

# The Best of Both Worlds



*Hello! Kia ora everyone!*

My name is Benazir. I am 13 years old. I am profoundly deaf - which means that I can't hear anything without my hearing aids. When I put my hearing aids on I can hear some sounds. My family all have normal hearing, I am the only one who is deaf.

I live in Christchurch with my family and I go to school at van Asch Deaf Education Centre in Sumner. I am in Year 10.

## My school

van Asch was the first school for Deaf children in New Zealand. It is 127 years old. The students at van Asch range in age from 5 – 21 years old. Some of us are boarders and some of us are day students. I used to be a boarder when I lived in Wellington, but now I am a day student.

## My favourite stuff to do

I have lots of good friends at van Asch. We mostly use New Zealand Sign Language (NZSL) to communicate with each other. Sometimes we talk. I love to chat with my friends!  
We all like to play soccer together at morning tea and lunchtime. Soccer is my favourite sport. I also like rugby and basketball.

## Only girl in my class

My teacher's name is Steve. There are only five students in my class, four boys and one girl – that's me! I like that, it's cool! My favourite subject is Maths. I think I am quite good at it.

## Communicating with others

I also have lots of hearing friends. I teach my friends to use sign language so they can understand me. I can understand what they say if I listen with my hearing aids and watch their lips.  
I cannot hear well enough to use the telephone, so I use e-mails, faxes, MSN and texting to communicate with my deaf and hearing friends.

Some people find it hard to understand me. If I go into a shop I have to write down what I want on a piece of paper. If I don't have paper, I use my cell phone to text the words.

## At home

At home, I love to play on Playstation 2 and X-Box with my brother. If I watch T.V. I have to read the subtitles. It's hard for me to go to the movies because there are no subtitles and the actors speak really fast. It's better to watch a movie on DVD with subtitles.

I like being me. I am really lucky. I have the best of both the deaf and the hearing worlds.

*Thank you for reading my story,  
Benazir*