Supporting the inclusion of children and young people with visual impairment

Top Access Tips: Writing

1.Paper

Provide paper type appropriate to child's needs, e.g.

- Wide black lined paper
- Enlarged, black squared graph paper
- Wide line music staves

> **Advice Point**
>
> Paper type needs to be assessed, child may require a selection of paper types, line widths for different activities

2. Writing tools

Pen used needs to:

- Provide good contrast, e.g. black pen
- Try a range of pens and nibs to find the optimum pen for child
- Pencil: Use 2B—4B
- Check the child can read back writing using the chosen pen/pencil

> **Advice Point**
>
> The aim is to find the pen and paper, that enables the child to write on the line and to read back work

3. Lighting

- Natural light is better, make sure that the child sits with their back to the window, so that the light is cast over their shoulder onto their work
- An additional task light may help, with the light focused on the page

4.Writing position and posture

Consider if the child requires:

- A cushion on the chair
- A different chair
- A sloped board
- Paper orientated in landscape format

> **Advice Point**
>
> Observe the child's position in relation to their access to the page, sometimes a small child finds it hard to reach the top of the page to write, also hindering their effective use of vision.

> **Advice Point**
>
> Posture and seating position may look awkward , but is the optimum one for the child. The aim is to make position more comfortable so that posture is supported and fatigue reduced

5. Using a laptop to present work

♦ Text can be saved directly onto the laptop and accessed by speech/ screen magnification

♦ Worksheets can be completed directly on the laptop for print out after the lesson

♦ Fatigue reduced by using speech to listen to text instead of accessing hard copy, helpful to support revision

6. Colouring

♦ Clear black outlines to colour within

♦ Shapes and aspects of picture enlarged to aid accurate colouring

♦ Use Wikki Stix to create guideline for colouring

♦ Colouring tools to provide clear contrast, e.g. felt pens

Advice Point

Visual Fatigue: "Seeing" for some children requires a good deal of effort and concentration, which in turn may affect their motivation, due to the visual fatigue they experience after prolonged periods of close work.

♦ Name/label colouring tools