

VI Centre- a Resource Base for children with vision impairments at Westbrook Primary School.

At Westbrook, we are hugely privileged to have this specialist resource base that supports children with vision impairment (VI). We have an amazing team of specialist Learning Support Assistants who between them have over 40 years of experience of working with children with VI. Their knowledge of the children is acute and this, without a doubt, means that learning can take place effectively.

We are housed in a suite of rooms where pupils can access the necessary support that they may need in order for them to fully participate in their learning and become independent successful young adults. All of our children have access to iPads, braille- note touch or laptops, depending on which they prefer. All of the LSAs are skilled to support them in their chosen medium of work.

How does the school know if pupils with vision impairment (VI) need extra help and what would parents/carers do if they think their children have additional needs?

Children attending the VI Centre have an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) which identifies this setting as the most appropriate mainstream provision for the child. It also identifies the child's primary need as Visual Impairment (VI) and, where appropriate, any additional needs.

The annual review of the EHC plan ensures that this document reflects the child's current needs. The VI Centre will receive information about the child's needs from their previous school and we will undertake a functional vision assessment to ensure the printed curriculum is modified or adapted appropriately and that they receive the right interventions to enable them to make progress.

The progress of children is monitored regularly. Each child within the Centre has an allocated specialist LSA who conducts weekly meetings with the class teacher to discuss academic progress. This along with subject information and whole school reviews enable us to closely monitor childrens' progress. If a child is not making expected progress in a particular area they can identify the need for additional support. This is discussed primarily with the child and, as appropriate with their parents.

If children seem to have an emerging or additional need it may be that there will be additional assessments carried out by other professionals.

How does the VI Centre support children with VI?

Every child starting at our centre has an Education, Health and Care Plan. This document outlines their particular needs and recommends the resources, teaching programmes and multi-agency involvement related to meeting these needs. Implementation is overseen by the Head of Centre, Mr Broad, who is a qualified teacher of the vision impaired.

Each child's timetable reflects where support is targeted and where independent working is appropriate and required.

Mr Broad has regular contact with each child and monitors progress and oversees provision and works in close partnership with the Inclusion Leader/SENCo, Mrs Benton.

Support, whether in-class and/or via modification and adaptation of materials and resources, comes from staff with a range of expertise and experience.

The SEN link Governor is Paul Bepey.

How is the curriculum matched to students with VI?

Resources are modified by our specialist team in advance of the lessons so that the children are able to fully participate and learn alongside their sighted peers. We adopt the policy that all children can access all aspects of the curriculum and this is reflected in our school curriculum-Westbrook Wonder World. . All children access the full range of subjects as well as those which form part of the specialist curriculum for vision impairments.

The level of support is reviewed frequently according to progress made and the children developing independence/needs. Additional support can be used to target a particular need. This may be within the class or a small group withdrawal or 1 to 1.

All children have access to all of parts of the additional curriculum taking part in sports clubs, music lessons and performing in the school play and choir.

We are looking to develop our Independent Living Skills (ILS) programme to enable our children to be fully independent young adults. We are working closely with the Habilitation Team to provide an appropriate programme for the children.

How do the Centre and parents/carers know how children with VI are doing and how does it help them support their children's learning?

All children have a pupil profile which identifies to all their staff an individual's needs and how best to support them in the classroom.

All children are set short-term targets as agreed at the Annual Review and long-term targets as described in the EHCP. Each child's progress and targets are regularly monitored and appropriate interventions are put in place where needed.

The VI Centre is committed to high achievement and self-evaluation and ensures that children demonstrate good progress. Progression routes for each child, secondary school placements, are discussed with the children themselves as well as parents/carers during consultation meetings or annual review meetings in school.

What support is there for the overall well-being of children with a vision impairment?

The VI Centre is committed to multi-agency working to ensure that the needs of the whole child are met. Professionals from other agencies including Speech and language, Occupational therapy and

Mobility visit the school on a weekly basis.

Children contribute to the annual review of their EHC plan through a person centred review process. They are encouraged to know their targets so that they can describe their next steps of learning to achieve those targets. They are also encouraged to self-advocate: an important facet of independence.

How accessible is the wider school environment?

We moved into a new building September 2014 and this had made the school experience much more comfortable for our children with purpose built accommodation both for academic support as

well as a social space for use at break and lunch time.

The school has an Accessibility Plan, in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and Reasonable Adjustments Duty, which keeps access to the curriculum, the environment and information under regular review.

Designated parking has been set aside for those children with vision impairment arriving by taxi.

How is the decision made about what type and how much support students with VI receive?

The EHC Plan reflects the child's current needs and funding is provided in accordance with low incidence, high impact disability. This is agreed through discussion between the school and the Local Authority.

Provision is planned to achieve the outcomes set for each individual student. It is constantly reviewed.

How are parents/carers of children with VI involved in the school? How do they become involved?

The school and VI Centre believe that a child's education is a partnership between parents/carers and staff. Therefore, we aim to keep communication channels open and communicate with parents/carers regularly via telephone, email, letter and information on the school's website. Parents/carers of children with vision impairment are invited to all review meetings.

Who do parents/cares of children with VI contact for further information?

For parents/carers of children with vision impairment, the first point of contact with anything VI related needs to be discussed is the Head of VI Centre, Mr. R Broad. Email: r.broad@westbrookprimary.co.uk Tel: 0208 570 9942

