

Support for children in nurseries and schools

We become involved with children who have a visual impairment and their families as soon as a referral is made. We offer support to nurseries and schools including:

- Specialist assessment of visual functioning.
- Evaluation of the learning environment in respect of the pupil's visual needs.
- Advice and support for staff relating to the educational implications of Visual Impairment.
- Contributions to the Individual Provision Support Plan. Provide programmes of specialist interventions to support the child through specialist Support Workers from our service if appropriate.
- Educational advice to contribute to the Local Authorities Statutory Assessment and Annual Review Procedures, exam modifications, if appropriate.
- In-Service training for parents, staff and other agencies to enhance awareness of the educational implications of Visual Impairment.
- Loan of specialist materials/resources.
- Advice and trial of specialist equipment.
- Liaison with professional from Health Authorities, Social Services and others as necessary.

Contact

Children and Young People's Services

SEND & Inclusion Service

Sensory & Physical Team

Visual Impairment

Belmont CE (Controlled) Junior School, Buckinghamshire Road

Belmont

DH1 2QP

Telephone: 03000 264 530



Children and young people who have a Visual Impairment

Information for parents and carers

Children & Young People's Services



What is the specialist service for children who have a Visual Impairment?

We are part of County Durham's SEND team and are part of the Sensory Team. Our team help those children who have a visual impairment which may make access to learning more difficult. We offer specialist advice and support for children and young people who have a Visual Impairment, from birth up to 19 years of age.

Who are we?

We are a team of teachers who have qualifications in teaching children with a visual impairment and are part of a wider team of teachers who have qualifications in teaching children with a hearing impairment or multi-sensory impairment.

Who do we support?

Children and young people who have a clinically diagnosed visual impairment.

Referrals

The service offers an open door referral system for parents, teachers and all professionals involved with children who have a Visual Impairment. The service welcomes referrals of children from birth or as soon after diagnosis as possible, as early intervention is of paramount importance. Referrals should be made in writing to our service base at Belmont Primary School.

What do we do?

The specialist teacher will at first want to find out as much as possible about what your child can do and what your child finds difficult. This process of assessment takes time. The teacher will discover what your child needs through playing with your child and introducing activities or experiences which are enjoyable and carefully chosen to support development of their vision as well as their overall

development. All young children learn through play, and that is no less true of children who have a visual impairment. Through this the specialist teacher will be able to assess your child's abilities and needs and develop a programme of activities for him/her. We will understand if your child needs a lot of encouragement to play or respond, and we hope to be able to work with you to find new ways of playing with and helping your child.

What about the other professionals who are helping?

It may be that you already have or are about to have other professionals who are working with you and your child such as Ophthalmologists, Paediatricians, Health Visitors or other professionals who are helping you in various ways. We have good relationships with the various professionals who might be involved, and if we do become involved with your child then (with your permission) we would contact everyone else and let them know what we are doing. This helps us co-ordinate our help in the best way for you, in the way you would prefer.

We become involved with children who have a Visual Impairment and their families as soon as a referral is made. Work with pre-school children is usually carried out in the home, but the teachers may utilise appropriate resources in Child Development Centres or nurseries.

Support for pre-school children

We:

- Advise parents as to the nature and implications of visual impairment.
- Provide on-going specialist assessment of the child's visual functioning.
- Work closely with parents to devise activities to encourage the child's overall development.
- Loan specialist materials and resources.
- Inform parents about appropriate local and national organisations.
- Liaise with other professional involved.