



Children and Young People's Services

Glossary – Specialist Language Explained

Accommodation: The ability of the lens to change shape to focus on objects at different distances.

Binocular vision: When both eyes work together at the same time; it enables depth perception.

Congenital: A word describing any condition present at birth.

Contrast sensitivity: The ability to perceive the difference between an object and its background, usually tested by the ability to distinguish different shades of grey from each other.

Field of vision: The total area that can be seen around you without shifting your gaze; detailed central vision as well as peripheral vision.

Focal point: The point of the retina where light rays meet and gives our most detailed vision; an object is in focus when it is being seen most clearly

Functional vision: The ability to use eyesight in everyday conditions.

Light adaptation: The ability of the eye to adapt your vision to different levels of lighting.

Low vision aids (LVAs): Aids that improve a person's functional vision such as magnifiers; often need training to be used efficiently.

Mobility: Training to develop orientation skills and independent movement, including use of a cane.

Monocular vision: Sight through one eye only.

Occlusion (patching): Covering one eye to develop the sight in the other (lazy) eye.



Peripheral vision: Everything that we see around us at the edge of our vision, outside our detailed central vision.

Pigmentation: Colouring, usually associated with skin or hair.

Refraction: The process by which the eyes are measured for long or short sight or astigmatism.

Refractive error: A defect of the eye that prevents light rays being brought to focus exactly on the retina (such as long or short sight); correctable in most cases with lenses.

Visual acuity: A measure of the ability to see fine detail; often called central vision.

Visual perception: The ability to give meaning and understanding to what has been seen (not just to see it).

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