



■ LEARNING WAVE: Becky and Jon Price — who run the Big Blue surf school — pictured in Welcombe.

# Surf school on board to help deaf children

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A NORTH DEVON surf school is taking part in a specialist training session to help deaf children learn to surf.

Members of the Big Blue Surf School together with the Exeter School for the Deaf, the Surfable project and the British Surfing Association will be getting together in Bude today to look at how to help youngsters learn how to master the waves.

Children from the Exeter School for the Deaf will also join them on the North Cornwall coast.

The aim is to offer young deaf people with certain disabilities the experience of surfing. Organisers are hoping to improve the health, well being, and self esteem of those taking part, and provide a new, fun experience.

The session is part of a pilot project

involving five British Surfing Association approved surf schools with the aim of them becoming specialist centres.

Big Blue Surf School based in Welcombe began teaching deaf students three years ago and now has bookings from all over the country.

The school was formed in 1999 by surfer Jon Price who was made a coach with the English Surfing Federation earlier this year.

He runs the surf school with his wife Becky, also a qualified coach, who provides the lessons for deaf students, and is keen to build on their success.

The couple also recently launched the Bude Junior Surf Academy in North Cornwall for local children aged 8 to 16.

A trainer from the Exeter School for the Deaf will be working with coaches from the schools at the session today to help raise awareness of the needs of deaf and signing students.

Becky will be passing on her tips for tailoring surf lessons based on her past experience.

There will be classroom based activities, followed by an afternoon on the beach.

Stuart Harrison, development manager of UK Deaf Sport, said: "UK Deaf Sport congratulates the Surfable Project and Big Blue Surf school in hosting the Surfing Instructors training in partnership with the Exeter School for the Deaf.

"All delegates will hear from experts who work with young deaf people and also from surf instructors who have already begun to pilot work with deaf and hard of hearing young people.

"In recent years deaf surfers from around the world have begun to gather in some of the world's most exotic locations. We are confident that this training event will provide the first steps in the performance pathway, that will one day see deaf surfers competing internationally."