

A PLACE TO START -

MAINSTREAM TRAINING PACK – MSI CASE STUDY - JACK

Date: February 2018

1. Introduction

Jack is aged three years old. He was born with CHARGE Syndrome. He has bilateral colobomas affecting his optic nerves and part of his macula. Moderately short sighted, additionally with nystagmus and astigmatism, he has been prescribed glasses but does not wear them consistently. He has a bi-lateral severe to profound hearing loss and whilst he was fitted with post aural hearing aids at the age of 12 months, it has been difficult to keep the aids in place due to shape of his ears and observed responses to sound have been minimal.

At a recent audiology appointment, the results of an MRI scan were discussed and indications were that there is an absence of the auditory nerve in both ears. In addition, Jack has inner ear abnormalities which affect both his balance and postural stability.

Jack's primary support in his pre-school years was a Portage worker supported by QTMSI with a joint visit from a Qualified Teacher for Vision Impairment (QTVI) and a Teacher of the Deaf (TOD) from the local Sensory Service taking place once every 6 weeks. Jack has just started a part-time placement at his local nursery school.

2. Strategy

Jack has a dedicated Teaching Assistant (TA) in nursery, and she is working closely with the SENCo to identify those activities which are presenting as challenging when supporting him, these include:

- Takes a long time to settle on entry on a morning and after outside playtimes.
- Showing little social interest in his peers.
- Difficulty in maintaining focus during input time on the carpet and at table top activities.
- Development Matters framework not necessarily capturing Jack's progress and attainment.

Neither the TA nor the SENCO had worked with a child with CHARGE whose learning and development is impacted by a multi-sensory impairment (MSI). As a starting point they downloaded factsheets from the CHARGE Information Pack for Practitioners from the Sense website.¹

A meeting was held in school with the QTMSI, QTVI and the TOD and the following actions were agreed:

- QTMSI to coordinate input from the three specialist teachers, to include:
 - Observation and functional vision assessment by QTVI to identify resources and environmental adaptations which would help engage Jack visually in his learning.
 - TOD to work with the TA and a small group of children including Jack to model use of sensory and signed story telling as a means of fostering joint attention and interaction with peers.
- SENCo to work with the family on a referral to an occupational therapist for a specialist sensory assessment to identify strategies which will help maintain Jack's arousal levels to aid focus on learning.

¹ See www.sense.org.uk/get-support/information-and-advice/conditions/charge-syndrome

- Joint visit to be arranged with Habilitation Worker and physiotherapist to assess Jack's mobility needs within the nursery and to provide an environmental audit.

3. Evaluation and Impact

- The Victoria School MSI Curriculum² being used alongside Development Matters to record Jack's progress as a multi-sensory learner.
- Jack is wearing his glasses consistently during small group work and for table top activities.

4. Advice

- Extend support from the local Sensory Support Service QTMSI to include and oversee the implementation of the Victoria School Curriculum and Development Matters.
- SENCo to work with OT to set up a sensory circuit each morning for Jack and other children within the nursery who find it difficult to transition in to school
- School to seek funding for Jack's TA to access Intervenor training. (Courses can be accessed via the NatSIP website³)

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² See: www.natsip.org.uk/doc-library-login/curriculum/victoria-school-msi-curriculum/1371-victoria-school-msi-curriculum

³ See: <https://www.natsip.org.uk/slh-home/develop>