

DARNLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL VISUAL IMPAIRMENT UNIT



Illustrations by a VI child Haniya Akhtar





Welcome to Darnley Primary

Visual Impairment Unit

On behalf of all staff, pupils and parents, may I extend a warm welcome to Darnley Primary Visual Impairment Unit and thank you for giving me the opportunity to share our learning journey with you. In Darnley we strive to deliver a nurturing and supportive community for our children parents and staff; one where we all thrive, work hard together, have fun and 'Reach for the Stars!' We aim to foster respect for one another and encourage each other to be the best we can be in all that we do.

We offer an educational experience which aims to address each child as an individual. We look to educate the whole child and to nurture our children to ensure that they are confident in their own abilities, that they take pride in and responsibility for their school community and the world at large and that they are children who are able to make effective contributions to society. We set high standards for our young people in Darnley in all aspects of life and in academic achievement whilst also concentrating on developing children who have a love of learning which will stay with them for life.

To achieve these aims and to deliver the most effective education for our VI pupils, we believe that it is essential to build a strong home - school partnership where we all work together to achieve this common goal. Such a partnership is a strength within a school. There are many ways in which you can contribute to the life of the school or participate in the many activities and events which take place throughout the session. I look forward to sharing these with you.

Darnley is now your school. Please do not hesitate to share any concerns or suggestions, which you may have, at any time. Please feel free to contact us by telephone, letter or email. We are all dedicated to providing the best service for all.

I look forward to the future when, together, we support our young people as they develop in to young adults who have a great sense of self belief, are attaining their very best and are ready to transfer to secondary carrying with them happy memories of Darnley Primary School and Visual Impairment Unit and are Reaching for those stars every day.



Mrs Yvonne A Adams
Headteacher



School Vision Values and Aims

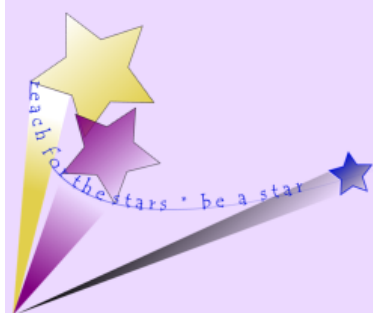


Vision, Values and Aims

Vision

Everyone belongs, is valued and achieves ...

In Darnley Primary and Visual Impairment Unit we give the best to our children every day in order to inspire and facilitate the creation of an aspirational environment.



We aspire to be a beacon of inclusion where everyone's opinion is valued and all of our young people are supported to be the best version of themselves. Our young people will be resilient, brave, creative, ready to cope with the challenges of the modern world hard working and determined ... they will 'reach for the stars' knowing that they are within their grasp.

Values and Aims?

Values

- Kindness and Respect
- Resilience
- Inspired, motivated and achieving
- Inclusive
- Honest

Aims

- To provide creative opportunities that inspire and motivate learning.
- To enable children to develop transferrable skills to achieve success and a love for learning.
- To work together with courage and compassion to achieve the best for our school community.



Background Information

Darnley Primary School Visual Impairment Unit was opened in 1998.

Children from Glasgow and the surrounding area attend the unit.

The school and unit have a policy of inclusion. Pupils with a visual impairment are regarded as valued members of the school community and are entitled to access all areas of the curriculum. Visually impaired pupils are educated within their mainstream class. They are supported by teachers and/or pupil support assistants (SEN.)

We recognise that some pupils have individual needs and will require additional help in some curricular areas. We aim to meet these needs within a supportive and inclusive setting. Staff from the school and unit work collaboratively to ensure that all areas of the curriculum are planned and presented in such a way that will allow blind and partially sighted pupils equality of educational opportunity.

Pupils and staff in Darnley Primary School take part in visual impairment awareness raising activities as part of the school HWB programme. This helps them develop a better understanding of visual impairment. They then show a good understanding of visual impairment and display a considerate attitude towards our visually impaired pupils. Mainstream teachers also undertake mobility education activities which raise their awareness of the implications of visual impairment for pupils in their class.

It is hoped that this handbook will help you understand more about the unit and the inclusive approach to education we practise in Darnley Primary School.

Comments on any information contained in this handbook are most welcome.

Yvonne Adams Allison Anderson
Unit Head Teacher Unit Principal Teacher

Unit Information

Contact Details:

Darnley Primary and Visual Impairment Unit

169 Glen Morriston Road

Glasgow City Council G53 7HT

Phone: 0141 638 8009

Telephone-Unit 0141-621-2919

Email: Headteacher@darnley-pri.glasgow.sch.uk

Website: www.darnley-pri.glasgow.sch.uk Twitter: @Darnley Primary

Office Staff

Clerical Assistant

Helen McColgan

Mobility Staff

Mobility Education
Specialist

Susan Scott

The School Day

Most of our pupils come to school by taxi. They will be escorted into the school building through the main entrance. Primary 1 pupils attend full time from August and this is supported by taxis.

A breakfast club operates in the school from 8.15am.

Pupils in the Unit are welcome to attend any and all school clubs which run at lunch times and/or after school with their friends from class.

At 9.00am pupils go to their class with the other children.

Support staff and members of the Management Team supervise pupils in the playground. In wet or extremely cold weather, pupils are supervised in classrooms.

Our school provides a lunch service which offers a variety of meals and snacks. Medical diets for children can be provided. Further information can be found here:

http://www.fuelzoneprimary.co.uk/UserFiles/files/Medical_Diet_Leaflet%20-%20June%202017%20WEB.pdf. Please inform the Headteacher.

Children who prefer to bring packed lunches will be accommodated.

All children in P1-5 are entitled to a free school meal.

Children and young people of parents/carers receiving Income Support, income-based Job Seekers Allowance, Working Tax Credit (check link below for thresholds), Child Tax Credit only (check link below for thresholds), Universal Credit (check link below for thresholds) and income-related Employment and Support Allowance are entitled to a free midday meal. Information and application forms for free school meals may be obtained at

<https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=17885>

Admission Criteria

Darnley Primary School Visual Impairment Unit supports primary aged children who have a visual impairment and who are able to access the Curriculum for Excellence with partial sight and/or via Braille.

Darnley Primary School and Visual Impairment Unit have a policy of inclusion. This means that children who attend the unit are fully included in all aspects of the mainstream curriculum. Pupils will receive varying degrees of support, depending on their individual needs. Pupils are supported by a teacher and/or pupil support assistant.

Support may include;

- Individual teaching
- Support within the class/group
- Support within the gym hall, dining hall or playground and on trips and visits
- Mobility education (which will include daily living skills and independence training where appropriate)
- Provision of adapted, elaborated or differentiated materials
- Braille
- Access to specialist equipment, technology, software and resources

Procedures for parents seeking a placement in the Unit

Parents from within Glasgow may contact the school or Unit to arrange an initial visit to look at resources and provision. Parents from outwith Glasgow should contact their child's Educational Psychologist.

If it is agreed to be appropriate by all concerned, a request for a place in the unit is then made through the child's Educational Psychologist. Further information concerning placement procedures will be discussed during the initial visit. The unit is unable to grant places directly and all requests must be made through the Educational Psychologist.

Transfer from Nursery to Darnley Primary Visual Impairment Unit

Parents who are considering a placement in the Unit for their child are welcome to visit. If they decide, in consultation with their child's Educational Psychologist that the placement would be suitable, the application for a place will be submitted by the psychologist. A transition programme will take place and the child will take part in the school induction/ enhanced induction programme with other children entering primary 1.

Transfer from Primary to Secondary School

Pupils are normally transferred between the ages of 11 and 12 so that they will have the opportunity to complete at least four years of secondary education.

Parents and carers will be informed of the School arrangements no less than a year preceding the date of transfer. There are a number of secondary establishments which parents may wish to consider. Parents should discuss possible placements with the Educational Psychologist in the year prior to transfer.

Most of our VI young people go to Rosshall Academy which is an inclusive secondary school community with a VI specialist provision.

Address: Rosshall Academy
131 Crookston Road
Glasgow
G52 3PD
Further information is available from
Tel: 0141-582-0200

The Curriculum

Pupils in the Unit are taught using a multi-sensory approach.

Literacy

The schemes used for literacy in the school are adapted for our Visually Impaired pupils. These are made available in enlarged or Braille format to meet the needs of each child.

In addition to this, blind pupils will use Braille notes. A pre-braille programme helps children develop the skills they will need to learn Braille. Braille is used for children who cannot see well enough to read books. '**Hands On**' reading scheme followed by '**Take Off**',

Other supplementary reading materials and reading resources are also available.

Numeracy

Visually impaired pupils participate in all aspects of numeracy. They follow the same programme as their peers. The school uses Glasgow Counts and follows the Curriculum for Excellence Maths continuum. Any materials are made available to pupils in enlarged and/or Braille formats as required.

Pupils are provided with a range of tactile resources and adapted or alternative materials. These may include:

- Talking scales, thermometer, stopwatch, tape measure
- Tactile rulers, metre sticks, measuring jugs, protractors
- Talking or large display calculators and Braille Note as a scientific calculator
- Tactile graphs/ diagrams and a range of other tactile materials.

Skills for Life and Work

All children in Darnley Primary follow a 'Skills for Life and Work' programme. There has been an additional aspect to this developed to incorporate the 5 aspects of skills development for children with a visual impairment. This is supported within the VI Unit and also through the work done by our Mobility Education Specialist.

Emotion Works

Emotion Works is a holistic Health and Well Being programme run. It is a coherent and inclusive program run from P1 - P7 and all children access all of the work covered here.

Outdoor Learning

This is an important focus within our curriculum. All children access Outdoor learning on a daily basis. Appropriate adaptations are made to ensure that all children have full access at all times.

ICT

Partially sighted pupils normally follow the same programme as their class with support from a specialist teacher in order to develop skills in independent access. They have access to laptops with accessibility options or specialist software which enlarge materials to the size they need.

They may also use speech output and learn to use hotkeys to access their laptop. They will develop skills which will enable them to present with the option of presenting their work using technology as they progress through the school. Pupils who are blind have one to one teaching in the use of specialist technology and follow an individual programme. They use programmes of study designed for specialist technology to access the internet etc.

Specialist Equipment

Visually impaired pupils have access to resources which provide an alternative means of communication and help them access and record information across the curriculum. These may include:

- Close circuit television
- A range of low vision aids including magnifiers and telescopes
- Cameras and IT resources
- Braille Notes

This provides them with personal choice of learning medium.

Specialist Curriculum

Pupils follow the mainstream curriculum with the other children in their class. Some pupils may also follow an individual programme in specialist areas such as Braille, mobility and information technology where they will have one to one support out of class in order to develop skills which will foster independent, confident learning across the curriculum.

Additional Support Needs/Accessibility Strategy

The school and Unit have a duty to ensure that all our pupils have equal access to the curriculum, supported as appropriate to meet their individual needs. This covers not only the content of lessons and teaching strategies but also minor adaptations to the physical environment of our buildings to address the needs of pupils with physical or sensory impairments, including relocation of classes where necessary. We also need to ensure that parents and carers who have a physical disability have equal access to information about their children. This will involve, for example, relocating the venue for parents/guardians meetings to facilitate physical access; provision of an interpreter for deaf people; agreeing a phone contact system to provide direct feedback to parents and carers.

Physical access: Darnley Primary School is built on one level with ramps installed to enable access to all areas of the school.

Routes for visually impaired children are established throughout the school to ensure equal independent access to all areas for all pupils.

Parents' meetings are held twice a year in the school. All areas of the school are fully accessible to parents who have a physical disability.

Communication: Agenda and minutes of meetings are available in Braille or large print format for parents with a visual impairment. A range of information leaflets covering specialist aids, equipment and approaches are also available as well as information on parent groups and sources of further information.

Alternative arrangements may be made for parents unable to attend parents' evenings. Please contact the Unit Lead for further information.

Curriculum: We ensure that all areas of the curriculum are adapted, elaborated or differentiated to meet the individual needs of every child so that every child has access to the curriculum in a way which best meets their needs. Children also individual programs designed to meet the needs.

Staff Development: All staff in the school and Unit have undertaken training in the Disability Discrimination Act. They have also taken part in mobility training with our Mobility Education Specialist and are fully aware of Disability Awareness Information and Supporting Inclusion Documentation. Unit staff have/ are working towards specialist qualification(s) in the field of visual impairment and continually extend their knowledge and expertise by taking part in a wide range of Continuous Professional Development activities.

Individual Support Plans

An Individual Support Plan is a written plan which identifies your child's additional support needs. This plan outlines the steps to be taken to enable a child with additional support needs to achieve specified long term and short-term targets.

An Individual Support Plan:

- Explains the reason why your child has an Individual Support Plan
- Contains the planned long and short term targets to be achieved by your child in a school session
- Describes your child's strengths
- Identifies services and agencies involved with your child
- Identifies staff working with your child and their contribution
- Identifies procedures for monitoring and evaluating the plan
- Enables staff to plan for progression
- Allows staff to monitor the effectiveness of teaching and learning
- Allows senior management to monitor the effectiveness of provision for Additional Support Needs.

The Role of Parents

You, as parents will be involved, along with your child and all staff working with your child, in drawing up the Planning and Reporting Framework which will help us identify your child's additional support needs and will inform us of his/her strengths. Parents and their child and all concerned with the child will be involved in drawing up the child's Individual Support Plan and in identifying appropriate targets for their learning. The views of parents and their child will be sought at all stages. Your child's Individual Support Plan will provide the focus for discussion with you at review meetings, consultation evenings or at any other time when you may wish to discuss them.

Equal Opportunities and Social Inclusion

Every child will be treated with respect having regard to his/her individuality.

We will, at all times meet the physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual needs of every child in our care.

No child will be discriminated against because of his/her religion, race, culture physical or mental handicap or because of his/her parents' circumstances in life.

Every child will be involved in every area of school life (subject to parental approval) and should be encouraged and helped to fulfill his/her potential.

Contact the Unit Lead for further information and advice.

The Education Authority requires every school to produce its own Race Equality Policy to comply with the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000.

A copy of the policy is held in the school office.

Reporting to Parents

Review Meetings

There will be at least one review meeting each session. Review meetings would normally include at least some of the following people:

- Parents
- Child will be invited to take part
- Unit Principal Teacher
- Head Teacher
- Class Teacher
- Pupil Support Assistant working with the child
- Mobility Education Specialist
- Educational Psychologist
- Therapists and any other professionals involved with the child.

Parents will be notified in writing of the time and date of the review meeting. This will also be noted in your child's Individual Support Plan.

If the time / date allocated are unsuitable, parents are encouraged to notify the Unit Lead in order that a suitable time may be arranged.

Parents will receive an annual report in advance of the review meeting and will be informed of progress towards the achievement of planned targets in their child's Individual Support Plan on a termly basis. Parents will also receive a termly update to inform them how well their child is progressing towards achieving identified targets.

In addition to review meetings, parents have the opportunity to visit the school twice a year to discuss their child's progress with the class and support teacher and to look at examples of their child's work.

Parents will be notified of dates and times in advance.

Informal visits

Parents are encouraged to visit the school in order to observe their child in the school environment. This may be particularly useful for parents who wish to find out more about specialist areas such as Braille, technology or mobility and staff will be happy to discuss these in more detail.

Transport

Children on the role of the Visual Impairment Unit will normally come to school by taxi. This is arranged through the Educational Psychologist or Unit Lead.

Applications for transport may be submitted at any time throughout the year but may be subject to delay whilst arrangements are made. The appropriate officer has discretion in special circumstances to grant permission for children to travel in transport provided by the authority, where spare places are available and no additional costs are incurred.

The authority has an Exceptional Circumstances policy relating to eg. Homelessness, parental/carer disability etc. Details are available from Glasgow Online. There is also a procedure to request transport on medical grounds. The Unit can advise on procedures. Parents are asked to inform Glasgow Education Services, Education Transport Section of any changes in transport arrangements.

Parents have the responsibility to cancel taxis if they are not required at any point.

Parents are also asked to telephone the school to inform us of absence or changes in arrangements.

School 0141 638 8009

Further advice is available from the Unit Lead