

Multi-sensory impairment

Whole school approaches

- School access policy reflects the needs of sensory impairment, including deafblindness.
- Positive role models of disability are used within the curriculum.
- Planning demonstrates an awareness of deafblindness needs in relation to the additional curriculum, environment, mobility and signage, road safety awareness, stranger danger.
- Planning reflects understanding of the needs of a learner with deafblindness, including the use of programmes such to reduce social isolation.
- Provision for disability awareness-raising training, with particular reference to the impact of sensory impairment including deafblindness.
- Staff training promotes the development of pupils to be independent learners and decision makers.
- SENCO accesses sensory impairment awareness training, e.g. STLS Sensory Service core offer - Online Training for Multi-Sensory Impairment (MSI).

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 or hear what everyone else can see and hear
- get around the school building or classrooms easily or at all
- to engage positively with the outside space
- hear in noisy environments
- find things or specific people
- participate fully in some sports activities
- respond to instructions or announcements
- respond to fire alarms.

What can help

(Provision – strategies, interventions and resources)

- Staff have a positive approach toward the use of amplification, and the use of hearing aids, supplied by Health, is supported.
- Signage has good clarity and contrast and routes are clearly signed.
- Handrails on stairs, marked steps and stairwells are well lit.
- Computer network used to enable curriculum access and supports accessibilities options.
- Teaching areas provide optimum learning conditions:
 - good lighting, blinds to reduce glare
 - good listening conditions and sound field systems
 - reduction of background noise
 - control of noise with carpets and curtains etc
 - positioning of teachers/peers to improve access information
 - awareness of posture and seating
 - worksheets available electronically
 - access to the interactive whiteboard through separate monitor
 - low tech equipment to support access, e.g. desk slopes, task lighting, audio recording, magnifiers.

What you will see

ACCESS TO THE CURRICULUM

Learners may have difficulties with:

- hearing their teacher
- hearing in a noisy classroom
- seeing work on the whiteboard
- reading regular size print
- seeing the details of pictures and illustrations
- accessing spoken information when the teacher is facing away
- hearing their peers in class discussions
- understanding what is being said on DVDs or TV
- understanding new or complicated language
- writing in cursive script and reading cursive script
- seeing fine detail such as mathematical signs
- seeing computer icons
- 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

- Appropriate analysis of curriculum content to ensure learning outcomes are reached by using adapted curriculum materials, environment and information:
 - 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
 - use of visual timetables.
- Appropriate classroom organisation including: alternative labelling, high visibility playground equipment, adapted PE equipment.
- School curriculum must include appropriate mobility training.
- Teachers accommodate all learners' preferred methods of recording/ communication in their teaching and assessment.
- Teacher uses a range of communication approaches in the presentation of the curriculum.
- Considerations of the physical elements of task so as to focus on key concept/objective.
- Peer support and sensitive grouping/pairing for a range of activities.
- Modified or adapted materials to provide immediate access to learning activities.
- Monitoring of outcomes supports next stage of planning.
- Good clarity and contrast used in the preparation of classroom materials.
- Careful consideration of the requirements of homework activities.
- Special arrangements applied for internal/ external learning assessments.
- Seek specialist advice from a Qualified Teacher for MSI.

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 sensory impairment
- feel sad that they cannot do things independently.

What can help

- Good voice levels and clear speech are always used.
- Use of positive language to promote self-esteem.
- Use of a range of communication modes which are appropriate to engage all pupils.
- Opportunities for monitoring the success of communication mode.
- Opportunities for pre-teaching specific vocabulary.
- Provide opportunities for learners to gain the language to express their concerns.
- Provide opportunities for learners to learn to talk about their multi-sensory impairment.
- For learners who require specialist access equipment or for those who use Braille or BSL, please seek advice from a Qualified Teacher for MSI.