

Sensory Inclusion Service

Visual Impairment Newsletter

Issue
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Sensory Inclusion Service, Floor 7, Darby House, Lawn Central, Telford, TF3 4JA

Dancing winner



This is Matilda. Matilda is 9 years old who has always loved dancing. Despite having only peripheral vision in her right eye, she was part of a group who participated in a festival on Sunday 19th June in Telford. Her group came in First Place! She dances at Insteps Academy in Ludlow!

Catch of the day

Over half term, Ellie went to Black Rock Sands, Porthmadog. Ellie did her best to get the crab in her net but soon gave up and just picked it up. She was a little surprised to see how big it was.



Gymnastics trophy



In May, Amy took part in her first Shrewsbury Gymnastics Academy Club Competition at Lilleshall National Sports Centre. She loved the day and worked very hard to achieve 3rd place for her floor work and 4th place in her age group competition overall. Well done Amy!

Rock Star

For the Jubilee celebrations, Finley's school dressed up as the "Kings and Queens" of music. Here is Finley as Ed Sheeran. Love the guitar!



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Cataracts Operation

My name is Michael, I enjoy swimming and golf. I was born with cataracts in both eyes.

The cataracts in my left eye was removed in January and in the right eye more recently.

Before my operations, my vision was blurry and cloudy. I couldn't see detail. School helped me by making print bigger and I always had to sit near the front.

I have had cataracts removed from both eyes now. The second operation was in May.

On the day of the operation I felt giddy and had butterflies in my stomach. I was nervous. My brain was over stimulated and all I could think of was the bad things that could happen. Doctors always tell you what could happen to prepare you and help you make the decision whether to have the operation. My parents helped me understand, they explained things clearly and talked me through what the operation would be like.

On the day, I went with my mum to the theatre where the operation took place. The hospital staff were really nice. I had a drip put in and was told to count 10 seconds and then I dropped off to sleep and don't remember anything else. I woke up slowly at first and went on to the ward. I could open the eye and I knew instantly that I could see better however it was sticky from the stuff they'd put around it.

Two weeks later and my sight is so much clearer. I want to let others know that it really wasn't anything to worry about and I am so pleased that I had it done.

I have since received new glasses that have helped me to see short distance. I no longer need my print enlarged. The operation was definitely worth it.

If you are due to have a cataracts removal then my advice would be for you to do it because you won't regret it.

Michael Ward
13 years old.



Meet Mason

Name: Mason Bradley
Home town: Telford – Shropshire.

I'm 14 years old and have recently selected my options at school. I chose to take the following 4 options along with the mandatory subjects. Design and technology, Engineering, History and Interactive media. I had hoped to do a qualification in sport, however due to lack of interest from other students this option was taken away by the school.

I try my best at school and have various aids that help me cope, with my nystagmus but I find it very tiring and some days are a real struggle. The thought behind my options is that they are quite practical based subjects that allow me to be more hands on.

Away from school I enjoy cycling. I tried to ride motorbikes when I was younger but my vision made this very difficult.

I have been taking cycling more serious for a couple of years now. I have tried all disciplines, Road, Track, Mountain Bike, BMX and even have a special bike designed for pulling wheelies. Oh yeah, I can also ride a unicycle.

I have rode on my own bike, known as a solo, and I have recently started riding on a tandem due to my eyesight deteriorating.

From all these disciplines my favourite has to be Track, Track is done mostly indoors on a 250m velodrome made of wood with 45degree banked corners, most people will have seen this in the Olympics. Great Britain has been really successful at track producing lots of medals at the highest levels. Names like Jason and Laura Kenny, Sir Chris Hoy, Katie Archibald are some of the Olympians but then you also have Paralympians like Neil and Lora Fachie who ride tandems with Matt Rotherham and Corrine Hall are the individuals who I want to hopefully follow in the footsteps of.

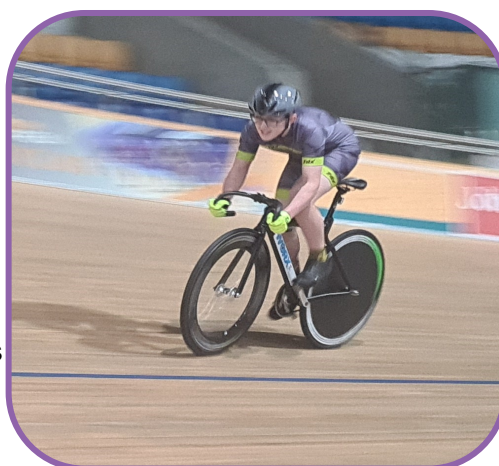
I recently had a trial and testing day with British Cycling in the hope of making it onto their Track sprinters pathway. Even if this doesn't work out, I will continue to train, as not only is it fun but it helps me to stay fit and healthy and meet lots of new people. I have rode the tandem now with a few, what we call pilots and even recently rode with a guy who is a below knee amputee.

Its amazing how cycling can bring people from all areas of life together with one common goal, that goal being to go fast and have fun!

At 14 I know that I have lots of different options ahead of me, in life, in school, and in sport, but one thing will always remain the same, I want to go each day and make sure that I do at least one thing that makes me smile.

Thanks for reading.

Mason Bradley.



Meet Josh

1. **When did you move up from secondary school to college?**

I moved up to college last September 2021.

2. **Can you remember your thoughts/feelings about starting college?**

Nervous. I was in my own bubble. All my friends had gone to different colleges and I had no confidence.

3. **How did your thoughts/feelings change once you had started college?**

I have changed since starting college, it teaches you social skills. I had very little social skills at school. Now I am more confident talking to people. I am able to tell tutors what I need and I feel I am supported to get the best grade possible. I am forecast to receive merits on my course. That is not something I expected this time last year. Two pieces of my work are on display in the corridor of the art department and I am very pleased.

College work can be taxing and I do become tired a lot but if you find a rhythm you'll get a better result than you would have hoped for.

4. **What do you most like about college?**

Everyone is really nice. I am treated more like an adult and I get more freedom. In college you are granted freedom to go off campus at break or work outdoors as long as you attend lessons. You do need to learn time management skills. The course I am doing is more hands on, more practical so if you like practical stuff do a vocational course.

5. **Is there anything you would change or you would do differently?**

No. It takes a while to get used to a new routine but it is now perfect.

6. **How have the college supported you to make sure you have everything you need in terms of your visual impairment?**

I have a TA to support me. My text is modified to be larger and in art I use a light box which allows me to draw photos more accurately.



What is Little Stars?

Little Stars is a family group for preschool children with visual impairments where preschool siblings are also welcome to attend. Parents can chat with other parents and seek advice from qualified staff. A qualified teacher for children and young people with visual impairment (QTVI) is available to support the children achieve developmental targets around social and emotional development, communication and language, play and learning, movement and mobility, independence and self-care.

A sensory/light room is available for the children to work with a qualified teacher on visual targets.

Activities including craft, cookery/sensory activities, music/singing and the session always ends with a calm parachute session.

Parents who have attended Little Stars sessions with their children, have made the following comments;

"Little Stars has been there to support us through times of worry and the unknown."

"The people who run Little Stars have given advice and an ear to bend and a shoulder to cry on."

"The families I have met have become friends outside of the group and I think they will be friends for life. "

'When my daughter was born with a cataract, I did not know what to think or what to do. However, I was put in touch with the Sensory Inclusion Service in Telford and Wrekin. They were so welcoming and invited me to many events. Myself, my daughter and her sibling attended Little Stars sessions which is a friendly support group for pre-school children with a visual impairment and their parents/carers. I was very nervous about attending the first time; however, I was reassured from the team that it was a small, kind and friendly group. As soon as I arrived all my worries and anxiety soon disappeared. Each session was fun. My daughter and her young sibling took part in arts, crafts and playing with other children, just like my daughter. Weekly we were invited to go into the well-equipped sensory room with the Qualified Teacher of the Visually Impaired (QTVI), using torches, lights and relaxing sensory equipment such as bubble tubes and fibre optics. My daughter loved this room, and it would help her to relax. I found the sessions a great opportunity for Ella to mix with other children with visual impairments and for her to realise that she is not the only child who had to wear a patch. This helped us so much, as applying her patch before these sessions used to be a fight from her; however once she realised that her friends at the group also wore them, she was happier wearing it. This session did not only help her, but it also helped my other daughter who was a year older than Ella. It helped her to realise that other children as well as her sister had 'magic eyes' and at this point she would want to have a patch applied to her face to join in. As a parent, I found this session a life saver, it helped me to talk to other parents in the same or worse situations. We could have a cup of tea together and a good catch up about things, such as hospital appointments, terminology doctors used and strategies that we would use at home. This session helped me become more confident and at ease with my own situation with my daughter and I came away with friends as well as a happy child.'

Little Stars is based at The Stepping Stones Centre, Brunel Road, Malinslee, Telford, TF3 2BF on Tuesdays in term-time from 9.30 to 11.30am

If you are interested and feel that these sessions may benefit you and your child please speak to your child's QTVI or contact the Sensory inclusion Service on 01952 385259 . We look forward to seeing some of you in future.



Watch this space!

Activities and events will be returning in the near future with this year's pantomime trip to see Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs already booked!
Details will be sent out via email so watch this space!



Hello and goodbyes

Welcome to Rob



Hello, I am Rob Tipton.
From September I will be the Visual Impairment Lead for the Sensory Inclusion Service.

I have been a teacher of children and young people who have a visual impairment in Wolverhampton for over 17 years and Team Leader there for the last 9 of those.

Before that I worked in retail, sales and engineering. After I finished a part time degree in my late twenties (kids, listen when they tell you to work hard at school, it saves a lot of time later in life) I was made redundant and so I decided to train as a lecturer and began teaching in 1995.

I got bored teaching Business and Finance, so I retrained as a primary school teacher. A colleague became a VI teacher and she convinced me to apply when a job came up. I'm glad that I did. It is the most rewarding yet challenging job I have done.

I am married with 3 grown up children and will be a grandad for the first time in October. My nappy changing skills are a bit rusty but I am looking forward to enjoying all the good bits of babysitting, knowing that I can hand my grandson back to his frazzled parents when he gets grumpy.

I like to walk, garden, do DIY, read old spy and action novels and watch anything on T.V. or YouTube about history, car restoration and aircraft, but not necessarily at the same time!

I have two dogs, a 12 year old Lurcher called Izzy and an 18 month old rescued from Spain called Ed – not our choice, as he was already called that! He understands English very well but chooses when he wants to do what he is told.

I am really excited about my new job, although I will miss the many children, parents and colleagues that I have worked with over the years in Wolverhampton

Hello to Louise

Hello everyone,

I am very excited about starting the Sensory Inclusion team in September. I always wanted to join the team since my daughter was born with a visual impairment. I was so amazed by the work they did with her and myself to help us cater for her needs. It helped us both to be confident in living with the disability. I am looking forward to meeting you all and your children. I hope to gain a great, trusting rapport with you all and your children and to work with you to ensure that your child has everything they need to progress through life to become a confident, independent person.

I thought I would give you a little bit of information about myself and my background, so you know about me. Firstly, I have been a teacher in a primary school for 12 years. I have very much loved this job and enjoyed nurturing and helping children to do their best throughout their educational journey. In this time, I have been lucky enough to support children from the age of 2 up to the age of 11 which has given me a wealth of knowledge and skills. Throughout my career I have worked with children from all over the world. Prior to becoming a teacher, I lived in Spain for a year where I was a children's representative for a well-known company. This was a great, fun job and allowed me to meet many people from different backgrounds and cultures.

I have many interests which include, reading, swimming and I love taking my children out for exciting days at the weekends and on holiday.



Goodbye to Kerry

Hi everyone,

As you will know I have not long joined the Visual Impairment team and sadly it is already time to say my goodbyes.

Prior to joining the team, I had a long career in special education spanning 15 years, and whilst I have loved my time visiting your children and young people both in their schools and in their homes and getting to know you as their parents and carers, the classroom is calling me back and I will be taking up a SENCO position at a new special school in September.

I would like to say a big thank you to the team for making me feel so welcome and a huge thank you to everyone else I've met along the way – it has been an absolute pleasure. I wish you all well for the future!



Family pantomime trip

Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs
Saturday 18th December 2022

The Place, Oakengates

(with an opportunity to meet the cast before the show)



Sensory Inclusion Service, Floor 7, Darby House, Lawn Central, Telford. TF3 4JA

Sensory Inclusion Service update

Can't believe it's the summer newsletter already and that we are blessed with the sun actually shining!

It is hard to believe that Graham has already been gone for 4 months and the two HI Lead Teachers Nikki Coombes and Ruth Lawton are well settled in their new roles supporting children and young people with hearing loss. In September, we will also be joined by Robert Tipton who will take on the role of Lead Teacher for children and young people with visual loss. Rob is a highly experienced teacher and was previously a Team Leader, the wealth of experience and expertise he brings is greatly welcomed.

The HI team has been joined by Nicky Clark, our new Social Inclusion Facilitator. She has replaced Dawn Ball who previously worked supporting children and young people with hearing loss. Nicky and Jo Adcock will continue to support children with sensory impairments across the service in accessing activities and events within their communities as well as fostering positive self-esteem, independence and confidence in the youngsters supported by the service. As many of you will know, the charity One Vision which previously supported many of the activities on offer to children and young people with visual impairments, has dissolved and Jo Adcock is working hard to provide sources of funding to support these activities. Watch this space! If you have any ideas for fundraising events or sources of revenue to support social activities such as the pantomime at Christmas, please contact Jo Adcock.

In September, we say goodbye and thank you to Kerry Trow who has worked very hard and been a great member of the team. She is going to work as SENCo at the new Keystone Academy in Shrewsbury and we look forward to meeting her there in her new role! After the summer break, we will be joined by Louise Kitson who will join the team as a Teacher for Children and Young people with Visual Impairment. Louise is a very experienced teacher and brings a wealth of experience to her new role, we look forward to her joining us. We also say farewell to Tracy Hollyhead who has accepted a year-long secondment with the SEND team. Helen McDonald will continue to 'pick up' some of Tracy's hours in her Access Support Assistant role. We will also seek to recruit temporarily to cover the other hours.

So yet again, it has been a period of recruitment and change but as always the current team continues to strive to provide stability and the very best support possible for children and young people across Telford and Wrekin and Shropshire. As ever, a huge thank you to the SIS team and our colleagues in Guide Dogs for all their efforts and to the families and children who continue to provide the professionals with the inspiration to strive for excellence. Please send their achievements to Jo Adcock who will include them in the next newsletter!

Finally, for the first time in 3 years, we are able to run the SIS training course for professionals in October. This is a real cause for celebration as it is a source of information on all aspects of sensory impairment as well as providing an opportunity for staff from the service and colleagues in schools and other settings to share their solutions and tips!

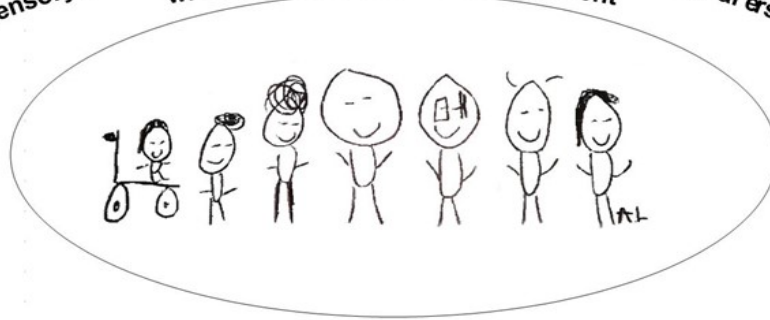
Wishing you all a wonderful summer, may the sunshine continue!

Warmest wishes,

Theresa



Sensory Inclusion Service resources library for parents and carers with children with visual impairment



Our Sensory Inclusion library is back up and running!

The Sensory Inclusion Service (VI) resources library has been set up for the use of parents/carers of children and young people with visual impairment.

Toys and equipment are available to loan for a period of 3 weeks and will need to be collected from and returned to the Sensory Inclusion Service at Darby House, Lawn Central, Telford TF3 4JA. If you would like a copy of the catalogue to see what is available or for more information, please contact Jo Adcock by emailing jo.adcock@telford.gov.uk or calling 07773 534390.

Local Offer for Special Educational Needs and Disability

Discover everything you need to know about education, health and care services in your local area for children and young people with SEND 0-25yrs at...

www.telfordsend.org.uk



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- Learn how schools support special educational needs.
- Use the interactive map showing what is available near to where you live.
- Have your say through our online feedback form.



www.telfordsend.org.uk

Need this in large print or Braille?

If you would like to receive this newsletter in Large Print or Braille, please email

sendandinclusion@telford.gov.uk



Shropshire's SEND Local Offer is a single place for information and services for children and young people with special education needs and/or disabilities, their families and the practitioners who support them.

Take a look at the [SEND Family directory](#) for local events, groups and things to do. For news and updates please like and follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

Email: Local.Offer@shropshire.gov.uk Telephone: 0345 678 9063

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