

Sight Awareness Workshop for Schools

Information for Potential Volunteers



**I'm a Southampton Sight
Awareness Champion**



Presented by -



Southampton Sight
supporting people living with sight loss

Sight Awareness Workshop for Schools

BACKGROUND

Southampton Sight is a local charitable organisation that has been in existence since 1899 when it was known as Southampton Association for the Blind.

We offer a one stop hub for people living with sight loss. Whether it comes in the form of information and advice about equipment or visual aids, arranging for a volunteer to visit a blind or partially sighted person at home, or offering emotional reassurance, we always aim to provide help and support in a warm, friendly and understanding way. We promote independence, life skills and social inclusion.

As part of our work, we also provide Sight Awareness Training to businesses, places of work and community groups, to try and help build an understanding of sight loss and what it might be like for people living with Visual Impairments every day.

As an extension to this work, we have now developed a Sight Awareness Workshop for schools at Key Stage 1 level (6-7 year olds). The aim of the session is to encourage children to be aware of others with Visual Impairments. We do this through talk and practical activities that encourage children to think about how people with Visual Impairments might see the world differently, and the challenges this may present. We also encourage children to think positively and recognise that people with Visual Impairment can be active and involved in daily life and activities. The session has been designed by a qualified teacher, to include practical, hands on exploration of ideas.

We hope that the following information will give you a good idea of what to expect from our Sight Awareness Workshop and help you in deciding if you would like to be a volunteer Schools' Ambassador with us.

Thank you.

AIMS OF THE SESSION

To promote an awareness of people with visual impairments.

To encourage empathy with people with visual impairments.

OBJECTIVES

Through discussion, practical activities and positive images, children will be able to –

Identify the 5 senses by which they experience and explore the world around them.

Talk about everyday things they use their sight for.

Understand that some people may see/experience the world differently due to a Visual Impairment.

Use positive language associated with sight/vision and Visual Impairment.

Identify different symbols that indicate someone with a Visual Impairment.

Talk about positive/helpful things they might need to do/be aware of in their interactions with someone who has a Visual Impairment.

Recognise that people with a Visual Impairment can take part in and enjoy a range of everyday activities.

ORGANISATION OF THE SESSION

The class is gathered together, sat in the class “carpet space”, with a view of the Interactive Smartboard.

Introduction to Sight Awareness

An adult led discussion includes -

1. Review/recall of the 5 Senses
2. What do we use our vision for during our day?
3. People may see/experience the world differently due to Visual Impairments

Group Activities – to develop ideas about Visual Impairments

The class is split into 3 groups of 10 with 1 member of Southampton Sight per group (+ teacher/TA to support). Children move around the 3 activities every 10 minutes, as directed. **This is where volunteers will be involved in delivering the group activities.**

Activities are practical and resourced based. They include -

1. **Canes & sticks** - exploring different symbol canes/walking sticks/guide dog(toy).
2. **Simi Specs** – wearing simulation glasses to look at the world through the vision of people with Visual Impairments.
3. **Feely Bag Activity** - using the sense of touch to identify unseen things and to explore braille print.

Plenary

We review the main points including the use of images of Visually Impaired people engaged in everyday/sporting/creative activities. Any questions?

Children receive a leaflet to take home to parents and a wrist band promoting children's participation and awareness -

“I am a Southampton Sight Awareness Champion”

All School Ambassadors are required to undertake a Disclosure and Barring Service check (DBS) to ensure their suitability to work with children. This is a legal requirement.

We hope this has given you an idea of what to expect from a Sight Awareness Workshop for Schools.

If you require any further information, please email **Mandy** at the following address –

support@southamptonstight.org.uk