

# Visual Impairment Awareness

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# Introduction

- It is estimated that 80% of our learning occurs through vision
- Seeing is our dominant sense and our main route for gaining information quickly and accurately
- Vision is a motivating sense
- Vision primarily directs our exploring
- Children who are blind or live with severe visual impairment require concrete visual experiences ( hands on activities) very early in life to help them reach their cognitive potential.



“When a child’s vision is affected, there is a reduction in the information necessary for understanding how the world is organised and how it can be acted upon”. (Juliet Stone, 1999)



# Issues and Strategies

“While we cannot change the different-ness imposed by visual impairment, we can change how these differences are valued and accommodated within the learning environment” (Sacks and Wolffe, 2006)

The visually impaired child must adapt to a world where things are often not produced for ease of access and environments change daily.

# Legislation

## Standards in Scotland's Schools Act 2000

(1) Where school education is provided to a child or young person by ...an education authority it shall be the duty of the authority to secure that the education is directed to the development of the personality, talents and mental and physical abilities of the child or the young person to the fullest potential.



## Education (Additional Support for Learning) Scotland Act 2004

(1) Every education authority must

(a) In relation to each child and young person having additional support needs for whose school education the authority are responsible, make adequate and efficient provision for such additional support as is required by that child or young person

# Where do we start?

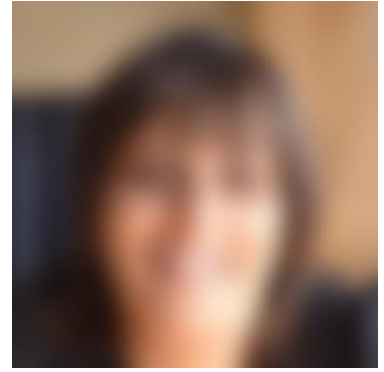
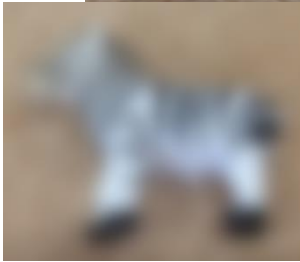
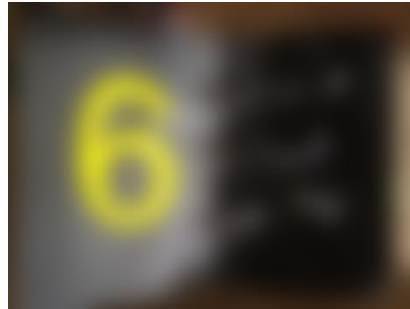
**Good practice requires an adaptation of teaching methods as well as curriculum presentation**

- Know and understand the young person
- Know and understand their learning environment
- Be conscious of materials- type and content
- Maximise access to the curriculum
- Be prepared



# Visual acuity

Simply, this means the ability to see fine detail





# Factors affecting visual acuity

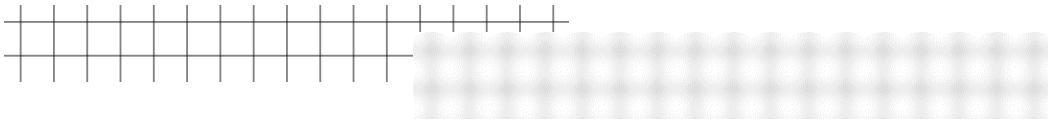
- level of background illumination
- the contrast of the target against its background
- the distance between the eye and the target

E.g. it is easier to see a black letter on a white background or,

Yellow letters on a black background in electronic documents,

than dark grey letters on a lighter grey background

or consider the size of grid lines on a graph



# Visual Acuity

We need vision to guide movement and reaching. Stairs with contrasted edges will assist a person with low visual acuity.



# Visual field

The visual field is the area of space in which all objects are visible simultaneously



Normal visual field



Central visual field loss



# Interrupted visual field



Different conditions  
cause different  
problems



**Albinism** may result in a pale and faded image on the retina



# Retinitis Pigmentosa



# Nystagmus

Nystagmus is the continuous uncontrolled to and fro movement of the eyes.



This condition affects the focussing of the eye.



# Main considerations

- Print - size, font, colour
- Layout, format
- Technology
- Relevance
- Social inclusion
- Environment
- Preparation
- TIME





# Remember

There is no 'one size fits all'

“The success of children with visual impairment in mainstream schools is heavily dependent upon the quality of support that is available to them” ( VI Access to Education for Children and Young People)

**We cannot provide all the answers, only a framework on which to build achievement.**



Thank you for watching.

Contact us for support and advice about educating children and young people with a visual impairment.

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