



## Visual impairment support

### Early years support for babies and young children with a visual impairment

#### About this fact sheet

This fact sheet explains the support on offer from Dudley Disability Service's visual impairment team for babies and young children with a visual impairment and their parents and carers.

#### What support is on offer?

The visual impairment team:

- Provides information and support to parents and early years practitioners. We advise on children's individual needs and the implications of visual impairment.
- Provides assessment of children's functional vision in the home/early years settings using the Early Support Development Journal.
- Provides assessment through play based activities of the impact of visual impairment on overall development and targets areas where there is a possible delay
- Monitors and stimulate developing vision. Sight continues to develop after birth and must be stimulated (used) to reach its full potential.
- Advises on access, inclusion and health and safety i.e. risk assessments and environmental audits.
- Provides opportunities for visually impaired children and their families to meet, socialise and share experiences.

#### How are referrals received?

We receive referrals from a variety of sources. These include:

- Health. i.e. Ophthalmologist Consultant/Orthoptist, Paediatric Consultant, GP, Health Visitor, Physiotherapist, Occupational Therapist
- Education i.e. Specialist early years, nurseries, children's centres, playgroups
- Parents and carers

## **A useful group**

A visually impaired baby and toddler group takes place once a month from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm at the Stourbridge Family and Children's Centre, Forge Rd, Stourbridge, DY8 1XF. This is run by the visual impairment service.

For parents this is an opportunity to meet and talk to other mums and dads and share experiences, as well as talking to members of staff who may be working with your child.

There is lots of indoor and outdoor play equipment to explore in a safe environment. There is also a sensory room which enables children to play in a darkened environment with light stimulation.

## **More information**

The visual impairment service is part of Dudley Disability Service. We are a team of qualified teachers of the visually impaired and specialist teaching assistants.

We provide advice and information to parents and teachers. We help teach and support children with a visual impairment of all ages and abilities. We also assess children's vision. In addition we support and advise on the use of specialist equipment and train in the use of low vision aids, provide Braille and enlarged or modified learning materials, provide training independence and mobility training and teach touch typing and specialist software. We will also liaise with other professionals such as social care, healthcare and RNIB.

### **For further information or advice, please contact us at:**

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