

Audit of the Classroom Environment

Positioning

- Where are the children expected to work?
- In what position and on what surfaces?
- Where does the light source come from?

Lighting

- Where are the natural light sources?
- At what time of day is sunlight at its strongest in each teaching area?
- Are there blinds or plain curtains available to block out some of the light?
- Do these work?
- Does the light fall onto any work areas?
- If so, is there any glare from these surfaces?
- Do children lie or move into these areas to play or rest?
- What forms of lighting are there in the classroom, e.g. strip, spot, etc.

Clothing

- Is the clothing worn by staff visually confusing?
- Are any items of dress dangerous to the children, e.g. buckles?

Classroom management

- Are visually impaired ambulant children encouraged to move around on their own?
- Are they encouraged to move the other equipment themselves.
- Are there any cluttered displays?
- Do they have their own equipment?
- Is their equipment always kept in a particular place?
- Is all equipment and storage clearly marked?

Surfaces

- Look at the surfaces in the classroom
 - are they shiny causing glare?
 - are they patterned, causing confusion?
 - are they matt, and do they create good contrast?

Flooring and furnishing

- What type of flooring is there - lino or tiles?
- Is the flooring patterned or does it cause glare?
- Blinds - do they fit, do they work?
- Curtains - do they fit the windows? Are they thick enough to block the light out totally?
- Furniture - Are there clearly defined areas/layouts for furniture? Does the furniture clearly contrast to the floors and walls?
- Steps/stairs - Are edges of steps clearly highlighted
- Slopes - Is there a hand rail at the correct height for use when using slopes?
- Is the furniture frequently moved around for different activities?
- Are particular areas of the classroom designated for particular activities?
- Are the classrooms cluttered with furniture that is not used?
- Are they plain or patterned?
- Do the doors and floor create a good contrast?

- Areas which shine/produce glare, e.g. mirrors, Formica surfaces?
- Ceiling - dark or light?
- Clearly defined areas for storage?
- Are door knobs, light switches - highlighted?
- Is there clear labelling on cupboards?
- Are there areas of the room that can provide clear contrast where necessary?
- Are they free of clutter?
- Are there lots of mobiles etc dangling at a low level or are they in a particular area?

Walls

- Identify walls which
 - a) are cluttered (visually)
 - b) are glare producing, e.g. mirrors
 - c) are heavily patterned
 - d) have clearly defined doorways, shelves, storage, plug sockets
 - e) have visual displays at inappropriate height

Surfaces

- Look at the surfaces in the classroom
 - are they shiny causing glare?
 - are they patterned, causing confusion?
 - are they matt, and do they create good contrast?

Table tops

- Do they produce glare?
- Is there good contrast?

Trays/standing frames

- Do they produce glare/good clear contrast?
- Are they at the correct level?

Non-slip mats

- Do these provide glare or good contrast?

Equipment

- Is equipment kept in the same place and clearly defined/labelled?
- Is any equipment left lying at a low level or on the floor?
- Is any equipment kept at a high (above eye) level?

People audit

- Identify a member of staff who is wearing.
 - a) very visually attractive clothes.
 - b) clothes which provide good background for signing to children.
- Identify a member of staff whose voice is easily recognised.