

Working in special education

Resource Teacher: Vision





Meet Devi Dawson, a Resource Teacher: Vision at BLENNZ – the Blind and Low Vision Education Network New Zealand

Devi Dawson, a trained primary school teacher, has worked at BLENNZ, as a Resource Teacher: Vision (RTV) since 2010.

Devi's story

Devi is a trained primary school teacher. She has worked as both a classroom teacher and an itinerate specialist teacher for children supported by the Ongoing Resourcing Scheme (ORS). Devi also spent some time teaching in the UK.

Devi's day-to-day

Devi works with a range of children and young people with low vision, including some who use braille. Accessing the school curriculum often proves challenging for these students and Devi works to make adaptations that address these challenges. She works in a collaborative way, promoting a team approach. This can involve working with other specialists to provide services and support for children and young people with complex needs. In her role, Devi prepares resources and programmes and offers advice



and guidance to support her students and their teachers in the classroom. She also works closely with the family, sharing information and progress, helping families support their child's programme.

Reflecting cultural values in her work

"The most important thing to remember when working with families from other cultures," says Devi, "is that you only see this child for a small part of the day, their family know them best and they hold the key. Respecting their ideas, wishes and aspirations is fundamental to a working relationship."

Rewards and challenges of the role

For Devi, the most rewarding aspect of her job is the chance to develop relationships with individual children and young people and their families. "I also think I am very fortunate to have a job where everyday I learn something new."

"One of the greatest challenges in my role," says Devi "can be in working with others who have a different view to inclusive education to my own. Getting them onside can be difficult if they have a particular set opinion."

Future aspirations

In the future, Devi would like to take on further management responsibilities, as her experience and knowledge increases.

Nature of the work


Resource Teachers: Vision (RTVs) are employed by the Blind and Low Vision Education Network New Zealand (BLENNZ).

Resource Teachers: Vision:

- › work in partnership with parents, families, communities, teachers and other specialists to help provide a quality education for children and young people who are blind, deafblind or have low vision
- › work with children and young people and their families from birth to the end of compulsory education and support children and young people to make the transition to life after school
- › adapt learning environments, teaching and learning approaches and the regular curriculum. Ensure access to accessible format materials
- › advocate for children and young people who are blind, deafblind or have low vision, and their families.

Qualifications and experience

To become a Resource Teacher: Vision you need:

- › a Bachelor or Diploma of Teaching
 - › to have attained a Postgraduate Diploma in Specialist Teaching (Blind and Low Vision)
 - › teaching experience.
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Skills and knowledge

In addition to the qualifications and experience, a Resource Teacher: Vision must have knowledge of or skills in:

- › blindness, deafblindness and low vision
- › Te Whāriki, the New Zealand Early Childhood Curriculum; the NZ Curriculum/ Te Marautanga o Aotearoa and the Expanded Core Curriculum.
- › facilitating access and adaptation of curriculums
- › psychology and education theory and child development
- › community and family support services
- › effective communication, teaching, research and planning.

Career development

Becoming an RTV will give you the rewards and challenges of the job itself, as well as opportunities to develop your career.

You will:

- › be supported, mentored and coached by experienced professional colleagues
- › be kept up to date with the latest evidence
- › take part in ongoing professional learning and development
- › have opportunities to share and extend your knowledge and skills.



Related careers

Orientation and mobility instructors work with children and young people who are blind, deafblind or have low vision and their families, whānau and specialist teams. Visit the BLENNZ website for more information **www.blennzonline.edublogs.org**.





Further information about Resource Teacher: Vision

Special education careers and professional development

For more information about working as an RTV and working in special education, visit our special education careers webpage **www.education.govt.nz/careers-in-special-education**

Special education scholarships and study awards

If you're interested in a career in special education you may be eligible for a scholarship or study award. Find out more at **www.education.govt.nz/r/sestudyawards**

Career information

For profiles of different careers visit the Careers New Zealand website **www.careers.govt.nz**

Contact us

Want to speak to someone about a career as an RTV? Give us a call or drop us an email.

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