



VIEW Professional Development Event 2025

Thursday 13th March – Friday 14th March 2025

Copthorne Hotel, Merry Hill, Dudley

VIEW Conference 2025 – Speaker Biographies

Anna Clarke (panellist: The QTVI as practitioner-researcher: importance, ideas and impact)

Anna Clarke, QTVI, Wigan Council Sensory Team - I have worked in education for 15 years, working in nurseries, primary schools and SEN schools. As a QTVI with a background in mainstream and special education, I'm passionate about enhancing structured support for children and young people with a vision impairment plus additional needs. I currently work for Wigan Specialist Sensory Education Team (SSET) as a QTVI, and it is a role that I love. I joined the team in January 2022 and have never looked back. The team embraces the use of technology, and we are continually upskilling ourselves on the latest innovations. Our team has also worked hard to develop a comprehensive planning and assessment framework linked to the CFVI which we are currently in the process of embedding this academic year. The team thrives on collaboration with other services within Wigan, and various local authorities. Together, we strive to support our pupils' growth and success every step of the way!

Elizabeth Clery

Elizabeth (Liz) has oculocutaneous albinism and attended a mainstream school and college in London in the 1980s and 1990s. Having completed a history degree, she spent the next 25 years forging a career as a social scientist, working across the voluntary sector, government and for

the UK's foremost social research institute – the National Centre for Social Research. Following the birth of her two children, she moved to working freelance, focusing on the areas of poverty, mental health and public health.

Andrea Davies

Hello! I am Andrea Davies, a Specialist Education Support Officer (SESO) with Guide Dogs 'Education Team'. Prior to this role, I was a mainstream class teacher and a Qualified Teacher for Vision Impairment (QTVI), supporting children aged 0-25. With over 26 years of experience in education, I focus on supporting children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), particularly those with vision impairment (VI). I am committed to promoting inclusive education and empowering parents, while developing practical resources to assist both professionals and families.

I genuinely value collaboration. I enjoy working with colleagues across various teams at Guide Dogs, as well as with professionals from local authorities and other third-sector organisations. Together, we advocate for "good VI practice", and I am pleased to have been involved in initiatives that have been taken to parliamentary level.

Recently, I qualified as a coach, and I am eager to see how this new skill set may further enhance my support for young people with vision impairments. My specialist interests include self-advocacy, Cerebral Vision Impairment (CVI), strabismus, and assisting parents with occlusion therapy.

Rupert Ephithite

Following his degree in Popular Music, Rupert trained to be a primary school teacher before relocating to Norfolk in 2016. In July 2021, Rupert became a Qualified Teacher of Vision Impairment at the Virtual School Sensory Support. Rupert says that discovering the role of a QTVI was a huge moment in his career and one that he felt naturally drawn to having been diagnosed with a juvenile macular degenerative condition at the age of 13. His experience of living with low vision has contributed hugely to his role particularly in understanding the emotional impact that a VI can have.

In recent years, he has specialised in use of assistive technology including screen reader skills on Windows and Apple devices. He is passionate about the power of assistive technology in building skills and confidence for young people with VI. These skills can ensure that when

they leave education, they have the knowledge and self-belief needed to be an employed, independent, and thriving individual.

Lucy Gallacher (panellist: The QTVI as practitioner-researcher: importance, ideas and impact)

QTVI Leicestershire County Council. Lucy Gallacher is a Qualified Teacher of Children and Young People with Vision Impairment, currently working for Leicestershire County Council. With over 20 years of experience teaching across both primary and secondary schools, Lucy has developed a deep understanding of inclusive education. She spent seven of those years as a Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENDCO), where she honed her skills in supporting students with diverse needs. Lucy is dedicated to promoting equitable participation for children and young people with vision impairments. She is passionate about supporting their education and empowering them to prepare for adulthood with confidence and independence.

Sarah Hovington

Sarah Hovington qualified as a QTVI from St. Vincent's School and Liverpool John Moores University in 2021. Whilst she was studying for the mandatory qualification and working as a specialist teacher for the London Borough of Newham, she supported her first pupil who had a diagnosis of CVI. It puzzled her that this youngster had good visual acuities but could not recognise her mum on the playground.

In 2022 she worked as a QTVI in Surrey. She supported CYP with CVI in special schools including a specialist centre that provides targeted interventions for CYP with acquired brain injuries.

Sarah was successful in winning a Churchill Fellowship in 2023. She studied at The CVI Center at The Perkins School for the Blind. It was an incredible experience, observing current practice and assessments and learning more about the leading cause of childhood blindness and low vision.

In 2024, she relocated to her home in South Staffs and worked as a QTVI for a short time in Coventry. Currently, she is a QTVI in Telford and Wrekin, using her CVI expertise and passion to improve both the educational and well-being outcomes for these CYP.

Sarah Hughes

Sarah was previously Head of Science at New College Worcester, then Deputy Head Teacher at the Royal Blind School in Edinburgh, with responsibility for outreach. She is currently Head of SenCom VI Service

covering the SE Wales region. Sarah is the Chair of WAVIE (Welsh Association of Vision Impairment Educators) and in June 2023, she won the VIEW (Vision Impairment Education Workforce) UK award, for "Educator who has shown leadership in promoting vision impairment education."

Simon Kerrigan

Simon is an Education Specialist at RNIB. He has previously worked as Lead QTVI in a large Integrated Resource for children and young people with visual impairment in a mainstream secondary school.

Dr Ian McCubbin

Dr Ian McCubbin is a Clinical Psychologist and part of the Children's Psychological Medicine team at Oxford Children's Hospital. For the past ten years he has worked with the charity Fight Against Blindness (FAB) in order to provide psychological support to visually impaired children and young people. In addition to his direct clinical work with patients he also is involved in research looking at the psychological wellbeing of children who are living with a visual impairment.

Charlotte Milburn representing LOOK

LOOK works with allies to ensure young people and their parents/carers are getting the support they need, whether that be at home, with friends, in education, or at work. LOOK does this by creating a strong community of support – through their pioneering mentoring programme, transformational events, youth forums, parent/carer support groups, and wellbeing activities. LOOK is a VI team and share lived experience, knowledge and connections to help young, blind and partially sighted people thrive.

Anna Pilson

Anna Pilson, QTVI, Lecturer in Vision Impairment Education, University of Birmingham. Anna Pilson is a Lecturer in Vision Impairment Education and Pathway Lead for the Vision Impairment education programmes at the University of Birmingham. She is also (hopefully soon) completing a PhD student at Durham University School of Education. Her ESRC-funded project explores the lives and experiences of young visually impaired people. Prior to joining the University of Birmingham, she spent nearly 20 years working as a teacher, including over a decade as a QTVI. Anna is a member of the Vision Impairment Centre for teaching and Research (VICTAR) and aside from her doctoral studies is also currently working on the current phase of the CFVI project, focusing on producing resources for and with visually impaired young people.

Kate Prayle (panellist: The QTVI as practitioner-researcher: importance, ideas and impact)

Kate Prayle, QTVI, Nottingham City Sensory and Physical Team. Kate Prayle is a Qualified Teacher of Children and Young People with a Vision Impairment (QTVI) working in Nottingham City. She completed the Birmingham University MQVI course in September 2024 and works in a team of four QTVIs as part of Inclusive Education Services. Kate trained in Primary Education, with a particular interest in literacy and inclusive learning. After teaching a girl with no sight, she found making the world accessible to a child with VI incredibly rewarding and wanted to explore this specialism further. Kate loves teaching braille and sees its importance as a medium for reading and route to independence. She is also very interested in the social and emotional impact of VI and what QTVIs can do to support this. Kate is passionate about learning and sees research and continual professional development as essential to provide a context for the practical aspects of being a QTVI.

Lisa Reynolds

Lisa is an experienced teacher, initially working with children with profound multiple learning disabilities. She is a Qualified Teacher of Vision Impairment (QTVI) within the SenCom Vision Impairment Service, delivering support across South East Wales. As a QTVI she supports children and young people with vision impairment in all settings, special and mainstream schools, playgroups and within homes. In addition to self-advocacy, Lisa has a deep interest in digital access and technology.

Sue Ricketts

Sue is the Executive Information and Development Manager with the Nystagmus Network, a registered charity in England and Wales. The organisation's charitable objectives are to provide support and information to people living with nystagmus, to raise awareness of the condition in the wider community and to foster and fund research.

The charity represents the biggest nystagmus patient group in Europe. Sue is privileged to work alongside researchers, clinicians and teachers and, just as importantly to her, people living with nystagmus. She is passionate about raising awareness of nystagmus and its impact on quality of life and making the voices heard of the community she feels privileged to represent.

Previously, Sue, who is a qualified and experienced post-19 teacher, enjoyed a long and successful career in adult, community and, latterly, secondary education in both teaching and leadership roles. She is the parent of an adult daughter with congenital nystagmus.

Joao Roe

Joao Roe is a QTVI and Head of Sensory Support Service based in Bristol. Joao has combined research and practice throughout her career. She has published work in her main areas of interest which are play, early years, social emotional development and literacy through braille. Joao has been involved in training of QTVIs in a range of UK universities.

Will Stark

Will Stark, is Assistant Principal: Curriculum, Teaching and Learning, at New College Worcester (NCW) and a teacher of Physics. Will has worked in mainstream for many years, and at NCW since 2014; Will started at NCW as Head of Science. He is an examiner for OCR and CIE and has authored A Level physics papers for OCR. He also works for CIE on the International A Level, where he is involved in producing teaching resources.

Caireen Sutherland

Caireen is a qualified teacher with the mandatory qualifications for vision and multi-sensory impairment (MSI) and has been working in the field of SEND for over 20 years. She currently works as Programme Lead and Senior Lecturer for the Mandatory Qualification (MQ) in MSI at Seashell. Previously as head of education at RNIB she was instrumental in the work of the Curriculum Framework for Children with Vision Impairment and she continues this work as project sponsor, as well as being co-chair at NatSIP and a committee member of VIEW. During her career Caireen has worked in specialist settings, Local Authority Sensory Support services, in the third sector and as a freelance consultant. Her particular passions include: ensuring equal access to assessments for those with sensory impairment, improving use of technology to support students to achieve their potential, developing tactile learning skills and optimising independence for children and young people with sensory impairments.