



# Accessibility Strategy

2021-2023

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

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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 children and young people, parents, schools, 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, our [SEND CYP Outcomes Framework](#) and our joint work with partners.

Improving access to education and educational achievement for pupils with SEND is essential to ensure equal opportunities when preparing for adulthood.

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 \(Schedule 10\)](#)

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:

- 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;
- Ensure there is no discrimination that is unlawful under the Equality Act 2010;
- Eliminate harassment of disabled pupils that is related to their disability.

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 cognitive 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 issues who do not hold any formal medical diagnosis but who have had involvement from the Children and Adolescents Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and Deaf 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)

**Throughout our robust identification and assessment of needs we endeavour to identify those with SEND early, meet their needs, improving 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, 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. Ensuring plans are specific about the provision required to make the school curriculum more accessible for individual pupils 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 *high* aspirational outcomes, centred around the children and young person
  - A graduated approach enabling all schools to meet the needs of their pupils. Bradford recommends the use of the My Support Plan when a child needs SEN Support.

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- 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's Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS) and Bradford's Parent Carer groups.
- Gather annual feedback from children and young people with an EHCP via the Annual Review
- 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
- Provide opportunities for SENCOs to regularly meet, share good practice and keep up to date with new developments
- Encourage liaison between early years settings and schools to ensure good transition

## 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. 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 and anticipatory duties. This refers to but is not limited to; physical, visual, hearing, SEMH and is wider than the physical environment. This encompasses a wide range of accessibility matters, tailoring the environment to the individual needs through the QFT.



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## 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>
- Continue to encourage provisions and services to promote the Local Offer to families and to be involved in the review and continuous development with children and young people, their families and providers
- 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
- Liaise with partners in schools, social care and health professionals, to ensure that there is a consistent and equitable method of securing technological aids e.g. laptops and internet connectivity dongles, providing access to WiFi, Radio aids. This was rapidly introduced during the Covid-19 Pandemic, and we would be now better prepared for a similar situation
- Continue to work across schools and settings and with health professionals to commission an integrated, high quality [Speech and Language Therapy service](#)
- STaSS provides specialist teaches and other professionals, providing support to all maintained schools and Early year settings for all children and young people with SEND
- Continue to work across schools and settings to make information available through alternative methods and formats in partnership with our Access Team
- Continue to offer impartial information for families, guidance and support through independent partners, e.g. SENDIASS, PFBA, AWARE, Snoop, Carers Resource
- Continue to develop and share Bradford's [One Minute Guides](#)

## Some quotes from children/young people and parents

"I like using my own arms to push my wheelchair. That makes me a big girl and I can go really fast. I used to get stuck at this door going outside because there was a tiny step there. Now the builders have made it all flat and I can go in and out really fast."

"At our school we have these green buttons at doors. They help us go outside during playtimes. I can reach it myself and can go out, together with my friends. I am a big boy now."

"There is a ramp at our building, I can go straight to our Dinner Hall now, not going around and around. I get really hungry and going all the way around makes it even worse."

"I am learning to use white cane now. All my friends want to have a go but Miss says later. It is a great fun walking around like a soldier, I can feel every corner and every step. I can do it all by myself."

"The specialist provision provided, is absolutely brilliant. Staff have quickly understood the needs of my child & have been working on helping to develop her skills. My child is able to take part in activities that the mainstream children take part in e.g. making a Christmas hat, Eid card etc. My child is provided with a variety of learning opportunities from water play to sensory toys. The building itself is accessible & being able to park in the staff car park during drop-off & pick up, is incredibly helpful & thoughtful. Opportunities to learn, socialise & eat with others has been great for my child. The nursery is brilliant & I would highly recommend to parents with SEND children. Wish I knew about it earlier"

## 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 RP. 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 RP. 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 been 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. coloured exercise books and overlays. For children who benefit from the use of electronic equipment to aid their learning, such equipment as lap-tops, iPads 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"> <li>• Aim to increase the extent to which pupils with disabilities can participate in the curriculum</li> <li>• Improve its physical environment to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of the education, benefits, facilities and services provided</li> <li>• Improve the availability of accessible information for disabled pupils</li> </ul>	<p>An audit* (<b>see below – A checklist for schools</b>) 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 (<b>see section on Quality First Teaching below</b>)</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](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.

Bradford's Physical & Medical Team have also produced the following [Accessibility Audit](#) that you can use.

## Checklist for Schools

Points	Notes	Done
<b>Access to site</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Disabled parking signposted at car park entrance</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Disabled parking space(s)</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dropped kerb to pavement with appropriate textured paving</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High contrast signage to the entrance</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adequate lighting along pathway</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Walkways should be evenly paved and in good condition</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clear of overhanging trees or windows opening onto the pathways</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All stepped areas accessible by ramp with tactile surface at top and bottom</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appropriate handrails starting before the first step and finishing after the last.</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Edges of steps/stairs highlighted</li> </ul>		
<b>Entrance</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Height of entrance bell clearly visible and contrasting with surrounding areas</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Entrance mats etc. flush with floor no tripping hazard</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Area well lit</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clear signage</li> </ul>		
<b>Reception</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clear of obstacles or clutter</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Glazing should be clearly marked by banding or frosting to indicate its presence</li> </ul>		

<b>Corridors</b>		
• 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		
<b>Cloakrooms</b>		
• Coat hooks a good size and contrasting colour		
<b>Classrooms (see section below with regard teaching and learning)</b>		
• 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		
• Consideration of the acoustic environment (background noise, reverberation, external noise sources)		
• 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		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clearly defined and labelled equipment, shelves and storage to encourage independence</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Whiteboard cleaned regularly</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clear of unused furniture and clutter</li> </ul>		
<b>Toilets</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clear and tactile signage</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to a disabled toilet</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sanitary ware must contrast in colour with the walls and floor</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Logically placed hand dryer and bin</li> </ul>		
<b>Dining Hall</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cover or guard any unusually hot surfaces to prevent them from being touched accidentally</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consideration of the acoustic environment (background noise, reverberation, external noise sources)</li> </ul>		
<b>Outside areas</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>External posts highlighted with a band of contrasting colour</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Railings and boundary fences kept in good condition and painted in a bright colour</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Paint signs and directional markings on walls</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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).</li> </ul>		

## The Importance of Quality First Teaching

High quality, inclusive teaching ensures that planning and implementation meets the needs of *all* pupils, and builds on high expectations for *all* pupils, including those with SEND. 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

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- Suggested support levels.

[https://bso.bradford.gov.uk/userfiles/file/EPT/Bradford%20Matrix%20of%20Need%202019%20v1\\_2%20160719RD.docx](https://bso.bradford.gov.uk/userfiles/file/EPT/Bradford%20Matrix%20of%20Need%202019%20v1_2%20160719RD.docx)

<https://bso.bradford.gov.uk/userfiles/file/EPT/Bradford%20Graduated%20Response%20Document%20RD%20230620.pdf>

## Our Objectives

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

1. Signpost for schools a simple access audit tool, that has been co-designed with children and young people with SEND, to assist schools to work with their pupils to identify access issues within the school environment.
2. Support and challenge all schools to ensure they implement an inclusive and accessible environment for all CYP with SEND.
3. Offer schools a template for their school accessibility plan – to include ethos and approach to inclusive design in their school.
4. Engage with CYP with SEND to encourage their sense of belonging to communities.
5. 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. (Contact the Local Offer on **01274 439 261**, to request these)
6. Work closely with schools to understand the reasonable adjustments (Capital Improvements, Auxiliary aids, Physical Environment) they need to make.

## Implementation and Review

This strategy was reviewed in early 2021. A special thank you to those stakeholders that helped with this review, including St Edmund's Nursery School & Children's Centre, Lilycroft Primary School, Clayton St John CE Primary School, Burley & Woodhead C Of E Primary School and Knowleswood Primary School.

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 updated by the SEND Strategic Partnership Board.