Submission from Carol Ferguson

Please find below my comments and suggestions in regard to the attainment of pupils with a sensory impairment:

**Issues**

- **Qualified Heads of service.** Unqualified heads of Service leads to a lack of understanding of the needs of blind and visually impaired children and contributed to a dilution of service provision. It is vital that head of service provision is qualified so that the service provision is of high quality and serves the distinct needs of visually impaired pupils. Qualified heads of service would also mean that QTVI's can carry out the job they have been trained for without undue pressure (due to misunderstanding of role) to take on other remits within their teaching establishments. This would reduce our service delivery and could potentially have an adverse effect on attainment.

- **Improved access to enlarged books.** There are specific organisations such as Load to learn and Books for all which can be used to access books. However, this is not equal equal access and visually impaired children are still disadvantaged.

- **Technology:** children now have access to ipads to assist with their education. However, in many authorities the purchasing of apps and i-books can be problematic. If this problem could be solved then access of books etc would be improved. Internet access is problematic for children who use a braille note computer. Authority encryption methods can make the internet inaccessible to blind children. This needs to be brought to authorities attention.

- **Improved Mobility:** Increased support from local authority mobility and rehabilitation services. Child specific training needs to be priority. Without good mobility skills, children will fail to grow into fully functioning, independent adults who can access further education and employment. A designated mobility officer, working and based at each service provision would be beneficial.

Kind Regards, Carol