

HOWES COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL



ACCESSIBILITY STRATEGY

2019-2024

INCREASING ACCESS FOR DISABLED PUPILS

1. Introduction

1.1 The Equality Act 2010 and related Equality Duty 2011 reiterate the duty upon schools as laid out in the previous Disability Discrimination Act. It is unlawful for schools and LAs to discriminate against disabled pupils in their admissions and exclusions, education and associated services. They must not directly or indirectly discriminate against, harass or victimise disabled children and young people. Schools and LAs must not treat disabled pupils less favourably and must make reasonable adjustments, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services, to ensure that disabled pupils are not at a substantial disadvantage compared with their peers. The legislation requires LAs and schools to take account of both existing pupils and prospective pupils –the duty is anticipatory.

1.2 Disabled persons are defined as "someone who has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities". In this definition 'substantial' is more than minor or trivial and 'long-term' means 12 months or more. The definition is broad and might include children with a learning disability, sensory impairment, severe dyslexia, diabetes or epilepsy, pupils who are incontinent, or have AIDS, severe disfigurements or progressive conditions like Muscular Dystrophy.

1.3 Not all children who are defined as disabled under the DDA will have special educational needs (SEN) and it is important that disability discrimination is seen in the widest context and not only as an SEN issue within the LA and schools.

2. Legal requirements LAs.

2.1 Each LA is required to have a written accessibility strategy for increasing over time the accessibility of schools within its area for disabled pupils in a planned and strategic way. This plan covers the period 1 January 2012 to 31 December 2015.

2.2 The LA has a duty to review the strategy, revise it if necessary and implement it. This plan has to be made publicly available for inspection to interested parties at reasonable times.

2.3 The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 introduced a duty on the public sector to promote disability equality for employees and service users including children and young people in schools. All public bodies, including schools, have a duty to :

- promote equality of opportunity
- eliminate unlawful discrimination
- eliminate disability related harassment
- promote positive attitudes towards disabled people
- encourage disabled people's participation in public life
- take account of disabled people's disabilities even where that involves more favourable treatment

These are known as the "general duties".

2.4 This document needs to be considered alongside the City Council's Equality Strategy.

3. Legal requirements schools.

3.1 Schools are required to publish an accessibility plan setting out how they plan to increase access for disabled pupils to the curriculum, the physical environment and to information. School governing bodies must also publish information about the arrangements for the admission of disabled children, the steps taken to prevent disabled children being treated less favourably than others and the facilities provided to assist access of disabled children. This should be brought together with the information required under the Children and Families Act 2014.

3.2 Coventry LA will assist its schools in fulfilling their duties under the legislation. Training has previously been provided to staff and Governing Bodies. Advice is available and information has been provided to all schools in the summer term 2014 as part of the requirements from 1 September 2014 for schools to publish their SEN Information Report under the Children and Families Act 2014. LA has previously requested copies of schools accessibility plans and Disability Equality Schemes both to inform this strategy, provide further support to schools as necessary and to ensure that schools are complying with this duty.

4. Policy Context

4.1 As part of its commitments under articles 7 and 24 of the United Nations Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the UK Government is committed to inclusive education of disabled children and young people and the progressive removal of barriers to learning and participation in mainstream education.

4.2 The Children and Families Act 2014 secures the general presumption in law of mainstream education in relation to decisions about where children and young people with SEN should be educated and the Equality Act 2010 provides protection for discrimination for disabled people.

4.3 The City Council is committed to providing an education service which enables all children to develop to the maximum of their potential, whilst recognising that variability is the norm. Education must enable pupils to have a view of others which is free from prejudice and discrimination. This Accessibility Strategy forms part of Coventry's Strategy for Inclusion and Special Educational Needs.

4.4 The Council is developing more effective inter-agency and cross-service working that will also help promote practice in this area. Services for children and young people with disabilities were identified as one of the top five priorities by the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership.

4.5 All children should have their needs provided for in a way which:

- values them
- supports their inclusion in the community
- allows them to be educated in mainstream schools where appropriate and taking into account the wishes of their parents
- enables them to attend schools which are as close as possible to their own neighbourhood
- enables them to make use of amenities and services that are generally available
- takes account of their views
- develops the qualities and competencies needed for full and effective membership of their community.

4.6 The City Council will be engaged in the continuous development of provision for pupils with disabilities.

5. Accessibility Strategy

5.1 This strategy supports the following areas as required by the legislation:

- Improving the physical environment of schools to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services (see Section 6 below and Action Plan Strand 1.)
- Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum (see Section 7 below and Action Plan Strand 2.)
- Improving the delivery to disabled pupils of written information which is provided to pupils who are not disabled. This should be done within a reasonable period of time and in formats which take account of views expressed by the pupils or parents about their preferred means of communication. (see Section 8 below and Action Plan Strand 3.)

5.2 The strategic approach to each area is contained in the following three sections and detailed actions to be taken by the LA are contained in the attached Action Plan.

6. Physical Access

6.1 This strand of the planning duty includes improvements to the physical environment of the school and physical aids to access education.

6.2 The LA will ensure that new school buildings take account of inclusion and disability issues as part of Coventry's Strategy for Inclusion and Special Educational Needs.

6.3 The LA will support improvements to school buildings in relation to disability issues through its Access steering group. They will monitor the provision of facilities such as hygiene suites to ensure availability across the city.

6.4 The LA will ensure that schools have access to appropriate advice and training in relation to the improvement of the physical environment of schools through the work of appropriate support services. Advice and guidance on issues related to pupils with physical difficulties can be obtained from the Access and Technology Service and support from Hereward College. The Sensory Support Service provides advice and guidance on the physical environment of schools in relation to pupils with hearing and visual difficulties. The Autism Support Service provides advice and guidance on issues related to pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorder. This includes training programmes and the use of ASD "Learning Environment and Whole School Environment" check-lists.

7. Curriculum Access

7.1 The curriculum covers not only teaching and learning but the wider curriculum of the school such as participation in after school clubs, leisure, sporting and cultural activities or school visits.

7.2 The LA will help schools increase the accessibility to the curriculum to disabled children by:

- Securing appropriate staff training
- Offering advice / support to schools in a variety of formats: formal courses, school reviews, heads of department meetings etc
- Encouraging schools to work together to share good practice
- Maintaining up to date information on subject specific approaches to disability within each area of the curriculum which will be made available to schools
- Providing guidance on access to the wider school curriculum e.g. school trips, supervision of pupils outside of lesson times.

7.3 Guidance will be produced for schools by the LA on curriculum access in subject areas, identifying 3-5 strategies/facilities that must/should/could be in place to support pupils with disabilities.

7.4 The pool of information could be used to:

- Enable curriculum access audit exercises with heads of department/subject specialists
- Advise schools and departments wishing to audit provision
- Advise schools considering rebuild or refurbishment projects
- Develop bids for additional curriculum resources to governors

7.5 The SEN Support Services and Special Schools Outreach will provide support regarding access to the curriculum issues for pupils with disability.

7.6 The Local Authority has been awarded the British Dyslexia Association Quality Mark in recognition of good practice in the support of Dyslexic pupils. A specialist team support whole school development through a combination of training and one to one support. A number of schools have gained the Coventry Dyslexia Friendly Schools Award.

8. Information

8.1 The planning duty requires written information normally provided by a school to be made available in alternative formats that ensure it is accessible to disabled children and their families. The information should take account of pupils' and parents' disabilities and preferred formats, and be made available within a reasonable time frame.

8.2 All existing and new policies and documentation made publicly available by the Education and Inclusion Service should meet these requirements. Information sent to parents/carers should be in accessible formats. The LA will seek opportunities to co-produce, consult with, and seek the advice of parents. All LA staff will be made aware of these requirements.

8.3 Schools will need to take account of the wide range of information made available such as learning materials, timetables, information about school events and school news. Coventry Access and Technology Service purchased "Communicate in Print " for all schools to support accessible information and access to the curriculum. Schools have also received "Communication Friendly Environments", a CD which works within "Communicate in Print". This will allow them to make accessible labelling around the classroom and wider school environments.

8.4 The LA will ensure that good practice is shared across schools through their networks with regards to this strand. SEN Support Services will facilitate the sharing of good practice about accessible information. The Sensory Support Service undertakes a great deal of work in this area with respect to curriculum materials for pupils with hearing and visual difficulties.

8.5 Schools should involve parents/carers and pupils views about inclusive practice, for example by the use of the "Index for Inclusion".

9. Monitoring, evaluation and review dates

9.1 The Act provides for OfSTED inspections of LAs to cover the discharge of LAs responsibilities to prepare, revise, review and implement their accessibility strategy. School accessibility plans will be subject to OfSTED inspections. The Secretary of State can intervene where an LA or school is not complying with the planning duty and can direct an LA or school to do so.

9.2 This strategy will be monitored and evaluated annually in the spring term.

9.3 In evaluating the success of this strategy the LA will ensure that there is:

- Evidence of greater involvement of disabled pupils in wider school life
- Evidence of improvements in the physical accessibility of school buildings
- Sharing of good practice
- Staff reporting greater confidence and skills in supporting disabled pupils

9.4 Parents who believe that discrimination has taken place can take a claim to the SEN and Disability Tribunal or to the admissions and exclusions appeal panels.

Accessibility Plan 2019

Action Plan

Aim 1: To increase the extent to which all pupils, including disabled pupils, can participate in the school curriculum.

Our key objective is to reduce and eliminate barriers to access to the curriculum and to ensure full participation in the school community for pupils, and prospective pupils, with a disability.

	Targets	Strategies	Timescale	Responsibilities	Success Criteria
Short Term	To liaise with Nursery providers to review potential intake for Sept 19	To identify pupils who may need additional to or different from provision for Sept 19 Intake	Sept 2019/2020	HT EYFS teacher Inclusion Team	Procedures/equipment / ideas set in place by Sept 2019
	To review all statutory policies to ensure that they reflect inclusive practice and procedure	To comply with the Equality Act 2010	Ongoing	HT All subject leaders Inclusion Team	All policies clearly reflect inclusive practice and procedure
	To establish close liaison with parents	To ensure collaboration and sharing between school and families	Ongoing throughout 2019/20	HT All Teachers Inclusion Team	Clear collaborative working approach
	To establish close liaison with outside agencies for pupils with ongoing health needs.	To ensure collaboration between all key personnel	Ongoing throughout 2019/20	HT TAs Inclusion Team Outside agencies Inclusion Team	Clear collaborative working approach

	E.g. Children with severe asthma, epilepsy or mobility issues				
	To ensure full access to the curriculum for all children	<p>Outside Play visits; Employment of specialist advisory teachers; CPD for staff and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A differentiated curriculum with alternatives offered • The use of P levels to assist in developing learning opportunities for children and also assessing progress in different subjects • A range of support staff including trained teaching assistants • Multimedia activities to support most curriculum areas • Use of interactive ICT equipment • Specific equipment sourced from occupational therapy/physiotherapy 	Ongoing	Teachers Inclusion Team	<p>Advice taken and strategies evident in classroom practice</p> <p>ASD children supported and are accessing curriculum</p>

Medium Term	Targets	Strategies	Timescale	Responsibilities	Success Criteria
	To review attainment of all	Inclusion/Class teacher meetings/Pupil	Termly	Class teachers Inclusion Manager	Progress made towards pupil

	SEN pupils pupils.	<p>progress</p> <p>Scrutiny of assessment system</p> <p>Scrutiny of assessment system</p> <p>Regular liaison with parents</p> <p>Regular liaison with parents</p>			targets
	To monitor attainment of Able, G & T pupils	<p>More Able G&T booster groups/activities</p> <p>Monitor More Able Register</p> <p>More Able G&T booster groups/activities</p>	Ongoing	<p>Inclusion Manager (More Able Pupils)</p> <p>Class teachers</p>	More Able G&T children making proportionate progress
	To promote the involvement of disabled students in classroom discussions/activities	<p>Within the Curriculum, the school aims to provide full access to all aspects of the curriculum by providing (where appropriate)</p>	Annually	Whole school approach	Variety of learning styles and multi-sensory activities in planning and in the classrooms
	To take account of variety of learning styles when teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Giving alternatives to enable disabled pupils to participate successfully in lessons • Creating positive images of disability within the school so that pupils grow into adults who have some understanding of the needs of disabled people 	Ongoing	Access and Technology Service	Ensuring that the needs of all disabled pupils, parents and staff are represented within the school

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wheelchair Access • Specialist Equipment 			
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	Targets	Strategies	Timescale	Responsibilities	Success Criteria
Long Term	To evaluate and review the above short and long term targets annually	See above	Annually	SMT, Core curriculum co-ordinators Governors	All children making good progress
	To deliver findings to the Governing Body	Full Governors meetings	Annually Termly SEN Governor /Inclusion meetings	Inclusion Manager SMT/SEN Governor	Governors fully informed about SEN provision and progress

Aim 2: To improve the physical environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services.

	Targets	Strategies	Timescale	Responsibilities	Success Criteria
Short Term	Improve physical environment of school	The school will take account the needs of pupils, staff and visitors with	Ongoing	SMT	Enabling needs to be met where possible

		physical difficulties and sensory impairments when planning and undertaking future improvements and refurbishments of the site and premises, such as improved access, lighting, and colour schemes, and more accessible facilities and fittings			
	Ensure visually stimulating environment for all children	Colourful, lively displays in classrooms and inviting role play areas	Ongoing	Teaching and non-teaching staff	Lively and inviting environment maintained
	Ensuring all with a disability are able to be involved.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create access plans for individual disabled children as part of their personal support plan • Undertake confidential survey of staff and governors to ascertain access needs and make sure they are met in the school and meetings etc. • Include questions in the confidential pupil information questionnaire about parent/carers' access need and ensure they are met in all events. 	With immediate effect, to be constantly reviewed	Teaching and non-teaching staff	Enabling needs to be met where possible
	To ensure that the medical needs of all pupils are met fully within the capability of	To conduct parent interviews, liaise with external agencies, identifying training needs and establish	With immediate effect to be constantly	Head Teacher Sensory Support Service	

	the school.	individual protocols where needed.	reviewed		
	Ensuring disabled parents have every opportunity to be involved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilise disabled parking spaces for disabled to drop off & collect children Arrange interpreters from the Sensory Support Service to communicate with deaf parents Offer a telephone call to explain letters home for some parents who need this Adopt a more proactive approach to identifying the access requirements of disabled parents Arrange other interpreters if required to support understanding 	With immediate effect to be constantly reviewed	Whole school team	To ensure that disabled parents are not discriminated against and are encouraged to take interest and be involved in their child's education

	Targets	Strategies	Timescale	Responsibilities	Success Criteria
Medium Term	To improve community links	School to continue to have strong links with schools in the South6 cluster and the wider community	Ongoing	SMT All staff	Improved awareness of disabilities/the wider community of Coventry and the world and their needs Improved

					community cohesion
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	Targets	Strategies	Timescale	Responsibilities	Success Criteria
Long Term	Continue to develop playgrounds and facilities	Look for funding opportunities	Ongoing	Whole school approach	Inclusive child-friendly play areas
	To ensure driveway, roads, paths around school are as safe as possible	Communication with parents via safety messages /letters/walk to school week Bikeability for Year 6 children	Ongoing	PSHE Co-ordinator SMT	No accidents
	To maintain accreditation of Enhanced Healthy Schools award	Continue to work towards Healthy Schools and Eco schools targets	2016/17	PSHE/Healthy School Co-Ordinator Whole school approach	Maintenance of award

Aim 3: To improve the delivery of information to disabled pupils and parents.

	Targets	Strategies	Timescale	Responsibilities	Success Criteria
Short Term	Parents with Hearing impairment	Regular communication with parents Interpreter provided for annual reviews	Ongoing	Class teacher SMT Sensory Support Service	Two way communication in place

	To ensure all children with ASD have access to the curriculum	Regular parental communication Individualised multi-sensory teaching strategies used for ASD children.	Ongoing	All staff to be aware	ASD children able to access curriculum
	To enable improved access to written information for pupils, parents and visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate symbol software to support learners with reading Difficulties • Raising awareness of font size and page layouts will support pupils with visual impairments • Auditing the school library to ensure the availability of large font and easy read texts will improve access • Auditing signage around the school to ensure that is accessible to all is a valuable exercise. 			
Medium Term	Targets	Strategies	Timescale	Responsibilities	Success Criteria
	To review children's records ensuring school's awareness	Information collected about new children	Annually	Class teachers Inclusion Team Outside agencies	Each teacher/staff member aware of disabilities of

	of any disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Records passed up to each class teacher • End of year class teacher meetings • Annual reviews • Personal Support Plans • Medical forms updated annually for all children • Personal health plans • Significant health problems - children's photos displayed on staffroom notice board/First Aid Room/DRA Office 		SMT Office staff	children in their classes
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Long Term	Targets	Strategies	Timescale	Responsibilities	Success Criteria
	In school record system to be reviewed and improved where necessary	Record keeping system to be reviewed	Continual review and improvement	SMT	Effective communication of information about disabilities throughout school