

3. Sensory Considerations for Learners with Visual & Hearing Loss, Multisensory Learning

3C: Implications of Visual Conditions for Learning

Strategies to support learners with visual conditions include:



- Maintaining a known arrangement of furniture/classroom layout so that learners know the locations of fixed equipment/furniture during different activities

Strategies to support learners with visual conditions include:

- Providing clutter free routes to key areas of the classroom



Strategies to support learners with visual conditions include:

- Using different textured surfaces can give useful information as to location or the content of cupboards or storage boxes.
- Equally, on a larger scale, these can provide environmental objects of reference



Strategies to support learners with visual conditions include:



- Avoiding shiny surfaces that may reflect glare and considering the use of blinds to reduce sunlight

Strategies to support learners with visual conditions include:



- The use of task lighting for specific activities

The functional effects of a visual condition on learning

Learners may experience functional effects of their visual condition in:

- visual acuity (clarity of vision)
- loss of central vision
- loss of peripheral vision
- low contrast sensitivity

The functional effects of a visual condition on learning

Learners may experience functional effects of their visual condition in:

- adaptability to light
- impaired eye movements
- interrupted vision
- colour loss

These effects may be experienced across the range of visual conditions we've described.

The functional effects of a visual condition on learning

Here is a simple guide to the functional effects of visual conditions and what this might mean for the learner in your classroom.

- **Visual acuity:** the sharpness of the image the learner sees. This may affect near and distance vision. The learner may see close work clearly, but not see the whiteboard or teacher as clearly or vice versa.
- **Loss of central vision:** inability to see fine detail and colour in the center of the visual field. The learner may experience difficulty with reading and writing or tasks presented directly in front of them.

The functional effects of a visual condition on learning

Here is a simple guide to the functional effects of visual conditions and what this might mean for the learner in your classroom.

- **Loss of peripheral vision:** inability to see at the edges/sides of the visual field. The learner may experience difficulty moving around, finding objects or knowing where to write/make marks on a page. Care must be taken when approaching these children on a carpeted floor when no auditory clues to your proximity is given.
- **Low contrast sensitivity:** inability to pick out an object from its background. The learner may experience difficulty identifying a letter/picture etc. against a complex visual background.

The functional effects of a visual condition on learning

- **Adaptability to light:** difficulty adapting to variations in the level of light. The learner may experience difficulty moving from a light to a dark space, or vice versa. This is particularly noticeable when moving from the classroom to playtime and vice versa on a sunny day. N.B. You may need to be aware of mobility implications if this is an issue.
- **Impaired eye movements:** difficulty focusing one or both eyes on an object. The learner may experience difficulty seeing all of the object/picture at once, seeing only pieces of it.

The functional effects of a visual condition on learning

- **Interrupted vision:** ‘patches’ of poor vision mean the learner experiences difficulty with complicated visual tasks, seeing only fragments of the visual image and not the whole image.
- **Colour loss:** colour loss or confusion means the learner experiences difficulty with identifying fine colour detail or following a colour coding system (Colour blindness)