



BRITISH BLIND SPORT

A VISIBLE DIFFERENCE THROUGH SPORT

Visually Impaired Friendly Football

**A Guide for Supporting Visually
Impaired Adults and Children
in Football**



A Visible Difference Through Sport

Introduction

Welcome to the Visually Impaired Friendly Football resource. This resource has been produced by British Blind Sport, in partnership with the Football Association.

At British Blind Sport, we believe every person with sight loss has the right to participate in the sport of their choice. However, we understand there are many barriers to overcome to ensure every visually impaired person has the same opportunities as their sighted peers. This resource has been created to assist those delivering football activities, providing support, ideas and guidance on how to include people with a visual impairment.

This resource aims to help mainstream football providers become VI friendly through their provision of training, resources and support. These include:

- Football clubs
- County Football Associations
- Schools

This resource will enable coaches, teachers and parents to:

- have a better understanding of the needs of people with a visual impairment.
- use basic communication skills to support the needs of people with a visual impairment.
- identify where you can obtain further support to ensure your group is accessible and inclusive.

You will be able to include people with a visual impairment by making small and simple changes to your coaching methods. Much of the advice in this resource will help all of your participants, not just visually impaired people.



“British Blind Sport is committed to providing sport and recreational opportunities for all blind and partially sighted adults and children across Great Britain from grassroots to elite level. Sport is often the

springboard to developing new opportunities, health benefits, new friendships and renewed confidence. The positive effects of participation in sport for a visually impaired person cannot be underestimated and we are aware that skilled coaches and teachers make all the difference to helping others achieve their goals. This resource is a fantastic tool for those who are committed to making a visible difference through sport.”

Alaina MacGregor

Chief Executive Officer, British Blind Sport



“The Football Association believes that every player who wishes to play football is given the opportunity to reach their potential and play this great game of ours. The FA are delighted to be working in partnership

with British Blind Sport to deliver an educational resource for teachers and coaches to improve provision for visually impaired players.”

Jeff Davis

National Development Manager for Disability, Football Association



“This guide will help you get started in delivering basic skills in blind and partially sighted football. It will enable coaches, teachers and parents to have a better understanding of the skills needed to provide coaching for people

with a visual impairment at grassroots level. “It provides simple and useful guidance on how to prepare and deliver training sessions and highlights the importance of good communication skills. It also points you in the right direction to obtain further information and support. I thoroughly recommend this guide.”

Tony Larkin

Patron, British Blind Sport
Former Head Coach of the ParalympicsGB and England Blind Football Team



“Whether you join in sport recreationally or compete to represent your country, the positive experience of participating in sport starts with a knowledgeable coach or teacher. British Blind Sport have recognised

the need for coaches and teachers across the UK to understand how to adapt sport and activities to be fully inclusive for visually impaired children and adults. These fantastic resources help to break down barriers to participation as well as assist and provide tips on how to make each sporting experience enjoyable for every visually impaired person regardless of their ability. We know sport can be the springboard for so many things for a VI person such as increasing confidence, developing spatial awareness, growing a social network and providing a sense of accomplishment. With this in mind, I wholeheartedly support this educational programme as I recognise British Blind Sport’s ambition to make a visible difference through sport.”

Rt Hon David Blunkett MP

Member of Parliament for Sheffield Brightside and Hillsborough

Contents

Section One: Understanding Visual Impairment	Page 6
1.1. What Is Visual Impairment	Page 6
1.2. Understanding Common Visual Impairment Conditions	Page 7
Case study: Keryn Seal (England Blind footballer)	Page 9
Section Two: Making Football Accessible for Visually Impaired People	Page 10
2.1. Coaching visually impaired football footballers	Page 10
2.2. Event literature	Page 15
2.3. Venue considerations	Page 15
2.4. Guiding visually impaired people	Page 16
2.5. Health and Safety	Page 16
Case study: Tony Larkin (Coach)	Page 17
Section Three: Competitive Football for Visually Impaired Athletes	Page 21
3.1. Rule adaptations	Page 21
3.2. Classification	Page 21
3.3. Pathways for Blind and Partially Sighted footballers	Page 23
Case study: Stephen Daley (England Partially Sighted footballer)	Page 26
Section Four: Further Information	Page 27
4.1. Resources and Guidance	Page 27
4.2. Useful contacts	Page 27
Summary and Best Practice	Page 31





Section One

Understanding Visual Impairment

There are two terms regularly used to refer to people with a sight loss condition. These are severely sight impaired (blind) and sight impaired (partially sighted). British Blind Sport uses the term 'visual impairment' to refer to all levels of sight loss.

There are significant variations between blind football and partially sighted football. Therefore, throughout this resource, we will use the following headers to distinguish between the two sets of footballers:

Blind footballers

Football played by people with severe sight loss or who are recognised as being totally blind.

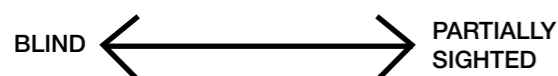
Partially Sighted footballers

Football played by people who have partial sight and who are recognised as being partially sighted.

1.1. What Is Visual Impairment

Visual impairments can be broadly defined as 'a limitation in one or more functions of the eye or visual system' (Source: RIDBC).

It can be congenital (someone born with the impairment) or acquired later in life. Visual impairments are a broad spectrum, ranging from:



Sight level is classified on more than one measure. The main measures are visual acuity and visual field.

Visual acuity

A person's ability to see fine detail. For example, reading text is often tested by reading down an eye chart.

Visual field

The boundaries of what a person can see in one instant; the entire area which can be seen without moving the eyes.

Visual Impairment Categories

Severely sight impaired (blind)

- People in this category will often use braille to access text.
- They will not be able to see a demonstration.
- They will need to orientate themselves correctly (to ensure they are facing the correct direction) before taking part in an activity.
- They may not know when they are standing too close to a fellow footballer.
- They may become disorientated part way through an activity and need your voice to find the correct direction.

Sight impaired (partially sighted)

- People in this category may or may not be able to see print.
- They may not be able to recognise you from a distance when you greet them at the start of the session.
- They may not be able to see a demonstration due to light conditions or their position in relation to you.

Visual impairments are on a broad spectrum and sight will vary greatly depending on the cause of the impairment and where it occurs in the eyes or brain. Visual impairments can range from the total loss of sight to a disturbance within the field of vision. The age or stage of onset that the visual impairment occurs will have an effect on the individual's physical, psychological and emotional development.

1.2. Understanding Common Visual Impairment Conditions

The common conditions below are all types of ocular visual impairments. This means the condition has affected a part of the eye. There are also cortical visual impairments, which occur when the processing of information received from the eye is at fault, and not the eye itself.

Albinism

This condition occurs due to a lack of pigmentation in the skin or eyes causing a reduced visual acuity. Bright light will cause discomfort to people with this condition. This is important to consider when holding a session in a brightly lit venue or in direct sunlight. If sunlight or floodlights are shining into an environment, it may alter a person's vision.

Nystagmus

Nystagmus is the involuntary movement of the eye, with the person's eyes appearing to shake or oscillate. This condition is often a factor in other visual impairments such as albinism. People with nystagmus may find it difficult to follow a moving football, due to the movement of the eye. There may also be an angle of sight that the nystagmus affects the least. This means that the visually impaired participant may look indirectly at the point of interest.

Retinitis Pigmentosa (RP)

This condition affects both the visual acuity and visual field, often resulting in tunnel vision. It will take time for a participant to adjust to new light levels when transitioning from poorly-lit to well-lit environments. If the change is very significant, it may leave the participant temporarily blind. Some forms of RP are progressive and may result in individuals losing all their sight over time.

Retinoblastoma

Retinoblastoma is cancer of the eye. The resulting visual impairment will vary depending on the size and location of the tumour and whether it affects one or both eyes.

Colour confusion (also known as colour blindness)

Colour confusion is not generally identified as a visual impairment, but can have a significant impact on sporting participation. Those with this condition see colour differently as they are unable to identify colour variance.

You may become aware of a participant with colour confusion when you describe tasks with colour terms such as "run to the red cone". To resolve this situation, ask the participant to name the colour of the cone, and use that colour when describing the activity to them.

Conclusion

There are some sight loss conditions that occur as part of a syndrome. These conditions affect more than one part of the body. For example, Usher's Syndrome affects both hearing and sight.

There are many different eye conditions that result in sight loss. If you need to know about specific eye conditions, please visit the RNIB website:

- RNIB eye conditions: [bit.ly/eyeconditions](https://www.rnib.org.uk/eyeconditions)

Keryn Seal (England Blind footballer)



Keryn was in mainstream education until leaving school at 18 years old. He regularly played football, cricket and rugby with his sighted peers until the age of 16. This was when his vision deteriorated, making it impossible for him to play at an enjoyable level.

For Keryn, the opportunity to play blind sport has had a positive impact on his life:

“Blind sport has given me many things: incredible and strong friendships, the ability to travel around the world and compete on the biggest stages, the opportunity to learn how to deal with different types of people and how to cope with the highs and lows.”

Keryn Seal is one of the country's most capped blind footballers, winning over 80 caps for England and Great Britain. Keryn has competed in several European and World competitions, including 2 Paralympic Games. Along with football, he also represented the England visually impaired cricket team for over 5 years until 2007.

Keryn has already enjoyed a successful career and wants to continue to develop as a footballer by winning European, World and Paralympic titles. Along with this, he wants to “help grow blind football in both the UK and developing nations and coach the next generation of players.”

Section Two

Making Football Accessible for Visually Impaired People

The emotional effect of having a visual impairment cannot be quantified. Football can develop a number of skills and can also improve self-esteem and provide a safe environment to create enjoyable experiences.

To deliver these great experiences, you need to consider a number of factors when delivering football sessions to people with a visual impairment.

2.1. Coaching visually impaired footballers

It is important that coaches and volunteers are knowledgeable about working with visually impaired participants. Like any interaction between people, it is about assessing a situation and behaving appropriately.

Remember that we are all different, so each person with a visual impairment will be different too. Their sight levels, personality, ability and fitness levels will vary. It is important not to generalise about visual impairments across participants, but to understand how much the person can see and how to maximise the use of any sight they have.

General coaching advice

- Consider what descriptions you use when describing an activity or action. Some visually impaired participants may not understand certain descriptions. This is due to gaps in their knowledge or having no reference for that shape or action such as high knees or specific stretches.
- When approaching a person or group, always say who you are by name. You may have to do this more than once to allow them to become familiar with the sound of your voice.
- Try and verbalise body language. Some participants with sight loss may not be able to read facial expressions or make eye contact.

- Address a visually impaired participant by name or lightly touch them on the side of the arm to indicate you are talking to them. Always ask before touching the footballer.
- Don't be afraid to use everyday language such as "see" or "look."
- Experience sight loss yourself by listening to coaching sessions with your eyes closed. You will be able to identify whether enough information was provided and whether the techniques required were adequately described.
- Clear communication is vital, so provide detailed explanations of drills and rules.
- Physical, manual demonstrations may be necessary when working with a visually impaired participant. It is vital that you ask the participant if they are happy for you to do this.
- Some visually impaired participants may require additional support. This may include hands-on support, guiding or assisting with skills repetition.
- Remove obstacles from the activity area, such as spare balls or cones on the side.
- Keep equipment in a well-defined area and inform the participants of the area location.
- Verbalise all instructions because hand movements and gestures are not always seen by visually impaired participants.
- Give precise instructions to help visually impaired participants find their way. For example, use "the equipment is on your left side" instead of "it's over there" and pointing.
- Involve visually impaired participants in all aspects of the club, including social activities.

Partially Sighted footballers

Partially sighted footballers can usually be coached in a similar way to their sighted peers, but consideration should be given to the following:

- Determine what they can see from the start; do not assume level of sight.
- Ensure verbal instructions are concise and accurate.
 - If the footballer does not understand instructions, they may not be able to copy the techniques of sighted footballers.
- Environmental factors can influence how you communicate with blind and partially sighted people. For example:
 - the amount of available light.
 - changes in light, such as cloud cover.
 - type of light (such as the sun, fluorescent lights, floodlights, skylights in ceiling where changes to outdoor light can affect indoor lighting).
 - positioning of the footballer and coach in relation to the light source.
 - level of background noise, such as echoes and ventilation fans.
- Avoid having your back to a window or bright sunlight, as the reflection will make it more difficult for a partially sighted participant to see you.
- People's level of vision may vary on a daily basis. Their vision may be affected by changes in lighting or their general health. Due



Bright sunlight makes it difficult to see the coach

to this, some people may be able to do a task one day, but find it more difficult on another day.

- It is important to consider colour contrast during your sessions. For example, if you are using cones on grass, use white or blue cones instead of green cones.

Blind footballers

It is difficult to include blind people in an inclusive coaching group with sighted footballers. This is due to the blind version of the game being considerably different to mainstream football. Blind footballers have no vision and react to sound and verbal instructions to play the game. It's important to consider this general advice when communicating with footballers who are blind:

- Always address the footballer by name.
- Do not walk away from the footballer without telling them.
- You may need to use touch to explain your instructions, but always ask first.
- Use key words and avoid long, complicated sentences.
- Be logical and sequential when presenting information.
- Enlist the help of a family member or friend of a new blind footballer to assist with guiding.
- During training, blind footballers must be encouraged to work independently without a guide as independence is required in all forms of competition.
- Poor acoustics can make orientation around an environment very difficult. It will pose problems when a blind footballer is trying to focus on the origin of the noise.
- Draw on the palms of hands to demonstrate team movements.
- Use a tactile tactics board to demonstrate team tactics.



Orientation and Spatial Awareness issues

- Allow enough time for footballers to orientate themselves properly in the environment. This is important for new or experienced footballers and even in facilities that they have used before.
- Always walk around the playing area, highlighting key elements of the pitch, such as the halfway line and goal positions.
- Always highlight potential dangers such as doorways or slippery areas to visually impaired participants. Do this at the start of every event, as changes may occur in the venue from session to session.
- Remove noise distractions as they will have an adverse effect on orientation and communication.
- Every participant will have differing levels of spatial awareness, light perception and hearing. Don't be afraid to ask individuals about the level of their eye condition.



2.2. Event literature

Advertising

- Provide information in accessible formats (for example: braille, large print or a suitable electronic version for a screen reader). The English Federation of Disability Sport have produced an inclusive communications guide. It offers guidance in providing information in accessible formats for people with a variety of impairments.
 - EFDS inclusive communications guide: www.bit.ly/efdsguide
- Advertise your sessions with local and national VI organisations, such as British Blind Sport, to help spread the message.
 - Advertise with British Blind Sport: www.bit.ly/bbsevent
- Use appropriate images of visually impaired footballers in your marketing material. This can help highlight the differences between partially sighted and blind football.

Participant information

- Provide a named contact, email and phone number on your event literature.
- Provide information about the nearest public transport options and provide a meet and greet service from there to the venue.
- Encourage participants to contact you in advance to discuss any additional support they need.
- Ask for disability information on pre-activity questionnaires or membership forms. This allows you to be aware of visually impaired participants prior to the session.
- Contact the participant (or their parents or guardians) before a session to identify the level and type of sight loss, whether they have had any sight previously and whether they require any further support or guidance.

2.3. Venue considerations

Session venue and time

- Consider the impact of daylight on some eye conditions and organise sessions in good daylight where possible.
- Partially sighted football sessions are best played in an indoor environment. This allows for better contrast and lighting.
- Blind football sessions are best played outdoors. This allows for better acoustics.

Guide dogs

Some visually impaired participants may have guide dogs. Identify the best location in your facility where the guide dog can rest, whilst the owner is participating. The best location is usually the reception or offices, where the dog can relax and be supervised. It is important to provide water for the dog to drink. Guide Dogs can provide advice about how to ensure a guide dog is comfortable at your venue.

- Guide Dogs: www.guidedogs.org.uk

2.4. Guiding visually impaired people

People with a visual impairment can find unfamiliar surroundings challenging. They may require assistance outside the football activity, such as before the session or at a club's social event. Follow these tips when guiding a visually impaired person:

- Identify yourself and ask the visually impaired person if they would like some help. Do not presume they need your assistance.
- Offer your elbow or shoulder to the visually impaired person for them to hold. Ask which side they prefer to be guided on.
- If you are guiding a child, they may want to hold your hand instead of your arm.
- Always ask which technique they would prefer.
- Make sure you are always one step in front of the person that you are guiding. Ask them if they are happy with the pace.
- Communicate at all times: describe what is around them and explain any changes in ground surface. Make sure the individual is aware of staircases as you approach them.
- When you guide a person to a seat, place their hand on the back of the chair. They will be able to sit down by themselves.
- As you walk through doorways, make sure the visually impaired person is behind you. Be careful and make sure you don't get hit by the door.
- Explain any loud noises if they occur.
- Keep your guiding arm still and relaxed; don't start waving it about.
- Give the visually impaired person adequate room around obstacles.

2.5. Health and Safety

If you follow correct health and safety procedures, people with sight loss will be able to enjoy your sessions. Health and safety must never be a reason to exclude visually impaired participants from football activities.

Health and safety considerations

- Regularly reflect on your health and safety practices.
- Remember to treat footballers individually; not everyone is the same.
- Plan and adapt your coaching sessions to work effectively with visually impaired footballers.
- Allow time for footballers to orientate themselves.
- Regularly check any changes to the environment such as opened doors or new equipment in the playing area.
- Check that the playing surface is suitable with decent colour contrast.
- For new footballers, mobility could be a challenge. This is because their muscles might not be used to vigorous activity.
- Have regular water breaks as some footballers might have other conditions, such as diabetes.
- Make sure there is a procedure to support visually impaired participants in a fire evacuation. It's important that they understand the procedure, and who is assigned as their evacuation guide.
- If other groups are using a nearby activity area, make their participants aware that you are coaching visually impaired people.
- For blind football, ensure footballers use the word "Voy" as they attempt a tackle. This is an internationally recognised term and helps reduce collisions.

Case study: Tony Larkin (Coach)



Tony Larkin, Patron of British Blind Sport and Director at the Royal National College for the Blind in Hereford was instrumental in developing blind football in this country.

Tony has worked with the FA and BBS since the 1990s, helping to set up both leagues and national teams. Between 1996 and 2012 Tony was the Head Coach of the England B1 team.

Tony says "Having been Head Coach for so many years and worked with students at the college, I could see there was a need for a specialised Blind/VI Football Academy to provide a talent pathway to the national team as well as a unique opportunity to play blind football whilst studying. I felt strongly that there should be no barriers to achievement for any person, blind or not. The abilities of blind/VI people are often seriously underestimated, and I knew from experience that young blind/VI people required only a pathway to develop

confidence and enjoyment of sport, whether at recreational level or as a Paralympic athlete.

When coaching blind/VI players, some understanding of mobility and orientation techniques is essential. Players' listening skills need to become highly developed for communication and using the sound ball. As in the senior game, knowledge of the rules, team work, strategy and fitness are all important. I have seen many players progress to a high level of mental and physical skills through training and hard work.

Discipline, dedication, enjoyment are three things a coach asks from the players. Opportunity to have a go, and progress as far as you want to go, is the right of any blind person. All the players in the national team started somewhere. Other players still play for clubs or for their own pleasure. At any level it is both pleasurable and absolutely rewarding to coach this incredible game".





Section Three: Competitive Football for Visually Impaired Athletes

3.1. Rule adaptations

Both versions of the game follow the FIFA Futsal Laws of the Game. There are a few rule adaptations to make the game suitable for blind and partially sighted footballers.

Blind football

- Predominantly played outdoors (usually on artificial turf) to allow for improved acoustics, enabling blind footballers to hear better.
- The football is adapted with ball bearings inside that make a noise when moving to allow footballers to locate the ball.
- Walls are used at the sides of the play area to allow the ball to remain in play. There are no other differences within the pitch playing area.
- 5 footballers per team (4 blind, outfield players and 1 sighted goalkeeper)
- All 4 outfield footballers must wear eye patches to ensure they cannot see.
- A 'goal coach' is located behind the opposition's goal to help orientate footballers.

Partially Sighted football

- In competition, the playing areas should be free of other markings.
- Played on an indoor pitch.
- Domestically, 5 partially sighted footballers per team, including the goalkeeper.
- Internationally, teams have 4 partially sighted footballers with 1 sighted goalkeeper. Sighted goalkeepers must remain within their penalty area.

3.2. Classification

Sight classifications are important as they ensure a fair and equal competition. Success at competitions should be defined by an athlete's skill and ability, not their impairment. The sight classifications should give all athletes the confidence that they are competing against others equally. The classification process groups athletes with similar level of visual impairments together. British Blind Sport records classifications as B1, B2, B3, B4.

Sight classifications are based on the visual acuity and visual field of the athlete. The classification will be based on best correction (such as lenses) in the best eye. To be classified into a category, you either need the required acuity level or the required field level, not both.

Classification	Acuity		Field
B1	From no light perception up to and including hand movements.	or	Not applicable.
B2	From counting fingers at any distance to a visual acuity of up to and including 2/60.	or	A field of 5 degrees or less.
B3	From a visual acuity above 2/60 to a visual acuity of up to and including 6/60.	or	A field of more than 5 degrees and less than 20 degrees.
B4	From a visual acuity above 6/60 to a visual acuity of up to and including 6/24.	or	Not applicable.

The FA allows footballers on the lower-end of the B2 category to be classified as B1b athletes. This is for athletes whose sight loss stops them from playing competitively in partially sighted football. This allows them to compete in domestic blind football. As they are not officially classified as B1 footballers, B1b athletes are not eligible to play in international blind competitions. B1b classifications are solely at the FA's discretion.

Selecting the correct version of the game

As there are two different types of football for visually impaired people, it's important to have your footballers classified. For both blind and partially sighted football, footballer eligibility varies internationally and domestically.

Blind football (international)

B1 classified footballers are eligible to play international blind football. This allows them to participate in events such as the 5-a-side competition at the Paralympic Games.

Blind football (domestic)

B1 and B1b classified footballers are eligible to play domestic blind football. This allows them to participate in events such as the FA National Blind Football League.

Partially Sighted football (international)

B2 and B3 classified footballers are eligible to play international partially sighted football. This allows them to participate in competitions such as the IBSA World Games.

Partially Sighted football (domestic)

B2, B3 and B4 classified footballers are eligible to play domestic partially sighted football. This allows them to participate in competitions such as the BBS Partially Sighted Football League.

Additional information about sight classifications

Sight classifications via British Blind Sport

British Blind Sport is the leading organisation in the UK for sight classifications. We are able to classify domestic and international athletes. More information about the classification process can be found on our website:

- Receive a sight classification:
www.britishblindsport.org.uk/classification

International Blind Sports Association (IBSA) Classification Guidelines

IBSA provides the classification criteria and structure for IBSA-governed sports. These include blind and partially sighted football.

- Classification guidelines:
www.ibsasport.org/classification

3.3. Pathways for Blind and Partially Sighted footballers

The FA's Disability Talent Programme aims to identify young footballers deemed to possess higher levels of ability. It places footballers into a development programme designed to produce football excellence, in conjunction with personal development.

B4 footballers will generally not qualify to participate in the FA's talent programmes. This is because B4 footballers are ineligible to compete in international competitions. However, if a B4 footballer's condition is degenerative, then their involvement in the FA's talent programmes will be considered.

FA Blind Footballer Pathway



The Football Association's Disability Footballer Pathway webpage has more information about the pathways. Website: www.bit.ly/fapathwa



Case study: Stephen Daley (England Partially Sighted footballer)



Stephen has enjoyed a very successful football career. The outfield footballer has captained England 117 times and scored over 60 goals for the country.

Stephen was also inducted into the National Football Hall of Fame in 2007.

As a school boy, Stephen had great non-disabled football potential. However, by the age of 15, his glaucoma meant he would be unable to continue in mainstream sport.

With the support of British Blind Sport, he was able to continue playing the game he loved. He joined the Loughborough Lions in our Partially Sighted Football League and won numerous league and cup medals with the team. It was through the support of his coach, Mick Smalley, that Stephen developed his footballing talents.

For Stephen, the support of the Loughborough Lions and British Blind Sport was vital to his success:

“If it was not for the support of British Blind Sport and my club Loughborough Lions, I would not be the player I am today. The opportunity to participate and compete against other partially sighted players is something that I hope other youngsters are able to have.”

Stephen is a qualified Level 3 UEFA B licensed coach and now has the player/coach role for the England Partially Sighted Futsal squad. Before he retires from playing, Stephen wants to win the European or World Championships and become the most capped footballer for England.

For Stephen, “the pride and honour to represent your country and wear the kit, knowing you are in a select group of people, is a great feeling.”

Section Four: Further Information

4.1. Resources and Guidance

The FA Coaching Blind Footballers course

The FA Coaching Blind Footballers (CBF) Course is designed to provide football coaches with an introduction to working effectively and confidently with blind footballers. Contact your local County Football Association for more details:

- Website: www.thefa.com/CountyFA

Creating accessible content and literature

The English Federation of Disability Sport have produced an inclusive communications guide. It offers guidance in providing information in accessible formats for people with a variety of impairments:

- Website: www.bit.ly/efdsguide

Sports Coach UK Visual Impairment Factsheet

Sports Coach UK and British Blind Sport have produced a factsheet that highlights the fundamentals of coaching visually impaired people:

- PDF document: www.bit.ly/scukfact

4.2. Useful contacts

British Blind Sport

- Telephone: 01926 424247
- Email: info@britishblindsport.org.uk
- Website: www.britishblindsport.org.uk

Football Association

- Telephone: 0800 169 1863
- Email: customer.relations@thefa.com
- Website: www.thefa.com

Action for Blind People

- Telephone: 0303 123 999
- Website: www.actionforblindpeople.org.uk

Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB)

- Telephone: 0303 123 999
- Website: www.rnib.org.uk

Guide Dogs

- Telephone: 0118 983 5555
- Website: www.guidedogs.org.uk

Sport England

- Telephone: 08458 508508
- Website: www.sportengland.org

English Federation of Disability Sport

- Telephone: 01509 227750
- Website: www.efds.co.uk

About British Blind Sport

At British Blind Sport we help blind and partially sighted people get active and play sport. Sport and recreational activities can enhance the lives of people with visual impairments by improving their health and increasing their social interaction. We encourage adults and children to participate in activities at all levels, from grassroots to the Paralympic Games.

What does British Blind Sport do?

- Organise sporting competitions for people with visual impairments, allowing them to compete against others.
- Support people with visual impairments within the sports world.
- Provide sight classifications to blind and partially sighted athletes to ensure a fair and equal competition.
- Support the education of teachers to ensure no child with visual impairment is denied the opportunity to play.
- Provide advice to clubs and coaches to enable more people with visual impairments to participate in sport.



About the Football Association

The Football Association was founded in 1863 as the governing body of the game of football in England and is responsible for all regulatory aspects.

The FA's activities are many and varied. These include:

- Promoting the development of the game amongst all ages, backgrounds and abilities in terms of participation and quality. This also involves promoting the availability of the sport to the greatest possible number of people.
- Regulating the game on and off the field of play through the "Laws of the Game" and the "Rules of The Association".
- Sanctioning, either directly or indirectly, all matches, leagues and competitions played in England.

- Overseeing the administration of the disciplinary system, which is applicable to all participants in the game (each club, footballer, competition, match official and any other person involved in the game in England is bound by the Rules) and the administration of refereeing throughout the game.
- Organising a number of senior men's, youth and women's national competitions (including most notably The FA Challenge Cup) and the participation of England national representative teams (again, senior men's, women's and youth teams) in international matches, most notably the men's senior team in the FIFA World Cup, the UEFA European Championship and friendly fixtures.

Summary and Best Practice

Communication

- Good and clear communication is vital.
- Don't assume all people with a visual impairment can't see anything.
- Remember everyone is individual and every eye condition is different.
- Ask the participant what they can see and what support they need.
- Always identify and introduce yourself verbally, so that the participants become familiar with the sound of your voice.
- Don't be afraid to use everyday language such as "see" or "look."

Equipment

- When selecting equipment, think big, bright and bold!
- Consider the colour contrast of the equipment and surface you're using.
- Use audible equipment where possible.

Venue

- Help familiarise the visually impaired participant with the playing area and venue.
- Provide time for your visually impaired footballers to orientate themselves within the activity area.
- Ensure the activity area is well lit.
- Have sighted guides to support the participants around the venue.
- Describe venue hazards where necessary.

Demonstrations

- Use clear instructions and explanations.
- Verbalise your actions when describing techniques.
- Don't rely on visual demonstrations.
- Use tactile demonstration where appropriate.
- Ask the participant questions to check they have understood your request.
- Don't assume all participants will be able to do basic motor skills correctly.





Acknowledgements

British Blind Sport would like to thank the Football Association for their expertise and support in producing this resource.

We would also like to thank Tony Larkin, patron of British Blind Sport and a Director at the Royal National College for the Blind for his assistance during the development of this resource.

This resource has been produced with the support of the Sport England Inclusive Sport fund.





A VISIBLE DIFFERENCE THROUGH SPORT

British Blind Sport is the leading voice for the blind and partially sighted community in sport and recreation in the United Kingdom.

Email: info@britishblindsport.org.uk
Website: www.britishblindsport.org.uk
Telephone: 01926 424247

Address: Pure Offices, Plato Close, Tachbrook Park,
Leamington Spa, CV34 6WE

Copyright © February 2015 by British Blind Sport.
All rights reserved.

British Blind Sport is a registered charity, No. 271500.

This publication can be requested in larger print, braille and on audio CD.

This resource has been funded by;

