



## **Introduction to the West Lothian Vision Impairment Service**

### **Aims of the West Lothian Vision Impairment Service**

The service aims to support the successful inclusion of children and young people with vision impairment (VI) **in West Lothian schools and early year establishments, including nursery, primary, secondary and enhanced provisions.** We work in partnership with children and young people with VI, parents/carers, schools, education/career services, medical professionals and allied health services to meet individual needs as identified through the assessment process.

### **Who We Are**

- West Lothian Council has contracted Sight Scotland to provide education support to children and young people with vision impairment across the authority. This service is known as the West Lothian Vision Impairment Service.
- The service is a peripatetic, term-time outreach service provided by a team of experienced Qualified Teachers of the Visually Impaired (QTVIs), Habilitation Specialists and Learning Support staff.

### **Who Do We Work With?**

- **Children and young people (3 – 18)**
- Parents and carers
- Education professionals
- Other agencies e.g. Health, Social Work
- Voluntary organisations

## When Do We Become Involved?

Involvement from the outreach team begins when a referral or request for assistance is made by a hospital specialist, a parent/carer, a school or another professional. A process of assessment by one of the outreach teachers, will begin within 4 weeks from the date of the referral. If the period of referral spans the school summer holiday, this extends to 8 weeks.

## Making a Referral

Hospital specialists, parents/carers, schools or other professionals can request referrals to the Service.

- After parental consent has been received, one of the outreach teachers will arrange to visit the child/young person at home or in their educational setting. In consultation with parents, education and medical professionals, the outreach teacher will undertake a functional assessment of vision to determine if support is needed for the child or young person.

## What Do We Do?

Support can be provided in the home, in the nursery or in a local authority mainstream school or enhanced provision. The frequency and level of support varies according to the individual needs and circumstances of each child or young person and is reviewed regularly. Support can range from annual monitoring and termly visits, to weekly support depending on the individual requirements at any time.

Services offered by the team include:

- Assessment of functional vision
- Vision information, practical help and advice
- Support with specialist resources and/or technology to promote independence
- Supporting staff to promote inclusion
- Provision of vision awareness training sessions
- Supporting staff whose pupils use braille and assistive technology
- Providing advice and training on adapting curriculum materials

- Monitoring a pupil's progress and providing reports to relevant agencies
- Attending meetings to review progress and plan for the future
- Making referrals to habilitation support services for individual pupils as appropriate

### **Early Years Services**

Outreach teachers are available to work in collaboration with early years professionals, raising awareness of the developmental and educational needs of young children with VI and supporting targeted input where appropriate/requested.

### **Post School Transition**

Outreach teachers work closely with the young person, their parents/carers and education professionals, to plan and prepare for post school transition. In partnership with school staff, we signpost to Skills Development Scotland and other services.

### **Training and Events**

Sight Scotland are happy to provide tailored training and events for individuals and smaller groups on request.

### **For Further Information, Please Contact:**

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