



BEST PRACTICE AND COLOUR BLINDNESS ACCREDITATION FOR SCHOOLS



MAY 2012



ADVICE FOR HEAD TEACHERS WISHING TO EMPLOY BEST PRACTICE TO SUPPORT COLOUR BLIND STUDENTS OR SEEKING TO ATTAIN COLOUR BLINDNESS (CVD) ACCREDITATION FOR THEIR SCHOOL

This Advice Note is aimed at Head Teachers wishing to ensure that their school is as colour blind compliant as possible.

The Colour Blind Awareness Organisation recognises that it may be a lengthy process to achieve the Colour Blind Awareness Accreditation Mark by meeting all of the criteria detailed below. This Note is therefore intended to help schools identify how they might become more 'colour blind friendly' environments for their CVD pupils, parents/Governors, staff and visitors until such time as they attain the Accreditation Mark.

Criteria Schools Should Meet to Attain the Colour Blind Awareness 'Colour Blind Compliant' Accreditation Mark

Your school will be considered to have met the definition 'Colour Blind Compliant' and be entitled to display the Colour Blind Awareness Accreditation Mark if it can demonstrate it meets the following criteria:-

- 1 The school can readily identify colour blind pupils to a number approximating the statistically occurring ratio in relation to the number of pupils on the school roll i.e. approximately 1 in 12 (8%) boys and 1 in 200 (0.5%) girls.

Schools can readily achieve this by introducing screening of all new pupils at school entry. It is unlikely to be sufficient for the school to rely upon parents taking children for an eye test because many opticians do not test for colour vision deficiencies.

Where the school identifies a colour blind student through screening the school should also issue information sheets to the parents including information about how to obtain a formal diagnosis and in how parents can support their child at home.

- 2 The school can demonstrate that most teachers have received training in how to identify and support CVD pupils either via in-school training or as a recognised element of their teacher training course. Most teacher training courses do not include instruction on colour vision deficiencies therefore the school may prefer to consider specialist INSET training at school to ensure all teachers are aware of the needs of their colour blind students.

- 3 The school will need to demonstrate policies which are designed to ensure that:-

(i) throughout the school all coloured art materials – paints, coloured pencils, felt-tipped pens, crayons etc. are labelled with the name of their colour; all coloured educational tools – blocks, beads, counters etc are stored in containers of a single colour labelled with the name of the colour; all colour-coded storage boxes/library book codes etc which the pupil is expected to use independently are also labelled with the name of the colour or by some other method of labeling in addition to colour.

(ii) no textbooks/computer software/worksheets/wall posters/atlasses etc are used by CVD students unless coloured information is also able to be identified by other means e.g. shading, texture, text etc

(iii) teachers do not rely only on colour only to make different teaching points on whiteboards or employ different colours in marking etc unless other indicators are also used e.g. underlining/labelling

- (iv) in Games/PE only balls, cones, team kit, pitch markings etc are used which are visible to CVD students taking into account the colour of the background surface upon which they are intended to be used. Team colours from other schools in matches etc should be checked for compliance with the colour blind students before a match commences and if found to be unsuitable either yellow or blue bibs should be worn by one team
- (v) a 'buddy-up' system is in place for a colour normal pupil to work alongside CVD pupils in any lessons where colour may be an issue, especially science (when lessons include universal or other chemical indicators which rely upon colour, use of prisms, in dissections/microscope work etc); geography – use of atlases/maps; maths/economics - to interpret graphs, charts and so on.
- (vi) Careers advice (secondary schools) tailored to the needs of CVD students is available covering issues which may arise for those wishing to pursue careers in the Armed Forces, medicine, ICT, design etc.
- 4 As soon as a CVD student is identified the school will establish an Individual Education Plan or similar to ensure that as the pupil progresses through the school their teachers are fully aware of the individual needs of the student.
- 5 The school will not set internal exams which use colour unless (i) colours are also labelled by other means or (ii) a colour 'reader' is available to the CVD student e.g. chemistry practicals
AND
The school has in place a procedure which will ensure external Examination Boards are made aware of the needs of CVD students in good time to allow proper consideration to be given to needs of the CVD student e.g. for a colour 'reader' and/or extra time allowed to decipher labels etc. Schools should note that extra time per se will not help the CVD student to decipher colours as he will be physically unable to perceive colours accurately. If colour forms part of the exam, the student will require tailored assistance.
- 6 The school should demonstrate that it is striving to ensure the school environment in general is colour blind compliant i.e. not a discriminatory environment for those with CVD – for example way-finding signs and maps will not be colour –coded, House systems will not be distinguishable solely by colour, menus should be easy to read, the school website and all school publications will be colour blind friendly, electronically operated lockers would not rely upon coloured lights to indicate open/close, toilet door locks will not use red/green to indicate engaged/vacant and so on.
- 6 In view of the large proportion of society affected by CVD the school may wish to consider including instruction to all pupils on the issues arising from CVD which may affect them in later life e.g. as the parent, sibling, offspring of a colour blind person and in how they can improve accessibility for colour blind people in their future careers e.g. ICT or design, marketing, retail etc.

For further details about how your school can be assessed for the Colour Blind Awareness Accreditation Mark contact info@colourblindawareness.org.

For more information and advice about colour blindness including colour vision screening, teacher training/INSET talks, to purchase colour labels for classroom use or to download advice sheets visit the Colour Blind Awareness Organisation's website www.colourblindawareness.org or send your queries to info@colourblindawareness.org.