

Sensory Inclusion Service Visual Impairment Newsletter

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

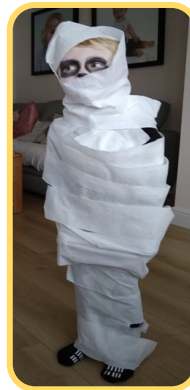
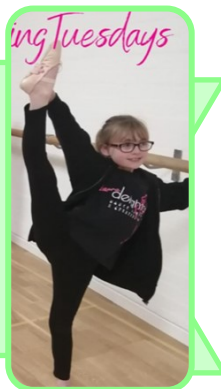
What have you been up to?



This is Amy who had lots of fun carving bat pumpkins and dressing up as a vampire for Halloween.



'My daughter Ellie loves her dance, she absolutely lives for it! Sadly, lockdown now means it's all on zoom but here is a picture of her limbering up - she won two silver medals at the Wenlock festival this year!'



This is Finley, following the mummy wrapping competition, at the family's Halloween party.



After just 3 lessons after lockdown, Freya achieved her 1000 metre swimming badge!

Niamh's story

Hi, my name is Niamh and 12 years old. I am writing to tell you how I live with nystagmus. I was diagnosed with nystagmus when I just turned 1, it's a condition that makes my eyes wobble from side to side rapidly without me knowing, this also gives me a head tilt which allows my eyes to focus. Even though I am partially sighted, I don't let it hold me back from taking up opportunities. As I have been at secondary school for a while, I've been asked to talk about how I manage with my condition. When I first joined the school, I'll have to be honest, I was terrified. I always had that one feeling in the back of my head that my eyes could possibly hold me back but as soon as I settled into Sir John Talbot School, I felt at home and comfortable. The SEN team have been an absolute god-send for me, helping me with equipment and helping me settle in. Now that I have finished my first term, I have accomplished so many things. Since starting school I have made several new friends, become a school councillor and have really enjoyed taking part in my lessons. Overall I have loved my secondary school life so far and can't wait to see what happens next. The whole reason I wanted to write about my condition today is to show all the people in a similar position to me that even with an eye condition, it shouldn't stop you from excelling in your school life.



OneVISION Update



Registered charity no: 1043696

We are a small Shropshire charity which aims to support children and young people with visual impairment and their families .

We are all parents /grandparents/guardians of children and young people with visual impairment ourselves so we understand their needs and the support they might require.

We offer funding for assistive technology and equipment and organise trips and events to improve confidence, wellbeing and socialisation.

We need to raise as much money as possible to benefit as many children as possible.

We need to make Shropshire families aware that we are here to help and support them in any way we can.

Please contact: Sandra

Email: socean456@aol.com

Or look us up on, Facebook or Twitter

oneVISION Shropshire

Virtual catch ups

As you will be aware, unfortunately, under the current circumstances we are not able to arrange activities and events for children and young people or their families so instead we would like to invite you to attend virtual get togethers. These will provide an opportunity to welcome new people and keep in touch until such times that we are all able to come together properly (in the not too distant future hopefully!);

Please look out for emailed information with regards to virtual catch ups for both children and young people and parents/carers in the New Year.



Ophthalmology and Audiology Updates

As part of the Restoration and Recovery process at the hospital, all outpatient appointments are now being undertaken and both Ophthalmology and ENT are working through any backlog of appointments. If you have a routine appointment, that has been cancelled or due, please contact the respective hospital admin team member who may be able to give you an update. New referrals are now moving forward more regularly and there should now be no delay in picking up these cases nor in the SIS team offering support. If you have any enquiries about these type of appointments, please contact your SIS support worker.

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Have your say on Shrewsbury's traffic arrangements

A survey is being launched to gather people's views on how Shrewsbury town centre's traffic arrangements have worked over the summer.

Since mid-June, when shops were allowed to reopen, High Street and adjacent streets have been closed to vehicles to allow room for social distancing, following advice and guidance from central government and Public Health, and for businesses to use the outside space for seating customers.

Councillor Peter Nutting, leader of Shropshire Council, said: "The most obvious change has been closing High Street to traffic during the day, and making Wyle Cop one-way, so all inward traffic has had to go around the inner ring road or along Town Walls, St John's Hill and Claremont Bank.

"This survey is an important part of the review of traffic measures this summer and will help us to decide steps we might take in the longer-term to improve transport and pedestrian movement in and around Shrewsbury."

Leader of Shrewsbury Town Council, Alan Mosley, said removing traffic had improved the atmosphere in the High Street and surrounding areas and he had heard many people praising the move. However, any future long-term measures had to be carefully considered from all points of view, he said.

"By bringing in these changes we have carried out a really useful experiment in increasing pedestrianisation beyond the Pride Hill area, which we can use to inform any future decision-making linked to the objectives of the Big Town Plan.

"It is vitally important that as many people as possible complete this survey so they can tell us what they think."

The survey will take around 10 minutes to complete and respondents can opt into a prize draw to win one of three £50 vouchers for a Shrewsbury business of your choice.

[Click here to access the survey.](#)

End of the Year - Message from Joint Team leaders - Theresa and Graham

It's been quite a year for all of us! At the end of the year, we wanted to pass on our best wishes and regards to you all. It has been a challenging time for families who have had to spend extended periods at home in the earlier part of the year followed by an often fractured return to schools.

We are constantly amazed at the resilience of all our children and families. You all rose to the challenge of engaging your children in learning at home as well as providing the emotional support that has been so critical at this time.

The SIS team has continued to work alongside you and schools to support sensory impaired children over this period of time. As children have returned to school, this has presented many challenges with bubbles closing and children having to be at home for 2 weeks at a time.

We do get some notification from schools when this occurs. It is, however really helpful if you can contact your SIS key person if this happens. We can then set up, where possible, virtual contact with children to support them with any work they have to complete.

Our thanks go to the team as well for their unstinting dedication to the children and families we support. They have been highly inventive and resourceful in these new ways of working.

In the New Year we will, hopefully, be working towards some sort of normality both in our working and personal lives. We will try to keep you up to date with any changes or developments.

Best wishes to all for the holiday break

Graham and Theresa



Meet The New Members of the Team!

Linda Webb, Qualified Teacher for the visually impaired (QTVI)



I am new to the Telford and Wrekin Sensory Inclusion Service, but I am not new to supporting children and young people with a vision impairment!

I first learnt braille when I became a class teacher at Dorton House School for the Blind in Kent, in 1986. I loved this job, but moved away from the area and went on to other teaching posts, particularly with children who have special educational needs. I had the opportunity to study for the Mandatory Qualification for Teachers of Children with a Vision Impairment at the University of Birmingham in 2007, and have been working as a QTVI ever since, first in Herefordshire and then in Worcestershire. As I live in Shropshire myself, I am delighted to take on a new challenge and to get to know parts of the county I have never visited before.

My husband has also been heavily involved in education for children with a vision impairment, and together we visited a parent led school for blind children in Uganda in 2018, to take much needed resources and to offer some training to staff. We have continued this support by raising money to help pay school fees and sending braille books and supplies.

I have been made very welcome in the team, and I am really looking forward to meeting everyone for real as soon as possible.



Helen MacDonald, Access Support Assistant

Hi, my name is Helen. I rejoined the Visually Impaired team as an Access Support Assistant in September after an 8 year break! Lots of changes here, not many members of staff are the same in fact only one on the VI team will be the same going forward.

While I was away I have been working as a nanny and also I have become a grandma to Leonora she is adorable! I also keep myself busy with our dog and the garden! The dog causes most of the work in the garden!!

I am looking forward to getting out and about and meeting your children in hopefully the not too distant future!



Jodie Newman, Registered Qualified Habilitation Specialist



Is employed by Guide Dogs' for the blind and is delivering Habilitation training to children and young people with a visual impairment in Telford and Shrewsbury. Jodie has worked for the

Visual Impairment Team for Dudley LA for the past 20yrs and is very experienced in the field of Habilitation. She is married and a Mom to two boys aged 10 and 7 years old and has a very demanding pet French Bulldog!

Judith Claes is retiring

The end of this term sees the start of Judith's retirement. Her kind and caring yet knowledgeable approach to her role as Qualified Teacher for the Visually Impaired is going to be missed. We are sure you will join us in wishing her all happiness in her new adventure.

Thoughts on my forthcoming retirement by Judith Claes



I will miss

- working with children, young people and families - what a privilege this has been, doing my best to provide support and advice to make sure that children are able to use their vision as effectively as possible
- being part of such a lovely team. I have been so lucky to have had 17 happy years with the Sensory Inclusion Service

I won't miss

- meetings, especially on Microsoft Teams

I'm looking forward to

- continuing with my music teaching
- getting away from it all in our new camper van!

I wish everyone lots of luck for the future and hope that you all stay safe throughout the Covid pandemic.

Judith



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



Key features...

- Search for clear and accessible information, advice and sources of support.
- Explore leisure, fun and short breaks activities.
- Find out about specialist services and education health and care plans.
- 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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