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How your child with visual impairment is supported in school

Information for parents and carers

*This leaflet provides
examples of what you
and your child can
expect from schools
through a graduated
approach for
supporting Special
Educational Needs
and/or Disabilities
(SEND)*

There are different types and degrees of visual impairments that require different levels of support. A visual impairment is likely to affect how your child makes sense of the world around them and how they move within it.

Visual impairment is often identified early through a consultant ophthalmologist. Once you receive a diagnosis, a referral is sent to the Islington Physical and Sensory Team (based at Richard Cloudesley School), the specialist team who will support you, your child and the school at every stage. A qualified teacher of the visually impaired will work with you and your child to make sure you get the support that you need.

The type and level of support required will depend on your child's needs. Schools will use a **graduated approach** - a system to identify and meet the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND). Most children and young people with visual impairments will make good progress and achieve well when the right support is in place.



Quality First Teaching

You will be involved in decisions about your child at every stage of the graduated approach, and all staff who come in contact with your child should be made aware of their needs and how best to work with them

Quality First Teaching is high quality teaching which provides appropriate learning opportunities to all pupils, whatever their individual needs. It is the first step of a graduated (or stepped) approach in responding to pupils who have, or may have, SEND. Staff knowledge and understanding of SEND is a key factor to good Quality First Teaching outcomes.

All staff must have knowledge and understanding of the SEND Code of Practice 2014 and the The Equalities Act 2010.

Examples of what might be expected at this level of support:

The class teacher will:

- Provide resources to support your child's needs, as advised by the specialist teacher for children with visual impairment
- Monitor your child's progress and ask for further advice if needed
- Provide your child with their own copy of enlarged text
- Ensure your child is included in class
- Provide commentary on what is happening in class
- Be aware that your child may need more time to complete tasks
- Make adjustments to ensure that your child can access PE.

The teacher for children with visual impairment will:

- Provide the school with training and advice to help them meet the needs of your child
- Visit your child in school
- Spend time with the class teacher to make sure your child is fully included in the class
- Plan with the class teacher to make sure work is adapted to meet your child's needs
- Monitor to check that your child is wearing their glasses, if prescribed, and that the glasses are clean, positioned correctly, and in good repair
- Identify whether some technology may be needed to support your child.

The school will:

- Consider the lighting and environmental conditions
- Provide an inclusive curriculum, for example making special arrangements for trips, after school clubs, assemblies and sports days
- Carry out risk assessments for safety.

All Islington schools take a child-centred approach.

This means fitting the system to the needs of your child, and not expecting your child to fit the system

SEND Support Plans

Some children will need support that is 'additional to' or 'different from' what schools provide for all pupils. This is called SEND Support.

The special educational needs coordinator (SENCO) and the teacher will work with you and your child to create a SEND Support Plan which should be reviewed three times a year. This will be based around your child's strengths and needs and will identify outcomes for your child that will be agreed with you.

It will be important to identify the main characteristic of your child's main area of need. However, support plans will identify all the needs of your child within the following four broad areas:

- Cognition and learning
- Social, emotional and mental health
- Communication and interaction
- Sensory and physical

Targeted SEND support might include:


- The specialist teacher for children with visual impairment to carry out an assessment and advise on further curriculum adaptations and technology
- The specialist teacher for children with visual impairment to provide a programme of support, including advice from other specialists (for example, for mobility training) as appropriate
- Support for your child to learn life skills
- Further Specialist equipment as required
- School trips are planned to take into consideration your child's needs
- Planned arrangements for assessments
- A habilitation specialist may need to complete a further risk assessment and environmental audit to recommend adjustments.

Additional Support for parents and carer

The Local Offer

Information for parents and carers on a broad range of SEN and disability issues and support can be found on the Local Offer website. This includes more about visual impairment and some of the interventions and approaches used in Islington schools.

www.islington.gov.uk/localoffer
Telephone: 020 7527 5518



SEND Local Offer

Information, advice and services for Islington children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities aged 0-25

Islington SEND Community Support Service

Islington SEND Community Support Service provides free, legally based, impartial, confidential and accessible information, advice and support on all matters relating to special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

Email: islingtonsend@family-action.org.uk
Telephone: 020 3031 6651



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Other 'How your child is supported in school' leaflets available from the SEND Team include:

- Speech, language and communication needs
- Physical difficulties
- Hearing impairment
- General learning difficulties
- Social, emotional and mental health needs
- Emerging needs (Early Years)
- Autistic spectrum condition