

# Sensory Inclusion Service Visual Impairment Newsletter

Issue  
**20**  
March 2021

Sensory Inclusion Service, Floor 7, Darby House, Lawn Central, Telford, TF3 4JA

## So, what have you been up to?



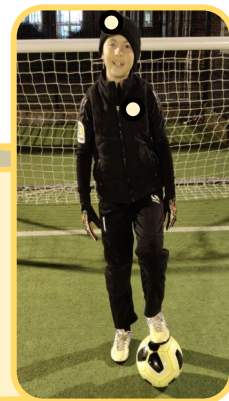
Finley has been working really hard at home schooling both online and from his text books. Here he is carrying out project work for Science, English and PSHE.



Niamh has been carrying out various home schooling activities including making a bird feeder and replicating the scenery on her walk on an iPad. Looks like she enjoyed making the most of the snow too!

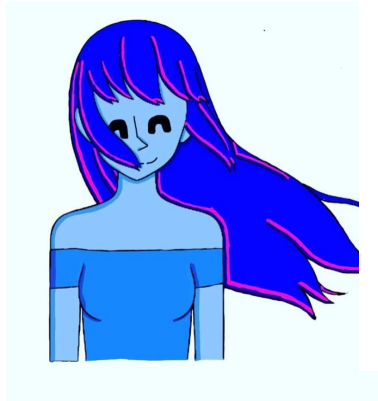


'Jack has been staying top of his class with home schooling. He has also been enjoying baking with his dad over the weekend and is currently working on a few new football skills for when his football team are allowed to play again'



## Sarah's hobby

Hi, my name is Sarah I'm 13 and I draw to let my imagination go wild and I make original characters. My most recent one is Khyaria (blue character below). She has a quirk called Void which means she is basically invincible and immortal. Drawing is relaxing and I mainly do it before I go to sleep so I can get a good night's sleep and not be laying in bed for an hour. I also like drawing characters from Minecraft roleplays. I like Origins, a group of Minecraft Youtubers who make roleplays together like Origins of Olympus, Fairytail origins, My Hero Origins and many more.'  
(I used templates from google for some of these);



*Crys*

## Meet Shania



So this is me Shania and my mum Tilly.

I am 14 years old soon be 15. My story is very long and crazy so I will try and keep it short and sweet.

I started having seizures in January 2016 out of nowhere and I was seeing so many doctors that hospital became my second home. In September 2017 I had to have a biopsy done of my brain that confirmed I had a very rare virus (1 in 1.8 million people) called Rasmussen Encephalitis and that's when our lives slipped for the worse.

The only cure was a hemispherectomy (disconnection of the right side of my brain) so in February 2018 I had major brain surgery followed by months of physical rehab learning to walk again. As part of my condition, my vision had been affected so I had to adjust to having no peripheral vision on the left at all and loss of function on the left side.

To start with I struggled to adapt and used to constantly bang in to things when rushing but now I always try to turn my head to look for any obstacles. It has been hard but over time and with lots of effort I am finding things easier.

## University life



My name is Aiden. I have an eye condition called Nystagmus which is an involuntary flickering movement in the eyes which reduces visual acuity.

I am now at University studying Physics with Astrophysics and no longer have support from the Sensory Inclusion Service. However I was asked to write an article for the newsletter by Gill Dorricott, one of the QTVIs that supported me, after my mum informed her of my A Level results. I gained 4 A stars in Physics, Chemistry, Maths and Further Maths. I always enjoyed maths and science, however when I was at school I struggled with reading graphs. I was given different graph papers to try out and chose the one which was most suitable. Once I could draw graphs on that paper I found it less of a challenge and it enabled me to complete my work to a higher standard.

I wear glasses with a green tint. At school sometimes people would ask me about them. It didn't bother me. I was happy to answer genuine questions so they understood about Nystagmus. I didn't care that my glasses made me look different. I would struggle without them so I had no choice but to wear them, if I wanted to achieve.

I did not need a lot of support from SIS however a QTVI visited me termly to monitor my access to the curriculum and make sure that school were following the recommendations.

When I sat my GCSEs Gill and my mum worked together (mum works at the school I attended) to make sure that I could do my Mock exams on the correct size paper. It was beneficial to me to make sure that work was presented the same as it would be in the actual exam. I also received some extra time to complete exams because of my eye condition and was allowed rest breaks.

I now attend the University of Manchester and I am well supported there. If anybody has concerns about going to University please don't worry. I applied to Uni through UCAS. When completing the forms for student finance I also filled in the section for the Disability Student Allowance. I was then contacted by the DSA to arrange an interview. The interview was fine, it was very relaxed and they made me feel at ease. The interviewer went through what I would need with me. They gave me some options and I chose what I thought would work best.

So far my course has all been conducted online due to Covid but I am able to access everything fine. I use magnifying software on my computer as well as a handheld magnifier and screen reader. I have an audio note taker to record lessons and can match the notes to slides on the PowerPoints. I also have Mind map software to help make mind maps easier to see, because they can be very complex for someone with visual difficulties. My family paid £200 towards the new laptop provided by the DSA because my laptop did not support the new software. I was also provided with a monitor and a printer.

Initially when I went to University I moved into Halls of Residence and moved away from home. However, because of Covid-19 I am now home again studying remotely. I have a timetable and access live lessons as well as completing work on my own. I hope to finish my course with good grades and be a research scientist in the future.

## Make an i-spy game

This is a fun activity that children can help to make, which will also improve their visual discrimination skills!

You will need:

- A collection of small objects such as an old key, button, plastic animal, dice, lollipop stick etc.
- A clear plastic bottle
- Dry sand (uncooked lentils or rice will probably do as well).
- Strong glue

First lay the objects out on a plain background and take a photograph. Then put them in the bottle and half fill with sand, lentils or rice. Glue the lid on carefully to avoid an unfortunate accident! Print the photograph, and then see if you can find the objects. You could photograph the pictures individually to make a game for more than one child, and let them see if they can find the object while the other count to ten.



## Sight loss/visual impairment (vi) dolls

BrightEars is a company that make a range of inclusive dolls that not only empower children but also promote inclusiveness through play.

The range includes sight loss/visually impaired dolls which can be customised.

Please see the website for more information;

<https://www.brightears.co.uk/>

## Save the date



As lockdown eases (fingers crossed) we will once again be able to look ahead and start arranging activities and events. In the meantime the annual pantomime trip has been booked for Saturday 18th December. Look out for further details to follow during the summer term.



Climbing Out runs 5 day outdoor activity programmes aimed at rebuilding confidence and self-esteem in people who've been through a life changing injury, illness or trauma. The programmes give participants the opportunity to take part in challenging yet fun activities whilst meeting others who've been through shared experiences. The activities are run hand in hand with personal development and life coaching sessions to enable participants to accept what they've been through and to start to see a new way forwards. The team of instructors will support individuals to work around any physical or mental limitations they may be facing, keeping everything achievable whilst stretching people's boundaries too.

This year Climbing Out are holding a programme for visually impaired young people 16—30 years between 2nd-6th August in the Peak District.

For more information please look at the Climbing out website <https://climbingout.org.uk/>



Registered charity no: 1043696

We are a small run charity with the aim to support children and young people with visual impairment and their families.

We are all parents/grandparents/guardians of children and young people with visual impairment ourselves so we understand their needs and the support they may require.

We offer funding for assistive technology and equipment and organise trips and events that improve confidence, wellbeing and socialisation.

We need to raise as much money to benefit as many children as possible.

We need to make Shropshire families aware that we are here to help and support them in anyway we can.

Please contact; sandra

Email; [socean456@aol.com](mailto:socean456@aol.com)

Or look us up on Facebook or Twitter

**oneVISION**  
**Shropshire**

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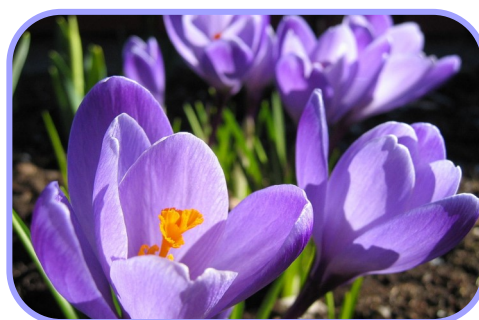
## Sensory Inclusion Service update

Well, it's Easter and so hopefully a time for new beginnings! This has been a hard year with all of us unable to see those we love and cherish and many having suffered great loss in their lives. But, hats off to our children and young people who, despite the enormous challenges presented to them, have done the 'best they can' to access education and move forward – sometimes a tiny step at a time!

The service has welcomed access to TEAMS to meet with you all, a real boost to our spirits to see your faces and to know that you are all still there and now (most of you) back in your nurseries, schools and colleges with a real desire to learn and to move on to the next stage. This newsletter is testimony to the many wonderful talents and interests you have and a time to celebrate! Please continue to share your achievements – they inspire others to challenge their limits!

Labi Siffre, a great songwriter, once wrote 'The higher they build those barriers, the taller I become' and all of us who have the privilege of working with your families now know this to be true! Well done to all of you.

Theresa and Graham



### Local Offer for Special Educational Needs and Disability

Discover everything you need to know about education, health and care services in your local area for children and young people with SEND 0-25yrs at...

[www.telfordsend.org.uk](http://www.telfordsend.org.uk)



#### Key features...

- Search for clear and accessible information, advice and sources of support.
- Explore leisure, fun and short breaks activities.
- Find out about specialist services and education health and care plans.
- Learn how schools support special educational needs.
- Use the interactive map showing what is available near to where you live.
- Have your say through our online feedback form.



[www.telfordsend.org.uk](http://www.telfordsend.org.uk)

### 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**



**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](#).

Email: [Local.Offer@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:Local.Offer@shropshire.gov.uk) Telephone: 0345 678 9063

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