

Meet Bella-Skye

Bella-Skye is 6 years old and has attended Pace since she was 3. Bella-Skye has a diagnosis of cerebral palsy - spastic diplegia, dystonia and periventricular leukomalacia. Bella-Skye has low tone in her trunk, increased extensor tone in her lower limbs and increased flexor tone in her upper limbs with her left side more affected than her right. Bella-Skye's increased tone makes it difficult for her to use her hands with accuracy and, without intervention, significantly limits how she can access and explore her environment. Bella-Skye is a highly motivated pupil and will always try her best, even when she finds tasks really hard.





Bella-Skye has benefitted from the hand clinic at Pace to create a bespoke contour brace to hold her right wrist in a good position for function and provide her with a specific set of stretches that are carried out each day. With an improved hand function position, Bella-Skye has better access to her learning, including using the touch screen on an iPad and locate keys with precision on a keyboard.

Bella-Skye is verbal but finds it difficult to coordinate her breathing for speaking and will push into a pattern of extension when she talks, resulting in slow speech and compromised body position. To address this, staff have been working on breathing control with Bella-Skye so that she can learn to better control her body when she talks because she has a lot to say!

Bella-Skye can become very anxious due to her increased sensory sensitivities which can impact on her attention and willingness to explore new activities. Previously Bella-Skye would be reluctant to use her hands during messy play but with skilled staff knowledge in sensory integration, strategies have been incorporated into her school day to help her process sensory information more effectively and she is now more willing to use her hands to explore a variety of textures.