

Lothians MSP visits the Royal Blind School in Edinburgh

Foyso! Choudhury, MSP for Lothian, writes about his recent visit to the Royal Blind School.

"I recently had a great visit to the Royal Blind School in Edinburgh, run by leading sight loss charity Sight Scotland, where I was shown around by Lucy Chetty, Head of Learning.

"The school provides specialist learning and teaching to children and young people with visual impairment. I saw the wonderful resources provided by the school and how these support each young person's individual needs. I was impressed by the innovation shown by the school in their mission to support every young person.

For example, the school are attempting to 3-D print school maps and Braille signs to make it easier for young people to guide their way around the school. The Royal Blind School's expert team also run great outreach programmes and family support, currently in partnership with East Lothian Council, Midlothian Council and Orkney Islands Council, as they seek to spread their knowledge to support even more children and young people with visual impairment across Scotland.

"I was heartened to hear about the work of the Sight Scotland Community team who are reaching more families through their support helpline. I was inspired by the dedication and enthusiasm of the teachers and staff and wish to assist them in their mission to help young people affected by blindness and sight loss in Scotland.

Therefore, I have lodged the following questions:

To ask the Scottish Government how many registered Qualified Teachers of Children and Young People with Vision Impairment (QTVI) there are, and what action it is taking to encourage more people to train for this qualification.

To ask the Scottish Government what framework it provides to local authorities for the delivery of services for young people affected by blindness and sight loss, to allow them to share (a) knowledge of best practice and (b) support for outsourcing services.

To ask the Scottish Government what funding it provides for families of young people affected by blindness and sight loss to help purchase dedicated equipment for the home and school environment to assist with any additional needs that they might have.

“I will continue to represent my constituents on these important issues and will continue to support the vital work of the staff at Sight Scotland’s Royal Blind School as much as I possibly can.”

