



# CANDIDATE PACK FOR CHIEF EXECUTIVE



# WELCOME

Every moment counts. It's the central theme of our strategy, to ensure we support deaf children during those crucial early years to help set them up for life. But for those involved directly with the charity, this moment in time is a particularly meaningful one; as our CEO of the past 33 years, Susan Daniels, steps down and we search for another exceptional person to lead the charity into the next phase of its history.

Susan has presided over phenomenal growth and impact during her time, driving significant change in the landscape for deaf children, and transforming the lives of many thousands of families. We are looking for someone to build on that legacy, to share in the vision of 'a world where anything is possible for deaf children' and help shape the charity to achieve ever greater impact in the future.

The last couple of years we have undergone something of a transformation. Away from traditional hierarchy and functional silos towards greater empowerment and flexibility, aligned around strategic priorities. Our next CEO will be an advocate of this way of being. Someone who excels at curating culture, setting clear direction, sees the value in giving their people room to deliver and inspires them to move at pace.

The opportunity to deliver meaningful change is vast, there remain significant social and educational barriers for deaf children. We believe we have all the ingredients to make that change happen; an outstanding Executive team, an engaged workforce, stable and secure finances, and a sizable membership base giving us a mandate for change.

You will have a combination of commercial aptitude, strategic delivery experience, and the ability to keep an organisation focussed. Most importantly, you will have an authentic passion for the cause and will naturally be able to unite people around our purpose and vision.

If you think you could be this person, we would love to hear from you.

**Dominic Holton**  
Chair



# ABOUT US

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Eighty years ago, a small group of parents of deaf children met during the Blitz to form the National Deaf Children's Society, just after the 1944 Education Act was passed – with one purpose - to make sure their deaf children benefitted from this new legislation and had a fair and equal right to education.

Today deaf children remain at the heart of everything we do, no matter what their level of hearing loss, how they communicate where they go to school or which technology they use.

We know with the right support from the start, deaf children can and should develop and achieve at the same rate as their hearing peers. To do this, deaf children need full access to a language rich environment whether through speech, sign language or a mixture of approaches.

More than 90% of deaf children are born to hearing parents, with no previous experience of deafness. They have little or no prior knowledge on which to draw on when making important decisions about communication, hearing technology and education. Having access to trusted and balanced information and advice, a key element of our work, is therefore crucial in helping families navigate these decisions.

Our passion and drive have helped us break down many barriers over the years. We successfully campaigned for the introduction of newborn hearing screening which was rolled out across the UK almost 20 years ago and has undoubtedly had a transformative effect on the lives of deaf children.

We pride ourselves on being a campaigning charity as well as an enabler/facilitator. Our unrestricted funding, the majority of which is generated through our extremely successful face-to-face fundraising programme, enables us to deploy resources as we see fit and also enable us to campaign with impunity.

## OUR STRATEGY – 'EVERY MOMENT COUNTS'

But our fundamental challenge is that deaf children are not getting the support they need early enough which is why we launched our 2023 – 2028 strategy 'Every Moment Counts'.

Our strategy sets out our ambitious plan to reach every deaf child, wherever they are and whenever they need us. Our goal is to reach 100% of deaf children and families who need us.

For all children the early years are a crucial time, but for deaf children this is even more true given the impact deafness can have on language development, communication and social skills. It's clear that supporting deaf children during those early years is where we can make the biggest impact and set them up for life. Our five-year plan is all about making every moment count – from the time a child's deafness is identified to their first day at school and beyond. We want to reach every single deaf child to make sure that they are supported in the right way, right from the very beginning. From a quality audiology experience that identifies hearing loss as early as it occurs, to ensuring that deaf children and their families are supported well from the start and that nothing holds deaf children back.

We make sure parents get first class support during those early years and empower them to make informed decisions and champion their child.

We also bring families together, so they feel part of a supportive, connected and dynamic community wherever they live and join-up this experience, as the whole is greater than the sum of the parts.

We campaign and challenge to make sure deaf children get the best start in life. We are working to address significant issues with paediatric audiology all over the UK and ensure that there is a robust specialist education provision in place for deaf children.

We are also working internationally, in low-middle income countries, to advocate for this same principle, starting with the introduction of universal Newborn Hearing Screening programmes, that are supported with family-centred practices. Because no matter where a child is, early identification and support is just as important. them up for life.



## HOW WE GO ABOUT EXECUTING THIS STRATEGY...

To measure whether we are on track in delivering our strategy we use an OKR framework - objectives and key results (OKRs). OKRs help answer two critical questions: where we want to go (the objective) and how we'll know when we get there (the key results).

This gives us a clearer focus for our work and provides a more measurable set of strategic metrics that will provide both assurance and challenge to us through the ongoing review and implementation of our strategy.

To manage our environment in which uncertainty, ambiguity and change is a constant, we have made a commitment to be a charity that uses Agile and Lean to best deliver our strategy. To do this we need the best people, with the right mindset to deliver to a high standard.

We focus on empowering our people, ensuring continuous delivery of value to customers, creating a safe environment, fostering rapid learning and experimentation with short feedback loops.

We believe in investing in our team's development, encouraging a culture of trust and open communication, and making data-driven decisions for better outcomes.

We organise ourselves into Chapters and Squads – led by platform leads who work with the C-suite to define our strategy we are working on and when. Chapters can be seen as the home team where our people learn and share good practice and failures with colleagues who have the same critical skills. Squads are cross organizational teams who bring their skills where they are needed, and platform leads are the leaders of parts of our strategy where effort is focused into quarterly cycles to ensure we deliver the most effective and efficient ways to get things done.

We operate in a culture of candid feedback where growth feedback is critical to help us develop, learn and grow.

We make an impact: We're ambitious and we won't stop until we've broken down every barrier. We work fast to give families what they need and make a lasting difference.

We're united: We stand side by side with families, professionals and supporters. Together we're an unstoppable force for deaf children's rights.



# JOB DESCRIPTION

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**Job title:** Chief Executive

**Reports to:** Board of trustees

**Direct reports:** Chief Finance Officer/Deputy CEO, Chief Strategy Officer, Chief Operating Officer, Chief Revenue Officer, Chief Information Officer

## ROLE PURPOSE:

As CEO, you will be responsible for all aspects of the charity, including strategic direction, operational management, financial sustainability, and ensuring the Board can fully discharge its statutory and governance (including safeguarding) obligations.

You are a passionate advocate for deaf children and their families, with a strong commitment to driving systemic change and improving demonstrable impact and outcomes for those we serve.

You have a deep understanding of the charity's financial model and have the commercial acumen to continue to grow our income.

You will have a strong focus on our culture and ways of working, building on the foundations of our recent organisational transformation. You will lead by example by consistently demonstrating an agile mindset and principles - setting the tone for the workforce to be sector leading, customer focused, data led, and insight driven.

You will have a digital first, customer centric mindset, recognising that the primary route to achieving our objectives is through leveraging digital as the key facilitator to delivery.

- **Direction** - clear strategic vision, direction and leadership, proposing to the Board long term strategies, business plans and annual budgets
- **Focus** - ensure organisational focus in executing and delivering against agreed strategies and plans
- **Team** - develop a highly skilled, capable and motivated workforce, aligned to our strategy and inspired to deliver the best customer experience
- **Culture** - embody and demonstrate the charity's values to the whole organisation, leading and promoting a culture of innovation and agility that demonstrates the positive difference we make to those we support
- **Network & Influencing** - engage with senior stakeholders, politicians and officials around the UK and in the future Internationally
- **Advocacy** - represent National Deaf Children's Society in the media and across the wider charity sector
- **Governance** - support the Chair of Trustees and the Board to ensure the highest level of governance is in place at all times, with regular reviews to ensure its continuous effectiveness
- **Stewardship** - protect the critical assets of the enterprise (finance, talent, technology, intellectual property and ecosystems) ensuring effective use to drive value
- **Investment** - take responsibility for the investment of the charities' financial resources and maximising the impact we have on deaf children and their families



## WHAT MIGHT A DAY IN THE LIFE LOOK LIKE?

- Maintaining ultimate accountability for the National Deaf Children’s Society’s delivery of its strategic objectives and performance
- Along with the other Executives, creating a common vision and a strategic roadmap for the charity that fully serves our customers - and develops the organisation to reach its full potential
- Creating a future focused culture and promote a culture of innovation, failure, learning and growth
- Driving technology enhancement to generate future success
- Living and breathing agile values and principles and being a shining example to others
- Navigating organisational dynamics to make things happen
- Navigating a localised and global world to understand where our energy is best placed
- Relationship building and leverage at senior levels across all relevant sectors
- Facilitating effective communication with the board of trustees, collaborating with them on strategic initiatives
- Operating with integrity and upholding a strong sense of corporate social responsibility and ethical decision making
- Preparedness to handle crises and unforeseen challenges, demonstrating composure under pressure
- Fostering a positive, collaborative and agile culture



# PERSON SPECIFICATION

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## KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE

- Significant experience in developing and articulating the vision and executing long-term strategic plans and balancing risk and innovation to drive sustained growth
- Experienced in navigating major expansions, partnership and systemic change
- A laser focus on delivering systemic change and long-term outcomes for deaf children and their families
- Strong financial acumen, understanding of financial statements and metrics, and experience of overseeing budgeting and forecasting in a large complex organisation
- Strong experience in handling crises with composure and decisiveness and building organisational resilience to navigate uncertainties
- A deep understanding of how successful fundraising in a large charity works and a strong appreciation for the dynamics and drivers of success in our fundraising approach
- An appreciation of services delivered through partners, volunteers and local community groups and what to be attentive to in their design and implementation
- Knowledge of Agile working and a leadership style that enables this

## SKILLS AND ABILITIES

- Excellent analytical thinking and resourcefulness to find creative solutions for complex problems
- Highly skilled in diplomacy in managing internal and external relationships
- Highly capable of assessing and managing risk effectively, with excellent decision-making skills to navigate uncertainties
- Highly effective negotiation skills for partnerships and collaborations and demonstrates strong conflict resolution skills
- Strong ability to build and maintain relationships with stakeholders and leverage professional networks for opportunities

## STYLES AND BEHAVIOURS

- Comfortable to let go of control, an inspirational servant leader who surrenders most of their authority and puts the team first
- Always resilient in the face of setbacks and approaches challenges with enthusiasm, seeking to learn and improve on their own merits
- Always trusts that their colleagues are doing their work with the very best of intentions
- Genuine and authentic and comfortable with making mistakes and telling others about it
- Skilled in cultivating networks and sustaining partnerships through excellent relationships built on integrity and trust
- When working externally, willing to be creative and see the art of the possible to advance of the work of the charity and the sector
- A leading authority in the sector who contributes frequently to sector events and committees
- Adept external and internal influencer to promote and deliver our strategy to external audiences to further our cause
- Recognised as a champion of Agility in the charity sector and brought in as a thought partner

# TERMS OF APPOINTMENT

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## SALARY

The salary for this role is c.£140,000 per annum on a full-time permanent basis.

## LOCATION

The CEO role is home based in the United Kingdom, with considerable domestic travel particularly around the London area. Some International travel may also be required.

## BENEFITS

- Annual performance-based salary increase
- Home based with flexible hours
- 30 days holiday plus bank holidays and 3 additional days at Christmas
- Pension (5.5% employer contribution) – group personal pension with Aegon. Minimum EE contributions of 1.5%
- Healthcare cash plan with Westfield – NDCS funds basic cover but the EE can increase benefits or add additional partner cover. The scheme provides money back towards everyday healthcare bills, like optical, dental, therapy sessions, prescription charges and vaccinations.
- Employee assistance and wellbeing programmes
- Death in service benefit of 3 x annual salary
- Sickness leave that increases with length of service – starts at 18 days full pay for staff over one years' service and increases to 90 days and 100 days half pay after 5 years' service. Full sick pay starts from first day with NDCS and is pro rata up to one year

# HOW TO APPLY

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We hope you will consider making an application. To make an application, please go to <https://starfishsearch.com/jobs/ndcs-ce/> and click on the apply now button, with the following prepared:

- Your CV (no more than three sides).
- A supporting statement (no more than two sides) that sets out why you think this role is the right move for you and how you meet the knowledge and experience criteria.

We would also be grateful if you would complete the Equality and Diversity monitoring form on the online application process. This form is for monitoring purposes only and is not treated as part of your application.

<b>Closing date</b>	Friday 21st March 2025
<b>Preliminary interviews with Starfish</b>	w/c 7th April 2025
<b>First stage interviews with NDCS</b>	w/c 28th April 2025
<b>Final Panel interviews including stakeholder engagement</b>	w/c 5th May 2025