What is albinism?

- It is an inherited condition that children are born with
- There are several different forms of albinism
- It results from lack of body pigment called melanin
- Hair, skin and eyes are usually pale in people of all races
- Ocular albinism only affects the eyes and vision

What are the effects of albinism?

The following points describe key aspects of the condition but each child is different and there will always be exceptions:

- some children will see quite well while others may have poor vision
- usually the less pigment there is in the eye, the worse the vision
- the condition is normally stable so vision is unlikely to get worse
- children with albinism usually have nystagmus (wobbly eyes) and photophobia (sensitivity to light)
What can be done to help?

- Wearing any glasses prescribed – and keeping them clean!
- Sitting in a forward central position in the classroom particularly when using the whiteboard or TV
- Using adapted and/or modified work materials e.g. large print, individual copies of board work, adapted ICT display, good colour contrasts
- Holding print close to the eyes when reading, or using a sloping work board or copyholder
- Using a magnifier to enlarge print, pictures or parts of real objects
- Making sure bright light and glare are controlled by blinds, curtains and use of matt (instead of shiny) surfaces
- Wearing a peaked hat and/or dark glasses to reduce glare out of doors
- Using skin protection, sun screen and shaded areas outdoors especially in summer

Useful contacts:

Cambridgeshire Sensory Support Team 0-25
Email: visual.impairment@cambridgeshire.gov.uk
Tel : 01480 373434
www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/visionsupport

LOOK (for families with visually impaired children)
Tel: 0121 428 5038
www.look-uk.org

Albinism Fellowship
Tel: 01282 771 900
www.albinism.org.uk