No. 5

Figure 1 Photograph showing an Alexa Echo Dot

September 2022

Reaching out

**NCW Outreach Termly Bulletin — Supporting V.I. Education**

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## **Top tips for your ‘Teenage Dirt-bag’ – Area 6 of the CFVI**

Advice from Nathalie Emanuel, Head of Independent Living Skills

* Colour and contrast with equipment and towels for ease of identification.
* Use bobbles or bands of different types to identify conditioner or own tooth brush. If bottles are different shapes this will help too.
* Use pump action bottles easier to handle.
* Use a scrunchie in the shower it produces lots of lather so easy to feel where you might have missed when showering and washing.
* Period pants are the winning solution for periods. Try different types to find the ones that fit you and your flow.
* Use caddies in the bathroom to keep your child’s items separate to yours.
* Electric shavers are easy to use and give a good result for boys and girls.
* Use a roll-on or stick deodorant, easier to direct.
* Use finger tips when doing a face care routine to identify spots and blemishes so you can identify any pain or issues and ask for help.
* Rule of thumb, anything close to skin, wash daily and anything else, use the sniff and touch test to check for food and odour on clothes.

## Supporting students’ emotional and social well-being – Area 9 of the CFVI

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Advice from Karen Holyoak, Pastoral team leader

* Social interaction with other young people with VI - Many students report that once they have friends who also have vision impairments, they feel understood by their peers.
* Constant in all areas of the curriculum – being taken out of lessons, e.g. PE, Science, Drama which is often damaging to the young persons sense of belonging.
* Work with parents - A network of parents who can support each other helps parents and in turn the young people to feel less isolated.
* Join clubs and do extra-curricular activities - Risk taking is hard but can really benefit all of us in the long term to build confidence.
* Check the PSHE programme at school to see how that supports them and don’t take them out of it. If necessary supplement the learning in PSHE to help with the understanding of concepts and gaps in knowledge due to lack of incidental learning. This is especially important during relationships and sex education. Navigating menstruation and understanding and accessing contraception can be hard. Relationships, especially on line, can be hard when young people lack the opportunities for incidental learning.
* Make the most of opportunities to work/co-operate/collaborate with others on projects. Often students report that they are not included in activities such as the Duke of Edinburgh award. This exacerbates the feelings of isolation. Work experience is also vital. Blind in Business offer young people work experience opportunities.
* Promote independence to allow young people to develop self-advocacy skills. This can promote well-being, confidence and self-esteem.
* Find an outlet for the students to just talk – counsellors with experience of VI or disabilities can have more impact. Young people often mask low mood and anxiety. Promoting self-care techniques, as for any young person, is a crucial life skill.

Signposts:

* Local sight charities
* RNIB: [RNIB sight loss counselling](https://www.rnib.org.uk/services-we-offer-advice-and-support-services/sight-loss-counselling-team)
* Look UK [Look UK counselling](https://www.look-uk.org/free-counselling-with-look-and-york-college/)
* Moorfields: [Moorfields support and counselling](https://www.moorfields.nhs.uk/content/patient-support-and-counselling)
* Great Ormond Street: [GOSH psychological service team](https://www.gosh.nhs.uk/wards-and-departments/departments/clinical-support-services/psychological-services-information-parents/)
* NHS mental health services
* GP
* School counsellor
* Wellbeing apps: [NHS wellbeing apps](https://www.england.nhs.uk/supporting-our-nhs-people/support-now/wellbeing-apps/)
* Blind in Business: [Blind in Business](https://blindinbusiness.org.uk/)

## **Upcoming Courses**

##  **Autumn 2022**

**Tuesday 27th September 2022 [online twilight – 3.30pm – 5pm]**

Introduction to Supporting Students with a VI: A Free webinar which will provide a practical introduction to teaching vision impaired students in mainstream lessons.

**Saturday 15th October 2022**

**Family Day**: A Free fun day for families who have a child with a vision impairment

**Thursday 10th November [online twilight: 3.30pm – 5pm]**

**Practical Advice for Supporting VI Students in Exams:** A Free Webinar which will focus on preparing students for examinations.

**Tuesday 15th November 2022**

**Outreach Open Day:** These informal days for education professionals supporting a student who is vision impaired or parents of a child with a vision impairment, will give a taste of how NCW teaches VI students.

**Looking ahead - GCSE Revision Course:** **Wednesday 29th – Friday 31st March 2023**

We are planning to hold the GCSE Revision course at the start of the Easter holidays, the course is suitable for all VI students in Years 9, 10 and 11 to help them refine their revision skills and exam technique and give them some new tips and ideas to assist with their revision. The course is residential and there is the opportunity in the evening to socialise with their peers and have some fun.

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## **NCW Outreach Team Profile 5 Victoria Ward**

I am Strategic Lead for VI Education at NCW.

My current role allows me pursue my passionate belief that every student should have equitable access to the whole curriculum including the specialist VI curriculum. I work to support the professional development of staff and to ensure that students are fully prepared for life after College and the world of work.

As a former Head of Music at NCW, I also contribute to Outreach sessions on this area. I believe that Music should be an important part of any child’s curriculum, but particularly so for students whose world is auditory. As QTVIs we will undoubtedly encounter many exceptional musicians and I feel very strongly that we need to do everything in our power to facilitate the teaching and learning of music braille. I have also taught A Level and BTEC Level 3 Music Technology since I first started teaching music over 3 decades ago and, in this time, I have seen an enormous leap in the development and affordability of software. In recent times the accessibility of this has really moved on and although it can be difficult getting to grips with it all and keep pace with things, it is most definitely worth the effort when you see the students’ enjoyment at being able to create music independently.

Aside from music, I have a keen interest in gardening and love being outdoors with my horses, dogs, geese, Indian runner ducks and chickens.

