

**Vision Service**

**Classroom Recommendations**

Many of these recommendations below are good general classroom practice. They will benefit not only a child with a vision impairment but also the other members of the class. **80% of learning is visual** so it is vital that children are well-supported and able to maximise their vision.

**Lighting**

Within the classroom setting and around school try to ensure that:

* **Overhead lighting** is on and even. Note if any lights are not working and make sure they’re fixed as soon as possible.
* Glare can be a huge challenge for many children. **Draw blinds** at windows and sit a child with a vision impairment with their back to bright light.
* Try to make sure there are **no dark shadowy areas** in your classroom or corridors as these can be visually challenging.

**Classroom**

* Make sure floors and walkways are kept as **clutter free** as possible to avoid trip hazards.
* Avoid changing the **position of key resources**. Make sure that your child with a vision impairment has a peg and drawer on the **end of a row**.
* Label in a **clear plain font such as Arial**. Avoid laminating in gloss – **matt** reduces reflection. Consider the **contrast** – black on pale yellow is better than black on red for example.
* Consider the position the child is sitting in; generally **centre and near the front** is best.
* **Avoid reflection** as much as possible. A good tip is to sit where the child sits to see what they are seeing.

**Screens**

* Change backgrounds to **off-white** (pale yellow is good).
* **Reduce the screen brightness** if possible.
* Present information in a **clutter-free** way, by eliminating unnecessary pictures for example.
* Use **bold dark colours** for presenting information against your plain off white-background – as examples, avoid yellow and green.
* **Turn your screen off** if not in use.

**Resources**

* Children with a vision impairment will generally need their **own copies** of books, including storybooks shared by the teacher with the class.
* When reading to an adult or in a group the child should be encouraged to **hold their own book** at a distance that works for them.
* Try to encourage a **good upright position** when working – a desk slope may be beneficial.
* Use **black felt pen** when writing as pencil lines may be too faint to see.
* Use **bright equipment** for PE.

**Social**

* Depending on the nature of their vision impairment a child may find it **more difficult to interact** with their peers. They may struggle to read facial expression and gestures. Be aware of this and support if necessary.
* They may well need support in the **playground** as they can be likely to ‘lose track’ of their friends in a large, busy space.
* In the playground an adult could wear a **high vis jacket** so the child can find them more easily.

**Final things to note**

* A child with a vision impairment is likely to be working a lot harder than their classmates to process visual information and will therefore tire more quickly. Adults need to have an awareness of this and act if necessary. **Regular visual breaks** are recommended, especially if a child has been doing a visually demanding task.
* Building a relationship with a child so they feel confident to tell you if they are finding things difficult is encouraged, although bear in mind that the last thing most children want is to feel different to everyone else. A **sensitive and subtle** approach is ideal.

Please make contact if there is anything further you would like to discuss with us. Either contact your advisory teacher directly or contact the Sensory and Physical Team on: Telephone: 01473 264717 or Email: [cypsensorycomm@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:cypsensorycomm@suffolk.gov.uk)