

Services for Children and Young People with a Visual Impairment in Plymouth



PLYMOUTH CHILDREN'S VI NETWORK



INTRODUCTION

Dear Parent / Carer

It can be overwhelming when you first discover that your child has sight problems. There are often many professionals involved in your child's eye care, and it can be difficult to remember who does what, and establish what help or services are available for your child. We hope that this booklet will provide you with answers to many of the questions you may have.

We would like to thank everyone who has contributed to the production of this booklet and hope that the information proves useful.

The wonderful artwork has all been contributed by students currently supported by the Visual Impairment Team in Plymouth.

Plymouth Children's VI Network



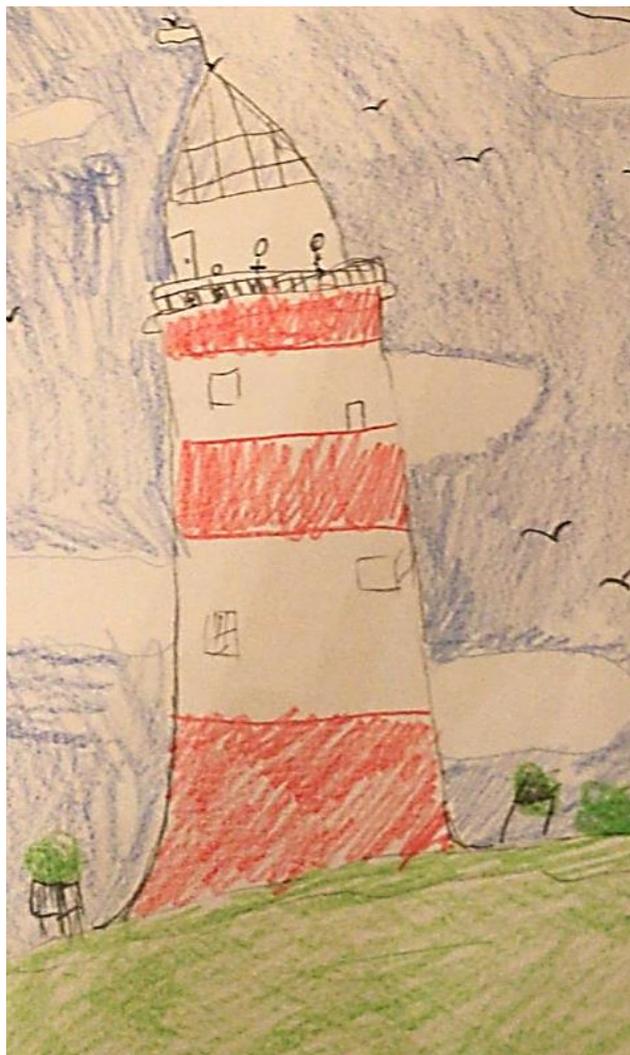
Services for Children and Young People with a Visual Impairment

Version 1.0 July 2020

Revision due: July 2021

CONTENTS

Local Services – Health	7
Local Services – Special Educational Needs and Disabilities	11
Local Services – Other	18
National Services	23
Eye Conditions and Support	34
Benefits and Grants	37
Reading and Listening	44
Sport	49
Theatre, Cinema, Music and Shopping	52



LOCAL SERVICES – HEALTH

Royal Eye Infirmary – REI, Derriford Hospital

If you or your child has an eye condition, it is likely that you will be seen at the eye department by a number of different professionals. These may include orthoptists, optometrists, paediatric ophthalmologists, nurses or dispensing technicians. They all form a key role in the care of a child's eyes. You may see a combination of these professionals on the same day and therefore have a number of assessments performed or you may just see one professional and have a relatively quick visit.

Orthoptics

The orthoptist is usually the first eye professional your child will come into contact with. They are trained in a variety of eye assessments for people of all ages. These assessments include: assessment of a child's visual function, eye alignment, binocular vision (depth perception) and eye movements. An orthoptist will work mostly with children, as this is when the critical period of visual development occurs. This means that management for amblyopia (lazy eye) or strabismus (eye misalignment) is usually undergone in childhood. Other roles the orthoptist undertake include conducting the primary school vision screening programme, as well as attending community hospitals (Child Development Centre for example) and special schools to conduct clinics. A separate more specialised eye service is provided for the children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) or Nystagmus in the community. With the range of vision assessments orthoptists cover, they are suited to managing the over-arching care of a child's eyes. They will work closely with the visual impairment team, ensuring all necessary information is conveyed and will refer on to other eye professionals and support groups where appropriate.

Optometry

The role of an optometrist is to identify refractive error (need for glasses) and assess the health of the eye. This means that if your child is longsighted, shortsighted or has astigmatism (eye in the shape of a rugby ball) then regular checkups with an optometrist are required to make sure the glasses are up to date. The reason for this being that glasses prescriptions can change frequently as a child's eyes develop. An optometrist may specialise in low vision and conduct clinics where magnifying aids can be supplied to children with poor vision to help them see. As previously mentioned, optometrists are also able to use lenses and lights to observe inside the eye. This is to ensure all the eye structures are developing normally and are therefore healthy.

Dispensing Technician

If a glasses prescription is required, a dispensing technician plays an essential role. They ensure the correct glasses frames are ordered to comfortably fit the shape and size of your child's face. The material of frame may be altered as even though metal frames are easy to adjust and trendier, they are more prone to being broken; a plastic or rubber frame may be more appropriate if this is a problem. The dispensing technician can also advise on glasses modifications such as glasses straps. Once the glasses have arrived, they will fit the glasses to your child's face, ensuring the glasses are comfortable and secure.

Paediatric Ophthalmology

The paediatric ophthalmologist is the consultant responsible for managing and treating eye conditions in children. They are able to fully assess the health of the eye and if necessary send your child for further investigations, such as electro-diagnostic tests (assessment of the nerves from the brain to the eye) or brain imaging, as examples. They will prescribe medications for certain conditions and can perform surgery if necessary, for example with strabismus (eye misalignment) or congenital cataract (clouding of the lens). It is also the paediatric

ophthalmologist's role to certify children as sight impaired (formally known as partially sighted) or severely sight impaired (formally known as blind), by completing a certificate of visual impairment (CVI).

Drops

Eye drops may be required for an eye department visit with a paediatric ophthalmologist or an optometrist. These are used to dilate the pupils (central black part of eye), which makes it easier to assess the health and refractive error (need for glasses) of children's eyes. The nurse will apply the drops and they may take between 20-30 minutes to take effect. After this period, focusing for near will be affected for up to 4 hours. These dilating drops will not be required on every visit.

Referrals

Referrals to the eye department can be made through your general practitioner (GP), health visitor, local optician or other health professional who currently manages your child's care.

Details

Web: <https://www.plymouthhospitals.nhs.uk/rei>

Email: plh-tr.OphthalmologyAdmin@nhs.net

Address: Royal Eye Infirmary, Level 3, Derriford hospital, Derriford road, Plymouth, PL6 8DH.

LOW VISION CLINICS

REI Low Vision Clinic, Derriford

Optical low vision aids help provide magnification for near or distance tasks. Normally they are hand-held devices but sometimes they can be mounted on glasses. Electronic aids may be provided by the Local Education Authority. The optometrist/ Low Vision Advisor

will assess your child's needs and will advise on the magnification that is needed.

Low vision aids are supplied on loan from the hospitals/clinics. They should be returned/ exchanged if not used or no longer needed.

Low Vision Assessments are generally offered to those of school age; however, if you feel your child would benefit earlier than this please ask for a referral.

Address: Low Vision Aid Clinic REI , Level 3, Derriford Hospital, Plymouth, PL6 8DH

Tel: 01752 439305

Web: www.plymouthhospitals.nhs.uk/rei

Low Vision Aid Clinic Sensory Solutions, Improving Lives Plymouth

Address: 156 Mannamead Road, Plymouth, PL3 5QL

Tel: 01752 201899

Web: www.improvinglivesplymouth.org.uk

PLYMOUTH LOCAL SERVICES FOR CHILDREN WITH SEND

PLYMOUTH LOCAL OFFER & CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES TEAM

The Plymouth Local Offer explains the support and services that are available for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) aged 0 to 25 years in Plymouth.

The Children with Disabilities Team is made up of social workers that work with disabled children and young people, their families and carers. They work with families to understand their needs and plan how to provide support that will make a positive difference.

Their role is to:

- Assess the needs of children and families.
- Offer support, advice and information.
- Plan a programme of care for children and families when this is needed.
- Liaise with Health, Education, and voluntary organisations to make sure that the help and support offered to families is coordinated and appropriate.
- Provide short-term breaks and long-term care for children and young people when this is needed.

Address: Children with Disabilities Team

Windsor House, Tavistock Road, Plymouth, PL6 5UF

Tel: 01752 668000

Email: Gateway@plymouth.gov.uk

Web: www.plymouthonlinedirectory.com/plymouthlocaloffer

PLYMOUTH CHILDREN'S GATEWAY

The Gateway should be used if you need help, information or advice relating to a child (pre-birth to 18 years old) or up to 25 years old if the child or young person has special educational needs and disabilities.

PLYMOUTH LOCAL SERVICES FOR CHILDREN WITH SEND

Address: Windsor House, Tavistock Road, Plymouth PL6 5UF

Tel: 01752 668000

Web:

www.plymouthonlinedirectory.com/childrenandfamilies/gateway

Email: Gateway@plymouth.gov.uk

PLYMOUTH ADVISORY TEAM FOR SENSORY SUPPORT (PATSS)

The Plymouth Advisory Team for Sensory Support Team helps children and young people with a sensory impairment by supporting and enabling independent learning and the development of appropriate life skills. They work with children and young people from birth to 19 years who are Deaf or Hearing Impaired, Visually Impaired, Deafblind or Dual Sensory Impaired who need support and/or advice (for themselves / their family / their educational setting) in order to access the curriculum and environment at the same level as their peers.

PLYMOUTH VISUAL IMPAIRMENT TEAM

Visual impairment is when your child has sight loss that cannot be fully corrected using glasses or contact lenses. Visual impairments range from severely sight impaired (blind) to sight impaired (partially sighted) and both can affect near vision, distance vision or visual fields.

The team's role is to:

- Provide advice to families and carers, early years settings, schools (including specialist provision) about practical and educational implications of the child/young person's visual impairment
- Provide practical and/or emotional support for families
- Provide guidance on access to the curriculum (including the sensory/experiential curriculum)
- Assess functional vision

PLYMOUTH LOCAL SERVICES FOR CHILDREN WITH SEND

- Teach specialist skills such as touch typing or braille
- Provide training for parents and other professionals
- Support the development of independence skills and the social and emotional well-being of a child/young person
- Monitor progress and contribute to target setting
- Contribute to early identification and assessment of children and young people with a visual impairment in accordance with the SEND code of practice
- Assess for alternative methods of access to the curriculum, e.g. braille or modified resources
- Provide assessment and training for children and young people's independent mobility
- Provide peer awareness training
- Advise on specialist resources (enlarged books, touch typing programmes, writing slopes, access technology)
- Carry out environmental audits with advice on improving visual accessibility
- Provide one-off advice following assessment where the child or young person does not meet the criteria for on-going support
- Signpost to other organisations (including on-going liaison with relevant organisations and running joint events as appropriate)
- Provide enhanced support for pupils/families/schools at key times such as transition into a new setting / school
- Carry out registration of visual impairment

REGISTRATION AS SIGHT IMPAIRED

Plymouth City Council keeps records of everyone living in Plymouth that have been certified as sight impaired or severely sight impaired by their consultant ophthalmologist and who chooses to be registered. The register for young people under the age of 18 is kept by the SEND Service.

PLYMOUTH LOCAL SERVICES FOR CHILDREN WITH SEND

Your child's ophthalmologist may have asked you to sign a form certifying your child as sight impaired or severely sight impaired. This form (Certificate of Visual Impairment or CVI) will be sent to the Access and Inclusion Worker (Vision) in the SEND Service, who will get in touch with you to discuss any queries you may have, and will offer to visit you at home. Registration is voluntary, but by agreeing for your child to be registered the council can monitor numbers of visually impaired children and plan services accordingly.

To be registered you need to complete a children's disability registration form at the registration visit. Alternatively, the form can be obtained by:

Email: SEND5252@plymouth.gov.uk

Post: SEND Service, Windsor House, Tavistock Road, Plymouth PL6 5UF

Phone: 01752 305252

Downloaded and printed from <https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/> by searching for 'register a child as disabled'. You will receive a registration card through the post which is valid for five years, after which you will need to apply for its renewal.

Even if your child is not registered you can still receive support from the advisory team for sensory support if he/she has a significant sight loss that cannot be corrected by glasses.

Once a young person reaches 18 they can be transferred onto the adult register by emailing a copy of their certificate to customerservices@plymouth.gov.uk

There are two Rehabilitation Officers working with adults in Plymouth with a visual impairment. Referrals to them can be made by contacting adult social care on 01752 668000.

How to request support

Email: gateway@plymouth.gov.uk

PLYMOUTH LOCAL SERVICES FOR CHILDREN WITH SEND

Write to: SEND, Windsor House, Tavistock Road, Plymouth, PL6 5UF
Tel: 01752 668000 or complete the PATSS Request for Involvement by
download the form from:
www.plymouth.gov.uk/visualsightimpairment

PLYMOUTH INFORMATION, ADVICE AND SUPPORT FOR SEND (PIAS)

Plymouth Information, Advice and Support for SEND (PIAS) provides information, advice and support relating to Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) for parents, carers, children and young people within the Plymouth Local Authority area.

All of the information they provide is impartial and confidential.

Plymouth Information, Advice and Support for SEND also offers a range of internationally recognised parenting programmes that have been shown to work in Plymouth for a wide range of families.

More information at: <https://www.plymouthias.org.uk/parenting-programmes>

Address: PIAS, Jan Cutting Centre, Scott Business Park, Beacon Park Road, Plymouth PL2 2PQ

Email: pias@plymouth.gov.uk

Tel: 01752 258933

Web: <http://www.plymouthias.org.uk/>

CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTRE AT SCOTT BUSINESS PARK

The Child Development Centre (CDC) is an assessment and treatment centre where a multi-disciplinary team of professionals work closely with parents/carers if there is a concern about a child's health and development.

PLYMOUTH LOCAL SERVICES FOR CHILDREN WITH SEND

Working in partnership ensures that appropriate intervention is made in order to maximise the child's future potential.

Children may present a range of problems and/or difficulties with:

- Developmental Delay
- Physical (Motor) Delay/Disorders
- Co-ordination
- Speech and Language
- Learning
- Vision and Hearing
- Attention
- Social Skills
- Communication

Address: Business Park, Beacon Park Road, Plymouth, PL2 2PQ

Tel: 01752 439400

Web: <https://www.plymouthhospitals.nhs.uk/cdc>

CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES REGISTER – PCC PARENT CARERS SERVICE

Plymouth City Council hold a register to keep families of children with disabilities informed of local services and activities in their area. This also helps both councils to plan and develop services for children with a disability.

Email: gateway@plymouth.gov.uk

Tel: 01752 668000

LOCAL OFFER FROM OTHER AREAS

If your child is receiving treatment at the REI or elsewhere in Plymouth but you live in one of the neighbouring Local Authorities, you will be able to find further information on your the Local Offer for SEND.

Devon County Council

<https://www.devon.gov.uk/educationandfamilies/special-educational-needs-and-disability-send-local-offer>

PLYMOUTH LOCAL SERVICES FOR CHILDREN WITH SEND

Cornwall County Council

<https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/education-and-learning/schools-and-colleges/special-educational-needs-file/cornwall-send-local-offer/>

Torbay Council

<https://www.torbay.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/send/local-offer/>

LOCAL SERVICES – OTHER

SENSORY SOLUTIONS PLYMOUTH

Sensory Solutions, part of Improving Lives Plymouth, provides information, advice and can demonstrate a wide range of equipment to people of all ages with concerns about sight or hearing.

Family members, carers, friends, professionals and employers are welcome to use this confidential and impartial service provided by trained advisors.

Address: 156 Mannamead Road
Mannamead
Plymouth
PL3 5QL

Email: sensorysolutions@improvinglivesplymouth.org.uk

Tel: 01752 201899 / 01752 201900

Web: [www.improvinglivesplymouth.org.uk/our-services/sensory solutions](http://www.improvinglivesplymouth.org.uk/our-services/sensory-solutions)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/improvinglivesplymouth/>

Twitter: [@ImprovingLivesP](https://twitter.com/ImprovingLivesP)



MOORVISION

Supporting Blind and Vision Impaired Children and Young People across Plymouth, Devon, Torbay and Cornwall

Moorvision is a support group for families of children and young people aged 0-25 who are blind or vision impaired. They offer regular activities, residential trips, advice, information, support and advocacy. They have an active Facebook page and can put you in touch with other similar families.

LOCAL SERVICES – OTHER

Address: Unit 4, The Watermark

Ivybridge

Devon PL21 0SZ

Email: info@moorvision.org

Tel: 01752 891934 / 07581566690

Web: www.moorvision.org

FB: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/161483982931/>

Twitter: @MoorvisionDevon



CAREERS ADVICE FOR 16-19 YEAR OLDS

The responsibilities of providing careers guidance has now been transferred to schools, but if you have any general queries about options and what support is available for young people please contact: **CSW Group (Careers South West)**

Address: Poseidon House

Plymouth

PL4 0SJ

Tel: 0800 97 55 111 / 01752 207700

Web: www.cswgroup.co.uk



DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTRE

This is an independent organisation run by disabled people. Facilities include an extensive Information Service and an equipment display area, which is open Monday – Friday 9am to 5pm. Whilst no appointment is necessary; telephoning before turning up is recommended in case the room is in use.

Address: Windsor House, Tavistock Road, Plymouth PL6 5UF

Tel: 01752 668000

LOCAL SERVICES – OTHER

FRIENDS AND FAMILIES OF SPECIAL CHILDREN

Friend and Families of Special Children provide information, support and services for families with disabled children. Their services give families opportunities to network and they create bespoke training and educational environments. They offer individual family support and give advice. They run social and leisure events relieving isolation and giving time for young carers to have fun. Integrated activities enable children with disabilities to experience a huge diversity of sports, arts, crafts and music and other activities.

Address: Virginia House Centre

Peacock Lane

Plymouth PL4 0DQ

Email: info@friendsandfamilies.co.uk

Tel: 01752 204369

Web: www.friendsandfamilies.org.uk

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/FriendsAndFamiliesOfSpecialChildren/>

Twitter: @FAFplymouth



THE ZONE

The Zone offers a wide range of information, advice, counselling and support services to young people. They support over 5500 young people each year. Their drop-in service, available, 6 days a week, supported by a dedicated team of volunteers, offer young people emotional support and information around many issues including housing, sexual health and mental health.

LOCAL SERVICES – OTHER

Address: 14-16 Union Street

Derry's Cross, Plymouth, PL1 2SR

Email: Enquiries@thezoneplymouth.co.uk

Tel: 01752 206626

Web: <https://www.thezoneplymouth.co.uk/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/TheZonePlymouth>

Twitter: @TheZonePlymouth



CHILDREN'S CENTRES

Government strategy is to provide quality services to children, young people and their families. Services offered will vary from centre to centre and may include:

- Support for children with special needs
- Child and family health services
- Parenting groups
- Support to access wider services
- Advice on training and employment
- Childminder networks

For more information on what they offer and to find your nearest centre, please visit Plymouth Online Directory (POD), details below.

<https://www.plymouthonlinedirectory.com/childrenandfamilies/childrenscentres>

PLYMOUTH PLAY ASSOCIATION

Plymouth Play Association is a resource centre which offers children's workshops, playschemes, toy library, craft activities and equipment at very reasonable rates and has play equipment for hire.

LOCAL SERVICES – OTHER

Address: Plymouth Play Association

Union Street, Plymouth, PL1 3HB

Email: admin@plymouthplay.org

Tel: 01752 256633

Web: www.plymouthplay.org

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/playengland>

Twitter: @playengla



NATIONAL SERVICES

VICTA

Empowering Children and Young Adults who are Blind and Partially Sighted.

VICTA is a national charity providing support to children and young adults from 0 to 29 who are blind or partially sighted and their families. VICTA's support, advice, grants and activities enable young people and their families to build skills and develop confidence.

The VICTA Parent Portal is a one stop information hub for all parents and carers of children who are blind or partially sighted with information and links to many other helpful organisations.

The VICTA Parent Network brings parents together for friendship and support empowering parents to support and advise each other and run local events and groups.

Email: admin@victa.org.uk

Tel: 01908 240831

Web: www.victa.org.uk

Web parent portal:

<https://www.victa.org.uk/introducing-victa-parent-portal/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/VICTAUK/>

Facebook Parent Network:

<https://facebook.com/groups/VICTAParentNetwork>

Twitter: @VICTAUK



EMPOWERING
BLIND
CHILDREN
YOUNG ADULTS

GUIDE DOGS FAMILY SUPPORT

The Guide Dogs Family Support team offers practical and emotional support, advice and information to the families of children with a

NATIONAL SERVICES

visual impairment, as well as working with other professionals and organisations. Their services include:

- CustomEyes books (large print books available to order)
- Access technology, Sensory equipment and grants
- Family events
- Family and education support
- Movement Matters – mobility skills and information
- Guide and Buddy dogs for children and young people
- Getting around safely and My Guide training
- Making the most of your vision

Email: cypservices@guidedogs.org.uk

Tel: 0800 781 1444

Web: <https://www.guidedogs.org.uk/services-we-provide/family-support>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/guidedogsUK/>

Twitter: @guidedogs



LOOK

LOOK support young visually impaired people and their families to thrive through mentoring, transformational events, youth forums and parent support groups. LOOK are the leading mentoring organisation in the UK for visually impaired young people. Mentoring can help increase your confidence, learn new skills and make new connections.

Email: info@look-uk.org

Tel: 07464 351 958

Web: www.look-uk.org

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/LOOKnational/>

Twitter: @LOOK_UK



NATIONAL SERVICES

RNIB - ROYAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR BLIND PEOPLE

RNIB have a Children, Young People and Education department and can offer information, products and services to support blind and partially sighted children and young people, their families and professionals across the UK. They also have a Facebook page for parents and carers of visually impaired children. Their services include:

- Children, young people and education services
- Information for parents
- Education and learning
- Family support and events
- Books, products and learning materials
- Support for education professionals

R N I B

The logo for RNIB consists of the letters 'R', 'N', 'I', and 'B' in a bold, black, sans-serif font, spaced out. Below the letters is a thick, horizontal pink line.

Their Children, Young People and Families (CYPF) team in our Sight Loss Advice Service are available to support with advice and information.

Email: cypf@rnib.org.uk

Helpline Tel: 0303 123 9999

Web: <https://www.rnib.org.uk/advice/children-young-people-education>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/rnibuk/>

Facebook Parent/Carer group:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/RNIBConnectparentsandcarers/>

Twitter: @RNIB

RSBC – ROYAL SOCIETY FOR BLIND CHILDREN

Are you worried about your child's emotional health and wellbeing?
Would you like some extra support for your child/young person and

NATIONAL SERVICES

family to build resilience, confidence, and self-esteem? RSBC's Family Practitioners are available to support children and young people, aged 0-25, and their families. Referrals accepted directly from families, or from professionals.

RSBC also provide a range of other services mostly in London for blind and partially sighted children and young people, their families, and the professionals who work alongside them.

Email: enquiries@rsbc.org.uk

Tel: 020 3198 0225

Web: <https://www.rsbc.org.uk/>

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/RSBCcharity/>

Twitter: @RSBCcharity



SENSE

Sense is a charity for adults and children who are deafblind and for those living with complex disabilities. They believe that no one, no matter how complex their disabilities, should be isolated, left out, or unable to fulfil their potential. Sense are there to help people communicate and experience the world.

Their experts offer personalised support through their centres, holidays and short breaks, or in people's own homes, providing early intervention for children, helping young people access education, and supporting the transition into adulthood and beyond.

Email: info@sense.org.uk

Tel: 0300 330 9256

Web: www.sense.org.uk

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/sensecharity/>



NATIONAL SERVICES

Twitter: @Sensecharity

SEEABILITY

SeeAbility provide specialist support, accommodation and eye care help for people with learning disabilities, autism and sight loss.

Their mission is to champion and deliver ambitious support and preventative services alongside people with learning disabilities, autism, and sight loss, enabling them to realise their goals each and every day.

Email: enquiries@seeability.org

Tel: 01372 755000

Web: <https://www.seeability.org/>

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/RSB.SeeAbility/>

Twitter: @SeeAbility



TPT - THOMAS POCKLINGTON TRUST

Focusing on Education, Employment and Engagement, TPT support blind and partially sighted adults and children to live the life they want to lead. They help other charities to set up new services or enhance their existing services for children, young people and their families.

Student support: TPT have an information and advice hub designed to support students with vision impairment living in England.

Email: cypf@pocklington-trust.org.uk

Tel General: 0208 9950 880

Web: <https://www.pocklington-trust.org.uk/>



NATIONAL SERVICES

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/thomaspocklingtontrust/>

Email Student Support: studentsupport@pocklington-trust.org.uk

Tel Student Support: 0203 757 8040

Facebook Student Support:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/687384152070270/>

Twitter: @TPTgeneral

BLIND IN BUSINESS

Blind in Business help people who are blind or have partial sight get into the world of work more easily. They can help:

- A blind or partially sighted teenager, looking for career advice or technology advice.
- A parent or carer of a blind or partially sighted child.
- Sighted and have a friend or relative who is visually impaired and may need our support.
- Having problems with your sight in the workplace and need some support or direction on technology, or support with your employer.
- A blind or partially sighted undergraduate or graduate looking for support in finding work or support at University.

Email: info@blindinbusiness.org.uk

Tel: 020 7588 1885

Web: www.blindinbusiness.org.uk

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/blindinbusiness/>

Twitter: @blindinbusiness

BLIND IN BUSINESS

Helping Blind & Partially Sighted People Into Work

NATIONAL SERVICES

CONTACT – FOR FAMILIES WITH DISABLED CHILDREN

Contact (previously Contact a Family) are a charity for families with disabled children. They support families with the best possible guidance and information and bring families together to support each other. Their services include:

- National advice, information, support sessions and workshops, family fun days and outings
- The Fledglings shop sells toys, clothing and sensory products
- Support for professionals
- Local and national groups bringing parents carers together
- An online community for parents to chat to other families
- Help for families to campaign, volunteer and fundraise
- Campaigns & research with families to remove the barriers they face every day and to conduct research

Email: info@contact.org.uk

Tel: 020 7608 8700

Web: <https://contact.org.uk/>

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/contactfamilies/>

Twitter: @contactfamilies

contact
*For families
with disabled children*

THE PARTIALLY SIGHTED SOCIETY

The Partially Sighted Society are a national charity helping anybody living with sight loss. Their specialist services focus on helping you to make the best use of the vision your child has, and they offer telephone support.

NATIONAL SERVICES

They provide information advice, equipment and clear print material. They also provide low vision assessments and produce a catalogue of mail order daily living equipment.

Email: reception@partsight.org.uk

Tel: 01302 965195

Web: www.partsight.org.uk

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/partsight/>

Twitter: @partsight



DEAFBLIND UK

Deafblind UK support people with combined sight and hearing loss to live the lives they want.

Their team of experts is there every step of the way to show you life for your child beyond sight and hearing loss and their services include:

- Awareness talks
- Befriending
- Care and Support and Helpline
- Holidays and Social Groups
- Technology

Email: info@deafblind.org.uk

Tel: 01733 358 100

Tel: 01733 358 356

Web: <https://deafblind.org.uk/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/DBUKCharity>

Twitter: @DeafblindUK



SIGHT ADVICE FAQ

The Sight Advice FAQ website answers questions about living with sight loss, eye health or being newly diagnosed with a sight condition. This includes those who are supporting people through their sight loss journey, including parents, partners, carers and friends.

There is a comprehensive children's section including:

- About your child's eyes
- Children with complex needs
- Early years, school and college
- Family support and wellbeing
- Grants and benefits
- Habilitation - Mobility and life skills
- Higher education
- Information for professionals
- Reading and listening
- Sport, leisure and play
- Technology and low vision aids



Sight Advice FAQ

Web: <https://www.sightadvicefaq.org.uk/>

STARTING POINT

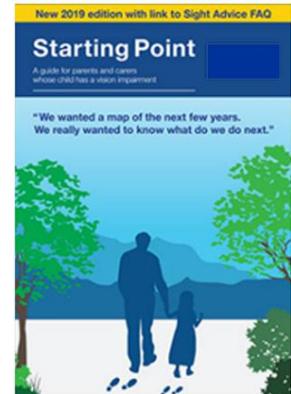
Starting point is a leaflet available online and in hard copy which signposts families to resources and professionals that can help with the first steps after receiving a diagnosis of visual impairment for their child. Starting Point can help by:

- explaining a child's sight condition and treatment
- helping a family understand what their child can see
- providing advice on their child's development
- connecting a family to national and local support
- explaining medical jargon and the role of professionals

NATIONAL SERVICES

- giving emotional and practical support for the whole family
- Advising on how to look ahead, regarding early years, education and leisure activities.

Web: <http://www.guidedogs.org.uk/familysupport>



IPSEA

IPSEA - Independent Provider of Special Education Advice offers free and independent legally based information, advice and support to help get the right education for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities. They also provide training to parents and carers and professionals.

Web: <https://www.ipsea.org.uk/>

Email via contact page:

<https://www.ipsea.org.uk/Pages/Category/service-overview>

Phone: 01799 582030

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/IPSEAcharity/>

Twitter: @IPSEAcharity



SPECIAL NEEDS JUNGLE

Special Needs Jungle creates easy to understand resources, articles and information for parents and carers of children with special needs, disabilities and health conditions to better enable them to navigate

NATIONAL SERVICES

the special needs system. They aim to inform, educate and empower families to self-advocate confidently, so their children get the help they need to live the best life they can.

Web: <https://www.specialneedsjungle.com/>

Email via contact page:

<https://www.specialneedsjungle.com/contact/>

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/SpecialNeedsJungle/>

Twitter: @SpcialNdsJungle



EYE CONDITION SUPPORT

The following organisations can provide support and advice on specific eye conditions:

SIGHT SPECIFIC ORGANISATIONS

Albinism Fellowship

Web: www.albinism.org.uk

Tel: 01282 771900

Aniridia Network UK

Web: www.aniridia.org.uk

Tel: 07792 867 949

Bardet-Biedl Society

Web: <http://bbsuk.org.uk/>

Tel: 07591 206680 / 01604
492916

Charge Syndrome UK

Web:

<http://chargesyndrome.org.uk/>

Tel: 07950 233 100

Childhood Eye Cancer Trust

Web: <https://checht.org.uk/>

Tel: 020 7377 0740 / 020 7377
5578

Childhood Cataracts Network

Web:

[https://www.childhoodcataract
s.org.uk/](https://www.childhoodcataract
s.org.uk/)

Congenital Rubella Syndrome

Facebook:

[https://www.facebook.com/co
ngenitalrubellasyn
drome/](https://www.facebook.com/co
ngenitalrubellasyn
drome/)

CVI - Cerebral Visual Impairment

Web: <https://cvisociety.org.uk/>

Diabetes UK

Web:

<https://www.diabetes.org.uk/>

Tel: 0345 123 2399

Esme's umbrella – Charles Bonnet syndrome

Web:

[https://www.charlesbonnetsyn
drome.uk/](https://www.charlesbonnetsyn
drome.uk/)

Tel: 020 7391 3299 24/7 365

FEVR - (Familial Exudative Vitreoretinopathy)

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/272919732665/>

Email: info@iga.org.uk

International Glaucoma Association (IGA)

Web: <https://www.glaucoma-association.com/>

Tel: 01233 648170

Lebers Congenital Amaurosis support group

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/LebersCongenitalAmaurosisSupportGroup>

LHON - Leber's Hereditary Optic Neuropathy

Web: <http://lhonsociety.org/>

The Macular Society

Web:

<https://www.macularsociety.org/>

Tel: 0300 3030 111

MACS The Micro and Anophthalmic Children's Society

Web: <https://macs.org.uk/>

Tel: 0800 169 8088

Nystagmus Network

Web:

<https://nystagmusnetwork.org/>

Tel: 01427 718093

OHN - Optic Nerve Hypoplasia & SOD - Septo Optic Dysplasia Support Group

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1776922049210179/>

Optic Atrophy

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/23423084077/>

Peters Anomaly

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/5202616817/>

EYE CONDITION SUPPORT

ROP - Retinopathy of Prematurity

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/161260317753157/>

Tel: 01903 785771

Usher Kids UK

Web:

<https://www.usherkidsuk.com/>

Stargardts Connected

Web:

<https://stargardtsconnected.org.uk/>

Uveitis – Olivia’s Vision

Web:

<http://www.oliviasvision.org/>

Stickler Syndrome Support Group

Web: <https://stickler.org.uk/>

WSUK - Wolfram/DIDMOAD Syndrome

Web:

<http://wolframsyndrome.co.uk>

Tel: 01903 211358

RARE CONDITION ORGANISATIONS

Telephone for all: 020 7831 0883

Rare Disease UK, SWAN UK & Genetic Alliance UK

Email: info@raredisease.org.uk

Swan UK

<https://www.undiagnosed.org.uk/>

Genetic Alliance UK

Web:

<https://geneticalliance.org.uk/>

BENEFITS AND GRANTS

There are a number of financial benefits which families of children with disabilities may be able to apply for.

GOVERNMENT BENEFITS

DLA – Disability Living Allowance

Web: <https://www.gov.uk/disability-living-allowance-children>

Tel: 0800 121 4600 Textphone: 0800 121 4523

PIP – Personal Independence Payment

Web: <https://www.gov.uk/pip/how-to-claim>

Tel: 0800 917 2222 Textphone: 0800 917 7777

Disabled Child's Tax Credit

Web: <https://www.gov.uk/disability-premiums>

Carer's Allowance

Web: <https://www.gov.uk/carers-allowance>

Your local Benefits Agency

Web: www.dwp.gov.uk

For general information and advice on any of these, contact:

Citizens' Advice Plymouth

Address: 32 Mayflower St, Plymouth, PL1 1QX

Webchat: <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/about-us/contact-us/contact-us/web-chat-service/>

Messenger: www.m.me/citizensadviceplymouth

Tel: 0300 3309 043

BENEFITS AND GRANTS

Web: <https://citizensadviceplymouth.org.uk/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/citizensadviceplymouth/>

Twitter: @PlymouthCAB

GRANTS

Guide Dogs Sensory equipment and grants

Guide Dogs can help fund sensory equipment for home use based on the following criteria:

- be aged 18 or under
- be certified or eligible to be certified as severely or partially sighted
- be supported by a VI professional at the time of submission

A 10% contribution of the total cost of the equipment is required.

Email: grants@guidedogs.org.uk

Tel: 0800 781 1444

Web: <https://www.guidedogs.org.uk/services-we-provide/sensory-equipment-and-grants>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/guidedogsUK>

Twitter: @guidedogs



VICTA and VICTA/RNIB

VICTA supports children and young adults who are blind or partially sighted by providing grants that support the purchase of equipment to aid their visual impairment.

VICTA is currently working in partnership with RNIB on a grant programme focussed on supporting independent study using the Orbit Reader 20 for Braille users free of charge.

Email: admin@victa.org.uk

BENEFITS AND GRANTS

Tel: 01908 240831

Web: <https://www.victa.org.uk/our-services/grants/>

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/VICTAUK/>

Twitter: @VICTAUK



R N I B

Family Fund

The Family Fund is the largest independent grant giving organisation helping low income families caring for a disabled child. The Fund issues grants that relate to the needs of a child, for instance sensory toys, computers, family breaks etc.

Email: info@familyfund.org.uk

Tel: 01904 621115

Web: www.familyfund.org.uk

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/familyfund>

Twitter: @FamilyFund



Family Fund
Helping disabled children

Newlife

Newlife provide thousands of items of equipment every year. There are now around one million disabled and terminally ill children in the UK. Thousands of them rely on Newlife to get the equipment they need. Newlife runs the only fast track equipment services in the UK helping those children in urgent need.

Email via contact form:

<https://newlifecharity.co.uk/docs/about/contact.shtml>

Tel: 0800 902 0095

Web: <https://newlifecharity.co.uk/>

BENEFITS AND GRANTS

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/newlifethecharity>

Twitter: @Newlifecharity



Amber Trust – see below under Arts and Leisure

TRAVEL

BLUE BADGE SCHEME

Children over the age of two who are registered as severely sight impaired/blind are entitled to a blue badge for parking concessions, to be used in any vehicle in which they are travelling. Some children with additional disabilities are eligible before they are two years old.

Tel: 01752 668000

Web:

<https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/parkingandtravel/disabledparking/bluebadgeapplications>

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/PlymouthCityCouncil/>

Twitter: @plymouthcc



BUS PASS CONCESSION

Children registered as blind/severely sight impaired or partially sighted/sight impaired are eligible for a bus pass for free local travel throughout the county from the age of five. In Plymouth those registered blind/severely sight impaired can travel free all day but on weekdays partially sighted/sight impaired people travel free after 9.30am.

To get a bus pass go to the First Stop Shop, 71 New George St, Plymouth PL1 1RJ. Monday to Friday, between 9.00am and 5pm or to your local library during opening hours. Take your child along with their certificate of vision impairment and evidence of their address.

Or contact them at:

Tel: Plymouth Gateway 01752 668000

TRAVEL

Web:

<https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/openall/yourlife/money/concessionsandpasses>

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/PlymouthCityCouncil/>

Twitter: @plymouthcc



DISABLED PERSONS RAILCARD

Sight impaired and severely sight impaired children over the age of five can apply for a Disabled Person's Railcard and they and their accompanying adult can receive up to one third off all rail tickets. (Children under five travel free). You will need your child's certificate of visual impairment to apply. You may however be better off applying for a Family and Friends Railcard until your child is 16 as this enables a total of four adults and four children to travel at a discounted rate.

Email: railcardhelp@nationalrail.co.uk

Tel: 0345 605 0525

Web: <https://www.disabledpersons-railcard.co.uk/contact-us/>

Web: <https://www.thetrainline.com/trains/great-britain/railcards/family-friends-railcard>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Railcard/>

Twitter: @_Railcards



OTHER BENEFITS

CEA – CINEMA EXHIBITORS' ASSOCIATION CARD CONCESSION

The CEA card enables a disabled cinema guest to receive a complimentary ticket for someone to go with them when they visit a participating cinema.

Email: info@ceacard.co.uk

Tel: 01244 526 016

Web: www.ceacard.co.uk



HALF PRICE TV LICENCE CONCESSION

If your child is blind (severely sight impaired) you can apply for a 50% concession on your TV licence. If they are partially sighted (sight impaired) they are not eligible. The Licence will need to be transferred into the child's name to benefit from this concession. You will need a copy of your child's Certificate of Visual Impairment (CVI) or a letter from your local Visual Impairment Team as proof.

Email via contact page: <https://www.tvlicensing.co.uk/cs/contact-us/index.app>

Web: www.tvlicensing.co.uk

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/tvlicensingcouk-1677036785870290/>

Twitter: @tvlicensing



LEISURE CONCESSIONS

Many theme parks, zoos, theatres, museums, theatres and other places of interest will offer a concessionary ticket for a carer to accompany a visually impaired child. Call your local venue in advance for details of any available concessions.

READING AND LISTENING

PLYMOUTH LIBRARIES

Blind and partially sighted children and adults can borrow large print books, audio CDs and MP3s and DVDs free of charge.

For more information contact your local library.

Email: library@plymouth.gov.uk

Tel: 01752 305900

Web:

<https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/libraries>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/plymouthlibraries/>

Twitter: @PlymLibraries



RNIB LIBRARY

The RNIB Library has an extensive range of books for Visually Impaired children and young adults in Large Print (24 bold), contracted and uncontracted Braille and Audio. New titles are being added all the time. It also provides children's newspapers and magazines.

Email: helpline@rnib.org.uk

Tel: 0303 123 9999

Web:

<http://www.rniblibrary.com/iguana/www.main.cls?p=b3ba52c6-5bac-4699-afb9-0dfb99409462&v=26563e2c-7b09-4a32-b733-f8c572da0f61>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/RNIBLibrary/>

Twitter: @RNIBLibrary

RNIB

Library

READING AND LISTENING

RNIB BOOKSHARE

RNIB Bookshare opens up the world of reading in education for learners with a print-disability, including those with dyslexia or who are blind or partially sighted.

- Listen to books with high quality text-to-speech voices
- Hear and see highlighted words on screen
- Read with digital braille or enlarged fonts
- Create physical braille or large print

Email via contact page: <https://www.rnibbookshare.org/contactUs>

Tel: 0300 303 8313

Web: <https://www.rnibbookshare.org/cms/>

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/RNIBBookshareUK>

Twitter: @RNIBBookshare

RNIB

Bookshare

GUIDE DOGS CUSTOMEYES BOOKS

CustomEyes Large Print Books give children with visual impairments the chance to read real books, just like everybody else. From Dr Seuss to Shakespeare they have over 4,200 large print books available. Each one is custom made, with font size, spacing, colour all tailored to your child's individual needs.

Email: customeyes@guidedogs.org.uk

Tel: 0118 983 8275

Web: <https://www.guidedogs.org.uk/services-we-provide/customeyes-books>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/guidedogsUK/>

Twitter: @guidedogs



READING AND LISTENING

CLEARVISION

ClearVision is a postal lending library of children's books for visually impaired and sighted children and adults. The books all have braille, print and pictures. This allows children with little or no sight to share books with their sighted friends and family.

Email: info@clearvisionproject.org

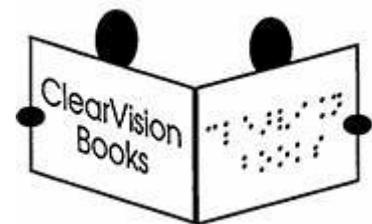
Tel: 020 8789 9575

Web: <https://www.calibre.org.uk/>

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/clearvisionproject/>

Twitter: @ClearVisionOrg



YOUNG CALIBRE AUDIO

Young Calibre audio library is a national charity providing a subscription-free postal service of unabridged audio books for young people with sight problems, dyslexia or other disabilities, who cannot read print.

Email: info@youngcalibre.org.uk

Tel: 01296 432339

Web: www.youngcalibre.org.uk

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/calibreaudio/>

Twitter: @CalibreAudio



LIVING PAINTINGS

Living Paintings create and publish tactile and audio books for blind and partially sighted people called Touch to See books. The titles are suitable for anyone from pre-school to adult. The wide and growing

READING AND LISTENING

range is designed to provide education and life-long learning, enhance lifestyle and support leisure interests.

Email: info@livingpaintings.org

Tel: 01635 299771

Web: www.livingpaintings.org

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/LivingPaintings/>

Twitter: @LivingPaintings



SEEING EAR

Seeing Ear holds the National Accessible Library which is free of charge to anyone who is blind, visually impaired, dyslexic or who unable through physical disability to hold or use a book. Books can be read as giant print, Braille and synthetic speech, and they can be accessed on computers, tablets or internet audio players.

Email: support@seeingear.org

Tel: 01424 428133

Web: <http://www.seeingear.org/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/seeingear>

Twitter: @TheSeeingEar



BWBF - BRITISH WIRELESS FOR THE BLIND FUND

BWBF supply specially adapted audio equipment to those who would not usually be able to afford it, on a free loan to visually impaired people across the UK including children aged 8 and over whose family are in receipt of any means tested benefit.

READING AND LISTENING

01234 311555 or 01582 655554

Email: info@blind.org.uk

Tel: 01622 754757

Web: <https://blind.org.uk/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/BWBF0/>

Twitter: @BritishWireless



IN TOUCH RADIO 4

In Touch Radio offers news, views and information for people who are blind or partially sighted.

Email: intouch@bbc.co.uk

Web:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006qxww>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/BBCRadio4/>

Twitter: @BBCRadio4



**In Touch:
All About Being
Visually Impaired**



SPORT

BRITISH BLIND SPORT

British Blind Sport helps blind and partially sighted people to get active and play sport. They encourage adults and children to participate in activities at all levels, from grassroots to the Paralympic Games.

Email: info@britishblindsport.org.uk

Tel: 01926 424247

Web: www.britishblindsport.org.uk

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/BritishBlindSport/>

Twitter: @BritBlindSport



GOALBALL UK

Goalball UK aims to transform the lives of blind and partially sighted people through the sport of goalball and to lead in promoting and providing sporting opportunities for blind and partially sighted people and to make goalball a universally recognised sport in the UK.

Email: enquiries@goalballuk.com

Web: <http://goalballuk.com/>

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/GoalballUK>

Twitter: @GoalballUK



ACCESS LIZARD ADVENTURE

Access Lizard Adventure offer accessible kayaking adventures for those with additional needs and all types of disabilities. They offer fun, high quality experiences that are accessible to all levels and abilities. Adventures can range from one off taster sessions, to a series of lessons that could lead to national qualifications.

SPORT

Email via contact page: <https://www.lizardadventure.co.uk/contact/>

Tel: 07845 20 40 40

Web: <https://www.lizardadventure.co.uk/access-lizard-adventure/>

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/lizardadventure/>

Twitter: @lizardadventure



TALL SHIP VOYAGES

Tall Ship Voyages-25 to fulfil offer life changing adventures at sea for young people aged 12-25 on residential youth sailing voyages that are particularly meaningful for young people with disabilities and those who have been marginalised by society.

Email: info@tallships.org

Tel: 02392 832055

Web: <https://www.tallships.org/>

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/TallShipsYouthTrust/>

Twitter: @TallShipsYT



JST – JUBILEE SAILING TRUST

The Jubilee Sailing Trust (JST) aims to promote the integration of able-bodied and physically disabled people through tall ship sailing and to give people of mixed abilities and circumstances the freedom to explore their ability, potential and place in the world through inclusive adventures at sea.

SPORT

Email: info@jst.org.uk

Tel: 023 8044 9108

Web: www.jst.org.uk

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/JubileeSailingTrust>

Twitter: @JubileeSailing



PLYMOUTH ARGYLE COMMUNITY TRUST

Plymouth Argyle have changed lives and inspired people over the past 20 years. They offer a large range of activities and programmes for children with disabilities or who are otherwise disadvantaged.

Email: community@pafc.co.uk

Tel: 01752 562561

Web: <https://argylecommunitytrust.co.uk/what-we-do/football/disability-football/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/argylecommunitytrust>

Twitter: @PAFCCCommunityTr



SAILING TECTONA

Sailing Tectona inspires positive change in people's lives through sail training experiences for people of all ages and backgrounds.

Email: ben@sailingtectona.co.uk

Phone: 44 758 1565 272

Web: <https://www.sailingtectona.co.uk/>

Facebook:

https://www.facebook.com/sailingtectona.co.uk/?ref=page_internal

Twitter: @SailingTectona



THEATRE, CINEMA, MUSIC AND SHOPPING

THE AMBER TRUST

The Amber Trust provides musical opportunities for blind and partially sighted children via its Music Awards and Music Services.

Little Amber

Little Amber's innovative music service aims to enable blind or partially sighted babies and young children to engage with music by providing families and professionals with resources and ideas for music-making.

AmberPlus

AmberPlus enables blind or partially sighted children to engage with music by providing families and professionals with resources and ideas for music-making.

Amber Music Awards

Amber Music Awards provide financial grants to individual blind and partially sighted children and young people. Music Awards can fund:

- Instrumental and singing lessons
- The purchase of musical instruments or items of specialist musical technology
- Tickets and assistance with attending concerts
- Travel and accommodation to access opportunities for making music

Email via contact form: <https://www.ambertrust.org/contact-us/>

Tel: 0300 323 9964

Web: <https://www.ambertrust.org/>

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/theambertrust/>

Twitter: @theambertrust



AUDIO DESCRIPTION

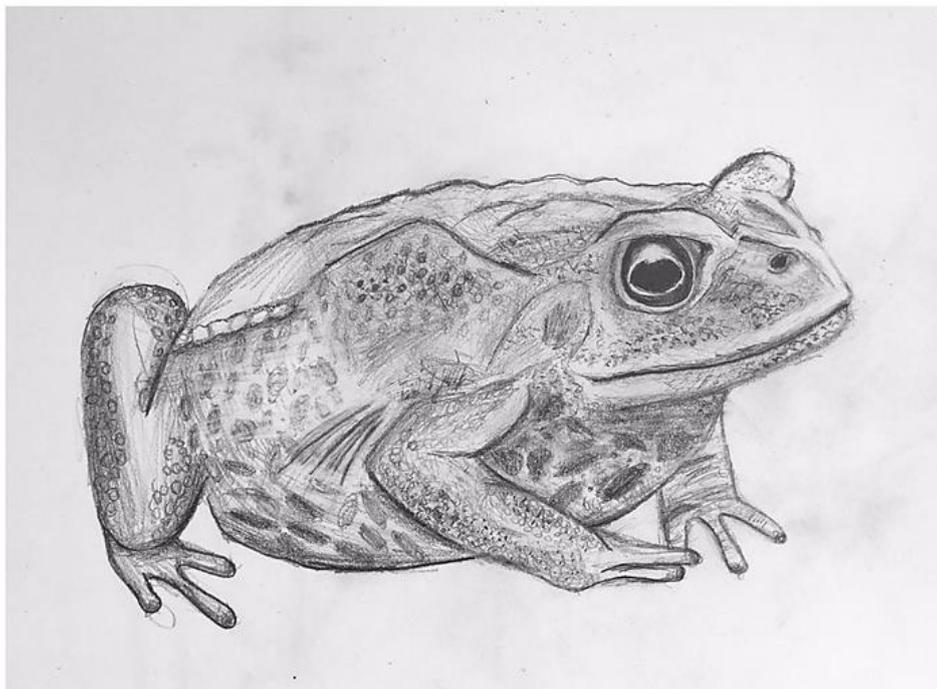
Audio Description may be available at local theatres and cinemas well as relaxed performances suitable for children with additional needs. Concert venues, theatres and cinemas may have special reserved seats closer to the stage. Theatres may offer a 'Touch Tour' giving your child a chance to meet the cast and feel their costumes and the props before a show.

Contact the venue you are interested in visiting in advance to see what they can offer.

OTHER PLACES OF INTEREST

Other venues may also provide services to make their venue accessible to people with sight loss. For example, a museum may offer guided tours or audio guides that you can listen to as you move amongst the exhibits; bus and boat tours may have additional information they can describe.

Contact the venue you are interested in visiting in advance to see what they can offer.



VOCAL EYES

VocalEyes help visually impaired people experience art and culture through audio description by bringing theatre, museums, galleries and heritage sites to life.

Email: enquiries@vocaleyes.co.uk

Tel: 020 7375 1043

Web: <https://vocaleyes.co.uk/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/VocalEyesAD/>

Twitter: @VocalEyesAD



CHRISTMAS CATALOGUES

Several large shops provide catalogues during the year and especially at Christmas e.g. Marks & Spencer, Next and Boots. These are available by request on audiotape and in braille. Please contact the store direct to identify whether this service is available.

