

SUPPORTING VISUALLY IMPAIRED PUPILS



Visually Impaired

Visual impairment is when your child has sight loss that can't be fully corrected using glasses or contact lenses. Visual impairments range from severely sight impaired (blind) to sight impaired (partially sighted), both can affect near vision, distance vision or visual fields.

Children and young people may be referred to the Sensory Support Team from 0-19 for support from a Qualified Teacher of Visually Impaired Children (QTVI) and/or Access and Inclusion Worker (support for mobility and independence). They provide support at home or educational setting and can provide additional support for transition.

Please see: <https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/visualsightimpairment>

The RNIB have produced an advice leaflet for transition:

<https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/sites/default/files/MovingOn.pdf>

Case Study 1

Child C attended a nursery class in a mainstream school and transitioned into the foundation class of a special school. A meeting took place between the parents, nursery staff, the QTVI (qualified teacher for visual impairment) and Access and Inclusion Worker to discuss the enhanced transition. Several familiarisation visits took place in the summer term before Child C started school to give her the opportunity to explore the new environment and for staff to collect information on her visual needs. The new class teacher was able to contact the QTVI for advice and support and additional visits were arranged. Staff training provided by the QTVI also took place in the first term. The transition was very successful and Child C has settled well into her new school. On-going support from a QTVI and Access and Inclusion Worker will continue throughout her time at school.

Case Study 2

Student B made the transition from Year 6 (Primary) to Year 7 (Secondary) with support from a QTVI (Qualified Teacher for Visual Impairment) and Access and Inclusion Worker (Vision). As part of an enhanced transition, B was given the opportunity to visit the secondary school at different times of day to become familiar with the layout and key areas she would need to access. The student, her parents, QTVI, Access and Inclusion Worker and key staff at both schools maintained an ongoing dialogue throughout the summer term of Year 6 to discuss her needs, including any equipment she was using to access learning. An environmental audit was also carried out to make changes to the environment, e.g. highlighting the edges of steps, to make it more accessible for her to move around independently. The secondary school had a student support base for students with additional needs and B was introduced to key staff there. By the time B started in Year 7, she was already familiar with the new environment, she felt more confident joining a new school and was able to concentrate on learning. The QTVI provided training for school staff – an overview for all staff and more detailed training for her teachers. She also visited B a few extra times during her first term to help her settle in and provide advice and support for her new teachers through lesson observations and feedback. Student B felt so confident by the end of her first term that she then felt able to talk about her visual impairment with the rest of Year 7 during an assembly!