

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