

Multisensory Impaired (MSI)

Children and young people with a combined vision and hearing loss are Multisensory Impaired (MSI). Leicester City defines MSI as significant impairments of both hearing and vision or function as if significantly impaired, where this is difficult to assess clinically. The pupil's language development and associated social and emotional development are likely to require support through augmented or alternative communication, such as Sign Supported English (SSE) or British Sign Language (BSL), tactile approaches, including Braille or Moon and supported through Intensive Community Treatment (ICT). It is exceedingly rare that a child will be completely deaf and completely blind. It is therefore important for the MSI child to be able to use the residual hearing and/or vision to its full potential.

Leicester City's approach to MSI

Children and young people with educationally significant hearing and vision loss will receive advice and support from Leicester City's SEND Support Service, (SENDSS) Vision Support Team (VST) and Hearing Support Team (HST). The Vision Support Team has a qualified teacher of the multisensory impaired (QTMSI). The level of support is determined with reference to the National Sensory Impairment Partnership (NatSIP) Eligibility Framework alongside professional judgement. An assessment of children with Multisensory Impairment is undertaken by a QTMSI to determine whether an Intervenor is required to provide specialist educational support. An Intervenor is trained in working with children and young people with multisensory impairment and can give specialist support in accessing environmental information, facilitating communication as well as promoting social and emotional development.

People and services for children and young people with MSI

Role and expectations of the school

Senior management team & SENCO should:

Follow advice from the Hearing and Vision Support best endeavours and reasonable adjustment (BERA), as well as:

- ensure the provision of an Intervenor, on the recommendation by the QTMSI. An Intervenor should be paid on a higher grade than a TA to reflect their specialist skills, and additional responsibilities - (Level 3 desirable).
- ensure that sufficient time is allocated for a pupil to practice specific skills – i.e., pre-learning, revising with an appropriately skilled adult. This may mean that the child or young person with MSI needs to withdraw from time-tabled lessons.
- allocate time and funding for staff to undertake specific training requirements essential to the role for effective support of the child or young person with MSI e.g., 5-day Intervenor training course, using, and maintaining hearing aids, learning braille.

- ensure that information about the child or young person with MSI's needs, impact of vision and hearing loss, teaching strategies and approaches are shared with all relevant staff, and that the guidance contained within this is consistently and effectively implemented.
- make sure that advice from QTMSI is followed and support the class teacher to monitor progress and the impact of support and interventions.
- allow the Intervenor to be a part of the planning processes short, medium, and long term so they can plan the appropriate access routes/steps and adaptations needed for the needs relevant to the child or young person with MSI.
- ensure time for the Intervenor to modify resources.

Teachers and TAs should:

Follow guidance from Hearing and Vision BERA, as well as:

- work in partnership with the QTMSI on appropriate targets, strategies, and inclusion.
- arrange time for the Intervenor to meet regularly with the QTMSI to discuss issues.
- arrange the timetable for the child or young person with MSI to enable time for revision/pre-learning/additional curriculum (such as touch-typing, speech and language skills).

Role and expectations of the local authority

The designated QTMSI should:

- assess a child or young person with vision and hearing impairment to determine if the CYP needs an Intervenor.
- mentor the Intervenor through the 5-day course and accreditation.
- give ongoing support and regular and frequent time with the Intervenor to discuss issues.

Provisions and practice for child or young person with MSI

Role and expectations of the school

Schools should:

Follow advice from Hearing and Vision Support BERA, as well as:

- provide time at the beginning of topics for the Intervenor to introduce new work to the child or young person with MSI and to assess the starting point. Do not assume that the child or young person with MSI knows what is expected.

Role and expectations of the local authority

The designated QTMSI should:

- Provide MSI friendly strategies for classroom management.
- Ensure training for all relevant staff on the impact of MSI on the environment, access to information and mobility.

Environment for child or young person with MSI

Role and expectations of the school

Schools should:

- follow advice from the Hearing and Vision Support BERA.

Role and expectations of the local authority

The designated QTMSI should:

- ensure training for all relevant staff on the impact of MSI on the environment, access to information and mobility.

Resources for learning for child or young person with MSI

Role and expectations of the school

Schools should:

- follow advice from the hearing and Vision Support BERA.
- allow the Intervenor to be a part of the planning processes short, medium, and long term so they can plan the appropriate access routes/steps and adaptations needed for the needs relevant to the child or young person with MSI.
- ensure time for the Intervenor to modify resources.