

Indicators of need:

Children with a Visual Impairment may demonstrate some of the following difficulties.

- Struggle to see information on whiteboards or interactive boards/screens
- May not be able to see detail on objects/displays from a distance
- Struggle to accurately see and read facial expressions and body language.
- There may be monocular vision (good vision in only one eye)
- They may have restricted visual fields e.g. central or peripheral field loss.
Patching or occlusion to treat a squint. (Sometimes, temporary treatments for conditions can cause restricted vision. For example patches or “whited out” lenses are used to treat a squint.)
- Difficulty with fixation and tracking. (This means that children struggle to lock onto an object and follow its path, or onto words in a sentence either on the whiteboard or book.)
- Fluctuating vision e.g. Stationary Night Blindness affected by poor light levels or Photophobia affected by glare and high light levels.

The number of visits children receive and level of support they need is measured by the “Nat Sip criteria”, which takes into account a range of factors which impact learning. For example the size of font required for written materials, the specialist equipment needed to support teaching and learning and whether the child is a cane user.

- Nat Sip Range 19% - 24%. There may be difficulty with near and/or distance vision, spectacles may have been prescribed.
- Nat Sip Range 25% - 39%. These learners may include those with; Restricted fields of vision e.g. tunnel vision, Cataracts, Macular Dystrophy, Retinitis Pigmentosa, Cerebral Visual Impairment, Optic Nerve Hypoplasia, Aniridia, Albanism and Nystagmus. These learners are often registered Partially Sighted.

High levels of need may be identified by:

Pupil Characteristics

- A Nat Sip Range 40% - 70%+. The pupil will have severely reduced or no functional vision. They may be Registered Severely Sight Impaired (Blind).
- They are likely to require provision of specialist equipment and may be Giant Print, Braille or Moon users. They may require other tactile and audio methods of accessing the curriculum and of recording their work.

Some learners may display ‘blindisms’ (characteristic movements that some blind people make that appear unusual to sighted people e.g. eye-pressing, rocking, hand shaking).

Quality First Teaching to meet need:

- Careful monitoring of a learners progress and ability to visually access the curriculum, concerns or changes should be communicated to the SENCO and IPaSS as appropriate
- Consideration should be given to a learners seating position in relation to teaching point
- Consideration should be given lighting and potential glare from windows etc.
- Consideration given to the position of personal points and routes between these e.g. pupil's storage tray, coat peg etc.
- The classroom/school environment should be kept free from clutter and uncommon obstructions
- The learner may need to be seated near the teaching point or the focus of the lesson.
- The learner may need a monitor they can sit close to or hard copies of what is being displayed.
- The learner should not be expected to share texts and other learning resources.
- Adaptation and enlargement of some learning materials, by visually simplifying, enlarging fonts, improving contrast.
- Learners may need emboldened large spaced paper and exercise books and large nibbed pens to allow them to independently record their work.
- Desktop computers and laptops should have accessibility options adjusted to have the optimum size and type of font, cursor and icon for the VI learner.
- Learners will benefit from additional verbal descriptions and explanations.
- Learners may need to be allowed hands-on or close-to access of artefacts and display work.
- Learners may benefit from access to new/unfamiliar equipment prior to a lesson to support familiarity
- Pastoral care should be given to help develop and maintain the pupil's self-esteem.
- Learners should be supported to access learning without the need for additional adult support.

Additional and Different Provision; Targeted and Specialist Support

- May require Curriculum Support resources to be provided by IPaSS. For example modified text, maths charts, pictures and maps.
- Low vision aids may be provided by IPaSS. For example screen/text magnifiers.
- Learners may need to use Low Vision Aids to access information at both near and distance. For example a short or long cane or specialist software.
- Large print texts and materials specifically produced, may need to be sourced.
- Teaching staff will need to liaise closely with support staff to provide enough time for resources to be produced or acquired so that the curriculum can be accessed.
- Specialist equipment for practical subjects may need to be acquired e.g. talking scales/calculators, liquid level indicators, bell ball for P.E.
- Learners may require Big Keys qwerty keyboards to access computers as well as Audio feedback software.
- The pupil may require some additional adult support and some specialist curriculum input e.g. learning to touch type or use of magnification aids.
- Learners will require additional time and adaptation considerations for tests and assessments/ external examinations.
- Learners may need more support when in an unfamiliar environments e.g. new classrooms or on a school trip.
- Support during unstructured times, or when activities are specifically related to vision, should be considered.
- Learners may need to be supported during non-teaching times so that they are able to socialise with their peer group.
- Some VI learners will need emotional support to come to terms with a vision loss or a deteriorating condition.
- Learners with more severe visual impairments may need guidance to help them learn social norms e.g. facing people they are talking to, not invading personal space etc.

Many children who have had a diagnosis of VI in the pre-school phase will enter settings and schools with support already in place from IPaSS. Schools and settings can expect to be contacted by IPaSS (Integrated Physical and Sensory Service) prior to school entry to discuss a child's needs, and the likely impact of the VI on their ability to learn in an educational context

Diagnosed VI children and young people receive support from IPaSS according to need; this is allocated using a set of nationally recognised criteria. The need is not always greatest where the visual impairment is greatest. Changing needs can be responded to, with the frequency and nature of interventions adapted.

- The Qualified Teacher of Visually Impaired (QTVI) involvement could be:
- Annually
- twice yearly
- Termly

- Six times per year
- monthly
- fortnightly
- or weekly

Dependent on the learner's individual circumstances and reflected in their Nat Sip support score.

Habilitation involvement involves the development of skills to maximise mobility and independence. This could be

- advice given to school about possible environment changes and safety considerations e.g. improvement of lighting, better blinds, highlighting hazards
- Intermediately such as during transition
- at specific times to suit needs
- or weekly for more intensive work

Higher levels of more specialist support may be required and could include:

- Curriculum Support resources provided by IPaSS. For example tactile resources, modified books/texts or specialist software.
- Specialist equipment and maintenance provided by IPaSS. For example brailnotes to record their work.
- Pre-tutoring, to prepare learners for specific lessons may be required.
- IPaSS Teaching Assistant **may** be involved for mainstream Primary and Secondary settings for blind and significantly visually impaired children.
- Learner may require these IPaSS allocated staff to support in lessons, particularly practical lessons
- Allocated staff to modify and adapt resources in cases of significant modification.
- Withdrawal from class may be needed for areas of specialist curriculum but also for support staff to work individually with a pupil so they can:
 - complete a task made slower because of their VI;
 - reinforce understanding;
 - prepare for future activities;
 - provide additional hands-on experience of resources used in class;
 - provide additional experiences to address gaps in knowledge.