Let’s play!

Toys and play ideas for young children with vision impairment
Produced for RNIB by Karen Newell, a Play Consultant whose son has a vision impairment and Rebecca Atkinson, a Journalist and Creative Consultant for children’s industries and founder of the #toylikeme campaign, who is herself partially sighted.

With thanks to the staff, volunteers, parents and children at the NNAB playgroup, and Beth Moseley Photography for their help with the photos.
Introduction

Whether you are a parent, teacher or carer of a child with vision impairment this play guide aims to get you started creating fun-filled playtimes for your child to develop and explore their senses.

All children love to play, but vision is just one way to explore and learn about the world. The toys in this guide have been specially selected by parents, children and play experts for their tactile, sound, scented, and visually stimulating play potential.

You will also find handy tips and ideas from other parents and carers on choosing toys, creating play environments, creative activities and further resources to help you support your child as they grow, learn, have fun, make friends and find out about the world around them.
Choosing toys

“Sit back and observe how your child plays with objects. Your child will teach you all you need to know. You will both become experts!”

All children have different play interests, styles, abilities and levels of useful vision. What works for one child may not be right for another. Celebrate your child as an individual, inquisitive, strong and capable learner. Together you can become experts in multi-sensory play.

The huge range of products available in high street toy stores can feel overwhelming, especially when you are looking for toys with added play benefits for children with vision impairment. We have listed lots of toys in this guide but you are certain to find more.

When choosing toys look out for:

- Good colour and tone contrast
- Lettering that is bold and clear
- Good reflection of light or fluorescent elements
- Toys which encourage children to use their eyes to follow an object
- Toys which encourage development of hand-eye co-ordination and/or fine motor control, using small finger movements
- Interesting textures and tactile variety – some toys which look like they offer different textures, actually feel similar, like felt and velvet – test for yourself to see if the textures really feel different
- A scented feature
- Switches that are recognisable by touch such as on or off and click when operated
- Toys which encourage awareness of cause and effect through touch – “when I press here, something happens”
- Toys which make a sound or other cue to an action having occurred
- Equipment and toys which encourage physical movement, running or jumping, or reaching and stretching for children with more complex needs.

“We did lots of trial and error. Rather than buying toys, we borrowed from our local toy library to find out which ones my son really enjoyed.”
Creating play environments

At home
• The right environment is key to a happy playtime.
• Some children with a vision impairment may not feel confident to explore, others may be hungry for adventure. If you have space, set up a well lit corner or nook that is theirs to explore. Incorporate good lighting, perhaps near a window, space for movement and a range of stimulating activities. Rotate toys so there is always something new to explore.

Out and about
All children benefit from socialising with others. For some children with vision impairment, noisy or busy playgroups may be overwhelming whilst others love to dive in with the rough and tumble. When choosing a playgroup to attend, observe and consider:

• Lighting conditions – What does your child like? Some children with vision impairment prefer natural daylight so look for outside playgroups or those with large windows. Others may find glare off-putting and need more subdued lighting. Observe your child in different situations. Ask the playgroup to make the adaptations your child needs.

• Noise and motion – If your child is sensitive to noise and lots of movement around them, seek small groups, or attend at the beginning or end when numbers of other busy children may be fewer.

“My son seemed really cranky at busy playgroups until I realised that the fast movement of other children around him was visually overwhelming him. Then we started going to a rhyme time where he was able to sit on my lap and the activity was gentler and more focused than rushing around free play.”
What does your child need to play well?

- All children need opportunities to experience challenge, risk and excitement in a way that is appropriate for them.
- Children need to be alert to play and enjoy new things. If they are tired or unwell choose less demanding or familiar activities.
- Children depend on a sensitive play partner to encourage, support and extend their play with objects – and to know when to withdraw!
- Talk to your specialist teacher for children with vision impairment about colour, contrast, lighting and using plain backgrounds. Try to find out if your child sees better on one side, or if objects should be presented in a particular position.
- Make sure that your child is in the most suitable position to use their hands and eyes to best advantage, whether seated, standing or lying down.
- Keep toys within easy reach so that your child’s movements can create an effect. For example, suspend toys above children lying down, or use a container to keep objects together on a table top.
- If toys roll out of reach, try to take your child to the toy, rather than bringing the toy back to your child.
- Allow your child to explore objects with their mouth and feet, as well as encouraging the use of hands.

- Use language that is simple, short, and descriptive and relate to what your child is doing.
- If your child has repeated behaviours, try to develop them into a more creative activity.
Play potential everywhere

Play doesn't always have to involve toys. Your home is full of interesting objects your child will enjoy discovering. Let your child explore around the house using touch, taste, sound, smells and any useful vision.

A wooden spoon and an upturned saucepan is a drum, a cardboard box can be a car, house or rocket. Create a treasure basket of interesting shapes and textures. Place a range of objects, such as keys, an orange, a piece of ribbon into a basket or container and let your children explore.

“My daughter and her sighted siblings love tactile snap. I put a range of fabrics and papers, all with different tactile surfaces, into a bag and they have to pick out the pairs with the same texture.”

Let’s grow!

Sow, grow and water flowers, herbs and vegetables in the garden or a window box. Explore the touch and smell of soil and sprinkling water drops tipping from the watering-can spout.

Listen to the sound of leaves crunching under feet. Feel the smoothness of conkers, the tickle of a ladybird scurrying across your palm. Sniff the smells of freshly cut grass or autumn leaves.

Bake off!

A session baking cupcakes with you in the kitchen can be a tactile and taste party! Use talking scales and measuring jugs to involve your child in every step of the preparation. Let them feel the difference between slippery raw egg, soft flour and sticky icing! And who can resist the taste of the end results!
Adapt and create

Whilst there are many mainstream and specialist toys listed in this guide, you can also adapt and create your own accessible toys with a little imagination.

Adapt

If your child’s favourite book doesn’t come in tactile form, consider adapting the pages yourself to enhance the sensory experience and bring the story to life. Add scraps of fabric to create tactile features to illustrations, or make the outline of an image tactile by using tippex, string or wikistix. Try using puffy markers to create tactile markings or braille on number jigsaws or toy clock faces.

“We had a book with jungle animal sound effects on it. My son loved it but there was nothing to differentiate the buttons by touch. So I found scraps of different fabrics – fur, leather, silk – and stuck small squares to help him tell the furry tiger button from the leathery elephant button.”

“My son loves the Tiger Who Came to Tea. We bring it alive with a bag of objects including a hard and a cuddly tiger, some fur, a cup saucer, plate of cakes and a jug. At the end of the story we always have to put a hat and scarf on and turn off the light to signify going out at night.”
Create

Toys can be expensive but your home can be full of potential for making low cost toys using recycled objects. Try hot-gluing two empty yogurt pots together filled with rice to create a shaker. Create several using different grains or pasta shapes inside to experiment with different types of sounds. Bubble-wrap is a lovely material for children to fiddle with or walk around on.

“When my son was diagnosed blind at six weeks a friend who was good at sewing made him a playmat which was black and white, high contrast and had lots of integrated sounds and textures.”

“I created a texture door game for my daughter by using the plastic snap shut lids you find on some brands of baby wipes to create a wall of doors by sticking them to a piece of stiff cardboard and putting different textures – sandpaper, foil, corrugated card – behind each door. My daughter loved opening and closing the doors to find out what ‘touch’ was behind.”
The Duckiness of Ducks*

Many toys are representations of animals and objects found in real life but may bear little resemblance to the real thing for a child who is relying on touch, sound and smell. Take a rubber duck for example, it has a similar shape to a real duck, but that’s where the similarity ends.

Whilst sighted children can be handed a rubber duck and shown a photograph of a real duck or see one on the pond, a child with vision impairment may have more difficulty connecting a real duck to the toy representation. They may think that real ducks are also smooth and plasticy.

When creating a play landscape for a child with vision impairment it’s important to think how a toy might teach a child about the real object it represents. What does the touch of a plastic duck tell a child about a real duck?

The solution to this challenge lies with using a multi-sensory approach to help build a picture of the real thing and help your child learn about how toys represent the real world around them.

*The term Duckiness of Ducks was coined by Professor Mike McLinden, co-author of Learning Through Touch, which is a useful in-depth guide for teaching professionals about tactile learning. Your local vision impairment teaching service may have a copy that you could borrow. The price reflects a target audience of professionals, rather than parents.
“When I was teaching my son about animals we had some plastic cows and ducks. I also found some feathers and scraps of cow skin so we could talk about what real ducks and cows might feel like. The library had a book with animal noises and I found some animal noise videos on YouTube. We also spent a lot of time at our local petting farm where my son could touch the real cows and ducks as well as smell and hear a real farmyard. My son loved feeding the animals. It was here that he truly understood the hardness and action of a duck beak in his open hand of seeds.”

“Plastic food is often nothing like the real thing. We had a plastic baguette which was the same colour and shape at the real thing, but it told my daughter nothing about the texture of a real baguette. The plastic baguette was smooth and rubbery whereas a real one is rough and crumbly and soft in the middle so I made her a baguette using a loo roll covered in sand paper with cotton wool stuffed inside and we played with this alongside a real baguette and the plastic one and talked about how they were similar and different.”
Developmental areas

Children develop through play from birth and beyond, but all children develop differently and at different rates. Many children with vision impairment may also have additional learning needs or challenges.

“I found it useful to put ideas of age ranges and milestones to one side and let my daughter show me what worked for her.”

Whilst many toys carry age guidelines, we feel that you are the best judge of what is right for your child and their developmental stage, regardless of their age. Observe your child and how they react to different toys and activities (filming can help). Give them time to explore and note what engages and challenges them, and above all, have fun!

How does your child like to play?

When choosing toys and activities for your child you may wish to consider the six areas of play development - sometimes known as Schematic Play Patterns - and consider how your selections may help your child develop in these areas.

Schematic play patterns

Schemas are patterns of play which children may repeat time and time again whilst they are exploring the world around them. There are six common schemas. Children should be encouraged to explore as many play schemas as possible, but you may find they have their favourites. Try to gently create opportunities for your child not to get stuck in one style of play.
• **Trajectory** – Children may throw or drop objects, run back and forth, enjoy jumping up and down or pushing chairs or objects around.

“My son loved pushing a toy buggy around and also chasing balloons and soft balls.”

• **Transporting** – Children may like to carry objects in a bag from one place to another. They may enjoy filling containers in the garden with sand or soil and move them from place to place.

• **Rotation** – Your child may be fascinated with objects that turn round and round, twist and spin, or even enjoy moving their own bodies to display these movements. You may find your child enjoys turning taps, switches and knobs on and off.

• **Envelopment** – Some children enjoy putting on layers of dressing up clothes or wrapping themselves up in fabric and hats. You may see your child making dens, hiding in cardboard boxes, or crawling through tunnels again and again.

• **Connection** – Many children enjoy connecting toys and objects together such as train tracks, bricks, junk modelling, or just lining up toy animals or cars so they all touch in a row.

• **Containing** – A child may enjoy enveloping objects, themselves or a space. They may make parcels containing everyday objects, enjoy putting one thing inside another (Russian dolls), shape sorting, posting objects, climbing into boxes.

“My daughter loves poking tubes of dry pasta into an empty drinks bottle.”
Products
How to use this catalogue

Some of the toys listed in this guide have features which stimulate any useful vision a child may have – shiny, bright or bold aspects that are visually interesting and will help your child develop and exercise any residual vision.

Other toys have features which stimulate the other senses and are suitable for a child with no useful vision – they have exciting textures, sounds or shapes.

You and your child can experiment with what aspects of a toy make it the most fun to play with, and what sensory skills might be most useful to practice.

Sourcing toys

Most of the toys featured in this guide are available from high street toy retailers or online for home delivery from major online retailers.

If you have difficulty sourcing a particular product contact the manufacturer, listed at back of this guide, to find out your local stockist.

NB Prices are approximate at the time of writing and don’t include postage and packaging. All products are suggestions to give you ideas. You may be able to find similar products at more competitive prices so it’s worth shopping around.
Every child brings with them a sense of curiosity which drives their interest to understand and explore the world.

There are lots of high contrast black and white, or black and yellow products available on the high street for very young babies. These can be useful to stimulate useful vision in babies with vision impairment.
Infant Stim Mobile
By Manhattan Toy
Wimmer-Ferguson
High contrast black and white mobile for use above a cot.
£26

Wrist Rattle and Foot Finder Set
By Lamaze
High contrast rattles which promote movement and activity before your baby is able to sit.
£7.50

Mind Shapes
By Manhattan Toy
Wimmer-Ferguson
High contrast blocks with varying tactile and sound features.
£12

Baby’s Very First Book: Faces
By John Fordham
Crinkly pages, a mirror and high contrast pictures to simulate senses.
£5
**Lamaze Octotunes**  
By Lamaze  
Vanilla scented, each of the 8 tentacles plays a different note when squeezed.  
£18

**Spots and Stripes Safari Gym**  
By Bright Starts  
Packed with tactile and sound features, including rattles, teethers, mirrors, lights and music.  
£42

**Bright Starts Activity Balls**  
By Bright Starts  
Multiple colours, textures, sounds and activities. Includes rattle, clicker and spinner.  
£6

**Manhattan Toy Whoozit Lights and Sounds Spiral**  
By Manhattan Toys  
Spiral design for attaching to cots and buggies. Touch sensitive light and music features.  
£19
**Prince Lionheart Original Slumber Bear**  
By Prince Lionheart  
Soothing womb or white noise options to aid restful sleep. Reactivates when baby cries or moves.  
£25

**Crawl and Discover Mat**  
By Manhattan Toy Wimmer-Ferguson  
High contrast with integrated texture, activities and sounds.  
£35

**Eva Rubber Foam Puzzle Floor Mat £10**  
By Sunix  
Non slip play mat that can also be used to construct 3D cubes and shapes.  
£10
Growing and playing

As your baby grows, so will their curiosity and interest in playful interactions with objects, toys and people. The best person to judge the appropriate toy for your growing child and their individual stage of development is you.

We have grouped the following toys into play themes to give you ideas.
Social play
Toys which promote social play help children understand the relationship between people, objects and place.

Hide Away Puppets
By The Puppet Company
Contains tactile play potential and movement as well as promoting role play.
£30

Talking Ginger
By Talking Friends
Ginger repeats everything you say with a funny voice. Pet him to make him purr or hear sound effects.
£25
**Wonderboard Make a Face**  
By Dowling Magnets  
Mix and match the magnetic features to create faces and explore emotions.  
£15

**Bright Eyes Pets**  
By Bright Eyes  
Touch activates this cuddly pet. Includes light and sound features.  
£15

**Lullaby Gloworm**  
By Playskool  
Cuddly critter which glows and makes a sound when squeezed.  
£15

**Yellow Lab Plush**  
By Melissa and Doug  
Almost life-size cuddly Labrador. Customize to create your very own guide dog!  
£35
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Product</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Price</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cozy Coupe Police Patrol Car</td>
<td>By Little Tykes</td>
<td>£50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cozy Pumper</td>
<td>By Little Tykes</td>
<td>£25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SparkUp The Magical Book Reader</td>
<td>By SparkUp</td>
<td>£15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Talk-Time post cards</td>
<td>By Wishtrac</td>
<td>£25</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
**Talking Clip Board**  
By tts-group.co.uk  
Innovative recordable clipboard featuring a 40 second record function.  
£11

**Twinkling Frog**  
By Cloud b  
Soothing sounds and a belly full of glowing fire flies give this plush frog enhanced sensory features.  
£33

**My Pal Scout**  
By LeapFrog  
Cuddly interactive friend who explores words, counting and feelings through 14 activities.  
£20
Physical play
Some children with vision impairment may need encouragement to move. Others may not stop bouncing! Physical play helps develop co-ordination, spatial awareness, strength, balance and agility.

5 in 1 Growing Gym
By Little Tykes
Offers hand and foot feedback and interaction and transforms into stand up art table as your child grows.
£35

Rainforest Jumparoo
By Fisher Price
Upright play and bouncing for pre-walkers. Promotes movement whilst supporting and stimulating.
£80
Full Support Swing
By Learning SPACE
Swing high! This seat gives added support for high flying adventures!
£120

Push Along Lion
By Orange Tree Toys
Promotes mobility and exploration. Push along and feel the ground through the wheels.
£10

TP Junior Trampoline
By TP Activity Toys
Boing boing! Use indoors or outside. Hand rail offers extra security and balance support.
£35

Discover Sounds Activity Garden
By Little Tykes
Lots of sound features. Includes crawl through archway, interactive telephone and much more.
£60
3-in-1 Zebra Scooter
By VTech Baby
Grow-with-baby design featuring sound and lighting features for multi-sensory exploration. Transforms into a scooter.
£40

Y Velo Junior Balance Bike
By Y Volution
Promotes mobility and balance whilst maintaining contact with the ground. A great introduction to cycling.
£50

First Steps Baby Walker
By VTech
Packed with interactive buttons and sound exploration, as well as providing mobility support for toddling children.

Weehoo Bike Trailer Turbo
By Weehoo
Offers great opportunities for family bike rides and the feeling of movement and the elements on your skin!
£340
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Product</strong></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HGL Metal Wheel Barrow</td>
<td>Promotes movement and mobility. Great for transporting objects and exploring the garden.</td>
<td>£25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metal Detector</td>
<td>Seek out buried treasure or just use along the street to find metal objects and explore surroundings through sound and touch.</td>
<td>£90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiddo 4-in-1 Trike</td>
<td>Transforms as your child grows from parent push-along to independent peddling.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Science Metal Detector</td>
<td>Explore different types of materials around the house or in a sand tray with this hand held metal detector.</td>
<td>£12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Nerf Vortex Mega Howler

By Hasbro

Howls with a whistling action as it spirals through the air helping your child locate and catch!

£13
Imaginative play and small world play
Many children love to dress up and role play as part of imaginative games which help them explore experiences and practise daily routines such as cooking and shopping. Small-world toys such as figures, animals and cars allow children to create worlds and act out familiar and unfamiliar scenarios.

Number Loving Oven
By LeapFrog
Cook up a storm and explore shapes, colours, number and fractions. Lots of sounds features too, including over 30 phrases and cooking sound effects.
£20

Laugh and Learn Tool Bench
By Fisher Price
DIY fun with a whole host of songs, phrases and sounds along with colour and shape exploration. Great for busy builders.
£30
**Happyland Farm**  
By Early Learning Centre

A busy farm with animal sound effects. The HappyLand farm can be expanded to create a village with other buildings and connecting play sets including a shop, nursery and church.  
£25

**Hamleys Sing Along Farm Tractor**  
By Hamleys

Vroom! Vroom! This tractor comes complete with animal and tractor engine noises, as well as playing Old MacDonald had a farm.  
£23

**Club Petz Caca Max**  
By Club Petz

Woof! Battery operated dog which walks and sits using a control on the lead. Feed it a bone and clean up after it as it messes! Lots of tactile and sound fun to be had.  
£25

**Hetty Vacuum Cleaner**  
Realistic vacuum cleaner which actually picks up small pieces. Great for playing house role play games and learning about adult life.  
£25
123 Noah’s Arc
By Playmobil

The bright contrasted colours and quality of Playmobil’s 1.2.3 range offers endless small-world play fun. Grow scenarios by adding from the large number of other 1.2.3 play sets available.

£30

Learning Curve
Chuggington Interactive All Round Set

These trains talk to you and each other. Each train can be identified by pressing a button to hear its name. Additional products are available to grow your railway further.

£50

Toot Toot House
By Vtech

An interactive house with seven magic point locations encouraging imaginative play and teach cause and effect relationships with lights and music.

£45

Toot Toot Helpful Hospital
By Vtech

An interactive hospital including three magic point locations. Place Doctor Doug and other toot toot friends in the seats to hear them chat.

£30.99
Creative play

Creative play helps develop your child’s individual way of expressing their ideas, thoughts and feelings though drawing, painting, crafting, modelling, and music.

Ocean Sounds Drum
By Percussion Workshop
Create the sounds of the sea by rolling this drum. A wonderful introduction to sound making and can be used to create atmospheric sound effects when reading stories or talking about the seaside.
£12

Tiny Rainbow Music Bells
By cosydirect.com
Delightful set of bells, each creating a different sound when rung.
£15
**Lacing Beads in a Box**  
By Melissa and Doug  
A really versatile toy that can be used not only as a fine motor lacing activity but also construction, shape and number recognition, pattern making and sorting.  
£13

**Munchkin Mozart**  
Magic Cube  
Toy cube provides musical foundations for children. Interactive cube teaches how to combine sounds to create eight Mozart masterpieces. Includes harp, French horn, piano, flute and violin sounds.  
£22

**Learn with Lights Piano**  
By Fisher Price  
Colourful light up keys, fun instrument sounds, and three distinct grow-with-me levels of play to encourage “all-around” music-making fun with motion-activated lights and sounds rewards for a ‘rocking’ good time!  
£18

**Giant Keyboard**  
By Early Learning Centre  
Hop, skip and jump around this fantastic jumbo keyboard to create and record songs. Includes demo songs, volume control and can be plugged into an MP3 to play along with your favourite tunes.  
£30
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Product Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Easi-Speak MP3 Player/recorder</td>
<td>£40</td>
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<tr>
<td>By TTS Group</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Record voices, sounds or music on the move with this MP3 recorder. Great for budding singers, news reporters or nature lovers. The high contrast colour scheme is a bonus too!</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Wikki Stix Wax Modelling Sticks</td>
<td>from £5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By Wikki Stix</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fun no-mess wax modelling sticks which stick together to create fun shapes. Use on a board to create outlines of shapes, numbers and letters or create tactile pictures or faces.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recordable Pegs</td>
<td>£37</td>
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<tr>
<td>By TTS Group</td>
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<tr>
<td>Use these fantastic recordable pegs to hang up art work and create an accompanying audio description. Pack contains six pegs, each can record up to 10 seconds of audio.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rainbow Talking Boxes</td>
<td>£30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By TTS Group</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pack of six boxes which record and playback up to 10 seconds of audio. Use them to create fun treasure hunts or store precious keep sakes.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
**LeapReader Reading and Writing system**
By Leap Frog

This versatile pen reader can read text and dialogue when pointed within the special accompanying books (sold separately).

£30

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**Colour Explosion Glow Board**
By Crayola

High contrast fun to create amazing 3-D effect pictures. Reusable surface creates hours of creative fun.

£17
Construction
Let’s build! Constructive play helps children develop awareness of form, shape, strength and balance, as well as promoting logical thinking, problem solving and fine motor skills.

Geometric Stacker
By Melissa and Doug
Offers a variety of playful learning explorations including shape, colour, size, form and height.
£14

Wooden Rainbow Sound Blocks
By Wonderworld
Combining construction with sensory exploration. Build, shake and listen or simulate useful vision with transparent coloured blocks.
£25
**Rainbow Nesting Wooden Blocks Stacker**  
By Grimm’s Spiel and Holz  
Create a rainbow! Or make a containing home for animals or create a tunnel for cars to pass under with this beautiful, robust stackable construction set.  
£21

**Magnetic Discovery Set**  
By Smartmax  
A fantastic kit for exploring magnetic attraction and repulsion as well as building fun structures. Contains bars and balls for infinite building fun.  
£30

**Marble Run**  
By Galt  
24 brightly coloured pieces in four different shapes to slot together to create a marble run and explore gravity, force and motion.  
£25

**Big Lego Bricks**  
By Lego  
If your child finds small Lego too fiddly then go supersize with these jumbo bricks. Made of rubber they can be fitted together to construct dens, walls and lots more.  
£79
**Bristle Blocks**
By Bristle Blocks
Create structures by pushing the tactile bristles together to grip one another. This portable carry case set is great at home or on the go.
£15

**Snap Cubes**
By Learning Resources
A great resource for children learning about length and one-to-one correspondence in maths. Also fun for building and colour sorting.
£10

**Braille ABC Blocks**
By Uncle Goose
Features sign language, braille and embossed lettering. A great early introduction to braille.
£33

**Wooden Geometric Solids**
By Amazon
These smooth wooden geometric shapes offer a natural way to explore shape and form.
£14
Representative toys

As well as finding toys that are accessible for your blind or partially sighted child, you may wish to consider including toys which represent vision impairment in your toy box. Seeing a toy with glasses, a guide dog or a white cane can help a child with a vision impairment grow positive self esteem and express their experiences through role play. These toys are also useful for explaining to siblings and sighted friends about diversity and difference.

The organisation #toylikeme celebrates disability representation in toys and can advise if you are looking for additional representations such as wheelchairs, hearing aids or diabetic kits.

facebook.com/toylikeme
toylikeme.org

Our Generation Doll
By John Crane

A large scale doll with glasses. An accompanying pack of additional glasses designs and sunglasses can be bought separately.
£30

Lottie Doll
By Arklu

Based on the body dimensions of an average 8 year old and with 25% of the range coming with glasses, Lottie dolls are sure to please.
£20
Guide Dog Puppy
By Dogalogue at Guide Dogs

Become a puppy walker with this cute plush guide dog toy to look after and train. Comes with its own blue training jacket. Woof!

£7

Giant Road Jigsaw
By Orchard Toys

Incidental representation at its best. This large floor jigsaw features wheelchair and mobility scooter users, along with a man and his guide dog strolling to work.

£14

Geek Shriek Ghoulia Yelps
By Mattel

This doll not only rocks glasses but the fabric of her skirt also features glasses in a fun celebratory design.

£15

Barbie Careers - Eye Doctor
By Mattel

Take an eye test and help Barbie choose her glasses. Great for role playing a visit to the doctors or opticians or preparing a child to get their first glasses.

£39.99
Seeing Eye Dog and Cane
By Children’s Factory
£19

Sylvanian Families Country Nurse Set
By Sylvanian Families
A sweet set which includes a wheelchair which can be used with other Sylvanian Families figures.
£15

3D Printed White Cane
By MakieLab at Shapeways
Toy white cane design available to print on demand from 3D print company Shapeways. The cane is the perfect fit for Barbie or similar doll. Also comes in a range of other colours.
£6.59

Monster High Finnagan’s Wake Doll
By Mattel
A stereotype-busting play figure with a wheelchair complete with spinable wheels.
£22
Weesie Pals Bespoke Toys
By weesiepals.com

These delightful plush toys are made to order and can come with a range of bespoke accessories including bone anchored hearing aids (pictured), hearing aids, cochlear implants, glasses, white canes, ostomy pouches and leg supports.

A full list of representative toys and where to purchase them can be found at toylikeme.org
RNIB toys and games
All of these products are available from the RNIB shop shop.rnib.org.uk

**Giant 4 in a row (ET32)**
The popular classic 4 In A Row game just got bigger! The same rules apply so the first one to get four in a row wins! Use your touch skills and forward thinking to beat your opponent.

£45

**Jingle Ball (ET33)**
Our Jingle Ball is clear and inside you can see all the bells that jingle when the ball is moved around. Great for getting moving and playing with friends! Please use on a surface free from pointed objects.

£20
http://bit.ly/2cXfAc4

**Giant 4 in a row (ET32)**
The popular classic 4 In A Row game just got bigger! The same rules apply so the first one to get four in a row wins! Use your touch skills and forward thinking to beat your opponent.

£45
**Feelie Dice (ET31)**

Feelie Dice allows you to feel different textures of each face of the dice that are connected to this little board. It has 6 different cubes that spin on their axis. Simply turn the dice to mix and match. The dice can be removed from the stand and used for a wide range of varied activities.

£82.80


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**Musical ball with handles (ET34)**

Lovely plush ball has lots of soft handles to grab which responds to movement with one of 8 sounds coming from within, your child will have fun whilst discovering new sounds and textures.

£18.90

http://bit.ly/2cll6Ng

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**Wikki Stix Alphabet fun cards (LC242)**

This pack aims to educate children about the formation of letters. It includes cards with a letter per card and 36 Wikki Stix. Made from food-grade wax and a strand of knitting yarn these Wikki Stix can be twisted, bent or pressed together again and again on the cards.

£14.95

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**Wikki Stix Numbers fun cards (LC243)**

Use this pack of Wikki Stix and fun activity cards to help learn the formation of numbers. Follow the dashed lines to learn numbers 1 to 20 and then answer the fun questions for further learning.

£14.95
**Non-slip and easy-grip dining set (DK158)**
This parrot and giraffe crockery set has been especially developed for children's motor skills and strength. It is made of durable plastic that can withstand almost anything.

**£24.95**
http://bit.ly/2cWPdF2

**Wooden Domino Shapes (ET26)**
This game is for 2-4 players. It consists of 21 wooden dominoes, each domino has two shapes raised on the surface for easy identification by touch. Not suitable for children under 3

**£28.80**
http://bit.ly/2d62s5a

**Tactillos tactile disc game (ET29)**
The sensory discs invite children to enjoy stimulating sensory play. The 5 rubbery stepping stones and matching tokens discs, are specially designed to develop the sense of touch in the children’s feet and hands.

**£70.80**

**Touch dominoes with blindfolds (ET30)**
28 unique tiles with 7 different materials (and colours). The dominoes can be used for tactile simulation or can be played as a game. To put down the dominos, players have to feel the dominos that are on display and find the matching dominos in their bag.

**£35**

**Non-slip and easy-grip dining set (DK158)**
This parrot and giraffe crockery set has been especially developed for children's motor skills and strength. It is made of durable plastic that can withstand almost anything.

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**£35**
Textured blocks (ET28)
Textured Blocks are soft foam blocks in assorted colours, shapes and lots of interesting textures to explore.
£23.94

Talking Tubes telephone exchange (ET28)
These fun Talking Tubes can be used both indoors and outdoors to develop children's communication, personal, and social skills.
The set includes 8 handsets and interconnecting tubing.
£59.99
http://bit.ly/2clQtZa

Colour SENSEation Raised Line Art & Braille Colouring Pad
Pack of eight embossed designs set on heavy paper with high contrast black lines and titled in large print and braille.
£5.99
http://bit.ly/2cyUmCy

Large Foam Bell Ball
This orange audible ball contains three bells inside to help players locate it during play.
£14.99
shop.rnib.org.uk/foam-bell-ball-large.html
Scentos Felt Pens
By RNIB

These scented pens conjured up images of strawberries, melons and chocolate as you draw and write!

£ 4.99

Scentos Activity Stationary Set
By RNIB

Everything you need to create scented masterpieces. With 75 scented pieces.

£14.99

Further resources

RNIB offers a range of information, advice, products, activities and services for children, young people, their families and the people who work with them. For more details visit rnib.org.uk/children

The following organisations and communities may be able to offer you more ideas and information to help you create a rich and exciting play landscape for your child.
Advice and support

**Action for Blind People**
actionforblindpeople.org.uk

Family support teams provide practical and emotional advice and organise activity breaks and family weekends for children with VI and their families.

The Early Support Development Journal can downloaded here: councilfordisabledchildren.org

**Family Fund**
familyfund.org.uk

Provides grants for families raising children with serious illness or disability, including assistance in purchasing specialist play equipment.

**Henshaw’s Society for Blind People**
henshaws.org.uk

Advice, training and a fantastic arts and crafts centre in Knaresborough.

**Blind Children UK**
blindchildrenuk.org

Supporting children and young people’s lives through family support, rehabilitation, education and access technology.

**RNIB**

We can provide information on all aspects of education and support for blind and partially sighted children and young people. Visit our website rnib.org.uk or call our Helpline on 0303 123 9999.

**Kids**
kids.org.uk

Enabling children and young people with special education needs and disabilities to enjoy their lives and achieve their ambitions, whilst providing support and guidance to their families.

**Look**
look-uk.org

National federation of families with visually impaired children.

**Through Scarlett’s Eyes**
throughscarlettseyes.com

Resource, information and community for parents of children with VI.

**Wonderbaby**
wonderbaby.org

Comprehensive resource and community for parents of young children with VI and additional disabilities. Packed with articles, ideas and lots of information about toys and play.

**VICTA**
victa.org.uk

Supporting children and young people with VI and their families.

**UK Vision Strategy**
ukvisionstrategy.co.uk
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<th><strong>Literacy and braille</strong></th>
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<td><strong>Access2Books</strong></td>
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<td><strong>access2books.org</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Produces and publishes high quality early years books in large print and braille without obscuring illustrations.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Clearvision Project</strong></td>
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<td><strong>clearvisionproject.org</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>UK postal lending library with over 13,000 titles of children’s books with added braille or Moon.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Inclusive Minds</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>inclusiveminds.com</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Championing inclusion, diversity and accessibility in children’s literature and publishing.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Living Painting</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>livingpaintings.org</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Produces and loans by mail order touch-to-see books for people of all ages.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Positive Eye</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>positiveeye.co.uk</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultancy and training for professionals and parents on meeting educational needs of children with VI. Toys and resources are also available to purchase.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Project Brailler</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>projectbrailler.co.uk</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aims to equip blind and visually impaired children with Smart Braillers and Mobility Canes.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>RNIB Bookshare</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>load2learn.org</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An online collection of educational books and images in accessible formats for print-disabled learners including those with dyslexia or who are blind or partially sighted.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Toy suppliers, loans and ideas

Cheap Disability Aids
cheapdisabilityaids.co.uk
Online store with a large range of sensory toys and products.

Imagination Tree
theimaginationtree.com
Contains reams of ideas for creative activities for children. This site is not VI specific but contains lots of tactile and sensory ideas.

National Association of Toy and Leisure Libraries (Play Matters)
admin@playmatters.co.uk
The option to borrow toys from a local toy library offers a very cheap and versatile way for your child to play with different toys.

Newlife Foundation for Disabled Children
newlifecharity.co.uk
Offers Play Therapy Pods to loan for children with disabilities and life-limiting conditions. Pods contain a range of sensory toys and are available for loan at home.

Playful Explorations for Children with Visual Impairment – Search on facebook.com
Facebook group and resource about play and creative fun run by a mother of a blind son.

Sensory Sun Technologies
sensorysun.org
Resources and products for children with visual impairment, includes a Braille App.

#ToyLikeMe
facebook.com/toylikeme toylikeme.org
A resource and campaign celebrating disability representation in toys and calling on the global toy industry to better represent 150 million disabled children worldwide. Their website lists representative products and where to source them.
## Manufacturers’ details

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Email</th>
<th>Telephone</th>
</tr>
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| Arklu / Lottie   | lottie.com  
info@arklu.com                          |                        |
| Big Jigs         | bigjigs.co.uk                              | 01303 212691           |
| Bright Eyes      | kidsii.com                                 | 01582 816080           |
| Bright Starts    |                                            |                        |
| Cloud b          | Cloudb.com info@cloudb.com                 | 0207 554 8751          |
| Cosy Direct      | cosydirect.com  
orders@cosydirect.com                    | 01332 370152           |
| Community Playthings | communityplaythings.co.uk  
sales@communityplaythings.co.uk | 0800 387 457 (UK only) |
| Crayola          | crayola.co.uk  
consumers@vividmag.co.uk                 | 01702 200660           |
| Dogalogue – Guidedogs | dogalogue.com  
dogalogue@omsg-cc.co.uk         | 0345 143 0197          |
| Dowling Magnets  | dowlingmagnets.com  
sales@dowlingmagnets.com               |                        |
<p>| ELC              | elc.co.uk                                  |                        |
| Fisher Price     | fisher-price.com                           | 01628 500303           |</p>
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<tr>
<td>Galt Toys</td>
<td>galttoys.com&lt;br&gt;<a href="mailto:customerservices@jamesgalt.com">customerservices@jamesgalt.com</a></td>
<td>0161 428 9111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Golden Bear</td>
<td>goldenbeartoys.com&lt;br&gt;<a href="mailto:customerservices@goldenbeartoys.com">customerservices@goldenbeartoys.com</a></td>
<td>01952 608308</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grimms Speil and Holtz</td>
<td>grimms.eu/en</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Hamleys</td>
<td>hamleys.com</td>
<td>0371 7041977</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hasbro</td>
<td>hasbro.com/en-gb/</td>
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<tr>
<td>HGL</td>
<td>ozbozz.com&lt;br&gt;<a href="mailto:info@ozbozz.com">info@ozbozz.com</a></td>
<td>0141 613 2525</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hope Education</td>
<td>hope-education.co.uk&lt;br&gt;<a href="mailto:enquiries@hope-education.co.uk">enquiries@hope-education.co.uk</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Im Toy</td>
<td>woodentoys.com.co.uk</td>
<td>01626 221380</td>
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<tr>
<td>John Crane</td>
<td>john-crane.co.uk&lt;br&gt;<a href="mailto:sales@john-crane.co.uk">sales@john-crane.co.uk</a></td>
<td>01604 774949</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lamaze</td>
<td>lamazetoys.co.uk&lt;br&gt;<a href="mailto:sales@play-learn.co.uk">sales@play-learn.co.uk</a></td>
<td>0161 7375099</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learning SPACE</td>
<td><a href="http://www.learningspaceuk.co.uk/">www.learningspaceuk.co.uk/</a></td>
<td>02890319360</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leggler</td>
<td>leggler-online.com&lt;br&gt;<a href="mailto:service@leggler-online.com">service@leggler-online.com</a></td>
<td>+49 (0) 4221 97302 69</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lego</td>
<td>lego.com</td>
<td>00800 5346 5555</td>
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<td>Little Tikes</td>
<td>littletikes.co.uk</td>
<td>0800 521558</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:support@littletikesstore.co.uk">support@littletikesstore.co.uk</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>LeapFrog</td>
<td>leapfrog.com <a href="mailto:info@leapfrog.com">info@leapfrog.com</a></td>
<td>01702 200244</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learning Resources</td>
<td>learningresources.co.uk <a href="mailto:customerservice@learning-resources.co.uk">customerservice@learning-resources.co.uk</a></td>
<td>0845 241 0484</td>
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<tr>
<td>Manhattan</td>
<td>manhattantoy.com</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mattel</td>
<td>mattel.com/uk</td>
<td>01628 500303</td>
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<td>Melissa and Doug</td>
<td>melissaanddoug.com</td>
<td>0800 731 0578</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:service@MelissaandDoug.com">service@MelissaandDoug.com</a></td>
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<td><a href="mailto:careline@munchkin.com">careline@munchkin.com</a></td>
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<td>National Geographic</td>
<td>nationalgeographic.com <a href="mailto:education@ngs.org">education@ngs.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>NES Arnold</td>
<td>hope-education.co.uk</td>
<td>0345 1202055</td>
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<td>Orange Tree Toys</td>
<td>orangetreetoys.com</td>
<td>01242 244500</td>
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<td>Orchard Toys</td>
<td>orchardtoys.com</td>
<td>01953 423422</td>
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<td>playmobil.com</td>
<td>01268490184</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:service_uk@playmobil.de">service_uk@playmobil.de</a></td>
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<td>Prince Lionheart</td>
<td>princelionheart.com</td>
<td>US  805-922-2250</td>
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<td>SpaceKraft</td>
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<td>shapeways.com/</td>
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<tr>
<td>SmartMax</td>
<td>smartmax.eu</td>
<td>01903 885669</td>
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<tr>
<td>Talking Friends</td>
<td>talkingfriends.com</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Puppet Company</td>
<td>thepuppetcompany.com</td>
<td>01462 446040</td>
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<td>Uncle Goose</td>
<td>unclegoose.com</td>
<td>01628 200077</td>
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<td></td>
<td>asobi.co.uk</td>
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<td>TFH Special needs toys</td>
<td>specialneeds.toys.com</td>
<td>01299827820</td>
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<td>TTS</td>
<td>tts-group.co.uk</td>
<td>0800 138 1370</td>
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<td>Vtech</td>
<td>vtech.co.uk</td>
<td>01253 555545</td>
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<td>Wee Hoo</td>
<td>rideweehoo.com</td>
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<td>wikkistix.com</td>
<td>US 800-869-4554</td>
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<td>dkl.co.uk</td>
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Insight Online

Do you support a child or young person with vision impairment?

Insight Online is packed full of practical ideas, personal stories and shared advice from teachers, families and leading experts to inspire you in the classroom and at home.

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- Reviews of the latest technology, products and apps
- Ways to promote mobility, independence and wellbeing
- Breaking news that affects you and the child or young person you support

rnib.org.uk/insight

insightonline@rnib.org.uk

020 7391 3297
For more information about the services we offer to children, young people and families visit [rnib.org.uk/children](http://rnib.org.uk/children) or call our Helpline on 0303 123 9999.

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