

Vision Inclusion Newsletter

Issue
36
Spring 2026

Sensory Inclusion Service, Floor 6, Darby House, Lawn Central, Telford, TF3 4JA



Holiday Cover

There is a QTVI on duty every week of the Easter holidays.

Call **01952 385269** for support.



Guide Dogs Tech for All Grant

Guide Dogs offers the **Tech for All** grant program, providing free assistive technology, such as Apple iPads or iPhones, to children and young people (aged 3-18) with a visual impairment in the UK.

Eligibility

Children and young people aged 3 to 18 with a vision impairment, residing in the UK.

Technology Available

Apple iPads, iPhones, and specific sensory equipment to aid learning and independence, often featuring built-in accessibility tools.

How to Apply

Download the Technology Application Form 2026 from The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association website.

Complete the form and submit it via email to tech@guidedogs.org.uk.

For questions, contact the team at **0333 070 3706**.

Charities that can support families, children and young people with a visual impairment

Royal Blind Children's Society

'We provide free support for families across England and Wales, throughout the journey from diagnosis to adulthood.

We're here for you, so that you have the confidence, information and support you need to thrive.'

RSBC runs a programme of activities for children and young people over Zoom and in person. They can also offer practical advice on grants and benefits available as well as family support.

Website: www.rsbc.org.uk

British Blind Sports

'British Blind Sport (BBS) is a charity that works across the UK. BBS works to ensure that people with sight loss have the same opportunities as sighted people to access and enjoy sport and physical activity. This includes everything from taking a fitness class at your local gym to competing in the Paralympic Games.'

Information is available on a wide variety of sports accessible to visually impaired people in our area including archery, Tae Kwon Do, gymnastics, cricket and football, in addition to specific events.

Website: britishblindsport.org.uk

Amber trust

'At The Amber Trust, we believe that vision impairment and other disabilities should not prevent children and young people accessing appropriate musical opportunities.'

Amber Trust offers a wide range of fun musical activities for children of all ages and abilities, including those with neurodegenerative conditions. They are also able to offer training for music teachers to promote inclusive practice.

Website: ambertrust.org

VICTA - empowering Children and Young Adults

'VICTA is a national charity that provides support to children and young adults from 0 to 29 who are blind or partially sighted and their families. VICTA believes that everyone has the right to an independent and fulfilling life. VICTA's support, advice, grants and activities enable young people and their families to build skills, develop confidence and help each other toward a more positive future.'

VICTA offers an exciting range of activities including Young Achievers Award Programme, Youth Expeditions, Family Weekends and Parents Workshop. They also have a grant scheme for help with purchasing particular items for children and young people with sight loss.

Website: www.victa.org.uk

RSBC Families First: Family Practitioner Support

When your child is diagnosed as blind or partially sighted, you, your child and your family might need some extra support to help manage your feelings.

Although your child may have been living with this diagnosis for some time, changes such as a deterioration of vision, changes within the family, or moving to a different school can make it feel like life is much harder to manage than it was before.

RSBC's Family Practitioners (FP) can offer you, your child and your family emotional wellbeing and practical support whenever life seems difficult.

They're based across England and Wales, and are there for you and anyone in your family who might be affected by a blind or partially sighted diagnosis, no matter what stage of the journey you're at.

Who is this service for?

We're here for the whole family:

- Any child or young person in England and Wales aged 0-25 years, who is blind or partially sighted
- Anyone in your family who has been affected by your child's diagnosis - parents, siblings or extended family members

How does the service work?

Tailored services: Your Family Practitioner will spend time getting to know your family, so that the support they offer suits you and your family's needs. They can also link you with other RSBC services.

Specialist support: Using our professional skills, we might hold 1:1 sessions with your child at home, school or college, working with them on areas such as self-esteem and confidence or helping them to accept the difficulties and challenges that they're facing.

Support for you: We can provide support and advice for parents and carers around parenting a child who is blind or partially sighted, and give guidance on navigating challenging parenting situations - helping you feel more confident and positive about the future.

Support for your children: You might feel that other children in your family could also benefit from support, perhaps relating to how they feel about their sibling's circumstances, understanding their role as a possible helper/carer within the family, and how to communicate their own needs.

Additional support: With your permission, we can also work with other professionals who support you and your family. We can be there for you at meetings, and introduce you to other organisations and professionals who'll work with you and your family, so everyone has the same goals.

How do I get in touch with a Family Practitioner?

If you're a family looking for support, or a professional wanting to refer a family, your local Family Practitioner is:

Jennifer Asaju
Jennifer.Asaju@rsbc.org.uk
07384236658



A picture of the items made at the pottery workshop

Events for summer term 2026



A picture of 2 children on the climbing wall

The young people's activity group (ages 14-25) has kicked off the year with its first few sessions. They've already tackled indoor rock climbing at Arthog Outreach in Wellington, and in December they got creative at a pottery workshop in Oakengates—making Christmas decorations, gonks, flowers, and even trying their hand at throwing a pot on the wheel.

There's plenty more planned throughout the year. Below is what's already booked, with new activities and dates being added all the time. Keep an eye on the activities page on the Sight Loss Shropshire website for updates.

March 28 th	Activity day, JCA Condoover Hall	09:00 - 16:00
April 2 nd	Horse experience day, Cavalier centre, Much Wenlock	10:00 - 15:00
April 11 th	Raft building, Arthog outreach, Telford	13:00—15:30
April 25 th	Lino printing workshop, Artisan Lab, Shrewsbury	14:00 -16.30
May 23 rd	Have a go, Archery, Arthog outreach, Telford	13:00—15:30
May 27 th	Jewellery, ring making workshop, Hadnall Village Hall	14:00 -15.30
June 6 th	Session 1 of 2, make a vase and ceramic flowers (£10)	14:00 -15.30
June 13 th	Low ropes & abseiling, Arthog outreach	13:00 -15.30
TBC	Taster with Shropshire sailing club	TBC
July 4 th	Session 2, glaze and decorate your fired vase and flowers	14:00 -15.00
July 11 th	Kayaking, Arthog outreach, Telford	13:00—16:00
July 30 th	Horse fun day & picnic, Cavalier centre, Much Wenlock	10:00 - 15:00
August 8 th	Outdoor climbing, Arthog outreach, Telford	13:00—16:00
August 25 th	Cake review get together, Shrewsbury	10.30-12:00
August 26 th	Cake review get together, Telford	10.30-12:00
August 29 th	Trip to Cadbury world	TBC

If you would like to know more or are interested in attending an event, contact

penny.norris@telford.gov.uk

Review of Events: Escape Room & Rifle Shooting - by Henry



A picture of Henry talking to the instructor



A picture of Henry holding paper targets

Henry recently attended two activities organised by the Sensory Inclusion Service (SIS) and Sight Loss Shropshire (SLS): an Escape Room experience and a Rifle Shooting session. He reflected on how both events helped him grow in confidence, manage nerves, and interact more comfortably with other young people.

Escape Room

Henry explained that he felt uncertain and sceptical before attending. He told himself:

"I will go once to try it and if I don't like it, I will never need to go again. However, I want to give it a go because if I do like it, I'll go to more."

He reassured himself that others were probably feeling nervous too. Despite his initial anxiety, Henry was pleasantly surprised by the whole experience.

He admitted that because he had watched the film *Escape Room*, his imagination was "running away with itself." He joked that he imagined it being:

"like a crime scene and I'd be locked in until security let us out."

When he met Penny, the activity coordinator from the joint SIS/SLS contract, Henry felt immediately more at ease:

"As soon as I met Penny - lovely lady. She made me feel so relaxed, and it helped when I found out she was a member of the Guide Dog community."

He described wanting to stand quietly in a corner and interact as little as possible, but something shifted for him:

He explained that he suddenly found himself opening a cupboard and beginning to talk to the others. Watching the film, he said, helped him understand that communication was essential in an Escape Room:

"It made me realise that when backed into a corner, communication was the only option to get out of the room."

The event involved young people aged 14-25, placed into groups with Penny supporting them inside the room. Henry said this surprised him, as he hadn't expected her to join in.

Overall, Henry enjoyed the activity far more than he expected:

"I would go again to the Escape Room - I liked it that much."

Rifle Shooting

Henry also took part in rifle shooting, with his mum attending for support. Despite this, Henry pretended she wasn't there so he could interact more independently with other young people.

One moment he was particularly proud of occurred at lunchtime. He was sitting alone when another young person sat next to him, Henry recalled:

He debated staying quiet but decided instead:

"Should I just sit here and eat my lunch or should I just talk? So I talked and asked her something about her lunch and we then kept talking. We talked loads and we even talked back home on the bus."

Henry said it was really positive to meet others with similar experiences, describing them as young people with:

"eye setbacks" (a term he prefers over visual impairment or registered blind).

During the rifle shooting itself, Henry felt well-supported by the instructors. One reminded him of a strict sergeant major, but Henry said he actually got on well with him, as well as with another instructor who was especially kind and clear in his explanations.

Henry described the shooting process vividly: wearing headphones, focusing on the target, letting the sound travel to his brain, and then firing. He had two turns, joking that he could have had a third but was:

"too distracted talking to another student."

This was a major positive change, considering how nervous he'd been before attending.

When Henry hit the black ring of the target, he said:

"My mum was ecstatic."

Henry was surprised and proud of himself too.

Although the activity was held in Wolverhampton, Henry said:

"Rifle shooting was in Wolverhampton, so a long way to go, but if it was in Shrewsbury I would 100% go again."

Henry's Overall Thoughts

Henry expressed that he would happily attend future SIS/SLS events run by Penny because:

"I can make new friends and relationships, have fun, learn new skills, and have a go even though I was sceptical."

Both events clearly had a significant impact on Henry's confidence, social interaction, and willingness to try new experiences. He reflected with maturity, humour, and honesty about the personal challenges he overcame and the enjoyment he ultimately found.

Henry's QTVI, who has known him since primary school, noted how maturely and reflectively he spoke about the event. She is proud of him for having the courage to attend these events and being confident to interact with the other young people, she looks forward to hearing about more of his adventures when he attends other events.

Braille Awareness Sessions

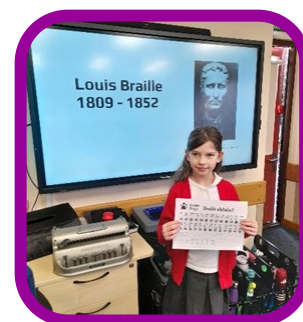
by Sarah Hovington, QTVI

January 4th is recognized internationally as World Braille Day to honour the birthday of Louis Braille, the inventor of the braille code. In the first half of the spring term in my role as a QTVI, I have been raising the awareness of braille by delivering braille awareness sessions to 3 primary schools across Shropshire. The children had the opportunity to write their first and family name in braille.

Five fun facts about braille

1. Louis Braille was completely blind by the age of five.
2. Braille is a tactile code, not a language. Different languages like Spanish, Japanese and Arabic can be written and read in braille.
3. A braille cell is made up of six raised dots. A different combination of the dots stand for each letter of the alphabet.
4. Letters, numbers, punctuation and symbols can be written in braille including musical notes!
5. There are two 'levels' of braille. Uncontracted braille where each letter is represented by a braille cell. Contracted braille is a 'shorthand' version where common letter combinations or words are represented by one or more cells.

The children also had the opportunity to handle resources used to teach braille literacy. Isaac, a year 4 student, liked the LEGO braille bricks. Isaac's name was randomly selected, and he was awarded a certificate and a book for participating in the sessions and completing the various learning challenges.



A picture of Molly showcasing her name in braille.



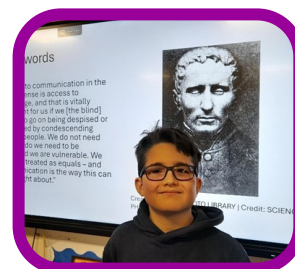
A picture of Isaac with QTVI Sarah Hovington



Amber, a year 5 student who is learning braille was also able to share her experiences with her peers. She was the bingo caller in the braille bingo game. The children loved it!

A picture of Amber with QTVI Sarah Hovington

Freddie a year 6 student asked questions and contributed to the discussion with his peers about the importance of braille in providing independence, education and employment for blind or visually impaired individuals. The children demonstrated maturity and a genuine interest in the power of the six dots. Well done everyone!



A picture of Freddie standing in front of the whiteboard



A picture of Amelia in her work uniform

Hi everyone, I'm Amelia and I am 21 years old. In 2010 I was diagnosed with Ocular Albinism which is a genetic inherited condition - quick version my irises are pale and thin with little holes that let in too much light. Gill was my QTVI from school until I finished college.

I am a second-year pharmacy technician apprentice working in an NHS hospital. Once I have finished my training, my job will be to ensure that patients receive the right and safe medicine for their treatment.

At work I have been lent my own laptop, this means that I can adjust the brightness and font size accordingly depending on how my vision is on the day. I do look at computer screens for long periods of time and I can take my laptop with me when I visit the wards, so the adjustments are very helpful. If I feel that I have looked at the screen for too long and it's affecting my vision, I take a break, find myself a glass of water and a good snack to boost my energy!

When I am not using the computer, I am checking the patient's medications. This can include looking for important information that isn't always easy to read, so I have a handy app on my phone that will use the camera to magnify the information, and it will also turn on my torch, so it is easier for me to read.

I also highly recommend learning to touch type too, your QTVI will be able to sort this out for you!



George had a wonderful time at the pantomime, organised by Guide Dogs.

To find out what's going on in your area, visit

www.guidedogs.org.uk/getting-support/help-for-children-and-families/living-well/family-events/

Sensory Inclusion Service, Floor 6, Darby House, Lawn Central, Telford. TF3 4JA

Smart Tech, Safe Choices!

International Safer Internet Day was on February the 10th. This year the theme was 'Smart tech, safe choices - Exploring the safe and responsible use of Artificial Intelligence'. If you missed it, here are a few top tips from the UK Safer Internet Centre <https://saferinternet.org.uk/> to help you stay safe when using AI:

Understand what AI is and how it can be used

Artificial intelligence technology is used by lots of people every day. AI suggests videos on streaming apps like Disney+ and Netflix, gives directions on map apps, can help translate different languages and can even create music and poems. Talk to your friends and family to see what they know about AI and where they have used it.

Consider how using AI can impact you and other people

Like a lot of other technology, AI can save us time and energy. You could use it to find the answer to a question, to check your spelling, or to create images or videos. Whilst AI can be a great tool, it's important that we think about when and how we are using AI, and don't use it in place of our own thinking and creativity, or to do things that may upset or worry other people.

Remember that AI is technology and isn't perfect

Even though it might seem like it knows everything, AI can still get things wrong. If you are using AI to get information or help with something, it is important to think carefully about what it tells you and remember that it should never replace support from people you know and trust. If you are ever unsure about something AI has told you, check with other sources, this could include looking on websites you trust or talking to an adult.

Look out for signs that something might be AI generated

It can feel hard to tell if something has been created using AI or not. Some websites and apps will tell you that AI was used, but this doesn't always happen. There are some signs you can look out for including if it looks surprising or shocking, if it looks too perfect, or if there are details you know aren't true. If you see something you are not sure is created using AI or not, speak to an adult about the signs they look for and try to work it out together.

Know where to get help

Although we know that AI can be used in a lot of great ways, remember there is always someone who can help if you are worried about something that has been created by AI or if you have concerns about the way you, or someone you know is using AI. You can speak to trusted adults like your parents, grandparents, teachers, or club leaders about any concerns you have online.

Sensory Inclusion Service Family Group



SIS (VI) Family Group takes place every Tuesday during term time for visually impaired children and their families.

Families can arrive anytime between 9.30 am - 11.30 am.

Summer 2026

April

- 14th - Sunflowers
- 21st - Guide Dogs session
- 28th - Whatever Next

May

- 5th - Guide Dogs session
- 12th - Jack and the Beanstalk
- 19th - Guide Dogs session
- 26th - Half Term

June

- 2nd - The Very Hungry Caterpillar
- 9th - Guide Dogs session
- 16th - No group
- 23rd - Summer crafts
- 30th - Guide Dogs session

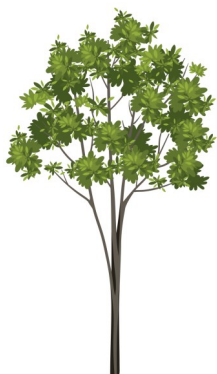
July

- 7th - Mr Bear's Picnic
- 14th - Guide Dogs session

The Stepping Stones Centre, Brunel Road, Malinslee, TF3 2BF Sat Nav TF3 2HZ

If you would like to attend Little Stars My Time to Play, contact Nicky
nichola.clark@telford.gov.uk or 07581 035047

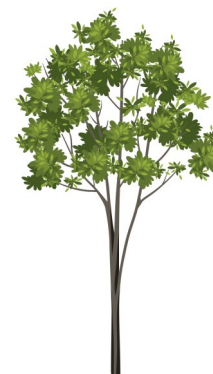
Attingham Park



We will be meeting at

Attingham Park, Atcham, Shrewsbury SY4 4TP

on Sunday 5th July 2026, 10am.



If you would like to know more or are interested in attending an event, contact

nichola.clark@telford.gov.uk or 07581 035047

Discover all you need to know about education, health and care services in Telford and Wrekin.

On the [local offer](#) website, you can find information and advice about services, support and activities for children and young people aged 0-25 with special educational needs and disabilities all in one place.



Local offer for special educational needs and disability

www.telfordsend.org.uk

SCAN WITH YOUR SMART PHONE...



[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](#)**.

**Local.Offer@shropshire.gov.uk
0345 678 9063**



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