAF IDENTITY



ANIMAL
RESIDENTS



HEAD PREFECT
JASPER ATTENDS
LIGHTMONGERS BALL



GLOBE THEATRE TRIP



BAKING SWISS
ROLLS IN CATERING



SPEECH DAY



SIXTH FORMERS
VISIT SEED BANK



NDCS HEALTHY
MINDS IN PSHE



SKI TRIP



RESIDENTIAL CARE REFLECTIONS

This year the residential service is proud to have maintained its Outstanding Ofsted grade for a second year.

The staff teams are joyful, committed adults who demonstrate every day how much they value giving the support, enablement and encouragement to our children and young people (the students). The inspection team described the teams as, *"...central professionals in children's lives. Their expertise and relationships-based approach are well valued. They have high aspirations for what children achieve and feel it is a privilege to work at the school."*

I listened to a parent of a Year 7 say to a group of parents who are considering the school for their own child's place in September 2026 – that her son has gained confidence and self-belief since being at the school, that he has formed friendships in residential that he would not have had the opportunity to do previously, that where he was once socially isolated he is now happy, has a clear identity and is excited in looking to his

future. This was endorsed by Ofsted who stated, *"...for many children and their families, the process of moving to the school has a transformative impact on their lives and children who previously struggled in mainstream settings are thriving socially and academically with improved confidence and engagement in learning."*

Activities and trips are now organised by the staff and young people and occur every half term, this means that choice and interests are promoted and shared and the experiences and the memories that are made are captured and will be remembered for a long time to come. As we approach our 80th anniversary of Mary Hare School this summer, and as we learn from the alumni how long and meaningful their friendships formed at the school have been, some lasting as long as 70 years – we hope that our current young people will be able to look back and say similar in another 70 years!

Sarah Stefano
Director of Residential Care



THE YOUTH CLUB REVOLUTION

At the start of this academic year Mary Hare had a mission to build a youth club run by the youth community at the school.

Chantele Adams and Alisa Dellow, Residential House Leaders for the younger age ranges in Year 7 and Primary and the older group in Sixth Form, took on the task and were joined by lots of staff volunteers who helped to clear the space and create a blank canvas that the pupils could then build upon.

They didn't want to just pick a new paint colour and hope for the best, so with the leadership of our Head Prefect, Jasper, we officially launched the **Youth Club Committee**. This isn't just a fancy title; it's a direct line of communication. With a representative from every single year group, feedback travels straight to the heart of the club. Our young people told us how they envisioned the space, and we set the ball in motion.

When we first swung the doors open to the **Mary Hare Youth Club**, we were admittedly a little nervous. Would they like it? Would they show up?

The response was a resounding **YES**. Because of their energy and ideas, we've grown from a one-day-a-week pilot to being open **three days a week**. It's no longer a room we "gave" to them - it's a space they have built themselves. Here's what's currently topping the charts: Bingo, Dungeons and Dragons, Blind Taste test with Pokémon Club and movie nights incoming, meaning a 4th night!

The result? A total transformation that proves when young people speak, magic happens.

Beyond the games and snacks, something deeper is happening. By listening to our young people's voices, we've created an environment that feels different from a classroom or a dorm. It's a place where they can relax, socialise on their own terms, and - most importantly - feel safe. It is a sanctuary designed by them, for them.

Change does not stop here; we will continue to evolve the Youth Club as our young people evolve into the next generation of adults.





TOGETHER AT CHRISTMAS

Mary Hare School, in partnership with His Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant for the Royal County of Berkshire, Mr Andrew Try, hosted a 'Together at Christmas' Carol Service as part of a prestigious national initiative supported by The Royal Foundation of The Prince and Princess of Wales.

Mary Hare School was selected as one of only fifteen locations across the United Kingdom to host a Community Carol Service as part of this year's 'Together at Christmas' programme. This selection recognises the school's outstanding work in supporting deaf children and young people, and its significant contribution to the local community in Berkshire.



A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

Based on the popular comedy play by William Shakespeare, our students brought this Athenian tale to life.

With interconnecting plots, plenty of hijinks and fairy magic, there was plenty of sparkle shining on our stage!

PADDINGTON VISITS MARY HARE

In December, the students wowed families, friends and audience members with their annual winter production, *Paddington Bear visits Mary Hare*.

Paddington Bear came to visit Mary Hare, he had an adventure and survived a scare. He shared in the music, dance and drama; it was a show to remember just last December.

Our Christmas productions are always a fantastic way for our students to get involved, from dancing, performing, to singing and even supporting in back-stage roles.

"Getting the chance to act on stage is something I never thought I would have, until I came to Mary Hare."





MAP DANCE WORKSHOP

Our students had the fantastic opportunity to take part in an inspiring choreography workshop with MAP Dance, a contemporary dance company who are recognised for their work nationally and internationally.



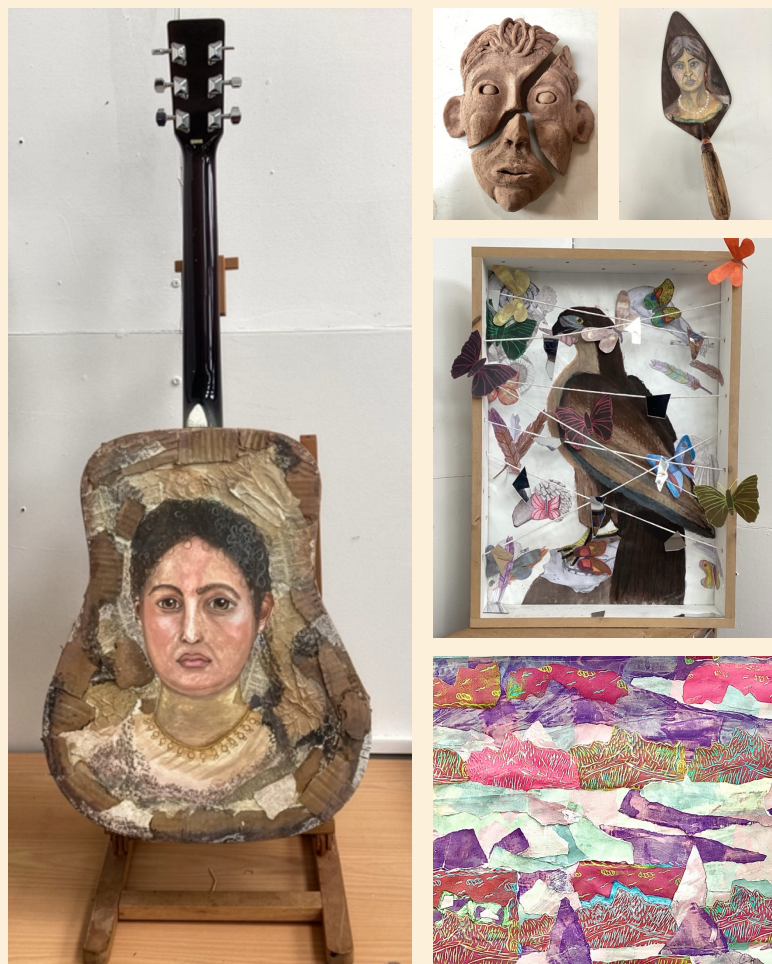
SPRING EQUINOX AT THE CORN EXCHANGE NEWBURY

Our students performed on the big stage as part of the Spring Equinox at the Corn Exchange, in Newbury.

As part of the preparations, we welcomed RS Dance Company who led a dance workshop for our students. Spring Equinox is a vibrant celebration of dance showcasing performances by West Berkshire schools, youth dance companies, community projects, and specialist performing arts colleges.

INSPIRING ARTWORKS

Our Year 11s have been creating fabulous pieces this year, here is just a small selection of what some of our students have created.



CLAY PINCH POT EGGS

Our Year 7s created and decorated clay pinch pot eggs. They designed vibrant patterns and colours inspired by Pre-Columbian designs.



STUDENTS GRADUATE FROM THE BRILLIANT CLUB

Mary Hare School is proud to celebrate the achievements of our Year 8 pupils, who have successfully graduated from The Brilliant Club's Scholars Programme.

Their graduation ceremony took place at the University of Bath on 28 April 2026, where students received their certificates alongside pupils from several other schools.

Following the launch of the programme at Oxford University on 20th January, students worked closely with a PhD tutor and experienced university-style learning. This year's course, "Why Are We Here? Answers from Science, Religion and Philosophy," challenged all pupils to explore complex ideas across multiple disciplines.

Riley, in Year 8, commented on his experience:

"Going to the Brilliant Club was an incredible experience. It made me think deeper and gave me a taste of university-

style learning. I am very glad that it will look good on my CV. I am very happy that I received a top mark this year."

All pupils approached the programme with enthusiasm and determination, demonstrating impressive engagement and academic progress throughout. They developed valuable skills in critical thinking, research, academic writing, and the presentation of ideas in a visual format - skills that will support them in their future studies.

Dr Robinson, the lead teacher for this programme, commented on the pupils' success:

"I was particularly proud of how all students embraced a demanding topic that stretched their abilities. They contributed thoughtfully to discussion-based tutorials, confidently sharing their ideas while remaining respectful of others' perspectives."

Congratulations to all Year 8 scholars!

CELEBRATING 80 YEARS OF MARY HARE SCHOOL: ALUMNI REUNION



Guests also had the chance to tour the school, where they could revisit parts that were more familiar, and explore the newer developments of the school.

In the afternoon, guests gathered in Dulverton Hall, where they enjoyed the music by Alumni band, Lumpy Custard, who played a selection of pop favourites. Principal, Robin Askew, shared his reflections on the 80th milestone and the history of Mary Hare School, and the event culminated with the cutting of the cake and a light hearted general knowledge quiz.

Lots of Alumni continued their own celebrations after the event, including a social meet up at the local pub, and a walk around Snelsmore Common where they enjoyed retracing familiar paths from their old school days.



On Saturday 20th June, over 180 alumni came together to mark a very special anniversary: the 80th year since Mary Hare School was named after its founder, Miss Mary Hare.

The day commenced with a welcome speech from Derek Grabham, Chair of the Mary Hare Alumni Association. There were lots of reminiscing as guests browsed through the wealth of history in the Mary Hare Archive Exhibition, featuring a breadth of articles and items including uniform from across the years, photos showcasing memorable moments and landmark events, and former classroom technology.



THE HISTORY OF MARY HARE SCHOOL

Mary Hare was a remarkable woman, establishing a Brighton based uniformed women's police force, as well as being an active suffragette. Her foremost achievement, however, was as the founder of an oral school for deaf children, which went onto become the UK's largest non-maintained special school for deaf children and young people.

Mary's ethos was that deafness simply brought a deaf child additional barriers to learning. At the time, this was quite a unique approach. To this day, the school continues to fulfil her vision in its learning approach in the education of deaf children and young people.

A brief timeline of Mary Hare School

1883: Mary Hare opened a school for deaf children in her mother's house in London

1916: Mary went on to establish Dene Hollow Oral School for the Deaf, taking pupils from all over the world.

1945: Mary Hare passed away two days after her 80th birthday. She wrote in her will, 'my efforts on behalf of the deaf have been my greatest joy in life'.

1946: In her memory, the school was renamed to Mary Hare Grammar School.

1949: Mary Hare School moved to its current home at Arlington Manor, Newbury.

1950: Princess Margaret marks the official opening of Mary Hare School.

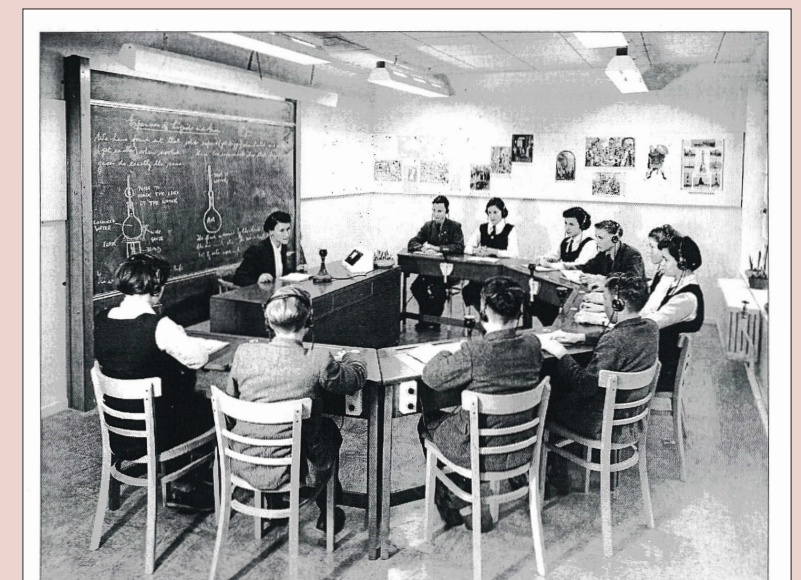
1991: The Mary Hare Foundation was established to raise money that would go on to support the school's technological advancements and big capital projects.

1996: Mill Hall Oral School for the Deaf, a primary school for deaf children, was relocated from Sussex to Greenham Lodge in Newbury where it became Mary Hare Primary School.

2022: Mary Hare Primary School relocated to a purpose-built school for deaf children on the same campus as the Secondary School.



The ivy-covered verandah, Arlington Manor, July 3rd 1948
Courtesy of Derek Shilline

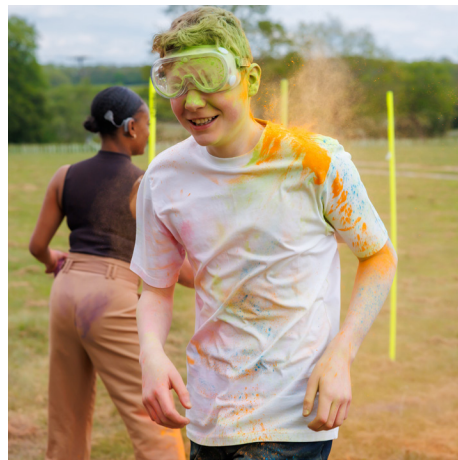


Mrs. Askew's Speech Class, Form II.

COLOUR RUN

STUDENTS 'WEAR IT LOUD' IN STYLE FOR DEAF AWARENESS WEEK

This year, as part of Deaf Awareness Week, staff and students across the whole school enjoyed a particularly colourful occasion with our Colour Run.



THE BUSINESS VENTURES

Meet the team at Mary Hare Hearing Centre and Hearing Aid Repair Shop

Supporting Mary Hare School and the work that we do to support deaf young people are two businesses; Mary Hare Hearing Centre and the Hearing Aid Repair Shop.

From these businesses, 50% of the profits go to Mary Hare School. We chat with Barbara Ribeiro, the Clinic Manager for Mary Hare Hearing Centre, and Bryan Dobson, Operations Manager for the Hearing Aid Repair Shop, who tell us more...

Tell us a bit about Mary Hare Hearing Centre...

Barbara: Mary Hare Hearing Centre provides exceptional private hearing care with a strong focus on long term support. Our aftercare is second to none. From regular servicing and fine tuning of hearing aids to comprehensive hearing assessments and earwax removal, we pride ourselves on looking after our clients throughout their entire hearing journey.

What makes the Mary Hare Hearing Centre so special?

Our care is genuinely personalised. We take the time to understand each person's needs and lifestyle so we can offer solutions that truly make a difference. We are also partly owned by Mary Hare School, and 50% of our profits go directly to supporting their work. Choosing us means supporting a wider community of children and young people with hearing loss.

If someone is thinking about getting their hearing checked, what should their first step be?

The first step is simply to get in touch. Whether by phone or email, one of our administrators will talk through your concerns and help you book the appointment type best suited to your needs. We make the process easy and welcoming from the very beginning.

What other services does Mary Hare Hearing Centre offer?

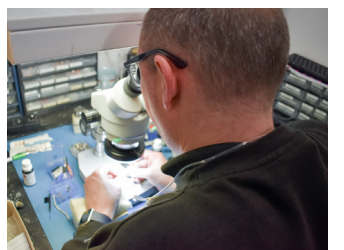
We also provide professional earwax removal, a service that has become increasingly important as NHS provision has reduced. We offer three methods: microsuction, instrumentation and irrigation. We select the most appropriate technique based on the consistency and location of the wax. Our priority is always safe, effective and comfortable care.

Tell us a bit about what the Hearing Aid Repair Shop does?

Bryan: The Hearing Aid Repair Shop provides a specialist service repairing and servicing all makes of hearing aids. We help extend the life of hearing aids well beyond the manufacturer's warranty.

What types of repair services do you offer?

We provide a full range of hearing aid repairs, including fault



diagnosis, component repairs and replacements, and routine servicing. Our focus is on returning hearing aids to optimum performance and helping them last longer for their users.

How long have you been working at the Hearing Aid Repair Shop for?

I have been part of the team for 18 years, and the Hearing Aid Repair Shop itself has over 25 years' experience repairing hearing aids. Our highly trained technicians specialise in repairs across all makes and models, with extensive experience handling a wide range of hearing aids and repair requirements.

What is the oldest hearing aid you have repaired?

We are still repairing hearing aids that are more than 25 years old. In many cases, hearing aids can be successfully repaired, and we continue to provide a sustainable and affordable option for hearing aid users who want to keep their devices working for as long as possible.

You can find out more about Mary Hare Hearing Centre and Hearing Aid Repair Shop online at:
www.maryharehearingcentres.co.uk

SPORTS NEWS



CROSS COUNTRY

Our students gave it their all at this year's School Cross Country run!

From our Primary pupils all the way up to our Sixth Formers, we're so proud of everyone who took part, showed great determination, and cheered each other on. Well done to all our runners!

PRIMARY TAKE PART IN ARCHERY

Our Primary pupils went head to head with local schools. They show terrific teamwork as they scored a personal best, tackling different archery stations and encouraging each other with kind words.



WORLD SUCCESS FOR SOPHIE

Sixth Former Sophie has had a very special 12 months as she saw international sporting success in football and futsal.

Back in November 2024, Sophie was nominated for the Rising Star Award at the Variety Disability Sports Awards. This was following her success in becoming the youngest player to be selected to play for Team GB in deaf women's football, where she also went on to score the winning goal in her debut game against Poland.

Following this she was selected to be part of Team GB for the Deaflympics in Tokyo last year.

Sophie says, "I had the absolute honour of representing the Great Britain Deaf Football Team at the Deaflympics. Standing there, competing against the best in the world, was surreal. Bringing home a Bronze Medal was a dream come true".

After the Deaflympics, Sophie headed to Croatia to play for the Deaf Futsal European Championships as part of the England team. The cherry on top - they went on to become the European Champions!



SUCCESS IN THE SWIMMING PANATHLON

Primary and Secondary students headed to the London Aquatic Centre and took part in the Schools Deaf Panathlon Swimming Gala.

Rachel Solly, Deputy Head of Primary, shares, "The Primary pupils had an amazing day at the Olympic pool. They participated in different swim races against other deaf children. The children all showed great team spirit and perseverance. We are super proud of our bronze medals!"

Our Secondary students were up against some very strong swimmers but, despite this, they still achieved a 1st place and lots of 2nd and 3rd positions across the races.

Overall both Secondary and Primary came third. Great work!



ESFA DEAF 5-A-SIDE FOOTBALL COMPETITION

Congratulations to the KS4 and KS3 Boys who not only reached the finals, but **WON** in their categories in the ESFA Deaf Football competition. They brought home two large trophies that now sit proudly in the trophy cabinet.

Well done also to Stanley, who was our Player of the Tournament.

SPORTS DAY CELEBRATIONS

The whole school came together for its annual Sports Day, with events including New Age Kurling, Javelin, Boccia and, of course, Track. Congratulations to Braidwood who were this year's champions!



FUNDRAISING

The Mary Hare Foundation raises vital funds for Mary Hare School. Thanks to the generosity of our kind supporters, local companies and charitable trusts, we can buy new equipment, refurbish learning spaces and provide invaluable opportunities for our pupils. These are some of the fundraising highlights of the last 12 months. Thank you to everyone who has supported us!

PLANTING FOR THE FUTURE

We were delighted to receive a grant from The Tree Council, in partnership with Network Rail, of £10,000. The impact of this grant is clear to see with hundreds of trees and hedgerows planted across the site. This project will support Mary Hare's long term succession planting plan, to ensure iconic native trees such as the oaks on site have established



replacements as they come to the end of their lives. We are also establishing a new wild woodland area along Oxford Road on previous scrub land. Through a kitchen orchard, we will support our catering students' farm to table knowledge. As well as native plants, we have also planted more unusual specimens including ginkgo, to help engage and educate our pupils. Through linking hedgerows with native hawthorn and beech, we are creating vital nature corridors for wildlife.

It was a massive task getting all the trees in the ground over winter, and we couldn't have done it without the support of our wonderful volunteers, so massive thanks to **Cornerstone, Newbury College, Handelsbanken, Bayer and Cleanova.**



THE BERKSHIRE GOLF DAY

With the support of **Mary Hare Foundation Trustee, James Ward** and **Kingsley Napley**, we held a successful charity golf day at The Berkshire Golf Club and raised £7,242. Thank you to everyone who made this day such a success.



LONDON QUIZ

Our annual London Quiz in April was a great evening's entertainment, with our Quiz Master, **Kit Loyd** keeping everyone on their toes. Over 100 guests took part with the Battlers team headed up by **Mary Hare Foundation Trustee, Bella Battle**, storming to victory. Thank you to everyone who bought raffle tickets, drinks and a table. Your support meant we raised a fantastic £7,000 for the Ivan Tucker Bursary Scheme. Thank you also to **Prime Purchase** and **James Hambro & Partners**, for your generosity in sponsoring this event.

James Hambro & Partners

Prime Purchase
Specialists in trading and buying residential property

BRIDGE AFTERNOON TEA

In April, Arlington Manor was transformed as over 100 guests arrived for an afternoon of Bridge. Everyone pulled together to make sure meetings rooms were cleared of office furniture, and chairs set up for the event. Our pupils entertained everyone with singing, keyboard and a harp, during a delicious afternoon tea with cakes baked by our students. We are very lucky to benefit from loyal and enthusiastic supporters who help organise events for us. Massive thanks to **Julia Scott, Janey Marsh, Woody Hellyer and Mary Troughton** for bringing together such a wonderful and generous group of Bridge players, and supplying all the raffle prizes. Thanks to the raffle, we have been able to buy a magnificent harp. We currently have three pupils studying the harp, including one who is preparing for Grade 7:

"I just wanted to say (on behalf of our table!) what a very enjoyable and worthwhile afternoon of bridge yesterday. It was a very nice space to play in with several different light filled rooms and delicious tea as well as the very touching recital. So thank you all."



SPRING JIGS AND REELS

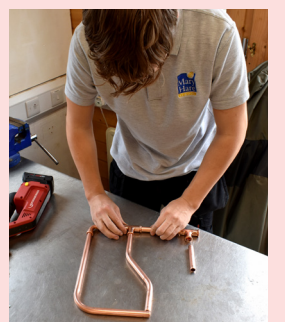
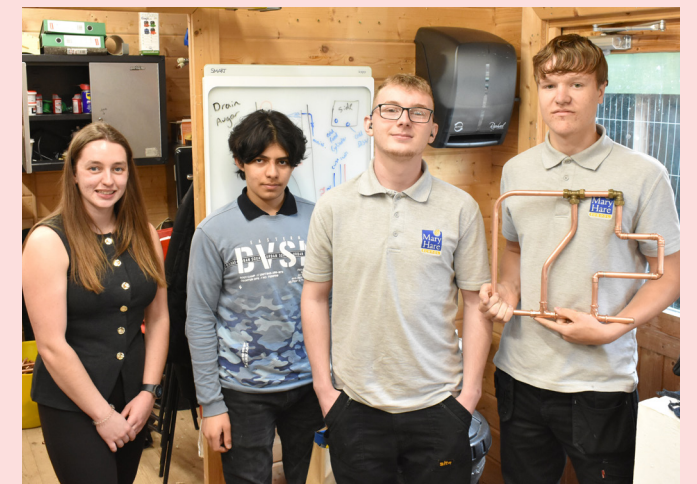
Around 200 people enjoyed our two Jigs and Reels events, expertly organised by Mary Hare Foundation Chair, **Georgina Woods**. We welcomed back Alex Carver as Caller for evenings of lively dancing at Hampstead Norreys Village Hall. We raised £6,500 in total.

THANK YOU TO OUR ALUMNI

We love to hear from our alumni, find out what they are up to and welcome them back to the School to inspire our pupils to aim high in their future careers. We are also very grateful for their support. **Thanks to a generous donation from a Mary Hare alumnus, we were able to buy a new defibrillator for Arlington Arts.**

WORSHIPFUL COMPANY OF PLUMBERS

We were delighted to welcome representatives from **The Worshipful Company of Plumbers and the Chartered Institute of Plumbing and Heating Engineering**. During their visit they donated more than £3,000 worth of plumbing tools and materials to Mary Hare School.



LITTLE HARES

For parents and carers with a deaf child or baby aged 3 and under, Little Hares provides a safe and welcoming space to meet other families in similar circumstances, share tips and advice and access support from professionals in the field of deafness. Thanks to the generous support of **D'Oyly Carte Charitable Trust**, we can continue providing these sessions free of charge.

A parent who attends the group shared, "Seeing my baby connect, learn and belong in a space designed for her has made me feel supported and hopeful for her future. It's given me confidence that we're not navigating this journey alone and has made such a difference during a challenging year."

To see our upcoming sessions, visit: www.maryhare.org.uk/events/little-hares



MILLENNIUM WOOD

Mary Hare benefits from beautiful grounds, including parkland, formal gardens and woods. We were delighted to receive a generous grant which will enable us to transform an area of woodland into an outdoor learning space.

This project will create more opportunities for all our pupils, from Primary, Secondary and Sixth Form, to benefit from time outdoors. As the majority of our pupils are residential, it is particularly important that there are opportunities at school to explore the outdoor environment.

Pupils studying land-based studies in Years 12 and 13 currently use Millennium Wood to gain practical experience in forestry and managing our natural environment. For these pupils, this investment will provide essential opportunities to develop their practical skills, while preparing them for further education and employment in environmental and land-based sectors.

WEST BERKSHIRE SCHOOLS AND CLUBS SHOWCASE THEIR TALENTS AT ARLINGTON ARTS

For the third year running, The Nicola Moran Academy of Drama presented 'Ignite the Stage', a showcase for young performing arts talent. A sold out audience raised £4,900 for the Mary Hare Foundation, with Guest of honour, the Mayor of Thatcham, Cllr. Mrs Petra Pemberton.

Nicola Moran, founder and director of the Ignite The Stage showcase, commented: "The work of the Mary Hare School is truly inspiring and at Ignite The Stage, we believe the magic of performing arts has the power to amplify the school's message and raise vital funds for their mission at the same time. By attending, the audience are not only enjoying a night of entertainment but also supporting the mission to empower deaf young people."

BRAVE FUNDRAISERS

Congratulations to **Brian**, who ran the City of Newport Half Marathon, raising £1,668 for the Primary School.

Also thanks to two intrepid staff, **Kat** and **Kyrie**, who jumped out of a plane, and raised an impressive £1,631 for Adelaide House.



DEAF U23 FOOTBALL IN SERBIA – MAN CITY RAFFLE

A few students and alumni of Mary Hare School have taken part in the GB Under 23 Deaf Football World Championships this summer. Because of limited funding within deaf sport, they needed to fundraise to fund the trip.



Our Head of Human Resources, **Mark Dixon**, reached out to his favourite club, Manchester City, to see if they could help.

"As a lifelong fan of Manchester City I was aware that the club undertake many great local community initiatives, and whilst Newbury is a long way from Manchester I wondered if they would consider providing a charitable donation and help the young adults participating in this upcoming Deaf Football World Championship. Amazingly, they would be delighted to support the fundraising by offering a family tour voucher of the Etihad stadium as well a ticket voucher for two tickets to one of their upcoming home matches to use in our fundraising. **Claire Thompson** was the lucky winner, who was thrilled to win the tickets as she took her nephew along, who is a huge fan of the club.

Thank you to everyone who has supported the Mary Hare Foundation this year! If you would like to take part in a challenge, are connected to a charitable trust, or have a company that would be interested in sponsoring us, we would love to hear from you.
Email: fundraising@maryhare.org.uk
Phone: **01635 244204**

Support our fundraiser



KEEPING ARLINGTON ARTS COOL

Our flagship centre for music and drama, Arlington Arts, provides our pupils with learning and performance spaces throughout the school day, along with the opportunity to perform on the stage.

We are urgently seeking funding for a new air conditioning system. The noise of the current extractor fan is being amplified by the pupils' hearing aids, meaning we need to switch it off during the school day. This means that by the evening, the auditorium has become uncomfortably hot.

Each year group has their own school band, all pupils from Years 7 to 9 have music lessons, while in Years 10 and 11 it is a popular GCSE option. Our talented musicians include harpists, keyboard players and singers.

Please support this campaign! Through Greenham Trust, we have been offered match funding until 29 October, meaning that for every £1 you donate, we will receive £2 - and with Gift Aid £2.25.



Please donate





WELLBEING REFLECTIONS

We had a great start to the year for the Wellbeing Team, as our department won the *School Wellbeing Award* at the West Berkshire School Sport Network Awards.

The award was for promoting the importance of exercise and being active when thinking about our mental health. At the award ceremony we were given our trophy by Olympic Gymnast and Commonwealth Games Gold Medalist, Steve Frew. It was a great evening.

We have been delivering lots of assemblies, form time activities and workshops. The first one being a whole school assembly about worries and stress. To demonstrate how worries and stress get 'heavier' if you hold onto them and do not talk to someone, we used jugs of water held at

arm's length. However, to make it more fun we had Mr Askew, Miss Kennett and Mr Adams sat underneath them - all of whom ended up getting very wet!

During a '5 Ways to Wellbeing' workshop with KS3 we had different activities for each of the 5 ways. For 'Connect' the students drew around their hands onto blue and yellow fabric. Helen, one of our Wellbeing Coordinators, has sewn these all together to create a beautiful mural, the colours of which represent the Deaf flag-connection, pride and thriving in unison.

We run a variety of lunchtime clubs each day of the week that are open to any student that would like to come along. The Art Club members decided to enter the PTA's 'Pitch to the PTA', a Dragon's Den style presentation was made where the pupils asked the PTA for £150 towards new art activities and to replenish the supplies we already have. They did a brilliant job showing off their artwork and creativity, and successfully won the £150. Thank you to the members of the PTA for the opportunity and support.

Charlie Hadley
Wellbeing Lead and Joint Head of PSHE

DEAF FAMILY FUN DAY

In the Summer of 2025, we held our inaugural Deaf Family Fun Day. A special event for any families with deaf children to come along and enjoy a day especially for them.

It was a day packed with activities for children across all ages, including bouncy castles, a climbing wall, archery, caving, face painting, and a treasure hunt. We welcomed lots of deaf organisations and charities who spoke with the families, and the PTA put on a BBQ and refreshments.

We are busy in preparations for our second Deaf Family Fun Day on Sunday 28 June, where there will be even more activities for the family, including a craft fayre of local artisan and craft makers.

Save the date: Next year's Deaf Family Fun is on Sunday 27 June. See you there!



MEET THE NEW HEAD PREFECTS

Every year we welcome a new Prefect Team, who are made up of enthusiastic Sixth Formers committed to bringing a positive impact to students at Mary Hare School. We catch up with our Head Prefects for 2026-27, Harry and Marcie.

HARRY: HEAD PREFECT

Why did you put yourself forward for the Prefect Team?

I want to be an ambassador for the school at events and the chance to share my experience to other families. I also put myself forward for the opportunity to be an active role and express the needs of students across the school.

What do you hope to achieve as Head Prefect over the next academic year?

I am looking forward to being part of meetings where I can represent the students and help implement positive changes.

How can you be a good role model to the younger students?

I think I can be a good role model by being present and available for students so that they can share their ideas and I can be a voice for them.



MARCIE: HEAD PREFECT

Why did you put yourself forward for the Prefect Team?

I put myself forwards because I feel like lots of people feel comfortable to talk to me as I can communicate in BSL and oralism. I also want to bring people's opinions about the school to meetings and try to improve the school.

What do you hope to achieve as Head Prefect over the next academic year?

Over the academic year, I hope to be a strong voice for students and try to bring more outside school activities in the week.

How can you be a good role model to the younger students?

I can be a good role model to the younger students by being approachable and treating everyone with respect.



PTA ROUND UP



A YEAR OF IMPACT: CELEBRATING OUR PTA ACTIVITY

The Mary Hare PTA has had an incredibly positive and impactful year – what began as a shared ambition to strengthen the bridge between families and school life has grown into a year of meaningful change, and well deserved recognition.

At the heart of the PTA's work is a clear purpose: to bring families, students, and the school closer together. Over the past year, the PTA has continued to evolve into a trusted partner to the school.

This has been supported by regular communication through PTA newsletters, meetings, and events, ensuring everyone feels included, welcome, and able to participate.

Fundraising with Purpose and CreatiXvity

Fundraising activities this year have gone beyond simply raising money – they've been designed to engage students in the process and show clearly how every contribution makes a difference.

One of the standout initiatives has been the **100 Club**, a simple but effective model that provides a regular income stream for the PTA. What made this especially powerful was the commitment to use funds quickly and transparently, ensuring contributors could see the impact of their support almost immediately.

Alongside this, seasonal fundraising such as raffles have continued to bring the community together. The Christmas

Tombola and the Easter Raffle, for example, both proved popular, with generously donated prizes helping to boost participation and enthusiasm.

Giving Students a Voice: "Pitch to the PTA"

One of the most powerful developments has been the **"Pitch to the PTA"** initiative – a brilliant example of putting student voices and opinions into action. Rather than adults deciding what should be prioritised, students were invited to pitch their own ideas for improvements and enhancements around the school. This initiative did more than fund projects. It empowered students, built confidence, and sent a clear message that their ideas matter.

Turning Funds into Real Impact

Funds have been used to invest in student spaces, activities, and resources that make school life richer, more comfortable, and more enjoyable. What has been especially important is the transparency around how money is spent – ensuring parents and carers understand exactly how their support translates into benefit for students.

Recognition on a National Stage

A defining moment of the year came with the PTA being recognised at a national level, winning a **Parentkind Award**. This award celebrated the transformation and innovation demonstrated by the PTA and acknowledged the outstanding

contribution it has made to student experience, family engagement, and school community partnership.



This recognition belongs to everyone involved: committee members, volunteers, families who donate or attend events, and those who support quietly in the background. It serves as a powerful reminder of what can be achieved when a school community works together with shared purpose.

Behind the Scenes: Volunteers Who Make It Happen

None of this progress would be possible without the commitment of PTA volunteers, who generously give their time, energy, and expertise. From organising meetings and managing finances to planning events and communications, the behind the scenes work is substantial – and often unseen.

As always, the PTA continues to welcome new volunteers, recognising that even small contributions can make a huge difference.

If you would like to join or support the PTA in any capacity, please email them on pta.maryhare@gmail.com

PEOPLE NEWS

With a combined total of over 150 years' service to Mary Hare we would like to recognise and extend a fond farewell to six members of staff retiring this year.

Ros Congdon (Deputy Head of Care) took early retirement on medical grounds this year. Ros had devoted the majority of her working career to Mary Hare and many staff and pupils have benefited from her care and experience. Her dedication and positive outlook on life and tackling new challenges is truly inspiring. Ros has relocated closer to family in Cornwall and remains in contact (mainly sending sunny seaside pictures!).



Anita Leach (Librarian) started working at Mary Hare in 1985 and throughout her career has worked with five different Principals. She recalls having watched the school develop from just the main school building, Blount Hall, Manor, Mansell and Howard House (which at the time was staff flats) to the magnificent site we have today. Over the years she has rearranged the library several times but feels the most recent refurbishment was the most satisfying as the old metal shelves were replaced by the lovely new wooden ones. Miss Leach has continued to share her love of reading and jigsaws with pupils and can impressively recall nearly all the names of alumni that visit.

Rosemary Sullivan (English Teacher) is retiring after 16 years at Mary Hare. Originally wanting to be a doctor, Rosemary was inspired to train to be a Teacher of the Deaf by her daughter's ToD, Peter Keen. Rosemary has taught pretty much everything from Functional Skills and GCSE, to A Level Literature. Rosemary's skill as an English teacher, and as a Teacher of the Deaf, have resulted in many years of superb outcomes for our young people, allowing them to progress to the next stage of their education. Such experience, dedication and compassion are rare; Rosemary will be greatly missed.

"Teaching English to deaf young people is both challenging and immensely rewarding. Watching students grow into articulate, thoughtful young adults has been one of the greatest pleasures of my career."

As I leave, I do so with gratitude, pride and many happy memories. I would like to thank all the students and colleagues who have made these sixteen years so enjoyable and rewarding. Mary Hare will always hold a very special place in my heart."

There are many important roles within the organisation that are not directly pupil facing but are essential for our smooth operation. **Bridget Bishop** has worked within the finance team for over 25 years prior to her retirement earlier in the year. In addition to her finance skills she was renowned for her seasonal wall displays and the finance office being the best decorated office environment in the school.

Tim Hogan joined Mary Hare on a part-time temporary supply contract to support Design Technology. Within a very short time his fascination in audiology and deaf education took over. He seized the opportunity to train as a qualified teacher of the deaf and subsequently went on to transform our delivery of Food Technology as well as delivering construction skills. Tim's time, energy and commitment to food tech has led to many successful outcomes for our pupils as they have been encouraged to experiment with new foods and techniques. Tim has always been passionate about showcasing and celebrating pupil achievement and we have all enjoyed his groups canapes and meals at school events.



"I have many great memories of working at Mary Hare. I've really enjoyed bringing in new courses that students have been able to succeed with."

All the courses I have worked with are creative and involve sharing. Life is brighter with creativity in it, whether it's a performing art or a visual one - seek it out and have some in your life. Life will be brighter for it!"

Debbie Read (Senior Team Leader) has worked in nearly all roles and levels within residential care. Her great sense of humour and corridor dances have entertained many generations of pupils and helped her form positive staff and pupil relationships. Debbie loves travelling and we all hope that her retirement gives her plenty of opportunity to visit new places and enjoy winter sun.



We wish all our retirees a long and happy retirement and remain extremely grateful for the impact they have had on the school during their time with us.

Recognising Long Service

Congratulations to the following staff who reached milestones in their length of service across the whole Mary Hare organisation.

- Liesl Britten (Exams Officer): 20 years
- Katherine Clements (Assistant Principal): 20 years
- Stephen Barrett (Grounds Maintenance): 25 years
- Lorna Gravenstede (Burwood Centre): 25 years

ALUMNI NEWS

MWAURA'S MARATHON SUCCESS



Mwaura recently completed his studies at Mary Hare, and this year has passed his Level 3 Plumbing at college.

While at Mary Hare, Mwaura was encouraged into the sport of running, and entered his first 5k park run last year. Since then he has gone onto take part in lots of running events and races, including the Hackney Half Marathon with the Deaf Run Club and, more recently, the London Marathon.

"Crossing the London Marathon finish line was one of the most emotional moments of my life. The atmosphere was unbelievable from start to finish, and becoming a London Marathon finisher is something I will never forget.

I want to say a huge thank you to Anna Jewell from the careers team for registering me for the 5k parkrun last year. That small step became the beginning of my running journey. Running has become a huge part of my life, and I honestly may never have started without her support and encouragement."

We welcomed back Mwaura to this year's Sports Day as our guest of honour.

DEAFLYMPIC STARS

Joining Sixth Former, Sophie (read Sophie's story on page 22), we had a number of Alumni represent Great Britain in the Deaflympics in Tokyo. The Tokyo games marked the 100th anniversary of Deaflympics. We're incredibly proud to see that so many of our talented Alumni represented Great Britain.



Oliver Pritchard - Cycling

Oliver competed in the cycling events, including Road, Time Trial, and Sprint races. Oliver began training during lockdown and has since become the first-ever deaf professional triathlete, earning podium finishes at European Championships. Representing Team GB at the Deaflympics was a dream come true for him.

Jasmine Wilkins - Women's Football

Jasmine grew up watching her deaf father and brother play football, which inspired her own journey. From joining her brother's girls' team to playing for her local ladies' team, Jasmine always dreamed of representing her country at the Deaflympics.

Ellis McLean - Men's Football

Ellis started playing football in his garden aged six and progressed through county leagues, Charlton and Fulham deaf teams, Fleet Town, and Camberley, to representing England Deaf at the World Championships (Malaysia 2023) and European Championships (Turkey 2024). He then took on the Deaflympics!

Mark Gill - Head Coach for GB Women's Deaf Football Team

Mark started football coaching at the age of 17. Mark has worked with various football clubs across the country including Fulham Deaf, Bristol City Deaf and Thatcham Town U16. Now, alongside GB commitments, Mark helps coach Longwell Green U10s.

Mark is no stranger to the Deaflympics - prior to his role as Head Coach in Japan with the GB women's team, he coached the GB Men's team in the 2009 Deaflympics in Taiwan and 2011 European Deaf Championships in Denmark, as well as the GB women's team at the 2013 Deaflympics in Bulgaria. Mark was very proud to represent Great Britain again this year and to have achieved the Bronze medal in Tokyo.



THOMAS' ROAD IN RESEARCH

Thomas recently visited Mary Hare School and shared with us what he has been up to since finishing his studies with us.

"Since graduating from Mary Hare in 2014, I've carried the confidence and independence it gave me every single day, and I wouldn't be where I am without it. After completing my bachelor's and master's degrees in the UK, I took a leap and moved to Canada, partly for adventure and the experience of living abroad, and for the opportunity to pursue a PhD in Kinesiology at Western University. My research focuses on Deaf athletes' experiences in sport, and how identity and belonging shape their journeys. It's been a blessing and rewarding, and it all stems from Mary Hare."

ALUMNI NEWS

SAM AND NEVE

We caught up with a couple of Alumni who have recently finished their studies with us and have since taken steps into further education. They tell us about what they are up to and how they have found the transition since leaving Mary Hare.

Sam completed his studies at Mary Hare in 2025 and has since then embarked on his career path through an apprenticeship.

What apprenticeship are you currently studying for?

I am an apprentice lines person with SSE, the electricity network company. This involves learning how to repair and maintain overhead power lines.

What does your apprenticeship involve on a day-to-day basis?

I am in the reactive team so we do different jobs in different locations every day. I spend the day with experienced lines people going to different jobs on the network, to inspect the network, fix faults and help customers.

When did you first become interested in the subject/apprenticeship you're pursuing now? Why did you choose it?

I wanted a practical job and a job where I moved around. I did work experience in Year 10 with an electrical firm in Newbury which I enjoyed, and this got me interested in working in the electricity sector. I wanted an apprenticeship with a big local company as I knew I would learn a lot and thought I would be supported, and SSE is a good company to work for.

How did Mary Hare School or Sixth Form help you prepare for life after school, academically and personally?

The careers team helped me research companies and prepare for interviews. My teachers helped me in my subjects and to get good results which was important to give me the best chance of getting an apprenticeship. Speech and Language helped me prepare for communicating in a hearing world.

How did you find the transition into your apprenticeship environment?

I have enjoyed working at SSE and look



forward to learning more as my training develops. I had to get more used to communicating with hearing people, and the teams I work with had to get used to communicating with a deaf team member. My manager sat down with me early on to talk about my deafness and how SSE could support me, which helped my transition.

Neve completed her A Levels in Biology, Chemistry and English Literature is now studying Veterinary Medicine at the University of Nottingham Veterinary School.

What helped you decide what you wanted to do?

When I was in Year 7, I decided that I would love to be a vet. Since then, this has been my focus and it really helped motivate me to work hard for my GCSEs and A Levels.

What support did you receive at Mary Hare School?

The staff were incredibly supportive in helping me achieve my university offers. They gave me interview coaching, supported me by reviewing my personal statement. They helped me to understand what equipment and support



was available but also allowed me to make the final decisions on what would suit me best.

How did you find the transition into university?

The transition from Mary Hare into university was made significantly smoother by the support provided within Sixth Form and Residential Care. Mary Hare made sure that I understood student loans, signing house contracts, and advocating for myself.

What aspects of your course are you enjoying the most, and why?

I really enjoy our practical sessions as they consolidate our learning from lectures. We also do Clinical Relevance which is small group working through a case to see how the theory applies in a real case.

How would you describe your overall journey?

I am very proud of myself to now finally be on a Veterinary Medicine course and on my way to becoming a vet. I am really grateful for my time at Mary Hare as it has allowed me to achieve my dream career which wouldn't have been possible without their support.

AN INSPIRING VISIT FROM SARAH ADEDJI

During Deaf Awareness Week, we welcomed back Alumna, Sarah Adedji, who is one of only a small number of professionally qualified audiologists who are deaf, having worked in major NHS hospitals. Beyond her clinical career, Sarah is also an author, sign language singer, and dancer.

During her visit, Sarah toured the school and later spoke to our secondary students in assembly, sharing her journey into audiology, the challenges she faced at university, and her fond memories of her time at Mary Hare.

We caught up with Sarah, to find out more about her journey so far:

You are one of the few professionally qualified audiologists who is also deaf. How did your personal experience shape your decision to enter this field?

My lived experience as a Deaf person is one of the driving forces behind the work I do as an audiologist because I, like many others, grew up in audiology appointments and never came across a Deaf audiologist who would have made me feel much more seen and understood as well as being a great fit into the team of professionals that my parents encountered in my journey through diagnosis, aiding, and education.

You are not only an audiologist but also a dancer and sign language singer, how do these creative outlets connect to your identity as a deaf person?

Being creative, as a Deaf person, makes so much sense and it's an escape from



my full-time job. Not only that, but it also contributes to breaking barriers and stereotypes around Deaf people in music and dance. Growing up with hearing aids before being implanted with cochlear implants really changed how I experienced music now that I stream it directly through my cochlear implants and enjoy it a lot better than I did growing up. Transitioning to cochlear implants tested my identity and strengthened it when I relearned how to navigate the hearing world, education, and communication with loved ones. Now I'm able to have more conversations with friends about music, I feel more confident attending concerts with BSL access, and it makes me a much better dancer. Even still, I've also learnt how to enjoy music without my cochlear implants and how to move without hearing which has helped me in my career as a Deaf performer and Deaf dancer.

How were you first approached by Stephen Iliffe to take part in the Portrait of Britain project?

Stephen Iliffe and I have known of each other for a few years now, and, if I remember correctly, I first met him at a Deaf Rave event he photographed while I performed. He reached out to me in the summer last year and invited me onto his Sign Language Stories project. It was at

the end of the shoot that he asked for just a few more minutes of my time as I was heading into work straight after. He initially only wanted to include the photo into his existing collection but then submitted it also for Portrait of Britain, and what do you know, we become one of the winners! It was a beautiful honour just to even be chosen to work with him amongst a few others for a new project, let alone do an impromptu photo that ended winning Portrait of Britain amongst other beautiful work.

As an author, how important is storytelling in changing perceptions about deafness and disability?

Storytelling about disability in general is so important for awareness, identity, and representation. However, our stories do not need to be embellished or exaggerated. Deaf people, and those adjacent to deafness such as CODAs, prefer the authentic stories with accurate representation of the community and our history. These harvest much more genuine conversations and pure interest. As an author, I prefer the real stories that gives room for vulnerability, humour, connection, and a better understanding of the community being spotlighted. There is so much richness in the Deaf community, culture, language, and such that deserves to be treated with dignity.



Sarah recently featured in Stephen Iliffe's Deaf Mosaic project which went onto win Portrait of Britain, and during her time with us we took inspiration and recreated our own Group Portrait of Britain with two Mary Hare students.



Celebrating 80 Years of Mary Hare School



1946-2026