

Sensory Inclusion Service Visual Impairment newsletter

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Sensory Inclusion Service | Floor 7A, Darby House, Telford & Wrekin Council, Lawn Central, Telford, TF3 4JA

VI Course 2017 – record breaking numbers this year!

Fifty-six delegates attended our course 'The Child/Young Person with a Visual Impairment in Your Setting' on 27th September 2017.

The largest number ever! Early years, primary, secondary and FE settings were invited. The course included information on curriculum access issues, the importance of vision, eye conditions, social and emotional issues, mobility, low vision aids, practical simulation exercises, modification techniques and the role of the Sensory Inclusion Service.

Evaluation from delegates was very positive. 96% of delegates thought that the structure of the day, the content of the course, the quality of the presentations and the workshops was highly relevant or very relevant.

"In all the presentations, the enthusiasm and passion for supporting students with VI to become independent young people shone through."

SENCo

"Great to hear a parent's perspective."

Teaching Assistant



"Great overall information, interesting practicals and a useful opportunity to discuss individual issues."

Teaching Assistant

Providing empowerment through knowledge and support to families of children and young people (CYP) with visual impairment is a vital INSET role for the Sensory Inclusion Service. This begins at referral and is then a continuous and ongoing process. When working in settings or homes, QTVis provide continual advice and support to enable all children with visual impairment to develop to their full potential, as they would have done if they did not have a visual impairment.

All pre-school settings, schools and colleges are offered in-situ INSET in a wide variety of tailored packages. In cases where CYP have a profound or severe impairment, INSET is offered to all teachers and teaching assistants. In less severe cases, INSET is offered to staff working directly with the CYP. In addition, a one day course is delivered annually.

Judith Claes (Qualified Teacher of the Visually Impaired)

Electronic Version by email

The Sensory Inclusion Service has been given consent by Telford & Wrekin to send out the newsletter by email rather than through the post.

We are therefore updating our database with current contact details.

Could you please send an email to matt.kelsall@taw.org.uk to confirm your current email address and that you are happy to receive correspondence electronically in the future from The Sensory Inclusion Service.



£5,000 donation helps buy new state-of-the-art eye machine for RSH

The Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust (SaTH) will benefit from new state-of-the-art ophthalmology equipment that will help detect eye conditions in both adults and children.

Sight Loss Shropshire has made a generous £5,000 donation towards a new visual fields machine for the Eye Department at the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital (RSH), run by SaTH.

Philippa Downes, Senior Orthoptist at SaTH, said, "The Ophthalmology Team has gratefully received a charitable contribution from Sight Loss Shropshire towards a new visual fields machine. This machine will allow very specific visual fields and binocular function testing for adult and paediatric patients.

SaTH had two machines that were over 50 years-old, and one of the machines had failed and could not



be fixed. The purchase of this new machine will replace the one that has failed and will mean patients will benefit from more modern and accurate equipment."

Andrew Evans, Operational Manager at SaTH, said, "The new machine will be located within the new Eye Department and will be available for patients at the end of October 2017 when a newly-refurbished Paediatric Ophthalmology facility will open. The facility is located adjacent to the brand new department which opened to patients on 26 June this year."

Robin Durham, Secretary for Sight

Loss Shropshire, said, "We are delighted that our donation means that the Trust can purchase a piece of equipment that will be of such benefit to both adults and children, and make a difference to the care that the Trust can offer to those with eye conditions."

Sight Loss Shropshire is a registered charity that provides information, advice and support to blind and visually impaired people of all ages throughout Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin to help improve their quality of life. They also provide grants to help the visually impaired buy specialist aids and equipment.

Notes for Editors:

- The Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust is the main provider of acute hospital care for almost 500,000 people from Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin and mid Wales. Patients come to us from Telford, Shrewsbury, Ludlow, Oswestry, Bridgnorth, Whitchurch, Newtown and Welshpool in Powys.
- The Trust continues to work with its partners in health and social care in Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin and mid Wales to develop patient-focused services that meet the needs of our communities.
- If you have any feedback about local healthcare, independent support and signposting is available from Healthwatch Shropshire, Healthwatch Telford and Wrekin and Powys Community Health Council (CHC):
 - Healthwatch Shropshire: 01743 237884 or email the team via enquiries@healthwatchshropshire.co.uk
 - Healthwatch Telford and Wrekin: 01952 739540 or email info@healthwatchtelfordandwrekin.co.uk
 - Powys CHC: 01686 627632 or email enquiries.powyschc@waleschc.org.uk

For more information contact **Claire Dunn**, Communications Specialist at The Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust, on **01743 492285**.

Dan Shepherd

Work Experience Placement with RNIB Birmingham

During the Summer Term of 2017, a Year 10 student from Hadley Learning Community had the opportunity to participate in an RNIB work experience placement at the Birmingham offices. It was a placement in the RNIB catering kitchen which prepares food mostly for the delegates who attend courses at the RNIB on a daily basis, many of whom are teachers and teaching assistants in the field of visual impairment. Having attended courses there myself in the past, I am aware that the meals are of a very good quality and the catering staff pride themselves on this (no pressure on Dan then!).

The other factor to note here is that many of the catering staff at the RNIB Birmingham kitchen have a visual impairment themselves and some are quite severely visually impaired. The catering staff welcomed Dan to attend this work experience and I do believe that he acted as 'the guinea pig', being the first visually impaired student to take part in this type of work experience placement. Dan attended the placement for a full day on four consecutive weeks of the Summer Term and his school, Hadley Learning Community, were instrumental in their support for the placement, kindly allowing him to attend during the school day on four consecutive Tuesdays. Dan undertook activities in the catering kitchen to include food preparation, baking, preparing food displays, stock taking and cleaning. He learnt about food safety techniques, health and hygiene, food storage, managing stock rooms and last but not least, the roles and responsibilities of staff in the catering kitchen.

Dan found it a very worthwhile experience, especially so as he plans to study catering post 16 after he has completed his GCSEs.

It is envisaged that other young people with a visual impairment may be able to be offered a place on this scheme in future, so please do watch this space. Well done to Dan on a very successful placement and thanks to his mum, Janet, for enabling us to print some photos of Dan at work in the RNIB catering kitchen.

Jayne. E. Bowen

Team Leader, Sensory Inclusion Service, (Visual Impairment)



place was the grocer's shop. It was a great week. I'd really like to get a proper job at Blists Hill or somewhere like it.

Faith Pugh Year 10, Abraham Darby School



Applying for a part-time job

by Rachel Last, Year 13,
Shrewsbury Sixth Form College

I was applying for part-time jobs for about a year before I got a job at Primark. I was worried that my visual impairment would put employers off and the more I got rejected from jobs, the more I got disheartened. All my friends were earning their own money and I wanted to as well.

I finally had an interview at Primark in Shrewsbury and it went really well and I got the job. Primark is an amazing employer for young people with visual impairment because there is so much that I can do. I normally work in the fitting rooms which is very easy for me to do. The clothing sizes are all colour coded and it's easy to remember which size is which colour. With my magnifier, I can always read whatever I need. I can even use the tills, which they can make larger and are very simple to use. The supervisors and managers are always happy to help if I need anything.

I feel so much more independent now that I have a job. **PTO**

When applying for jobs, make sure you explain about your visual impairment, tell people what adjustments you'll need (in my case it was to use my low vision aid) and tell them what aspects of the job that you think you're completely capable of. Also, give the reasons why. Just keep applying if you want a job, don't be disheartened if you're rejected, just stay positive!

Work Experience

**by Aiden Childs, Year 10,
Charlton School**

Aiden was interviewed about his work experience at Hadley Learning Community as a Science Technician.

How did you decide on this work experience?

When I grow up I want to do something science related. HLC is right next to my house so it wasn't far to travel and would mean that I was getting a difference experience rather than staying at my school.

How did you make contact with the placement?

I e-mailed to ask for consideration about a work experience placement. They replied relatively quickly and it did not take long to get sorted. I e-mailed before half term and they said that they'd get back to me after half term. It was about a week after that.

How was your first day?

I was a bit nervous. It was a new place, new people that I did not know. I was pretty nervous for pretty much the whole of the day but it did get better as the day went on. The second day and the rest of the week were ok.

What was your role? What jobs did you do?

Oh lots of things. I had to get the students' books ready for the different lessons. I set up experiments. I liked doing that.

I built particle models. It did not put me off, I learned the nature of the job. I can see myself doing something like this in future.



Work Experience

**by Emma Haston, Year 10,
Charlton School**

Emma was interviewed about her work experience at Freshfields Equestrian Centre

Why did you choose Freshfields Equestrian Centre?

I have been riding since I was four years old and the centre had horses there that I used to ride. I am preparing to enter a dressage competition. I wanted to see how the riding school was organised and what goes on behind the scenes.

Who made contact with the riding school?

I telephoned the owner and asked about work experience. He has a lot of other stable girls. He often has children go to do work experience. He expects some prior knowledge about horses and an understanding about caring for horses. He agreed straight away because we have known him for quite a long time.

I did want to go to Blists Hill because I like history and drama. When I rang they told me that they already had other students booked in for work experience.

What was your first day like?
I wasn't really nervous on my first day because I was familiar with the place that I was going to.

Was it what you expected? What jobs did you have to do?

It was a lot more hard work than I expected. There was a lot of poo picking, mucking out, tacking up and grooming. There are about 20 horses stabled at Freshfields.

Were you able to do any riding?
One day I was allowed to ride for a treat. It was good but they put me on a naughty horse. It was a bit silly but I did not fall off.

Is this the sort of job you would like to do for a living?

My parents would not be happy because there is no money in it. I don't mean that they will make me get a high flying job so I can earn a lot of money, it's just that a stable girl works really hard and the wages are not good. I could set up my own stables and teach riding I suppose but I would need a lot of money to start that up.

Have you thought what you would like to do in future?

I would like to go to Shrewsbury College to do a course in outdoor pursuits. I like doing that sort of thing. As a family we do a lot of outdoor activities and I think I would like to be an outdoor pursuits instructor when I am older.



Tackle... Blind Rugby!

I have played many visually-impaired sports in the last three years: football, cricket, tennis, goalball, judo. But I haven't played one that challenged me as much as blind rugby.

I only recently came across blind rugby over the summer when I attended a session in Wolverhampton.

The new version of visually impaired rugby caters for all abilities. The sport has kept the fundamental elements that makes rugby so iconic to include

backward passing, use of oval-shaped balls, scrums, tries but the format allows visually impaired individuals to play a sport that they would never have thought they were able to play.

Chris Styles, University Student, Shrewsbury



Interested?

If you are interested in improving fitness, meeting new people, or simply want to have a go at blind rugby, there are sessions running at **Telford College of Arts and Technology (TCAT): Mondays 6pm-7pm.**

For more information about blind rugby sessions, contact **Simon Northcott** (Warriors Community Trust Disability Lead): **simon.northcott@warriors.co.uk**

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