

# Creating vision friendly learning environments

## Tips on vision friendly classroom environments:

1. Keep the layout of the classroom the same, keep major changes to a minimum.
2. Remove obstacles and furniture that may cause an obstruction and restrict the space to move around in.
3. Control lighting to minimise glare, e.g. window blinds down on bright or glary days and lights switched on during duller days.
4. Present displays on matt backgrounds, avoiding shiny surfaces.
5. Use matt lamination to protect displays, flash cards, activities.
6. Present displays on a well contrasting background.
7. Keep layout of displays simple and logical to follow.
8. To present displays, use clear print, minimum of 14 point, in simple font, e.g. arial or comic sans.
9. Position displays at a height from which children can read easily.

## Tips on vision friendly teaching approaches:

1. Stand away from the window when teaching or speaking to the children, to prevent creating a silhouette, particularly on a bright day.
2. Consider the position of children who have a visual impairment so they can access teaching and learning, e.g. sit near to front.
3. Verbalise what is being written onto the board. Point to text on the board as it is spoken about.
4. Print in large clear writing, using a black pen on the board. Keep layout simple and logical to follow.

5. If presenting teaching programmes on the smart board, make adaptations to ensure the access is optimised, e.g. text in black, print size at minimum of 14pt, layout simply and logically displayed.
6. Speak to the children by name when they are taking part in class discussion, or when they are answering questions.
7. Present text on worksheets and handouts at a minimum of 14pt, in black ink and in a simple font, e.g. **arial or comic sans**.
8. Keep the layout on worksheets both simply and clearly presented with visual clutter, overlaid text and small detail minimised,
9. Use A4 size paper whenever possible to present worksheets.
10. Ensure diagrams and pictures are at an accessible size (i.e. not too small to distinguish detail)
11. Ensure diagrams and pictures are presented with clear black outlines and carry clear labelling.
12. Ensure text on diagrams and pictures are presented in black print and that colour is used with care (i.e. ensure good foreground/background contrast).
13. Avoid if possible situations where the children have to share worksheets and textbooks.
14. Use a black pen to mark the children's work.
15. Print comments alongside their work so that it is easy for them to read - consider using a coloured highlighter rather than coloured pen.
16. If showing small objects to the children from a distance, pass them around to ensure they have an opportunity to examine the object in their preferred position.
17. Provide the children with black pens or pencils that provide good contrast, to help them read back their own work.