

Vision Impairment curriculum offer policy

Our Vision:

Bradford Council Local Authority Led Resourced Provisions for children with Vision Impairment aim to be a centre of excellence for all.

Our approach places equality and inclusion of all at the heart of what we do. Our pupils will learn to appreciate and value difference and diversity. Our pupils will engage in learning experiences inside and outside of the classroom which will equip them with the academic, language and communication and social and emotional skills required to prepare for adulthood and life beyond school.

Staff and pupils value and respect the needs of each and every individual, implementing the necessary and appropriate specialist approaches to ensuring each pupil has full access to their education.

Curriculum offer:

All pupils who have a place within Grove House Local Authority Led Resourced Provision are registered Sight Impaired (SI) or Severely Sight Impaired (SSI).

They will have an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) or be undergoing assessment for one, which identifies Vision Impairment (VI) as a Special Educational Need (SEN).

These pupils are entitled to receive additional teaching and support from the Local Authority Led Resourced Provision (LARP) and will receive access to the mainstream curriculum offer of Grove House school where lessons are differentiated appropriately in accordance with the individual needs of those pupils.



As a pupil accessing the Local Authority Led Resourced Provision, there are various specialist curricula offered as standard in order to ensure these children and young people are able to achieve their potential and be equipped with the necessary skills required for a successful life beyond school.

All pupils have access to specialist teaching, support, modified learning resources, specialist technology and intervention as directed by Qualified Teacher of the Vision Impaired (QTVI). Access to mainstream lessons, Resourced Provision lessons and extra curricular activities is facilitated by Specialist Support Workers for the Vision Impaired who are trained in meeting the needs of vision impaired pupils.

Pre Braille

Prior to beginning pre-braille work, it is expected that all pupils will have experiential learning gained from working through the *Developmental Journal for babies and children with Visual Impairment (VI Journal)* and *Oregon Project for Visually Impaired and Blind Preschool children: skills inventory (Oregon)*. The areas of development taken from within the VI Journal and Oregon will be used as a baseline from which more development and /or pre-braille activities may begin.

The programmes of work used to develop pre-braille skills within the Resourced Provision are activities adapted from the Fantastic Fingers and Feeling Ready to Read schemes. Depending on the needs of the child, these schemes can run parallel to one another or be used sequentially. Activities and ideas from these areas of work can be modified and expanded upon as appropriate to the individual needs of the child and incorporated into class work.

Braille

Braille is a vital means of communication for Blind and Severely Sight Impaired pupils as well as those who may have a degenerative visual condition meaning access to print is unsustainable.

It is the responsibility of all Qualified Teachers of the Vision Impaired (QTVI) to ensure that Braille literacy and numeracy skills are developed to achieve the best possible



fluency in both reading and recording by tactile means across all appropriate curriculum areas. Acquisition of braille literacy skills is preceded by thorough training in fine motor skills, tactual discrimination, background experiences, language development and 'reading readiness'. Pupils who are assessed to be requiring Braille will often be taught uncontracted Braille before learning contracted Braille; although this may vary dependent upon literacy skills of the pupil prior to learning.

Specialist ICT and equipment

Specialist ICT and equipment refers to software and devices that can be used to support access to learning in school for pupils with a vision impairment. Liaison between school and resourced provision to support the use of specialist technology onsite is essential.

Specialist ICT can include but is not exclusive to; large screen tablets , refreshable Braille displays (BrailleSense, Orbit Reader), touch typing (TypingClub, bluetooth keyboards), screen mirroring technology (Join.Me, Google Meet), screen-reading solutions (iOS voiceover, JAWS), file sharing software (Google Drive, OneDrive) as well as appropriate Apps (Seeing AI, EasyReader).

Pupils with a vision impairment will be continually assessed to ascertain whether specialist ICT equipment can be implemented to support further learning and independence. They will then receive units of direct teaching to support their skills in using the equipment/software before being able to use independently in class. Where possible, decisions around which technology for a pupil to use will consider; access to technology at home, likelihood of technology being used in future years and skills of the pupil.

Tactile Skills

The differentiation of work into Braille and tactile format is time consuming and requires detailed forward planning to ensure that work is meaningfully adapted for the pupil to access and understand. The pace of the new curriculum presents challenges. Crucial to this provision being successfully facilitated, is the holding of timely liaison meetings with the class teacher.



Work will be adapted appropriately into Braille, large print and tactile format by the Curriculum Resource Officer and QTVI in preparation for the lesson. In addition, any particular resources or equipment will also be gathered, to enable appropriate adaptations to be made in preparation for the relevant lesson.

Pupils require tactile skills to understand tactile diagrams, which they are presented with. Pupils receive lessons based on developing their tactile skills for subjects such as maths and science. This involves pre and post teaching along with completing example questions, which focus on tactile diagrams.

Habilitation and Mobility

All pupils with VI receive orientation and mobility training from a Habilitation trainee or specialist. This involves skills ranging from sighted guide to long cane training. Pupils are taught to travel independently round school; building routes involving key areas such as their classroom, dining hall, playground and social areas as appropriate.

On an age appropriate basis, pupils will learn routes outside school and their home areas, leading up to travelling independently on buses and trains. Priority for mobility is given to new pupils into school and those in key transition years.

Independence and Living Skills

A graduated specialist curriculum devised by the Habilitation team builds systematically on age appropriate life skills. As the pupils miss everyday incidental learning, they have dedicated independent and social skills sessions to support their development in these areas. It also provides the pupils with a VI network group to support their emotional wellbeing, self-esteem and transition into adulthood.



Independent Access Skills

Enabling independent access to the curriculum and developing independent recording skills for a pupil with a visual impairment relies not only on work being adapted and modified to a particular specification, but also on a range of tactile, visual, ICT skills and recording techniques being taught and developed. The Independent Access Skills Curriculum is individually tailored to meet each pupil's specific visual/tactile needs. It is the curriculum that runs alongside the main curriculum, usually ongoing throughout the pupil's school life and is essential to enabling them to develop the range of skills that they need to support their independent access to the curriculum.

Relationship between School and Resourced Provision Staff

The differentiation and modification of work into Braille, Modified Large Print (MLP) and non-visual formats is time consuming and requires detailed forward planning to ensure that work is meaningfully adapted for the pupil to access and understand. The pace of the mainstream curriculum can present challenges. Crucial to this provision being successfully facilitated is the relationship between school teaching staff and the specialist staff in the Resource Provision.

Class teachers will ensure that they meet with QTVI and Specialist Support Workers regularly to discuss learning outcomes and resources. Work can then be adapted appropriately into Braille, modified large print and tactile format by the Curriculum Resource Officer and QTVI in preparation for the lesson. Where appropriate; QTVI or Specialist Support Workers will pre-teach or consolidate learning to ensure that pupils can move through the curriculum alongside their peers.



Access to curriculum information (enlarged print)

Each pupil's vision will be assessed and monitored on an ongoing basis by the QTVI , to ensure accurate information pertaining to their vision is available for key staff and to ensure provision continues to meet their needs. The majority of the pupils with VI who can access print are unable to access standard learning resources, used by their peers, for sustained periods of time. Therefore, it is necessary to make a careful and accurate assessment of the required print size, font, format and layout of text required (**print specification**), to enable their access to curriculum resources.

All Specialist Support Workers for Vision Impaired Children and Young People receive ongoing training and supervision in the production of modified learning resources such as Modified Large Print (MLP) and the use of specialist technology.

Access Arrangements

Pupils with a visual impairment are entitled to access arrangements in all tests and examinations to ensure they have equal opportunities to achieve their full potential under these conditions. Primary pupils with vision impairment will ordinarily receive 100% additional time and access to a reader as appropriate, it is essential that the school is able to facilitate this through space and time being made available during assessment periods. The QTVI will assess the pupil's needs for internal assessments and formative tests. Appropriate advice, information and support pertinent to meeting the pupil's needs will be provided for both the pupil and for the school.

Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the school to ensure all access arrangements are implemented in accordance with their internal exam and test policies. The QTVI will support the school with this process, to ensure the pupil's needs are appropriately met.



Functional Vision Assessment

Functional Vision Assessments (FVA) of the children's levels of residual vision are conducted using both formal (clinically recognised measures of vision) and non-formal (observations) methods. For those children who are using vision to access learning, a Functional Vision Assessment is updated at least once per academic year to ensure that the correct seating position, teaching strategies, resources and technology are in place to suit needs. Functional vision assessments are carried out by QTVI's who have knowledge and understanding of a range of visual conditions and how these may impact on access to learning. The findings from the FVA is shared with parents/carers, key staff and pupil. The findings of the FVA does not replace clinical assessments that are carried out by Orthoptists or Ophthalmologist but do provide a snapshot of how the young person uses their vision over a period of time in their current learning environment.

Transition

The QTVI will support each educational transition stage of the pupil with a vision impairment according to their individual visual needs. The QTVI will work in collaboration with parents/carers, key school staff and relevant professionals at both their current pre-school/school placement and with the school, the pupil is moving to..

All other transition e.g. within phases, is overseen by the QTVI. This will involve conversations with parents/carers, key staff and pupils to support with additional visits to new learning environments, information sharing and training for new staff. The Habilitation team are also involved in the process to support orientation around new and unfamiliar environments. This will ensure that the children feel prepared for the next phase of their learning journey.



Language Communication

The greater the degree of vision impairment, the more likely children with VI are to present with early social and communication difficulties (Parr *et al.*, 2010). Vision impairment may affect the play, motor, cognitive, social and communication skills of young children, as typical development occurs through unrestricted interaction with the environment. It could be that during the early years, when children are dependent on caregivers for language development, parents/carers may not be aware of how to adapt their interactions to stimulate development through alternative, non-visual means. Increased information about language and communication development in young children with vision impairment may improve early identification of communication difficulties, assist in goal setting and draw attention to the need for early communication intervention. All QTVI's and specialist support staff in the school working with children with a vision impairment will use ELKLAN language and communication strategies. This will support and provide strategies for the children to communicate effectively with their peers, familiar and unfamiliar adults.