



Accessibility Strategy 2018-2020

Improving access for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities and promoting equality of opportunity in Bradford.



CCGs working together
Airedale, Wharfedale and Craven CCG
Bradford City CCG
Bradford Districts CCG



City of
BRADFORD
METROPOLITAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

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Overview

The Council is required under the Equality Act 2010 to have an accessibility strategy in which it promotes better access for disabled pupils at school.

The Council has published this draft strategy which requires consultation with key stakeholders, including schools, parents, children and young people and council services. Consultation will include representation from disabled people.

All schools should have regard to this draft Accessibility Strategy and use it to inform their Disability Equality Scheme and Accessibility Plan that shows how, over time, access to education for disabled pupils will be improved. Schools must publish their Disability Equality Scheme and Accessibility Plan with links to their SEN Information report.

Introduction

In Bradford, we are ambitious for all children and young people and this is recognised in the council priorities and our joint work with partners.

Improving access to education and educational achievement for disabled pupils is essential to ensure equality of opportunity, full participation in society, access to employment opportunities and inclusion within mainstream education.

This accessibility strategy sets out the approach that we are taking to increase access to education for disabled children and young people, so that they can benefit from educational provision to the same extent as all children can. From 1 October 2010, the Equality Act replaced most of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA). However, the Disability Equality Duty in the DDA continues to apply. The LA is required to have an accessibility strategy under the planning duty in the Equality Act 2010, Part 6, Section 88 (Schedule 10): <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/schedule/10>

This strategy applies only to schools: the Equality Act requires ALL providers to make reasonable adjustments to avoid disadvantaging pupils with disabilities, but schools have an additional duty to plan for better access for disabled pupils, as detailed below. The reasonable adjustments duty and a wider and more strategic planning approach for schools are intended to complement each other.

These planning duties therefore do NOT apply to Further Education, Higher Education or Early Years settings (unless constituted as a school). For them, the requirement to remove physical barriers is contained within the reasonable adjustments duty.

The General Duty

This duty requires schools, when carrying out their functions, to have regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Quality Act 2010;
- Eliminate harassment of disabled pupils that is related to their disability;
- Promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people;
- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people;
- Encourage participation by disabled people in public life;
- Take steps to take account of disabled people's disabilities even where that involves treating people more favourably than other people.

The General Duty applies across schools' duties, and applies to disabled pupils, staff and parents/ carers, along with other users of the school

The Specific Duty

In addition to the General Duty, there is a Specific Duty for schools to demonstrate how they are meeting the General Duty. The main requirement is for schools to prepare and publish a disability equality scheme, involving disabled people in the development of this scheme, and to implement the scheme and report on it. In effect, the General Duty sets out what schools do, with the Specific Duty setting out how schools have to do it and what they need to record as evidence of what they have done.

Reasonable Adjustment Duty

The Equality Act requires schools and LAs to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that disabled pupils are not at a substantial disadvantage and enable pupils to participate in education and associated services.

When deciding if a reasonable adjustment is necessary, schools need to consider potential impact on disabled pupils in terms of time and effort, inconvenience, indignity and discomfort, loss of opportunity and diminished progress.

Duties on schools

The Equality Act 2010 requires schools to develop and publish an Accessibility Plan that outlines how they will improve the access to education for disabled pupils over time. The schools Accessibility Plan should be published on the school website, and hard copies provided upon request. There should be a link between the schools SEN information and the Accessibility Plan.

Requirements for local authorities to put in place an accessibility strategy for disabled pupils are specified in schedule 10 of the Equality Act – Accessibility for disabled pupils:

Schedule 10 states:

An accessibility strategy is a strategy for, over a prescribed period:

- (a) Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the schools' curriculums;*
- (b) improving the physical environment of the schools for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the schools;*
- (c) Improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is readily accessible to pupils who are not disabled.*

The delivery of information in (c) must be:

- (a) Within a reasonable time; and*
- (b) In ways which are determined after taking account of the pupils' disabilities and any preferences expressed by them or their parents.*

Definition

The definition of disability is set out in the Equality Act (2010). This identifies that a disabled person is someone who has:

A physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities

The effect must be:

- substantial i.e. more than trivial
- adverse i.e. unfavourable or injurious
- Long-term i.e. for at least a year or 'life-long'.

This definition includes children and young people with: physical, sensory, intellectual or mental impairments. The definition is broad and includes amongst others children with a learning difficulty, autism, speech, language and communication needs, severe dyslexia, diabetes, epilepsy, children and young people who are incontinent, or who have HIV-AIDS related impairments, severe disfigurements or progressive conditions such as Muscular Dystrophy.

In addition, children and young people who have mental health issue who do not hold any formal medical diagnosis but who have had involvement from the Children and Adolescents Mental Health Services (CAMHS) within the last 12 months are covered. This definition also covers cancer patients who may be in remission.



Our Vision for Children and Young People in Bradford with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

We will make sure we improve the outcomes and reduce inequalities for all children and young people with SEND in Bradford District, so that they flourish and reach their potential.

By using our collective energy, experiences, resources and drawing on the strength and efforts of all involved, we will work to promote a great start in life and improved life chances for every child and young person with SEND.

We aim to create and maintain a collective approach to the development and implementation of SEND services and provision in the Bradford local area through co-production with parent/carers and children and young people. We will continue to work closely as multi-agency partners to identify areas where more services can be jointly commissioned across education, health and social care. New services and provision will be co-designed with service users and will be based on accurate data which predicts future needs and demands across the district.



The current economic climate challenges public services to achieve ever improving outcomes for children against a backdrop of fixed or even diminishing resources. Funding will be utilised as effectively as possible and resources will be deployed to deliver positive outcomes for children and support sustainable provision and services.

There is a strong commitment to building on current inclusive practices. There will be a focus on key transition points in a child's life and on life outside of settings, schools and colleges, recognising that children and young people want to enjoy play and leisure activities and to be as independent and healthy as possible in all areas of their life; be prepared for adulthood and have access to opportunities for work.



Our pledges

Increasing Access to the Curriculum

In Bradford we will:

- Continue to adopt an integrated approach to education, health and care provision through our Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), and also through joint commissioning of services for children and young people with SEND.
- Continue to support schools to improve access to the curriculum for children and young people with SEND through the provision of targeted, high quality training and development that embeds the principles set out in the SEND Code of Practice 0 – 25:
 - A person-centred approach to the planning and delivery of all work with a student with SEND
 - A focus on aspirational outcomes
 - The development of a graduated approach that will enable all schools to meet the needs of their pupils.
- Continue to develop our accessible Local Offer to support schools in finding the resources and guidance they need to support their students with SEND, and to help families understand the services, support and guidance available to them. Work in collaboration with provisions and services published on the Local Offer website to ensure information is accessible, comprehensive and up to date.
- Continue to encourage provisions and services to promote the Local Offer to families and to be involved in the review and continuous development of with children and young people, their families and providers.
- Continue to engage with children, young people and their families in order to inform good practice within schools and settings. This work is supported by Bradford Independent Advice Service (SENDIASS)
- Develop engagement with the Special Inclusion Project (SEND 8-18yrs) to gather annual feedback from children and young people with a variety of needs and ages and develop further links with 19-25 year olds
- Continue to work with The Parents' Forum for Bradford and Airedale and extend this partnership working in the co-design of services
- Continue to monitor and analyse outcomes for children and young people with SEND through our SEND Strategic Partnership and share good practice with our schools and settings.

Improving the Physical Environment

In Bradford we will:

- Ensure that all maintenance of, improvements to, and additions to school property within our control comply with current building regulations and are physically accessible to disabled pupils. Where this work is not within our control, we will advise and influence all partners, including academies, on accessible environments
- Continue to advise schools about their own responsibilities regarding reasonable adjustments



Improving Access to Information

In Bradford we will:

- Further develop and improve our Local Offer through collaboration with partners, consultation and engagement with children and young people with SEND and their families. The Bradford Local Offer is available at <https://www.localoffer.bradford.gov.uk>
- Liaise with partners in schools, social care and health professionals, to ensure that there is a consistent and equitable method of securing technological aids.
- Continue to work across schools and settings and with health professionals to deliver an integrated, high quality Speech and Language Therapy service.
- Continue to work across schools and settings to make information available through alternative methods and formats in partnership with our sensory specialist provisions, and our New Communities and Travellers Team.
- Continue to offer impartial information, guidance and support through independent partners, e.g. SENDIASS.

“I used to get so mad having to sit down to do my work for a long time so I used to bite my jumper sleeves and the class table, or sometimes jump on class tables. I am happier at school, now I can do my work standing up at the table to do my writing and reading. My new chewable necklace helps when I get mad and I enjoy my rests in between work”.

“I found it hard to access toys because it was difficult to hold on and my vision affects my learning. Good sitting helps me hold things and I follow programmes that stop me feeling stiff. To help me see better I have bigger worksheets. I can now bend and stretch my arms more to help me play and I can read more words.”

“I get anxiety when doing class tests. Being able to do them in the Learning Support Office gives me more confidence and I seem to get better results.”

“Due to my physical disability I find it difficult to walk from one classroom to another. The classrooms can be a long way away from each other. The timetable was changed so that some of my lessons were moved to different classrooms or that I didn't have to go up two flights of stair. I can now get around school better and am not as tired or in pain.”

I've got a break-out space, which I haven't used much but it makes me feel better that I can use it.... I can access all my lessons”.

Some examples ...

A school that supports children who are deaf/have a hearing impairment.

The needs and abilities of individual pupils are clearly identified, through a range of assessments, in order to place them in the most appropriate learning environment within school. Some children are withdrawn from the mainstream class for maths and English to work in a smaller group. These groups are planned for by Teachers of the Deaf, with a focus on specific language and communication needs. These lessons are delivered by both teachers and specialist support staff within the ARC. Appropriate provision is made for all communication needs, including signed support where it is needed. Other children work within the mainstream class for core subjects and are supported by specialist support staff. Teachers of the Deaf liaise with mainstream staff to ensure that planning is appropriate for the needs of these children so that suitable and appropriate resources are provided. Most pupils spend some or all of their time within the mainstream class in the afternoons for Creative Curriculum. These pupils are again supported by staff from within the ARC. If it is considered appropriate, then pupils may also be withdrawn from class in the afternoon in order that the curriculum can be more closely matched to their learning needs within a smaller group.

The placement of pupils remains flexible and is regularly reviewed in order to make changes with regards to the placement and grouping of individuals where their needs may have changed. Pupils who use BSL receive weekly sessions, both in small groups and on a 1:1 basis, with the Deaf Instructor in order to develop their signing skills. The Deaf Instructor also has a key role in supporting BSL users within the mainstream class. All ARC pupils remain an integral part of their mainstream classes and are fully involved in wider learning through such things as visitors in school and educational visits to other places.

Children with a visual impairment: the importance of tactile learning.

A vital part of a blind child's learning is the ability to understand, interpret or 'read' tactile materials. These may include tactile pictures in different formats, diagrams, graphs and maps. In order for children to learn the skills needed to make sense of these images, they need a wide range of tactile experiences from a young age. Activities like sand and water play, playing with pots and pans and making buns are all useful tactile learning experiences. To help make sure that all the children have the best possible chance of making good use of tactile learning materials we use a structured skills checklist. Activities can often be taught within normal class time but will also take place in 'catch up' times out of the classroom. As children move through the school, they will be expected to learn how to 'read' a variety of tactile charts, diagrams and graphs. We teach them the skills to do this so that they are able to manage tests and assessments and be prepared for Secondary School.

How accessible is our school?

Our school building is housed in a Victorian building. The building is currently being renovated and will be more accessible to children with physical disabilities in the future. Teachers in school adapt the classroom layouts to cater for children with special needs and/or disabilities. Alternative resources are available for pupils and staff with dyslexia e.g. colored exercise books and overlays. For children who benefit from the use of electronic equipment to aid their learning, such equipment as lap-tops, iPad's are available. We have equipment and a room where children can experience different types of sensory stimulation; lights, sounds and tactile experiences. Writing slopes, writing grips, alternative scissors (e.g. loop scissors) are readily available for children to use.

Accessibility Plan Checklist

All schools are required to have an accessibility plan, although this can be published as part of another document. This checklist is designed to help you when writing and reviewing your accessibility plan. It's based on [Department for Education advice on the Equality Act 2010](#).

Items in **bold** are statutory.

WHAT TO COVER	TIPS
<input type="checkbox"/> Accessibility plans must set out how the school will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aim to increase the extent to which pupils with disabilities can participate in the curriculum • Improve its physical environment to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of the education, benefits, facilities and services provided • Improve the availability of accessible information for disabled pupils 	<p>An audit* (see below – A checklist for schools) could help you to identify potential barriers to access and what you could do about them. For example:</p> <p>Are all the shelves in the library accessible to all?</p> <p>Is there adequate lighting in all areas?</p> <p>Is information provided in large print, Braille, etc.?</p> <p>Do the curriculum and resources include examples of people with disabilities?</p> <p>To what extent to teachers consider the individual needs of pupils in their lessons (see section on Quality First Teaching below)</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> Policy introduction	<p>What is the purpose of the policy? What legislation does it comply with? How does it help the school meet its aims and values?</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> Details of how you will make the school's curriculum, physical environment and information more accessible for people with disabilities	<p>This section of the policy could include:</p> <p>Targets</p> <p>The strategies that will be employed to meet these targets</p> <p>Timescales</p> <p>Who is responsible for particular targets/strategies</p> <p>Success criteria</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> Monitoring and evaluating the plan	<p>When was the plan approved? When will it be reviewed? By whom?</p>

****The checklist below will help schools identify barriers to accessibility and the local authority has provided a comprehensive audit tool that will inform schools' Accessibility Plans. Also provided is a suggested activity to co-produce a school's accessibility plan with children and young people.***
https://bso.bradford.gov.uk/Schools/News_View.aspx?Id=18214

The Local Authority will monitor and audit provisions published on the Local Offer website to ensure Accessibility Plan's are published on their school websites as a statutory duty. All provisions must provide the Local Authority with a link to their schools SEND Information report as a statutory duty. The Local Authority monitors and audits this information and liaises with provisions to ensure links are current and in place.

A Checklist for Schools

Access to site

- Disabled parking signposted at car park entrance
- Disabled parking space(s)
- Dropped kerb to pavement with appropriate textured paving
- High contrast signage to the entrance
- Adequate lighting along pathway
- Walkways should be evenly paved and in good condition
- Clear of overhanging trees or windows opening onto the pathways
- All stepped areas accessible by ramp with tactile surface at top and bottom
- Appropriate handrails starting before the first step and finishing after the last.
- Edges of steps/stairs highlighted

Entrance

- Height of entrance bell clearly visible and contrasting with surrounding areas
- Entrance mats etc. flush with floor no tripping hazard
- Area well lit
- Clear signage

Reception

- Provide a Lighting Transition Zone out of the main traffic area where a visually impaired person can adjust to the different light levels when entering a building
- Clear of obstacles or clutter
- Glazing should be clearly marked by banding or frosting to indicate its presence

Corridors

- Plain no glare, non slippery flooring
- Adequate lighting, not pooling
- Corridors should be free of clutter, both floors and walls
- Doors painted in a colour that contrasts with their frame and surroundings
- Door furniture in a different colour to the door
- Clear and tactile signage to classrooms fitted to the outside wall, not the door
- Displays at eye level, tactile if possible
- Raised areas/ steps, which protrude into an open space creating a tripping hazard, require highlighting both the tread and riser need to be clearly indicated

Cloakrooms

- Coat hooks a good size and contrasting colour

Classrooms (see section below with regard teaching and learning)

- Natural light needs to be controllable and adjustable i.e. vertical blinds
- Diffusers should be fitted to all artificial lighting and cleaned regularly. Any faltering/flickering light bulbs should be replaced as soon as possible
- Light switches, plug sockets and door handles need to be highlighted to be easily identifiable from a pale background
- Walls painted in a matt finish
- Furniture clearly contrasting with walls and floors
- Glare from table tops
- Clearly defined and labelled equipment, shelves and storage to encourage independence
- Whiteboard cleaned regularly
- Clear of unused furniture and clutter

Toilets

- Clear and tactile signage
- Access to a disabled toilet
- Sanitary ware must contrast in colour with the walls and floor
- Logically placed hand dryer and bin

Dining Hall

- Knives and forks should be stacked with their sharp ends downward or flat to reduce the risk of injury and to prevent those with a visual impairment from handling cutlery belonging to others
- Cover or guard any unusually hot surfaces to prevent them from being touched accidentally

Outside areas

- External posts highlighted with a band of contrasting colour
- Railings and boundary fences kept in good condition and painted in a bright colour
- Paint signs and directional markings on walls
- All steps should have a tactile surface of raised ribs set parallel to the top step nosings (according to Part M of the Building Regulations) and the bottom (preferred guidance).

The Importance of Quality First Teaching

High quality, inclusive teaching ensures that planning and implementation meets the needs of *all* pupils, and builds in high expectations for *all* pupils, including those with SEN. It is about the day-to-day interactions that take place in the classroom and the different pedagogical approaches teachers use to engage, motivate learners which ensure good pupil progress.

Good provision and accessibility for children and young people is underpinned by quality first teaching.

Teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of the pupils in their class, including where pupils access support from teaching assistants or specialist staff.

High quality teaching, differentiated for individual pupils, is the first step in responding to pupils who have or may have SEN. Additional intervention and support cannot compensate for a lack of good quality teaching.
(SEND Code of Practice)

Some Top Tips

- Teachers knowing pupils well and understanding the implication of their needs on learning;
- Focused lesson planning with clear objectives matched to the needs of all pupils;
- Strategies to engage pupils fully in their learning (learning through talk and doing, project work, group work);
- Having high expectations with a degree of challenge;
- Effective use of questioning, prompting and cueing;
- Use of pre-teaching and over-teaching;
- Giving specific feedback to pupils on progress and next steps;
- Additional support staff focusing on learning and the increasing independence of pupils.

Underpinning Principles

- Effective engagement with parents – preferably co-producing support solutions together
- Pupil voice – pupil centred approaches enable student to lead in their learning and influence strategies for support
- Commitment to inclusion (every child belongs);
- Every teacher, every child

Bradford Matrix of Need

Follow the link below to access the Bradford Matrix of Need. For each type of need it provides:

- Curriculum access, teaching and learning strategies; and
- Suggested support levels.

https://bso.bradford.gov.uk/userfiles/file/EPT/Bradford%20Matrix%20of%20Need%202019%20v1_2%20160719RD.docx

Our Objectives

As a local authority we aim to work with schools by signposting tools and frameworks to help and also gather and share best practice.

1. Signpost for schools a simple access audit tool, that has been co-designed with disabled children, to assist schools to work with their pupils (both disabled and non-disabled) to identify access issues within the school environment.
2. Offer schools a template for their school accessibility plan – to include ethos and approach to inclusive design in their school.
3. Provide schools with a simple overview of what training options are available on accessibility, use of auxiliary aids and inclusive design; what's free, what's low cost and what's high cost but worth it (to include signposting to relevant advisory teams and services).
4. Offer a free pilot training session for education leaders and governors on inclusive design of premises, ICT, information and policy, etc.
5. Review our existing guidance to schools on capital improvements, to identify any opportunities to strengthen how accessibility is addressed and the advice being given.
6. Engage further with disabled children to identify what behaviours by staff make them feel they belong in their school so that council/school staff have a heightened awareness of disability/inclusive issues.
7. Continue to provide Local Offer information pocket booklets to provisions to inform their families about what the Local Offer is and how it can help them to find information, services and support available for children and young people with SEND and their families.

Implementation and Review

The council will support schools and settings in implementing the strategy and will continue to work with key partners in the context of our overall SEND Strategy.

The SEND Strategic Partnership Board will oversee the delivery of the strategy as part of their overall strategic role. This group has representation from education, social care, health, the voluntary sector and parents/carers.

This Accessibility Strategy will be reviewed annually by the SEND Strategic Partnership Board.

