



Bi-Borough Vision Impairment Team

Service Offer 2024-2025

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About Us

- Westminster City Council (WCC)
- Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea (RBKC)



Kathryn Gilgallon

Bi-borough Sensory
Support Team Leader



Lidia Lakhu

QTVI for RBKC



Christina Matawa

QTVI for RBKC and WCC



Viv Hollis

QTVI for WCC



Jane Hall

QTVI for Edward Wilson
and WCC



**Stephanie
Bruce-Crampton**

QTVI for WCC

About Us

Kathryn Gilgallon

Bi-borough Sensory Support Service Team Leader

Kathryn received her Masters as a Teacher of the Deaf in her home state of California. There she worked as a Teacher of the Deaf in specialist schools before moving to London where she gained her English Qualified Teacher Status. Although she misses the sun and sea of her home state, her heart is firmly planted in London now.

She has worked in various schools in London for over ten years now as a Teacher of the Deaf, including in specialist provisions and deaf schools. She has been a peripatetic teacher for a number of years, working across the ages from 0-25.

Kathryn has a further qualification in working with children who are deafblind or have MSI. She enjoys working with children and young people of all ages as well as those with additional complex needs.

Janee Hall

QTVI for Edward Wilson Resource Base & WCC

Janee began her teaching career in mainstream primary education before joining the VI Resource Base at Edward Wilson Primary School in 2010. She gained her QTVI qualification in 2012 and since then has witnessed many of her vision impaired pupils progress through secondary, further and higher education. Janee explains “the Resource Base creates a perfect balance of mainstream inclusion with on-site specialist support and no day is ever dull!”. Her in-school role enables Janee to network with other education professionals, parents, and the wider school community thus broadening awareness of Vision Impairment in young people.

Janee is keen to model a holistic approach to supporting children and young people with vision impairment. She is especially interested in promoting wider access and opportunities to enjoy arts, sport and leisure activities.

About Us- cont

Viv Hollis

QTVI for WCC; QTMSI for WCC & RBKC

Viv received her mandatory qualification as a teacher of children and young people with vision impairments in 2010 from the Institute of Education.

Since then, she has been working in a peripatetic role supporting children and young people with vision impairments aged 0 - 25, their families and teachers, across a wide range of settings including mainstream primary, secondary, special schools, nurseries, colleges and within the home. Viv has particular experience of supporting braillists.

More recently, Viv has received an additional mandatory qualification for Teacher of Multi-Sensory Impairment (QTMSI) from Birmingham University. Viv has a special interest in supporting those to develop their self-advocacy and social skills.

Stephanie Bruce-Crampton

QTVI for WCC

With over 13 years in vision impairment education, Stephanie is an experienced international teacher who started her secondary teacher training in Australia. In 2013, Stephanie completed her Master's in Education for Vision Impairment from the University of British Columbia (UBC), Canada, and later went on to earn dual certification as an Orientation and Mobility Specialist in 2016. The first decade of her career was spent in Toronto with the York Region District School Board.

Relocating to London in 2021, Stephanie secured her Mandatory Qualification for VI from the University of Edinburgh in 2023. Beyond conventional roles, she has served as an Adjunct Professor for UBC. Stephanie loves to build communities by organising events such as VI sports teams and habilitation day camps. She is the newest member of WCC and joins us after 3 years as a QTVI with LB Hounslow.

About Us- cont

Christina Matawa QTVI for RBKC and WCC

Christina has supported children and young people with vision impairments (VI) in the Bi-borough since 2007, while also working in other London boroughs.

Before 2007, Christina was Head of Music and Performance Studies at Dorton House School, then a school for students with VI in Kent. In 2008, Christina completed her Masters in teaching children with VI at Birmingham University. Her research was published in the British Journal of Visual Impairment and in “Focus on Music 2: Exploring the musicality of children and young people with retinopathy of prematurity”.

In October 2013, Christina became a trustee at ClearVision, a postal lending library of children's books with added braille, and has been a tutor at Birmingham University (qualification for teachers of children and young people with VI) since 2016. Christina is passionate about supporting children and young people with VI of all ages and abilities, including their families and the settings she works with.

Lidia Lakhu QTVI for RBKC

Lidia started her teaching career in Italy but gained her English Qualified Teaching Status after moving to London over 20 years ago, teaching Italian and French in a number of secondary schools before discovering that her real passion was working with children with SEND.

She has worked for the BBIS for a couple of years whilst simultaneously working as a QTVI for the borough of Brent where she has been for more than 7 years. There she works with a range of children with varying degrees of vision impairment, across many schools.

Lidia greatly enjoys working with young children with a vision impairment and supporting their families; she especially enjoys teaching Braille to children with profound sight loss for the challenges that it entails but also for the freedom and creativity that it allows.

Lidia really loves her job and she counts herself lucky because she is able to support families and school.



Who is likely to work with a child/young person with Vision Impairment?

RBKC and WCC fund a range of VI specialists including QTVIs, mobility officers/registered qualified habilitation specialists (RQHS).

Other professionals working with children and young people might include an optician, optometrist, orthoptist, ophthalmologist, paediatrician, occupational therapist and physiotherapist.

The habilitation support is commissioned from Guide Dogs.

The role of the QTVI

The QTVI carries out a central role in the education of children and young people with vision impairment from birth to 25 years, including:

- Managing referrals from health to education
- Providing direct support to babies and young people and their parents/carers
- Assessing children's functional vision and liaising with health professionals
- Advising on access in educational settings, independent learning and social inclusion
- Guiding the work of other professionals such as teaching assistants
- Teaching specialist skills (for example braille, the use of specialist equipment) to children and developing the visual and communication skills of those with additional or complex needs
- Advising on modifying and adapting teaching and learning resources in print, audio or tactile formats and training setting-based staff to do this
- Supporting students through transition into post16/FE education and independent adulthood
- Advising on access arrangements for exams
- Assessing learning environments for health and safety and reviewing access plans



The role of the Habilitation Specialist

A Registered Qualified Habilitation Specialist (RQHS) or mobility teacher/habilitation worker should also be available to teach children and young people how to move around more independently and how to do practical everyday tasks for themselves.

On advice of the QTVI some children should receive an initial assessment of their mobility and independence needs carried out by an RQHS.

Habilitation training has two main aims:

- Maximising the personal independence of a child/young person with visual needs ready for their life as a young adult.
- Preparing a young person for moving on to college, university, apprenticeships or work, as an independent young adult.

We commission our Habilitation Services via the Guide Dogs registered charity.



VI Specialist Equipment



- Local arrangements for provision of specialist equipment in mainstream schools is included in the Equipment Policy published by the Local Authority.
- There are many types of aids to assist children and young people to access the curriculum. The range of equipment varies widely and advice will be given by the QTVI following appropriate assessment.



Eligibility criteria

The service supports all children and young people with vision impairment from birth to 25 years. The C&YP should live within the boroughs of RBKC or WCC if pre-school age and/or attend a school or nursery within the borough. This includes mainstream schools, academies, free schools, independent schools and private schools.

The service is free to all children and young people with vision impairment in Bi-borough maintained schools, to all children under 5 and to all Bi-borough residents who have vision impairment support specified in their EHCP.

It also supports out of borough placements, within reasonable distance, where the Bi-borough resident C&YP has vision impairment support specified in their EHCP.

If a child or young person from another borough is a student in the Bi-borough and has an EHCP with VI needs specifically stated in section F of their EHCP then they are usually supported by the local authority in which they reside. Sometimes, reciprocal or commissioning agreements are sought.

Referral Pathways



Who can refer?

Schools
Local Authority
Health professionals
Parents/carers



How can you refer?

You can download our referral form from our website.

Please email your referral form to
qe2referral@qe2cp.westminster.sch.uk
clearly stating “**VI referral**” in the email subject

Frequency of visits

The frequency of a QTVI's input is guided by the NATSIP Eligibility Framework.

The frequency of the QTVI's input for Bi-borough children and young people with EHC plans attending out-of-borough schools is negotiated separately.

The QTVI will endeavour to attend annual reviews where possible. If the QTVI cannot attend, feedback on the QTVI input will be provided. Please give enough notice, in line with the SEND Code of Practice. Annual review paperwork may take the form of clinical/progress notes.

* In the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, we are currently offering a hybrid service delivery - a mixture of virtual and direct work on site. We can be flexible according to the needs of the child/young person and the school.



Eligibility Framework for Scoring Support Levels

Summer 2017 Edition

Range of support

Service offers in person and virtual support at a variety of settings (e.g. home, school, hospital). This includes:

- Observation/assessment
- Advice on target setting with reviews and updates
- Signposting to services
- Modeling approaches for staff including training
- Small group support
- Contribution to Annual Review/Transfer Reviews
- Audit of provision by habilitation specialist
- Advice on creating differentiated resources
- Transition support
- Multi-professional meeting/Team around the Child (TAC)
- Support for students in understanding their diagnosis
- Telephone, email and video call support



Working together

During the visits, targets are set and discussed jointly with parents/carers, school staff and other key members working with the C&YP. Our team uses the graduated approach, through which earlier decisions and actions are revisited, refined and revised, leading to a growing understanding of the pupil's needs and of what supports the pupil in making good progress and securing good outcomes.

The four stages of the cycle are: • Assess • Plan • Do • Review.

Written information will be given to school staff and sent home to families by schools, whenever appropriate. Parental involvement is an integral part of the service.

Parents/carers are encouraged to be involved in the following ways:

- Contribution to goal setting and reports
- Discussions/feedback/consultation
- Review/ school meetings
- Parental training and parental events



Charging policy- for QTVI consultation/support

The Vision Impairment Service is funded to provide consultation and bespoke training to maintained nurseries, primary and secondary schools in the Bi-borough.

There is no routine service for school aged C&YP attending independent schools unless the following applies:

- Where a student has a specialist teacher support identified in their EHCP this will be provided through the local services.
- Independent schools can purchase specialist advisory teacher support for the whole school or an individual learner by referring to the service.

We are offering a hybrid model of training that can include online and in person training.

Charging policies

Consultation

For 2024 the following charges will apply to independent schools and for those schools out of the borough

.Consultation rates:

- £350 for half a day consultancy
- £600 for one day consultancy
- £85 per hour: Each in-person visit with a child or young person will be charged at a minimum 2.5 hours to account for travel, preparation and report writing

Bespoke training for independent and OOB settings

Bespoke training in your setting:

- £600 for one-day training
- £350 for half day training/2 twilights
- £200 for one twilight session

These charges include preparation, delivery and travel cost in London zone 1-6

Online:

- £175 for 1-2 hours
- £175 for two twilight 1 hour sessions
- £100 for 1 hour twilight session

Centrally run training (QE2 or Kensington Town Hall)

Attendance at the centrally run training delivered by the members of the team continues to be free to all Bi-borough maintained schools and PVI nurseries.

The cost to independent schools and settings outside Bi-borough is:

- £50 for half day courses
- £90 for full day courses
- £30 for courses online

Courses provided by outside trainers will be charged on an individual basis for all school services, organizations and individuals.



Quality Assurance

The Bi-borough Vision Impairment Team adheres to Quality Standards for Sensory Support Services in England. These standards provide us with a framework for self- evaluation based on some of the key areas of the SEND Local Area inspection.

Based on the standards, we identified key performance indicators which allow us to monitor the outcomes. The outcomes are reported termly to the Local Authority. This includes feedback from schools, C&YP and families, training evaluation, KPIs analysis, case studies and development plans.

Consent and confidentiality

Each child and young person has an individual GDPR compliant electronic file containing records of visits, communications with other professionals, settings and families.

The Bi-borough Vision Impairment Team will gain consent from the family / carers from the point of initial involvement with the service. Additional consent will be requested for participation in specific projects and interventions e.g. peer support work. The team also request consent to share information with other professionals to support their work with the child or young person.

Only the initials of the child's name are used in email communication unless otherwise agreed. If photo / video footage of the child or young person is used for training purposes / publications or advertisement, additional consent is obtained from parents / carers.



Compliments and Complaints

The Bi-borough Vision Impairment Team are proud of their continuing professionalism, values and commitment to the children and young people in their care. Every year the team evaluates the impact of the service through questionnaires and other forms of communication. If you are pleased with our work, we are always happy to hear from you.

However, there may be situations where the service or a member of the team has not met your expectations and you would like to make that view known to us.

As a team we are open to receiving any feedback and to efficiently resolve any complaints. Please contact us on:

Anna Selwyn - Head of Bi-borough Inclusion Service aselwyn@westminster.gov.uk

Kathryn Gilgallon - Sensory Support Team Lead kgilgallon@westminster.gov.uk





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