

# **Support and contacts for young people aged 16-20 with a visual impairment and their families.**

You will soon be leaving secondary or Post 16 education so there will be changes and some different services to support you and your family as you become more independent.

This booklet is for young people aged 16-20 and their families. It is to give you information about support and services in Derby and changes to benefits from 16 years of age.

The information in this booklet is as follows –

- Bus pass/Gold Card
- Rail card
- Disability Living Allowance and Personal Independence Payment
- Hospital Eye Care
- Low visual aids Assessment
- Sight Support Derbyshire
- Other local organisations and groups
- SENDIASS Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information, Advice and Support Service
- Support available from the Inclusion team at Derby College sites
- Support available at Saint Benedict 6<sup>th</sup> Form
- Finding work
- Access to Work (ATW)
- Personal safety
- Cyber Safety
- Emotional Wellbeing
- Living Well with Sight Loss courses
- Local Area Co-ordinators
- Preparing for Adulthood
- Derby City Council Rehabilitation Services for Adults

## Gold Card – Bus Pass

If you are Registered Severely Sight Impaired (SSI)/Blind or Sight Impaired (SI)/Partially Sighted, you should be entitled to a free bus pass called a Gold Card. The bus pass gives free travel after 9.30am on weekdays and anytime at weekends. It can be used anywhere in the country on local buses. You can [download an application form](#) and send the completed form, along with a passport-sized photo and copies of your proof of age and address by post to

Concessionary Travel,  
Derby City Council, Council House, Corporation Street,  
Derby, DE1 2FS.

The Gold Card also gives you discounts in a range of shops and businesses. You'll get some information about the discounts when you receive your Gold Card

[Gold Card bus pass for disabled people - Derby City Council](#)

## Disabled Person's Railcard



People with a visual impairment can apply for a disabled person's railcard. The railcard entitles the disabled traveller to a discount on train fares for themselves and a carer across the rail network. The pass lasts for a year but there is a cost. If you travel a lot, you could save money.

[Disabled Persons Railcard | Official Retailer | National Rail](#)  
<http://disabledpersons-railcard.co.uk>

## Disability Living Allowance and PIP

Many children will have had DLA as they have grown up, but this stops when you are 16. As the young person approaches 16, they will get a letter telling them that they can claim P.I.P. Usually young people get the P.I.P themselves, but if a young person has additional needs someone can become an appointee and make the claim on their behalf. PIP claims involve an initial 20-minute phone call, a more detailed form to complete and usually a face-to-face interview for the young person.

Derby City council has a welfare rights team, Derby Advice, which can offer help and advice about benefits and allowances and support you

with claims, appeals and reviews if benefits have been turned down. Rehab and Mobility Service can help you with this process after the age of 18.

You can talk with a welfare rights officer on the **Derby Advice helpline** 01332 643394. Monday to Friday afternoons from 1-4pm or email [derby.advice@derbyhomes.org](mailto:derby.advice@derbyhomes.org)

## Hospital Eye Care

If you have been discharged from hospital eye care before the age of 18, you will have been advised to visit a regular 'high street' Optician for sight tests from now on. However, if your hospital eye care continues beyond the age of 18, the appointments will now be in the main eye clinic, which is in the King's Treatment Centre of the Royal Derby Hospital. You may see a different consultant from the one previously seen in the children's eye clinic.

Low Vision Aids (LVAs), such as magnifiers, are provided by Orthoptists from the children's eye clinic, either at a hospital appointment or during a visit to see you in your school. Once you have left school, if you require a replacement LVA or would like to be assessed for a different one, contact Sight Support Derbyshire (details below).

Should you have new concerns about your sight once you have been discharged from the hospital, please arrange to see your Optician who will be able to advise you and, if necessary, refer you to the hospital.

Contact numbers:

Derbyshire Children's Hospital Orthoptic and Ophthalmology Dept.  
01332 785659

Eye clinic, Kings Treatment Centre, Royal Derby Hospital 01332 787002

The Eye Clinic Liaison Officer from Sight Support Derbyshire is based in the Eye Clinic 01332 783366

[clare.thornton@sightsupportderbyshire.org.uk](mailto:clare.thornton@sightsupportderbyshire.org.uk)

## **Low Visual Aids Assessments**

The LVA scheme is across the county for those registered with a Derbyshire GP.

Those who are sight impaired (SI) and severely sight impaired (SSI) are eligible. You do not have to be registered as SSI or SI to receive help.

Sight support Derbyshire has an up-to-date list of those Opticians offering the service. Most are on the High Street and some may do home visits. The scheme supplies optical magnifiers, lights and sunshades. Electronic aids are very limited.

An assessment is made to optimise remaining vision and can include an eye examination and a home visit to assess lighting. In addition to supplying a magnifier.

Referral can be from Sight Support Derbyshire, GP, Hospital eye services, opticians or you can make the referral yourself.

## **Sight Support Derbyshire**

Sight Support Derbyshire works with local children and adults who are SSI/blind or SI/partially sighted to help them face the everyday challenges of living with sight loss. Sight Support Derbyshire is based in Derby City, and works with people throughout Derbyshire. We have a help line where staff can offer support and advice to callers about where to get help. We run several services ourselves, and work with partner agencies to enable people to get the help they need. Visit our website <https://sightsupportderbyshire.org.uk/> or call our helpline on Tel 01332 292262 if you want information or support.

## **SENDIASS (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information, Advice and Support Service)**

Provides free, legally based impartial, confidential and accessible information, advice and support for young people and parents/carers. SENDIASS gives advice on Special Educational Needs Disabilities (SEND), Health and Social Care. Your child does not need to have a formal diagnosis to receive our support. Derby SENDIASS number: 01332 641414 Email: [SENDIASS@derby.gov.uk](mailto:SENDIASS@derby.gov.uk)



## **Inclusion and support for students with a visual impairment at Derby College Group**

Inclusion support at Derby college work to support students with sight loss in all the college sites including Joseph Wright, Broomfield, Ilkeston college, the Roundhouse and the Johnson Building.

If you are considering applying for a Derby College course and you have a visual impairment, contact the **Learning and Support Team** and we will prepare any additional resources you may need in advance.

At Derby College we want to make transition to Further Education a positive experience for everyone from application through interview, during taster classes at enrolment and around the college on programme.

We can arrange transition visits during quiet times, introduce key staff and create an idea of the support you can receive as part of your chosen study route at Derby College.

A member of the Learning and Support Team will arrange to support you either virtually or in person well before the course begins to create a Person-Centred Inclusion Teaching Plan. The person-centred plan is so we know how to support your study and to organise any practical support or equipment you may need. We can also update and organise any exam access arrangements you may need. There will be opportunity at the person-centred planning meeting to share information and ask any questions.

We have Learning Support Assistants, LSAs, who support your development in college. The LSAs can guide, note take, differentiate learning materials and support modification of resource.

The college modification service produce braille or enlarged font materials for study and exams. The modification service can reformat text and diagrams, produce word, audio documents and tactile diagrams for those people with low or limited vision.

The inclusion service issue specialist equipment including magnifiers, reading pens, Dictaphones, laptops, tablets with software for ZoomText and JAWs. Inclusion at Derby college endeavour to purchase and install any specialist equipment or software recommended for an individual.

We encourage independence in learning and promote technological solutions at every stage.

As part of the course there may be a work placement, we will plan with you and prepare for this in advance to ensure adjustments are in place for your success.

We provide support for next steps; application to university or starting in a workplace.

We want every learner's journey to be a positive experience at Derby College.

**Contact** the inclusion and support team

[inclusionandsupport@derbycollege.ac.uk](mailto:inclusionandsupport@derbycollege.ac.uk)

Lead inclusion coordinator for visual impairment at Derby College

Liz Johnson

[An Introduction to Supporting Students With Sight Loss/Visual Impairment - YouTube](#)

### **Sixth form at Saint Benedict Academy**

We have excellent facilities which include Elmwood, our dedicated Sixth Form Centre, and we are proud to have our own Enhanced Resource Base which supports visually impaired and physically impaired young people.

The ERB (Enhanced Resource Base) at Saint Benedict is a department within the school which facilitates inclusion into the mainstream activities for students with Vision Impairment and/or Physical Disability. All students supported by the department have an EHCP.

The students supported by the ERB all attend lessons in the mainstream sixth form. They are supported in a number of ways such as modified resources, specialist equipment or support from a department Learning Support Assistant (LSA). We work closely with Directors of Learning (DoL) and teachers to ensure we have knowledge of lessons to be delivered and any adaptations, modifications or equipment that might be needed.

Students are able to have one-to-one tuition in the areas of Braille, if necessary (taught by a QTVI), mobility, independent living skills, social skills, physiotherapy, or to have pre or post teaching in lesson content to ensure they understand concepts being taught or have additional time to complete learning or assessments.

**Beyond Sixth form** the school employs a qualified Careers Adviser who is available for one-to-one appointments for Saint Benedict students giving the opportunity to talk about their ambitions and interests and how to move these forward.

The majority of our students make a decision to apply to university, we also have students go onto success through higher apprenticeships and employment. Whatever path you take, you will have access to guidance and advice to help you succeed.

University prospectuses and Higher education guides are available to help with UCAS applications.

### **Finding work and benefits after education**

If you don't have a job when you leave college or finish your apprenticeship, you can apply for Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or Universal Credit (UC) when you are 19. The Job Centre will then give you a Job Coach who will help you with finding work.

It can be difficult but the job centre can refer you to some agencies who can help with this. You may need to apply for lots of jobs before you are successful. Don't let the search get you down, you will get there if you keep trying, follow the advice from the job centre and make sure your CV and application respond to each of the points on the Job Specification for that particular job. Receiving an application saying e.g. you're really keen to do gardening when you're applying to work in a supermarket won't show the employer that you really want to work for them. You could do some voluntary work while you are looking for paid work.

Employers are expected to make 'reasonable adjustments' for employees with disabilities. This could mean a chair that has been adapted, a specialist fire alarm for a deaf colleague or a specialist keyboard and software for someone with a visual impairment.

### **Access to Work**

If you need further support, you can apply for Access to Work. This is money provided by the DWP to help people with disabilities start work and stay working. What they provide will depend on what you need for the particular job that you will be doing. They may provide a notetaker for meetings or taxis to get to and from work. You will have to tell them



about the work you will be doing, what help you think you will need, how many hours per week this will be needed and your manager will need to confirm this.

## **Cyber safety**

Facetime, Snapchat, Whatsapp etc. are great ways for people to communicate and keep in touch. Social media can be useful and fun but also brings risks.

Over recent years, there have been incidents of local teenagers sending rude photos to each other; arranging to meet someone they have met online, posting nasty messages about other people and filming other young people when they are drunk and posting these.

Posting or sending rude photos or nasty messages could be a criminal offence. Posts, messages and photos can all be used as evidence in court. Meeting someone you don't know in this way could put you at serious risk, especially if no-one knows where you are and who you are meeting.

All of these things could affect friendships and get you into trouble with school/college and your family. Think before you post. Remember that once an image is online it can end up anywhere and be very hard to take down. Some images are still there years later. Some employers check social media before deciding to offer someone a job.

## **Personal Safety**

Some simple tips to help you stay safe:-

- If you're going out alone, make sure someone knows where you are going and who you are meeting.
- Make sure your phone battery is charged
- Don't post personal information online
- Think about the photos you put online and who can see them
- Check your privacy settings regularly on your social media accounts or ask someone to check them for you.
- Its legal to drink if you're over 18 but getting too drunk leaves you vulnerable. You may not think the way you usually do, so could end up taking silly risks. You may not remember what has



happened to you. You could end up in hospital being sick and needing treatment.

- Lots of fights happen because of alcohol and drug use, often ending up with people being arrested by the police. Try to limit what you are drinking so that you can stay alert to what is going on around you.
- It can be tempting to follow your friends and try out different drugs. Remember that most of these will be illegal and could result in police action. You might not be worried about that now, but it can make things difficult for you later, for example, it could stop you getting a job that you want, stop you going to countries like America even for a holiday and affect your mental and physical health

## **Emotional Wellbeing**

Teenage years can be difficult for young people, with a lot of stresses and worries about all sorts of things - friendships; self-image; exams; feeling bullied; sexual identity; peer pressure. Try to limit your social media/phone use so that you get enough sleep. No-one copes as well when they're tired and having video chats or getting upsetting messages at 2am is not good for anyone.

It can be hard and maybe embarrassing to tell someone how you are feeling but it usually feels better when you do. Try and think of an adult you trust and talk with them. It might be someone in your family, at school or college or it could be a family friend or a professional you are seeing. It doesn't matter who it is as long as they feel like the right person to you. Having someone to talk with is enough for many young people to find a way through these worries but some young people need more help to feel better. It's OK to need support and to accept it. Your GP, school, college or any of the professionals you meet will be able to signpost you to other support.

## **Derby Impaired Visually Society (DIVS)**

DIVS is a recently established social group run by and for people with a visual impairment. They can be found on Facebook by searching the above name. The contact people are Julian Neale and Danielle Gage. New people are always welcome to join them from age 16.

## **Living Well with Sight loss – a course offered by the RNIB**

At the moment it is mainly online but they can make other arrangements if needed. There is a course for families to support them with their children and another course for anyone who is 18 or over and has a sight loss themselves or lives with someone who does. The course covers many of the areas in this leaflet such as

- Registration of sight impairment and understanding benefits
- Staying independent
- Daily life skills and using technology
- Eye health and available eye care services
- Wellbeing
- Leisure and opportunities to connect with others
- Signposting to other national and local organisations.

They can also offer follow up sessions as needed

- Confident living: independence and confidence indoors and outdoors
- Wellbeing: living well and feeling great
- Money matters: finance and shopping.
- Family and friends: dedicated support for people who have loved ones with sight loss.
- Technology: knowledge and confidence using technology in everyday life

The link to the courses is on their website here [Living Well with Sight Loss courses | RNIB](#)

## **Local Area Coordinators (LACs)**

Local Area Coordinators work across Derby, helping people make sense of things, making the changes that they want in their lives and connecting them to what is going on in their local area. They take time to get to know people and find out what is important to them, then work alongside them for as long as is needed as they find answers that suit them. This could be:

- Finding the right information or advice and helping them understand how it relates to their situation
- Building their own network and making connections with other people
- Finding practical ways to resolve problems
- Being part of their community and being able to share their skills with others

- Identifying their goals and needs
- Navigating services which may feel difficult to access or understand
- Building confidence to make decisions and do things differently

The name and contact information for your local area coordinator is here [Local Area Coordinators - Derby City Council](#)

## **Preparing for Adulthood and Independence**

This is sometimes called transition. If you have an EHCP (Education, Health and Care Plan) and it is likely that you will need support when you are 18, a referral can be sent by your school to the Preparing For Adulthood (PFA) team, part of Adult social care at Derby City Council. The PFA team will look at the referral. If you only need support because of your visual impairment, they will pass your referral to the council's Rehabilitation Officer for adults with a visual impairment. (see below for the support the Rehab Officer can provide) If you need other support to develop your independence because of your visual impairment and other learning needs or physical disability, the PFA team and Rehab officer will work together with you and your family to assess your eligible needs and the support you need.

The PFA team also has a worker who supports young people with disabilities to gain apprenticeships, voluntary work and paid employment. Your PFA worker or Rehab Officer can refer you to this service.

You can also think about small steps you can do to become more independent before you are 18. Maybe you could

- Learn to prepare your own snacks and maybe cook a few different meals
- Build your understanding of coins and money
- Buy things for yourself instead of getting someone else to ask
- Understand about different bills your family have to pay
- Use the washing machine
- Wake up by yourself,
- Access travel training for home to school journeys
- Know how to get help in an emergency

All young people learn and develop differently, so you and your parents need to decide when it is right for you to learn any of these or do them on your own.

## Derby City Council, Rehabilitation Services for people with a Visual Impairment

The Rehabilitation Worker (Rehab. Worker) who specialises in working with people who have a visual impairment will work with you in partnership to identify your needs and goals and can support in the following areas:

**Mobility Training:** This is to look at the best ways for you to get around safely, this may include the use of a symbol or long white cane with training, a referral to Guide Dogs for the Blind or perhaps looking at new techniques for traveling without the use of an aid. Any method or referral would first be agreed with you and only carried out with your consent.

**Daily Living skills:** We know that with limited vision, there is likely to be an increased chance that it will be more difficult to carry out the day-to-day routines of life. For example, making a drink or preparing a basic meal. The Rehab. Worker works with you to show you how these tasks can be carried out safely using adapted techniques and or equipment to make the task achievable with limited sight.

**Low Vision Aids & Lighting:** Low vision aids are specialist magnifying glasses that you can't purchase on the high street but can, following an assessment be issued to you on the NHS. They may well allow a person to read things that have become too difficult to read following a deterioration in a person's sight. The Rehab. Worker would be able to refer you to a specialist service for assessment in this area and they would also be able to look at reading lamps for you which, if prescribed, would also be available on the NHS. Lighting in the home is also very important as a well-lit area with the correct lighting will allow a person with limited vision to function at their best and the Rehab. Worker can advise you in this area.

**Benefits Advice/Support:** You may be entitled to claim certain specialist benefits based on your visual impairment/sight loss for example: Personal Independence Payment (PIP) from age 16. The Rehab. Worker would be able to give you advice and support in completing the application forms for these benefits.

**Referral and Signposting:** There are many other organisations that may be able to support you with your visual impairment/sight loss, both

local and national, voluntary, and statutory. The Rehab. Worker will be able to help identify suitable organizations and put you in touch with them or if appropriate make a referral to them on your behalf.

Please note - This is an Adults service so is available to support people who are aged 18 and over. However, we are happy to provide 'one-off' phone advice or information provision for 16-18 year old's if required.

Contact details:

For referrals, please contact Derby Direct on 01332 640000 and ask for a referral to the Rehab. Officer for people with a Visual Impairment.