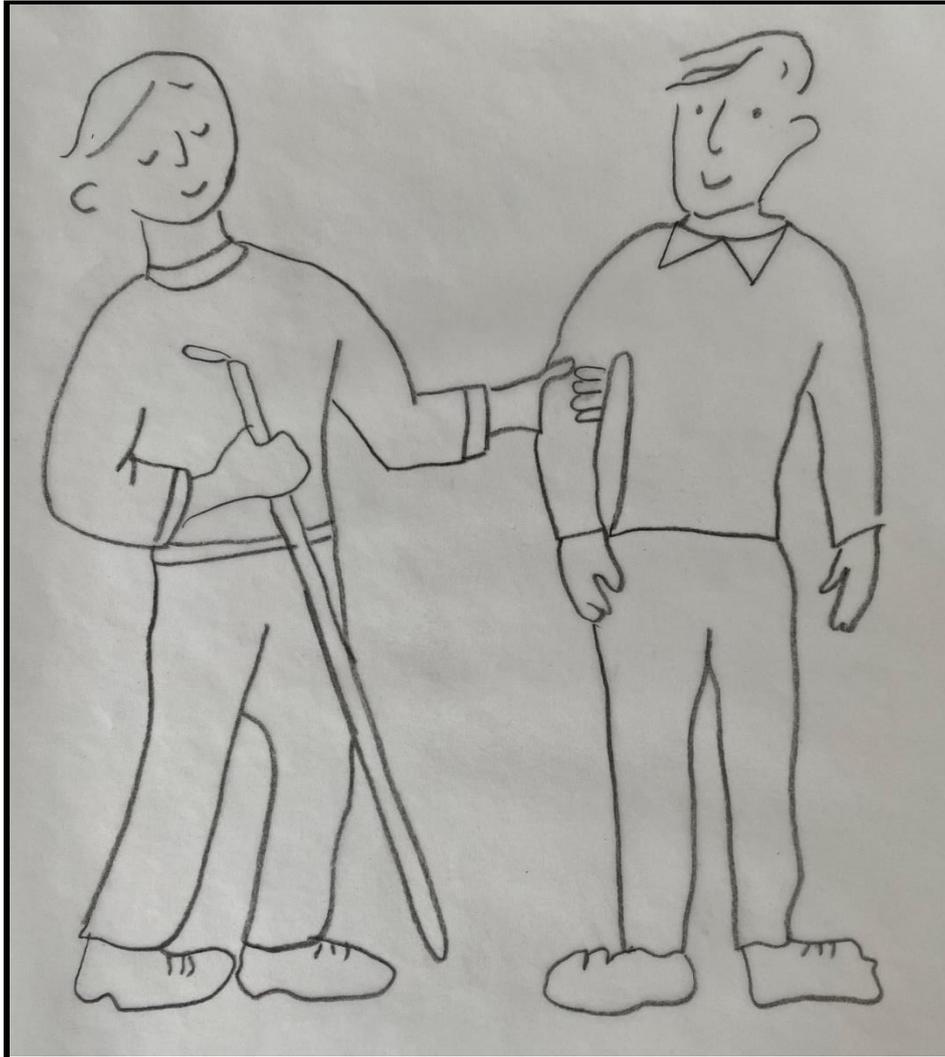


Guiding people who have a Visual Impairment



There are times when a person with poor sight has difficulty finding their way and would appreciate assistance. Please offer to help. This leaflets shows you how to guide confidently.

Walking together side by side

When guiding, stand slightly in front of your companion and ask them to grip your arm just above your elbow. Keep your arm close to your side as this helps you lead the way. Remember to check that your companion knows where they are before saying goodbye. For children they can hold your wrist or the last two fingers of your hand.



Walking in single file through a narrow space.

Explain that you need to walk in single file and that you are moving your guiding arm behind your back. Ask your companion to move behind you while still holding your arm. Walk forward. If your companion keeps their free arm out straight they will not tread on your heels.

Changing sides

Stand still. Ask your companion to cross behind you, keeping in touch with you until they can transfer their hold your other arm.

Going through a doorway

It is easier if the Severely sight impaired person stands, nearest to the hinge of the door, whilst still holding your arm. Open the door with your guiding arm. Go through the doorway, allowing your companion to hold the door with their free hand.

Going up and down stairs

Pause just before you reach the steps. Say stairs/steps up or down. Check that your companion is standing on the same side as the handrail; if not change sides. Move to the steps and indicate the handrail so that your companion can hold this with their free hand. Put our foot on the first step and set off when you are both ready. Keep one step ahead and take your time. Pause when you both reach level ground.



Crossing a road

Pause at the kerb, step down, cross the road. Pause briefly before stepping up onto the pavement.

Sitting at the theatre

Stand side by side at the end of the row, facing forward. Check that you are on the side nearest the seats; if not, change sides. With your companion holding your arm step sideways along the row. Change sides when you leave so that you lead the way.

Seating

Place your guide hand on the back of the chair. Allow your companion to slide their hand down your arm to the chair then continue to find the seat. Never push a Severely sight impaired person onto a chair. Give a description of the style of chair they are going to sit on.



Getting into a car

Say which way the car is facing. Place your guide hand on the door handle. Suggest your companion slides their grip hand down your arm to find the handle. Ask them to open the door and find the roof of the car with their other hand. They can then duck their head and find the seat; after sitting down they can swing their legs into the car and close the door. Help may be needed with finding the seat-belt.

For more information about guiding or anything else about vision impairment please speak with the school and ask to speak with Alison Hollands (QTVI and Habilitation Specialist).