

Overview

Northern Parade Sensory Impairment Resource started out as a centre for junior aged pupils with a hearing impairment.

The resource supported pupils with a range of hearing loss and includes students with cochlear implants. It has since expanded now caters for children who have a visual impairment.

The provision is currently funded to accommodate 5 pupils. A small but skilled team of teaching assistants overseen by our inclusion manager are based in the resource and work with pupils on a daily basis.

Portsmouth Sensory Impairment Service work closely with school staff, providing training, observations and teaching to ensure that all pupils with a hearing or visual impairment are fully included in all aspects of the school and are supported to achieve to their maximum potential.

An Inclusive Approach

The Sensory Impaired Resource Provision enhances every aspect of school life with our mainstream provision enriched as a result. We regularly provide Visual and Hearing Impairment awareness training to the staff and pupils, planned jointly with the Local Authority and local charities. This training gives all of our pupils some experience of the difficulties people with a visual or hearing impairment face and helps them to understand how they can support our sight impaired or hearing impaired pupils. Our Sensory Impairment Awareness Day happens annually and gives a pupils a specific day to focus and reflect on this.

Facilities for our Hearing Impaired Pupils

Our Sensory Impairment staff have a specialist room containing a range of audiological equipment. This includes hearing aid test box, listening kits, sound level meter, all the radio aids and relevant equipment for use by the pupils plus spare batteries and other testing equipment.

Pupils are encouraged to be as independent as possible and are supported, as necessary to participate in all areas of the curriculum. There is a portable soundfield system in the school which can be transferred to different classrooms to enhance the audiological experience and all teachers receive regular advice from Portsmouth Sensory Impairment Service in the delivery of the curriculum to a hearing impaired pupil. Additionally, Portsmouth Sensory Impairment

Service and Staff from Northern Parade Schools work together to carry out a programme of training and awareness raising with colleagues to ensure the teaching and management of pupils remains at a high profile within the school.

Staffing for our Hearing Impaired Pupils

The day to day running of the resource is overseen by our Inclusion Manager who has gained the SENCO accreditation. Portsmouth Sensory Impairment Service provide Northern Parade Schools with a Qualified Teacher of the Deaf who is present in the resource once a week. The school have one specialist communicator who works in the resource full time and is BSL level 3 trained and one specialist T.A who is also full time and studying for her BSL level 2. Our communicator attends regular training on audiological equipment and is responsible for the team's preparation of audiology in the morning; she is also responsible for BSL across the school and provides regular training for staff. The team have close links with the local hospital audiological teams and cochlear implant centres.

Facilities for our Visually Impaired Pupils

Our facilities include a VI Resource Centre where classroom resources, teaching and learning materials are modified for the individual needs of our Visually Impaired pupils. The resource is equipped with a comprehensive range of specialist equipment to ensure that work is modified to a high standard.

- Duxbury PC software for text to Braille translation.
- A Braille embosser.
- Perkins Braille machines.
- Heat embosser to make tactile/raised pictures and diagrams.
- I-pads connected to interactive whiteboards so the pupil can see directly in front of them what the teacher is doing on the board.
- PC software – Jaws, Dolphin Supernova and Dolphin Luna – text-zoom and screen readers.
- Scanner Reader.
- Specialist VI equipment for use in lessons e.g. calculators, rulers, protractors, compass, talking scales, liquid level indicators.
- A sensory room which has a variety of stimulating resources including bubble tubes, fibre optics, a sound wall, projectors, UV lights and tactile resources.

The Resource provides our pupils with a friendly personal space where they also receive personalised specialist teaching and support. In addition to their curriculum studies, pupils may also receive mobility training and support with independent living skills.

Staffing for our Visually Impaired Pupils

The day to day running of the resource is overseen by our Inclusion Manager who has gained the SENCO accreditation. Portsmouth Sensory Impairment Service provide Northern Parade Schools with a Qualified Teacher for Visual Impairment who provides specialist training to all resource staff, observes the pupils in lessons and then offers advice and participates in pupil meetings to discuss progress and next steps in learning. The school have two specialist teaching assistants who focus on modifying and adapting resources. One of these teaching assistants has a level 2 qualification in Braille.

Braille and Braille Support

Depending on their level of visual impairment some pupils require Braille. Portsmouth Sensory Impairment Service can offer a one-to-one, personalised teaching approach to give them the confidence and skills to make Braille a part of their lives. The ability to read Braille fluently and accurately can be life changing for pupils, opening up a new world of possibilities.

As their abilities grow staff show them how to use a manual Perkins Braille and Brailenote systems. The Sensory Impaired Resource is proud to have recently supported a Braille user throughout Key stage 2 to achieve age expected and greater depth results for their end of key stage assessments.

Parenting support

While most of our Sensory Impaired pupils are brought to school by taxi, we make regular contact with all the parents of the children in the resource base through a home-school diary. It is vital that parents feel that they are part of their child's education. We work hard to include parents in the life of the school wherever possible and support them to attend parents' evenings, workshops and special events. They are welcome to visit the school at other times and are invited to meet with the child's teacher once a term to discuss their child's progress and update targets.

Community links

Our Sensory Impaired Resource continually seeks to link with the local community for the benefit of our pupils. The school works with various charities including Guide Dogs for the Blind, RNIB, NCDS, Hearing dogs for Deaf People and Pompey in the Community. We also host social activities for hearing and visually impaired pupils from across the city to provide children with a peer support group. So far we have hosted a Halloween party, Christmas party and Easter Party. We are currently working with Portsmouth Sensory Impairment Service to broaden our reach and hope to encourage more pupils from other schools to attend.