

Retinitis Pigmentosa

What is Retinitis Pigmentosa?

- Retinitis Pigmentosa is the name given to a wide range of eye conditions.
- Retinitis Pigmentosa eye conditions are all linked by a problem with the rod and cone photoreceptors.
- The photoreceptors either work poorly from the day a child is born or else slowly stop working over a period of time.
- Usually the rods are affected more than the cones.
- Retinitis Pigmentosa can affect different children in different ways.
- Some older children may notice that their vision is blurred around the edges and that their vision is especially poor in the dark. These children might mainly have a problem mainly with their rod photoreceptors.
- Others may notice that their central vision is becoming increasingly blurred and that most colours are not bright. These children may mainly have a problem with their cone photoreceptors.
- Other children may end up only seeing bright lights or the movement of large objects. These children may have problems with both cone and rod photoreceptors.

What can help?

- Wear glasses if prescribed and keep them clean
- Providing a good level of lighting
- Using learning materials that provide good contrast. Black print on white (or vice versa). Avoid washed out photocopies and poor colour quality.
- Use good quality black or dark blue markers on whiteboards. Avoid using green, red or other light colours. Other students in the class may also have difficulty seeing these.
- Qualified Teacher of the Vision Impaired (QTVI) from the EA Sensory Service will assess the child's functional vision within the school environment and provide advice to the school on specific strategies for curriculum access and independent learning.