**Head Teacher/Chair of School Governors Letter Template**

To: [Type recipient details here] [Service Provider Contact Details]

cc. [Type cc names here] [Date]

Dear [type name here],

**Ear Check Service for Special Residential Schools**

The NHS aims to improve children’s health by making sure they get the right checks at the right time. We are writing to you to invite children and young people attending your school to participate in an NHS ear checks service that is being offered to special residential schools across the country.

The reason it is important to provide ear checks for children and young people in residential special schools, is that changes to hearing can develop during childhood, and these changes may not always be readily identified amongst children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), including those with a learning disability, autism or both.

From August 2022 to July 2023, NHS England carried out an ear check pilot programme in 16 residential special schools and colleges across England. It was found that 13% of children and young people checked had an unaddressed ear or hearing problem. Unaddressed hearing or ear problems can hinder a child’s communication and language development, adversely impact their education, physical, social and emotional well-being and generally negatively affect their quality of life.

The ear checks service model has been co-designed with special residential schools that participated in our pilot programme, along with parents, carers and children and young people with a learning disability and autistic children and young people. We are very aware that children and young people at residential schools have additional needs and would like to reassure you that reasonable adjustments will be made in the delivery of ear checks.

The Ear Check comprises three checks to assess hearing and ear health:

**Otoacoustic emissions (OAE)** Measures the response of the ear to sound. In the test a soft foam or rubber tip is placed in the child’s ear. A soft sound is played, and the ear’s response will automatically be measured. This is similar to the newborn babies’ hearing screening.

**Otoscopy:** This islooking into the ear to visualise any problems that might affect ear health or hearing. A picture will be taken and sent to a specialist to review.

**Tympanometry**: this check looks at how well the eardrum is moving and is helpful in detecting ear infections.

The checks are safe, simple and the results are reliable. They require no active response from the child or young person. Where a hearing or ear health problem is detected, an appropriate referral will be made so that further investigation, treatment and support can be provided as soon as possible.

We welcome the opportunity to discussing our service offer with you further and answering any questions you and your team may have. For further information please contact: [Name/Contact Details]

Yours sincerely,

[Sender’s e-signature]

[Sender’s name]

[Sender’s job title]

[Sender’s organisation]