**Job Description**

**JOB TITLE**: Specialist Teaching Assistant for Visual Impairment

**Reports to**: SENCO

**Day to day management/supervision**: SENCO

**Guidance and Support**: Qualified Teacher of VI, BHISS Visual Impairment team

**JOB PURPOSE**

Work with teachers to support the learning, educational progress and inclusion of a pupil with a visual impairment, with the aim of maintaining attainment levels in line with that of their sighted peers.

Give assistance to a student with a visual impairment so that they can access the curriculum, participate in learning, experience a sense of achievement and develop independence in learning and other aspects of school life alongside their fully sighted peers.

**MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES/DUTIES**

**Supporting the teacher in the planning, delivery and evaluation of lessons.**

1) To work collaboratively with the teacher to ensure the pupil with a VI has full access to lessons. This will include adaptations, modifying and producing tactile materials and direct support so that they can continue to make progress.

* To expertly modify and produce exam quality resources and teaching materials as necessary so that the pupil can access the key points of a lesson and achieve the learning outcomes set for them, as independently as possible.
* To have an excellent working knowledge of Duxbury Braille Translation software, MS Office Word and Excel, using a Braille embosser, a heat fuser and other specialist Braille and audio technology for the visually impaired.
* To have an excellent working knowledge of using a Perkins Brailler, drawing film and other VI specific equipment.

2) Support the delivery of learning by providing direct support as agreed with the teacher and QTVI. This may include pre-tutoring, 1:1 support to ensure pupils have the necessary knowledge and familiarity with the resources, skills and concepts to be used in the lesson. It may also involve 1:1 consolidation catch up support to check understanding and reinforce key learning points.

* Developing skills in the use of specialist formats (e.g. Braille). A pass RNIB certificate in contracted Unified English Braille is essential. A pass RNIB certificate in technical Braille (maths) is desirable, but a working knowledge of the technical UEB maths code is essential.
* Supporting the pupil VI to participate in class teaching activities, providing support to groups as appropriate to encourage independence and social interaction.
* Using praise, assistance and encouragement to motivate the pupil and to help them stay on task.
* Supporting the pupil to understand any follow up tasks set by the teacher.
* Taking lesson notes from the board (typing or Brailling), where required, to support the pupil with VI’s understanding and inclusion.
* Overseeing the pupil with VI’s work in practical activities where safety is a consideration.

3) Support the teacher in evaluating the pupil with VI’s learning and access

by:

* Providing constructive feedback to the teacher on the how the pupil with VI has responded to the lesson.
* Discussing with the teacher any difficulties experienced in providing the support the pupil needed.
* Providing information on how well the pupil is engaging in the lesson, any difficulties they appear to be experiencing, work they find relatively easy and work they find more difficult.
* Implementing Individual Learning Programmes for pupils

4) Support the development and implementation of individual learning programmes, guided by the teacher and QTVI, focused on delivering priority learning outcomes for pupils. These might include work in the areas of The Curriculum Framework for Visual Impairment, such as development of tactile skills, touchtyping, laptop skills including keyboard shortcuts and using a screenreader, personal, social and emotional development as required, learning to use Voiceover on Apple devices. This will be achieved by:

* Working with the SENCO, class teacher, and QTVI and other specialists where appropriate to plan and agree the programme which contains clear, challenging but achievable outcomes for the pupil.
* Reinforce mobility and independence skills under the guidance of the BHISS Habilitation specialist.
* Delivering the agreed programmes under the guidance of the teacher, SENCO, VI Habilitation specialist and the QTVI focussing on mobility, orientation and independent living skills.
* Providing feedback to relevant colleagues about the pupil’s progress towards targets and the effectiveness of the programme in securing this and the pupil’s engagement.

**Observing and reporting on pupil progress.**

5) Observe and report on pupil progress, gathering information about their knowledge, skills and understanding, including their progress towards targets, to support teachers in re-assessing need, evaluating teaching strategies and interventions, setting new learning targets and formulating new learning plans.

**Contributing to Maintaining Pupil Records.**

6) Contribute to the maintenance of pupil records as agreed with the teacher and/or SENCO and help to maintain the record keeping system.

**Using technology to support the pupil’s learning.**

7) Support the use of technology and optical aids to promote the pupil’s learning by:

* Checking that any equipment used by the pupil is functioning properly.
* Developing skill in the use of specialist equipment used by a pupil with VI, including software applications.
* Taking steps to ensure any problems with equipment are dealt with as quickly as possible.
* Promptly informing the teacher & BHISS VI Team if there are any problems.
* Supporting the pupil with VI and staff in the use of technology, encouraging pupils to use the equipment independently where appropriate.

**Supporting Children’s Emotional and Social Development.**

8) Support pupil’s social and emotional development by:

* Supporting positive behaviour, giving praise and encouragement as appropriate to build confidence and self-esteem.
* Providing support to enable the pupil to have the opportunities to participate in all school activities, to make choices and take decisions for themselves.
* Encouraging pupils to evaluate their own progress and to take an active part in reviews of their progress, when appropriate.
* Observing how pupils express their feelings and emotions and relate to others and feedback to the teacher and/or SENCO, recording any findings accurately.
* Delivering programmes designed by specialists to support students to understand, communicate and regulate their emotions as appropriate.
* Encouraging other pupils to develop an understanding of the needs and skills of a pupil with VI.

**Learning Environment.**

9) Working with colleagues to ensure the classroom provides a safe and accessible learning environment for a pupil with VI, paying particular attention to lighting, layout and auditory factors.

**Liaising with Parents.**

10) Support teaching staff and SENCOs discharge their responsibility in involving parents by providing information on the pupil’s engagement with learning and interactions with other pupils and helping to maintain home-school liaison records.

**Continuing Professional Development.**

11) Participate in training and other learning activities to develop the competencies to effectively support pupils with VI and to ensure knowledge and skills are kept up to date.

**PERSON SPECIFICATION**

**Specialist teaching assistant for Visual Impairment**

1. Specialist Knowledge and Experience – Visual Impairment

1.1 Knowledge and experience supporting tactile learners.

* Provide access to learning for pupils with a severe visual impairment.
* Experience in the modification and production of Braille and tactile teaching resources and materials.
* A pass certificate for RNIB Unified English Braille literary course – essential criteria.
* Experience using specialist Braille translation software and specialist screenreading software, touch typing and keyboard shortcuts.
* Skilled using a Perkins Brailler, heat fuser, drawing film, embosser and other specialist VI equipment.
* A good working knowledge of Unified English Braille technical code (for maths) and ability to find new technical Braille signs as required by the pupil.

1.2 Ability to build a rapport with learners, including those with special educational needs.

1.3 Ability to understand child development and the implications of visual impairment.

1.4 Ability to use ICT and to learn new ICT skills.

2. Organisation

Ability to organise time effectively, creating work schedules, prioritising workload and meeting deadlines.

3. Using Initiative

Ability to take responsibility for own actions and make decisions without referring to others on occasions.

4. Resilience

Ability to remain calm and self controlled under pressure.

5. Personal Drive & Commitment

Ability to be proactive, enthusiastic and committed by taking ownership to ensure tasks are delivered.

6. Communication

Ability to communicate effectively, both verbally and in writing, adapting style to suit the audience e.g. preparing reports.

7. Team Working

Ability to work effectively within a team.

8. Equal Opportunities

Ability to understand and demonstrate commitment to St Paul’s Equal Opportunities Policy and to ensure all activities are consistent with the

Equal Opportunities Policy. This includes all staff activities and their interface with the general public.

9. Special Conditions

9.1 Appointment is subject to an Enhanced Criminal Records check.

9.2 Must be prepared and willing to work occasional extra hours as agreed with the school Senior Leadership Team.