Literacy and Numeracy for Learning and Life
Literacy Session 3

Visual Impairment

Literacy and Numeracy for Learning and Life
Outline

1. **big picture understanding**

2. **good assessment**

3. **focused and purposeful interventions**

Handout: Challenges and Strategies
Link Teacher

- Communication
- Collaboration
- Assessment
- Literacy
- Support & CPD
- SSE
- Raising Awareness
- Understanding

Learning
Teaching

Handout - Reflection
What does this mean for you?

What are the challenges?
What does this mean for us in school?

All children are entitled to receive, with a suitable peer group, a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum.

Whenever possible this should be in a mainstream school, recognising that appropriate support, advice and resources may be necessary to achieve this. Parents and the young person’s views must be considered.
Assessment of learning needs

• Ensure that they are cautious in their use and interpretation of mainstream assessment tools when they are applied to children with visual impairment;

• Where appropriate, make use of specialist procedures designed for children with visual impairment (for example the assessment of Braille reading).
Print Literacy

• Ensure that a child’s optimal print size is established as part of a functional visual assessment;

• Recognise that, while teaching children using large print (i.e. large text presented on paper) is a useful technique for providing optimal print size in some circumstances, priority should be given to teaching children to use low-vision aids (LVAs) effectively to optimise their access to print.
Braille literacy

• Braille may be an appropriate route to literacy for most blind children, in some cases children may need to learn through print and Braille simultaneously;
• Braille may not be appropriate for some children with very low vision, including those with multiple disabilities and visual impairment (MDVI). Alternative tactile codes, such as Moon, should be considered as possible routes to literacy for some children;
• Given the particular demands of learning Braille, appropriate expertise, resources and adaptive technology will need to be available to support children in mainstream settings;
• Developments in technology make it increasingly possible to store electronic files (for example textbooks) centrally. These files can then be distributed through the internet and produced locally in the school or at home, at the preferred time and in the child’s preferred format.
Information and communications technology

• Visually impaired children should be given appropriate training in order to make effective use of access technology (for example training in touch-typing, training in the use of particular access software);

• Educators should also draw upon relevant technology to support their teaching of particular curriculum areas to visually impaired children.
Low vision training

• Specialist services should carry out regular functional visual assessments of visually impaired children to enable professionals to design appropriate educational interventions;

• Assessments should draw upon the views, expertise and assessments of a broad range of stakeholders, including optometrists, ophthalmologists, teachers, and parents;

• When low-vision aids have been prescribed, appropriate training should be provided for staff and pupils to reduce their low take-up in educational settings.
Alternative Formats

- Oral Communication
- Alternative Print formats
- Tactile formats: Braille, Moon, Tactile diagrams/maps
- Audio formats
- Digital Formats
Modifications

- The use of a mechanical aid such as a laptop
- The use of voice recognition software
- Access to a scribe
- Access to a reader
- Braille version of question papers
- Text version of the Braille question papers
- Enlarged versions of the question papers
- Extra time
Strategies for a Lifetime

To Know it... I will learn to ...

- Reduce it
- Highlight it
- Remember it
- Practice it
- Teach it
- Check it
- List it
- Say it
- Chart it

Special Education Support Service
• Communication and Language are core skills for literacy

• Students with visual impairment face challenges in communication and language

• Assessment informs learning and teaching

• We need to explicitly teach communication and language in order to improve literacy.
1. *big picture* understanding

2. good assessment

3. focused and purposeful interventions
The link teacher for literacy is a facilitator of change for improvement.

A number of key components inform the planning, teaching and assessment of literacy in the context of your school.
Working Together Norms

When?
First meeting but always thereafter

What?
Procedural & Interpersonal

Why?
Open dialogue, trust, productive work
A river without banks is a pond. Likewise, a team without relationship norms leaves itself open to potential interpersonal problems.
HOPE

CONCERN

IDEAS

ACTION

QUESTIONS

Special Education Support Service
Your next step is...

We are here to help.
Final Word.....

‘To effectively communicate, we must realise that we are all different in the way we perceive the world and use this understanding as a guide to our communication with others’

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