

Visual Difficulties

What will happen if my child has visual difficulties?

If a parent is concerned about their child's eyesight, they should take them to the opticians as soon as possible.

If a teacher is concerned about a child's eyesight, they will speak to the parents, explaining what they have noticed and ask them to take the child to be assessed by an optician.

In most cases glasses will rectify a child's visual problems, but it will be important to liaise with the child's class teacher to ensure that they know when the child should be wearing glasses. It is often helpful to have two pairs of glasses, one to be kept in school, as young children often forget their glasses and this can have a serious impact on their work.

If the teacher feels that the child is still struggling to see, even with their glasses, this will be discussed with parents and a referral to the **Visual Support Team** might be suggested (see below).

Most serious visual impairments will be picked up before a child starts school. In this case the **Visual Support Team** from the specialist teaching service (**Learning, Cognition and Interaction Team – LCI**) will probably have become involved. This teacher will liaise with the school and let us know what equipment and adaptations need to be made in order for your child to have full access to learning. This teacher will usually meet with your child's class teachers and SENCO at the beginning of each year to ensure that they understand the implications of your child's visual impairment. They will also visit regularly throughout the year to offer advice and support, as well as services such as adapting reading books.

What help will my child get in school?

The Visual Support Team teacher will advise the school about what need to be in place to enable your child to learn normally. The big challenge is to ensure that your child can see all the things that other children can see in the classroom.

Adaptations **may** include:

- Positioning your child appropriately on the carpet (so that they can see the teacher and any visuals) and at their table (eg. with their back to the window to avoid glare).
- Ensuring that written resources are in the appropriate sized font for your child.
- Having reading books adapted by the specialist teaching service so that your child can read them.
- Having a tablet for your child that is connected to the class whiteboard, so that your child can see what is on the board.
- Learning to touch type (the Visual Support Team will sometimes provide a touch typing teacher).
- Having a personal laptop for your child to do their written work on.

- Having a CCTV camera to provide a magnifier in the classroom to enable your child to look at objects or text that is too small for them to see otherwise.
- Having a hand-held magnifier for your child to use to magnify text when reading.
- Using a visualiser connected to the whiteboard to enlarge things for the child to see.
- Adapted resources, such as enlarged number lines or phonic flashcards.

If your child has a visual impairment they will often need more adult support than other children. When they are young, this adult support may be necessary during lessons to help them to use the equipment they need and to keep them focused. As they get older the adult support will be needed less to support your child in lessons and more to work on adapting the learning resources before the lesson.

There will be close liaison between the school, the Visual Support Team Teacher and you, to ensure that your child is making the best possible progress.