

Braille Teaching and Learning Policy and Procedure

Braille is a tactile writing and reading system used by some people when they cannot see well enough to read print. There are two forms: Grade 1 and Grade 2. Grade 1 is a set of signs for the alphabet and punctuation; Grade 2 is much more complex with 189 signs and strict rules, a bit like short-hand. Learning to use Braille presents readers with many challenges over and above those already faced by pupils learning print.

When a pupil either has a deteriorating eye condition or loses their sight unexpectedly, the decision about whether and when to introduce the Braille code will be made in the light of individual assessment by a Qualified Teacher of the Visually Impaired (QTVI) and consultation with the pupil, parents or carers and the school.

Service Involvement

Every pupil who needs to learn Braille will be supported by a QTVI who will:

- assess individual needs and aptitudes to make sure they are ready to learn Braille
- devise and implement a programme of Braille/pre-Braille activities
- offer training for school or early years staff, parents and carers so that Braille can be used both at home and at school
- continually assess and monitor each pupil to establish whether they need to learn Grade 1 or Grade 2 Braille, or a combination of the two. Some pupils may combine Braille with the use of large print and audio
- provide reading schemes (produced by the RNIB), as these are specifically designed to introduce the Braille code. Supplement these with tactile books produced by the Service or sourced from Clear Vision, Living Paintings, National Library for the Blind
- provide manual Braille writers and Braille paper for early learners and assess technology needs as the pupil's skills develop
- teach the pupil to read and write Braille twice a week from Key Stage 1 until s/he can use it independently to communicate
- provide ongoing advice and support for school staff on adapting the curriculum appropriately e.g. use of real objects, production of tactile diagrams, etc