

Visual impairment

Whole school approaches

- Planning promotes access to the learning environment and supports good progress for learners with VI.
- Planning reflects an understanding of the needs of a learner with VI, e.g. the use of programmes such as circle of friends to reduce social isolation.
- Positive role models of disability used within the curriculum.
- Planning demonstrates an awareness of VI needs in relation to the additional curriculum.
- The school accesses training provided by STLS Sensory Service through the core offer of awareness level training - online training for visual impairment (VI).
- Staff training promotes the development of pupils with VI to be independent learners and decision makers.
- Training opportunities for VI are supported, e.g. "Supporting Inclusion of Pupils with VI" course.

What you will see

(The difficulty/barrier, how this presents and the impact on the learner)

ACCESS TO THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Learners may not be able to:

- see what everyone else can see
- get around the school building or classrooms easily or at all
- to engage positively with the outside space
- to access information in the same way as their peers
- find things or specific people
- participate fully in some sports activities.

What can help

(Provision – strategies, interventions and resources)

- Signage has good clarity and contrast, and routes are clearly signed with marked steps, handrails and the provision of a shaded areas in playground.
- Whole school awareness of the importance of light control, e.g. window blinds, lighting in stairwells, reduction of glare.
- Low tech equipment to support access, e.g. desk slopes, task lighting, audio recording.
- Support the use of a range of magnifiers/Low Vision Aids.
- VI-friendly school including the orderly approach to organisation of personal belongings and movement around the school.
- School website and intranet fully accessible.
- Generic accessibility options are used and a range of computer access devices, e.g. switches, keyboard commands, high visibility keyboard, simple speech output devices, appropriate font/colour.
- Learners have internet access with individual log-in linked to accessibility options.
- Worksheets available electronically.
- Access to the interactive whiteboard through separate monitor.
- Awareness of posture and seating.
- Provision of specialist learning facilities, e.g. quiet area.
- School to undertake risk assessment for practical subjects, sports, unstructured time and outside visits.

What you will see

ACCESS TO THE CURRICULUM

Learners may have difficulties with:

- seeing work on the whiteboard
- reading regular size print in books or on worksheets
- sharing books
- seeing the details of pictures and illustrations
- seeing text or icons on a computer or finding the mouse marker
- scanning work for information
- finding equipment and resources
- writing in cursive script and reading cursive script
- seeing fine detail such as mathematical signs
- seeing the ball in PE games.

Learners may:

- appear confused or unable to start a task
- be very self-conscious
- get angry or upset
- take a long time to complete tasks
- get left behind in PE.

What can help

- School staff have awareness of the effect of visual impairment on access to the curriculum.
- Ensure that the curriculum is adapted to promote full participation and the development of independence skills.
- Appropriate analysis of curriculum content to ensure learning outcomes are reached by using adapted curriculum materials, environment and information and independent learning:
 - large, clear print
 - individual copies of books
 - additional verbal explanations
 - appropriate positioning in class
 - reduction in the number of examples needed to be completed
 - extra time for internal and external tests
 - access to tablets and e-readers.
- Appropriate classroom organisation including alternative labelling, high visibility playground equipment, adapted PE equipment.
- Careful consideration of the requirements of homework activities, which will be differentiated by task.
- Modified or adapted materials to provide immediate access to learning activities.
- Special arrangements applied for internal/external learning assessments for modified papers.
- Signpost to training opportunities, e.g. online training for VI, 'Supporting Inclusion of Pupils with VI' course.
- Peer support and sensitive grouping/pairing for a range of activities.
- Monitoring of outcomes supports the next stage of planning.
- Seek specialist advice from a Qualified Teacher for VI.

What you will see

ACCESS TO COMMUNICATION

Learners may:

- seek out adults and support from adults
- play with younger pupils
- be socially isolated
- wish to get away from close adult support
- lack independence and resilience
- express sadness about their visual impairment
- feel sad that they cannot do things independently.

What can help

- Use of language which is appropriate to engage the learner.
- Support for a range of communication modes in the classroom situation.
- Learners are directed to tasks by using their first name.
- Use of language which is both descriptive and specific.
- Provide opportunities for learners to gain the language to express their concerns.
- Provide opportunities for learners to learn to talk about their visual impairment.
- Use of laptops and tablets to promote electronic communication and access to curriculum materials in appropriate electronic formats.
- For learners who require specialist access equipment or who use Braille please seek advice from a Qualified Teacher for VI.