

Reasonable Adjustments For Children and Young People (CYP) with a Visual Impairment (VI) -All staff

Education providers have a duty to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that CYP with visual difficulties are not at a substantial disadvantage when compared with their peers (Equality Act 2010). There is a huge amount of evidence to show that CYP under-achieve unless schools are proactive in providing a fully inclusive environment.

“The Equality Act says that schools must proactively consider the needs of children with vision impairment and make reasonable adjustments to ensure they are not disadvantaged in their education. Schools should not wait until a child falls behind before additional support is provided. The Code of Practice says a qualified teacher of children with vision impairment (QTVI) should be involved if there are concerns.” (RNIB – Supporting People with Sight Loss)

The table below suggests the most common reasonable adjustments which schools can make. It should be used to audit whether reasonable adjustments are being made. Every visually impaired child has different needs due to different eye conditions and levels of functional vision, different settings and the age their vision deteriorated. It is important that schools follow Visual Assessment report recommendations alongside the reasonable adjustments recommended below if they have a child with a VI in their school.

Name of CYP:

Room/lesson being audited:

Audited by:

Date:

	Reasonable adjustments	Further information	Achieved Yes/No?	Action Required
1	Ensure all specialist VI equipment or modified work recommended in a report is in an accessible place for the CYP and they know how to use it to enable them to access the curriculum independently. (eg Perkins Braille, electronic Braille, Laptop with additional VI software, tablet, Low Vision Aid, electronic magnification aid and/or visualizer, coloured overlay, raised desk top, bold pens)	Working without additional VI equipment and/or modified print a CYP may not be able to access the curriculum or be able to produce work. This will cause them visual distress and will impact on achievement. School staff have a responsibility to ensure visual access to the curriculum and ETHV can provide specialist equipment, support staff or modify work if this is stipulated on the Visual Assessment report/EHCP .		
2	Have a clear uncluttered visual environment where all CYP can visually access information and learn without the distraction of superfluous decoration.	ETHV can provide a free Visual Access Audit report to enable the setting to address concerns. This may include recommendation with regard to marking difficult to see areas or steps, ensuring lighting conditions match the CYP's visual		

	<p>If a child has a profound visual impairment (registered sight impaired) the environment should take account of their sensory need for tactile and auditory cues, for example Braille in the environment, a good listening environment, clear organisation of equipment.</p>	<p>needs, keeping all doors either fully open or closed, information on walls is of a correct font size and contrast and at a level in the class to be visually accessible (e.g. not high above eye line) , Braille cues are placed appropriately.</p>		
3	<p>Ensure the CYP is placed in the best position in class to meet their visual needs and that the light conditions are suitable for them. This will be written in to their report as recommendations for access to learning.</p>	<p>Some CYP may need bright light where as other may require the diffusing blinds to reduce glare because they are sensitive to bright lights. Some may need to be seated close and central where as others may need to be seated further back to increase the area they can view. The CYP may know the best place to sit, ask them and encourage them to be independent in making choices for themselves.</p>		
4	<p>Use real objects where possible as CYP who have been born with a visual condition may have no visual memory to recall objects or concepts. Use completed work or real objects to check their understanding of what you are introducing or talking about.</p>	<p>If a CYP was born with a visual condition or the condition developed at a young age they will have had no incidental learning opportunities (TV, media or looking around) to tell them about the world around them, about how things work or fit together, or about how things relate to each other. Think about how someone with reduced vision would know what you are relaying to a class, would they understand or have had an experience to help them understand without using their vision?</p>		
5	<p>Ensure all homework is ready before the lesson and prepared in a format to meet the CYP's visual needs (e.g. correct font size, uncluttered, modified, Braille) This will ensure they can, like their peers, access homework.</p>	<p>CYP with a visual impairment often get very confused and upset about homework. This is because they cannot record or follow a verbal explanation at the end of the lesson while everyone is packing away and often need additional time to pack their additional VI equipment away too. Homework must be prepared prior to the lesson to match their individual needs. Acknowledge that visual fatigue at the end of the day can impact on the amount a CYP with a VI can produce and reduce the amount given.</p>		
6	<p>Let CYP with a visual impairment know it is ok to say if they cannot see without fear of being told off. Read their Vision ID Card (if provided by ETHV) and return it to them and adopt the</p>	<p>This is so strategies can be put in place by the teacher (correct font size on IWB or worksheets – up to N18) or specialist VI staff (e.g. Braille, specialist Vi equipment or modified work N24-36) to enable the CYP to access the curriculum and produce work independently.</p>		

	teaching strategies they need to help them access a lesson. Some visual conditions cause vision to fluctuate throughout the day and this should be accounted for.			
7	Let the CYP with a visual impairment know it is ok to tell someone there is a problem with their visual access to the curriculum or their equipment and expect it to be acted on immediately.	Without working equipment or work modified to meet their visual needs, CYP with a visual impairment will not be able to visually access or take part in lessons. It is not good enough to say someone will read to them or write for them if there is equipment that can be used or modified work that can be provided to enable them to work independently alongside their peers.		
8	Examination concessions should be applied to all assessments from Early Years through to the end of schooling.	For CYP with a visual impairment to access examinations, assessments and test tasks, they may require modified or Braille papers, a quiet good listening environment, additional specialist equipment and additional time to visually process information. Some examinations may require a scribe or a reader. National examinations concessions must be based on 'normal ways of working' for the CYP – which must be well established and used.		
9	Visual Awareness Training for all staff; teaching, non-teaching and supervising.	<p>CYP with a visual impairment are as cognitively able as children in their peer group. Greater understanding of their condition, knowledge and use of specialist equipment along with specific classroom strategies and support for mobility and life skills will allow CYP with a visual impairment to achieve equally as their peers.</p> <p>Contact: Educational Team for Hearing and Vision on (01472) 323465 to arrange as soon as possible.</p> <p>Flexible training sessions can be arranged free of charge.</p>		

This document is part of a pack and should be used in conjunction with:

- How visually friendly is your classroom?
- ETHV general leaflets on eye conditions and implications for support in the classroom/school environment.

References

Equality Act (2010)

RNIB– Supporting People with Sight Loss