

# Accessibility Strategy

## 2021 - 2025

## 1. Introduction

We want every school to be accessible and inclusive. Early years settings, post 16 provision and the wider community should also follow this example. The local authority must have an Accessibility Strategy and all school providers must have an Accessibility Plan.

- The vision for Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council (“the Local Authority”) is for every child to attend a great school and be the best version of themselves. For schools to be great, they need to be accessible and inclusive.
- This also applies to other educational settings including Early Years and Post 16 provision.
- Improving access to education for pupils with disabilities is essential to ensuring this can happen, and that our wider priorities are fulfilled.
- It is also important to consider the wider scope of education, including access to holiday and childcare provision, short breaks, and buildings such as leisure centres, libraries, and community groups.
- The Local Authority has a legal duty under the Equality Act 2010 to prepare, and keep under review, a written Accessibility Strategy for schools and settings, for which it is ‘The responsible body’ (i.e. maintained schools, maintained nursery schools and Pupil Referral Units within the Council’s area).
- The purpose of an Accessibility Strategy is to increase disabled pupils’ access to the school curriculum, improve the physical environment for such pupils, and improve the provision of information to these pupils and their parents.
- All schools, including academies, free schools, and fee-paying independent schools are required to have a written Accessibility Plan that is based on the same principles as the Local Authority’s Accessibility Strategy.
- Whilst the duty to prepare an Accessibility Plan does not apply to Early Years and Post-16 settings (unless they are constituted as a ‘school’), it is good practice for these settings to also follow these guidelines.
- This accessibility strategy sets out the approach that Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council will take to ensure all children, including those with disabilities, can access quality educational provision, no matter which area they live in.

## 2. Definitions

Under the Equality Act (2010), a person has a disability if they have a ‘physical or mental impairment’ that has a ‘long term’ ‘adverse effect’ on their ability to carry out ‘normal day-to-day activities’. The Children and Families Act (2014) states that “A child or young person has SEN (Special Educational Needs) if

they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her”.

- A child under compulsory school age has a learning difficulty or disability if they are likely to meet the definition above when of compulsory school age (or would be likely to if no special educational provision were made).
- It is important to note that the fact that a pupil has a disability does not necessarily mean that they have special educational needs.

### **3. Inclusion**

All stakeholders have agreed that Inclusion and Accessibility are interlinked. When schools, settings, and colleges value everyone equally, they welcome all children within their surrounding community.

- The Strategy for Inclusive Education should be read in conjunction with this document, as the guidance supports accessibility for all pupils. For the reader, the Solihull agreed definition for Inclusion is as follows:
  - Inclusion is a never-ending process concerned with the involvement of individuals, the creation of participatory systems and settings, and the promotion of inclusive values. (Booth and Ainscow 2017)
  - The aim of inclusion is to reduce exclusion and discriminatory attitudes, including those in relation to age, social class, ethnicity, religion, gender, and attainment (Ainscow et.al 2006).

### **4. Area Context:**

Solihull is made up of 59 primary schools (21 of which are academies), 15 secondary schools (14 of which are academies), 5 special schools (1 of which is an academy, 2 pupil referral units and 1 alternative provision academy).

- Out of the 63000 children and young people aged between 0 and 25 in the borough, 42238 were on role in a Solihull school, including both special and mainstream provision - Spring 2021 School Census.
- 3.4% of children have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and 12.9% of children were registered as SEN Support, as of Spring 2021 School Census.
- Approximately 45% of children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) were attending a mainstream setting, as of the statutory SEN2 return in 2021.
- As of the Summer Early Years Headcount 2021, there were 217 Early Years settings within the borough.

## 5. Important considerations

This document has been created by the Local Authority in partnership with a variety of stakeholders, including schools and parents of pupils attending schools in Solihull. We have given due regard to a range of characteristics and needs to reduce inequalities and discrimination. There are several important documents that may be referenced throughout and are linked to the work of the Accessibility Strategy.

- In production of this document, stakeholders across services have been consulted, including:
  - Solihull Parent Carer Voice
  - Headteachers
  - School Governors
  - Specialist Inclusion Support Services (SISS)
  - 0-25 SEND Social Work Team
  - Health
  - Commissioning services for learning and children and young people
  - Resourcing and Planning
  - Legal services
  - Asset Management
  - Facilities Management
- This document should be read in conjunction with the following:
  - Joint Additional Needs Strategy
  - SEND School Place Commissioning Strategy (2021)
  - School Organisation Plan (2020-2021)
  - Early Years and Childcare Sufficiency Plan (due end of 2021)
  - Strategy for Inclusive Education
  - Graduated Approach
  - Provision of adaptations and equipment (Jan 2021)
  - Accessibility Toolkit
  - Early Years Strategy (2021)
  - Alternative Provision Strategy (2021)

## 6. Legal Framework

**The Equality Act 2010** came into force in 2010 and replaced the previous Disability Discrimination Act 1995. The act states that local authorities must have in place a written Accessibility Strategy. For their part, schools (including independent schools) are required to have in place a written Accessibility Plan.

- Section 88 of and Schedule 10 to the Equality Act 2010 require a local authority to prepare, and keep under review, a written Accessibility Strategy which will increase access to the school curriculum for pupils with

disabilities, improve the physical environment for such pupils and improve the provision of information to them.

- The strategy applies to schools for which the local authority is the 'responsible body' (i.e. maintained schools, including maintained nursery schools, maintained special schools, and Pupil Referral Units).
- Although this document in itself is not applicable by law to academies and free schools, all schools (including academies, free schools and fee-paying independent schools) are required to prepare, and keep under review, written Accessibility Plans that are based on the same principles as the local authority's Accessibility Strategy. The Local Authority is also keen to work with all types of schools, whether maintained or not, to ensure accessibility is consistent across the borough.
- These duties 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 duty to make 'reasonable adjustments' for disabled learners and their responsibilities within the Public Sector Equality Duty. It is good practice for these settings to have due regard to the principles set out within the Local Authority Accessibility Strategy, to ensure consistency of accessibility for all.

**The Children and Families Act 2014** places an emphasis on co-production, and ensuring that local authorities work with children, young people, and their families to develop services and packages of support.

- This means working within a multi-agency approach, to identify and assess special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) and ensure that those needs are met. In doing so, we aim to improve the outcomes for children and young people with SEND.
- Local authorities should aim to develop integrated packages of support, working jointly with education, health, and care providers, ensuring that children and young people with disabilities can access the curriculum and make progress towards their desired outcomes.
- All schools are responsible for providing a broad, balanced, and inclusive curriculum for all pupils, including those with SEND. For Early Years settings, this requirement comes under the Early Years Statutory Framework.

The Equality Act introduced a single **Public Sector Equality Duty** (or "Equality Duty") that came into effect in April 2011, this applies to public bodies, including state-funded educational settings (i.e. maintained schools, including maintained nursery schools and maintained special schools, academies and

free schools, and Pupil Referral Units). It covers the protected characteristics, race, disability, sex, age, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy, and maternity and gender reassignment.

- In summary, the Equality Duty states that, in carrying out their functions, public bodies must have due regard to the need to:
  - Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act
  - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
  - Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Throughout the development of our strategy for 2021-2025, we have:
  - Given due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, and victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity, and to foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it; and
  - Given regard to the need to reduce inequalities between children and young people in access to, and outcomes from, schools and educational settings and to ensure services are provided in an integrated way to ensure equal opportunities and fair access.
- The Equality Duty applies in relation to **all** the protected characteristics under the Equality Act (i.e. it does not apply solely in relation to the protected characteristic of disability).
- It is important to recognise that some children may have medical issues, visual impairments, or other disabilities, but won't have an EHCP. However, they must still have equal access to education, and it is the responsibility of the school to ensure that this happens, with the support from the Local Authority as required.
- The growing breadth of need within Solihull is for children and young people with Social and Emotional Mental Health needs, and those with an Autistic Spectrum Condition. Therefore, when they are preparing their Accessibility Plans, schools should ensure that they cover these aspects and that have regard to the needs of these children.
- The Equality Duty is applicable to the needs of all individuals, therefore settings should also give due regard to the needs of the workforce and parents/carers, as well as children and young people. By doing so, they will not only be meeting legal requirements, but will also create a positive and inclusive culture.

## 7. Local Authority working

The feedback for each of the key principles outlined below, has been developed in consultation with the Local Authority's EHCP Service, and with colleagues working in both Health and Social Care, with the expectation that all parties will

be involved in the implementation of priorities, through the Joint Additional Needs Management Board.

- The Local Authority is responsible for the asset management of maintained schools in its area and are the responsible landlords for academies. For this reason, the Asset Management team will form part of the work needed to ensure the Accessibility Strategy priorities are met.
- To ensure suitability of school places for a range of needs, it is good practice for schools to have an Asset Management Plan, which can be created with the help of the School Asset Support Team:  
[schoolassetsupport@solihull.gov.uk](mailto:schoolassetsupport@solihull.gov.uk)
- Referrals for changes to a building can be made through the Specialist Inclusion Support Services team (SISS). Agreed changes with SISS, Occupational Therapists (OT) and the Asset Management Team can be funded by the school's capital programme. The local authority will fund 80% of the cost of making the agreed changes and schools must fund the remaining 20% of these costs. All extensions must be compliant with current legislation related to disability access.
- If a school wishes to fund a change themselves, they still need to apply through the Landlord Approval Process.
- Planning, Design and Engagement Services work towards accessibility standards for schools. Key documents include:
  - The School Premises (England) Regulations 2012
  - Building bulletin 104 (non-statutory)
  - Area guidelines for SEND and alternative provision – Including special schools, alternative provision, specially resourced provision and units (December 2015)
  - Building bulletin 103 (non-statutory)
  - Area guidelines for mainstream schools (June 2014)

## **8. Schools' responsibilities**

As mentioned above, the Equality Act 2010 requires all schools to prepare, and to keep under review, a written Accessibility Plan. This plan must be updated at least every three years and must incorporate the same key principles that the Local Authority is required to incorporate within its Accessibility Strategy. The 'Reasonable Adjustments' duty in the Equality Act (section 20), requires schools and local authorities to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that pupils with disabilities are not placed at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with their peers who do not have disabilities.

- The school's Accessibility Plan should be published on the school website, and hard copies provided upon request. There should be a link between the school's SEN Information Report and the Accessibility Plan.



- As part of the Accessibility Plan, schools must demonstrate their commitment to the Local Authority's Accessibility Strategy, including:
  - How they aim to improve access to and increase participation in the curriculum.
  - How they will improve access to the physical environment.
  - How they intend to improve access to information.
- In terms of the 'reasonable adjustments' duty, The Equality Act does not say what is 'reasonable'. This allows flexibility for different sets of circumstances so that, for example, what is reasonable in one set of circumstances may not be reasonable in another. While it is not possible to say what will or will not be reasonable in any particular situation, some of the factors that are likely to be taken into account in deciding what is or is not reasonable for a school or a local authority to have to do are listed on page 7 of the Equality and Human Rights Commission's technical guidance on 'Reasonable Adjustments for Disabled Pupils' (2015).
- Some children with disabilities will require individualised equipment to enable access to the curriculum: smaller items such as pencil grips and writing slopes, and more specialist equipment such as height adjustable furniture, toilet seats and supportive seating. Such equipment will be provided as part of the reasonable adjustment's duty.
- More information on the purchase and funding of this equipment, alongside examples of reasonable adjustments can be found in the following document:
  - Provision of adaptations and equipment (Jan 2021)
- As equipment is purchased for the use of individual pupils it is the council's expectation that any equipment which has been purchased by a setting, will follow the pupil throughout their school life including such times as when a pupil transitions between school settings. In those instances where a mainstream school has been required to fund equipment and the pupil for whom the equipment was purchased transitions to another school, it is anticipated that negotiation about payment should be held between the transitioning and receiving schools.
- For Early Years providers and Schools, an Inclusion Fund is available whereby applications can be made for additional funding for children aged 2, 3 and 4 years old who have additional needs and/or disabilities:



- [Inclusion Fund - Solihull local offer \(socialsolihull.org.uk\)](https://socialsolihull.org.uk)

## 9. Consultation and Planning

To work towards the vision for Solihull schools and educational provision, the Accessibility Strategy can help us move towards mainstream inclusion, parental confidence, quality specialist provision, clarity of information and identification of targeted support.

- The most important part of our strategy is to keep the voice of children and young people at the centre of all we do. The recent SEND and Additional Needs Children's Survey identified that children would like us to use the following words in our work:
  - Inclusion (everyone welcome)
  - Individual (everyone is different)
  - Equality (everyone has the same chances)
  - Happiness (enjoy life)
- Children were asked for their thoughts on Education, Health and Social Care. Overall, they found that there were some professionals who were kind and they valued this. Health services were considered helpful in most cases. And in school support was best when it involved pastoral, adult support or small groups, including the additional resource centres.
- Where children felt there were areas which needed developing, these were mostly around the following areas:
  - Adults not understanding their needs, particularly around communication. They felt a mistrust of those in all professions.
  - Long waiting times in health, and an excess of paperwork, made access to services difficult. More information about certain services and thresholds was also needed.
  - They needed more help for their families at home.
  - Some community facilities were not accessible for complex needs, including changing areas.
  - Many children felt that they didn't have access to clubs after school or during the holidays.

Guiding Principle 1: To increase access to the whole curriculum offered by schools for pupils with disabilities.

### What do we already do?

- Specialist Inclusion Support Service (SISS) – offering training and consultancy support to schools and settings.

- Community Educational Psychology Service (CEPS) – professional psychology services for children and young people in educational settings and in the community.
- In school provision – including small group teaching, pastoral support, flexibility in timetables, differentiation, scaffolding, and the use of specialist equipment where needed.
- There are examples of good practice already happening across the authority, with some schools paving the way for inclusive working.
- Most schools acknowledge that accessibility and inclusion is important, and ensure it is part of their development plans.
- There have been recent changes in the Local Authority's leadership, driving forward a shared vision with schools and parents. The development of a new Inclusion Service will enhance this offer moving forward, particularly for those children and young people on SEND support.
- The Specialist Inclusion Support Service (SISS): Sensory and Physical Impairment (SPI) team can advise on specialist equipment available such as low vision aids for pupils with a visual impairment, radio aids for pupils with a hearing impairment and specialist workstation equipment for pupils with physical disabilities. They can also advise further on funding options and reasonable adjustments. See the following document for more information:  
Provision of adaptations and equipment (Jan 2021) – available on the Local Offer.
- Personal health budgets are available for parents, and parents report support from mental health services and occupational therapy:  
[Personal health budgets - Birmingham and Solihull CCG](#)
- Special School nurses have a good working relationship with schools, and in most instances, can attend settings with the appropriate space needed for their work.
- Birmingham and Solihull have developed cross border and working principles in order to ensure clarity around care and support for those children and young people living near the border of each authority:  
[cross-border-working-principles-easy-read- FINAL.pdf \(socialsolihull.org.uk\)](#)
- A range of external services and professionals are available to offer advice and loan specialist equipment, including health colleagues at [Specialist health services - Solihull local offer \(socialsolihull.org.uk\)](#) and support for mental health at [Family and Carer Strategy - Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust –](#)
- A Co-production model has been developed between the Local Authority and the Solihull Parent Carer Voice (SPCV). More information can be found here:  
<https://socialsolihull.org.uk/localoffer/home3/co-production/>

- In Solihull, we have a range of specialist provision, including Alternative Resource Centres (ARCs) for pupils with Autistic Spectrum Conditions, physical difficulties, specific learning difficulties, social emotional mental health and speech and language impairments. Information about our specialist provision can be found here:  
[https://socialsolihull.org.uk/localoffer/family-information-service-directory/wpbdp\\_category/special-schools-prus-arcs/](https://socialsolihull.org.uk/localoffer/family-information-service-directory/wpbdp_category/special-schools-prus-arcs/)

**Priority areas for development:**

- **Early Intervention:** Parents and school professionals feel there needs to be earlier intervention support for children and young people, to help them stay in school before reaching crisis point or requiring an Education, Health and Care plan (EHCP). There is a gap in provision for pre-diagnosis support for schools and families, particularly around Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs, Autism and Communication and Interaction. Potential solutions to this were identified as supporting schools in using their funding more effectively when accessing traded services and developing new methods of tackling non-attendance and truancy.
- **Communication:** Schools and parents have told us that there needs to be clarity in communications between services, this includes the sharing of financial and funding information regarding financial alongside clear policies and protocols in the EHCP Service. Relationships between schools and parents were also identified as an area for improvement, including better co-production opportunities and the sharing of information when choosing a placement.
- **Placement planning:** Local Authority stakeholders, schools and parents all agreed that there needed to be longer term thinking and strategic vision around place sufficiency for children and young people with additional needs, transition between settings and the processes around school placement.
- **Sharing of good practice:** Whilst there are pockets of success across the borough, all interested parties felt that there needed to be consistency, and ways of sharing this best practice with others. This would include ensuring strong working relationships with schools and ways of sharing practice through the local authority.
- **Accessibility away from the school setting:** Parents, children and colleagues in health and social care all felt that access to extra-curricular activities was limited for those with a range of special needs and disabilities. This includes the quality of accessibility on school trips and visits.
- **Pupil Voice:** All parties agreed that accessibility could be improved with a successful pupil voice group involved, as they felt that pupil voice was considered low across all three of the guiding principles.

## Guiding Principle 2: Improve the physical environment of schools to increase access to education and associated services

### **What do we already do?**

- There are examples of good practice across the borough, for example, good wheelchair access, flexible classroom arrangements, or life skills training for older children. Schools often make adaptations to lunchtime arrangements too, to ensure access for all.
- Further examples of good practice in schools include, but are not limited to, the provision of technology (for example iPads/tablets), adapted furniture, accessible toilets, radio aids, presentation policies, clutter free areas, specific layouts for different needs, and ensuring equipment and materials are accessible and at the right height.
- Transport to school is provided, which specialist attendants/escorts being provided where required.
- Multi Academy Trusts report that they have access to professionals who can support them further with building design and improvement.
- Advice is available from SISS (especially the SPI and Autism teams) to help schools make the adjustments they need. SENDIAS (SEND Information, Advice and Support) are also available to provide advice to schools.
- There are a range of specialist health services available to give advice or support in school working and therapies: [Specialist health services - Solihull local offer \(socialsolihull.org.uk\)](#)
- There are protocols in place for all schools to manage health and safety and risk assessments.
- Some schools carry out environmental audits for pupils who are transitioning to their setting, for example the AET (Autism Education Trust) audit tool.
- The SEND School Place Commissioning Strategy 2021/24 provides the strategic plan for the provision of specialist provision in Solihull and can be found here: <https://socialsolihull.org.uk/localoffer/education/school-place-planning/>
- The most recent Asset Management Plan for Solihull, can be found here: [Solihull Schools - Asset Management Plan 2018](#). It includes details on the landlord approval process which applies to both maintained schools and academies.

### **Priority areas for development:**

- **Consistency:** The key to many of the above successes is consistency, all stakeholders involved in consultation felt that there needed to be

consistent good practice across the whole authority, where good practice can be found in every school, not just some.

- **Working in partnership:** Colleagues, particularly those in building and asset management, felt that schools needed the right tools to be able to assess the accessibility of their schools on a frequent basis. Parents, health colleagues and specialist teachers would all like to be involved in accessibility reviews and would all like to be involved in the design of new buildings and extensions for education. All parties felt that using these tools to look at long term provision would be more beneficial than just doing so for individual children. As with principle one, parents also felt that they could have a greater input to improving physical accessibility in schools.
- **Training:** Local Authority officers and schools agreed that it would be beneficial to provide training on accessibility for providers. This would include their absolute duties regarding the Equality Act, information on mandatory health requirements and support in writing their accessibility plan. It was felt that the training would be useful for early years and post 16 provision.
- **Communication:** As in Principle 1, all stakeholders agreed that better information sharing, including knowing the best people to contact for different queries, would impact positively on providers' ability to improve physical access.
- **Provision:** Parents and Local Authority officers felt that there needed to be more thought to sensory needs, as well as the provision of equipment. They also suggested that specialist equipment could also be better shared across settings.
- **Accessibility away from the school setting:** A wider consideration was raised by social care and health, which was also echoed in the views of children and parents, that access to other areas of education was limited and needed to be improved. This includes, but is not exclusive to, after school provision, school trips, holiday provision, early years settings, libraries, leisure centres etc.

Guiding Principle 3: Improve the access of written information for children and young people with disabilities

### **What do we already do?**

- Most school websites were accessible, with easy access and a variety of formats for communication. Schools are often using different media platforms and text messaging services to ensure that they reach families.
- There is good training available for staff on dyslexia friendly teaching and communication needs. It is felt that this enables children to better access written information in school.

- SENDIAS is considered by all parties to be accessible and supportive. <https://socialsolihull.org.uk/localoffer/education/sendias/>
- The Solihull Parent Carer Voice (SPCV) are independent parent carers who work with organisations and services to improve outcomes for children with special needs and disabilities. It is felt that the Local Authority and health are good at sharing SPCV correspondence with stakeholders and the community. <https://spcv.org.uk/>
- The Family Information Service is accessible and used well to support families in accessing services for children and young people. <https://socialsolihull.org.uk/localoffer/family-information-service-directory/10561/solihull-family-information-service/>
- The Clinical Commissioning Group (i.e. health) has established a subgroup of the Parent Carer Forum for health/SEND to look at pathways and support for selective mutism. The SISS team have recently provided training materials to all schools to support them with this area.

#### **Priority areas for development:**

- **Communication:** As identified in all three principles, parents and schools felt that there needs to be clarity on who to contact and for what, and easier access to information on aspects such as funding, placements, services, and support. Parents also felt that there was a need for better communication between schools and them. Health colleagues identified that some families were unable to access technology due to their circumstances, and that letters and phone calls should remain as standard to ensure the information was reaching all audiences.
- **Access to information:** Despite recent work taking place on improving the Local Offer, parents still report difficulties in being able to find and access information. Areas for improvement include, but are not limited to, the search engine, use of different coloured backgrounds, chunking and organisation of text and incorporating a voice reader for those who are not able to read the text in written format.
- **Working in partnership:** Whilst there are services available that provide advice and support (e.g. SISS, CEPs, EHCP Service), there were concerns over the timeliness of sharing this advice with parents. It was suggested that schools would benefit from clear protocols for involving parents and giving feedback.
- **Accessibility away from the school setting:** A gap was identified by parents and professionals, regarding the need for better family support mechanisms outside of school, and outside of term time. It was felt that the SPCV, SENDIAS and the Holiday, Activities and Food programme (HAF) could be used to support this.
- **Consistency:** As with feedback on other key principles, there were general concerns raised about consistency in school practice. In

particular, the use of visuals, mixed social grouping to support social interaction and alternatives and flexibility in the use of technology as communication aids.

## **10. Coordination, Accessibility and Review**

This strategy will be made available to schools, parents, and other interested groups through the Local Offer. The priorities identified in the strategy will have a named person and will be monitored by the Joint Additional Needs Management Board to ensure a continued multi-agency approach. This group will be responsible for reviewing the strategy in three years' time.

- The Joint Additional Needs Management Board has representatives from health, social care, education providers, the Local Authority's SEND department and the Inclusion Service. Representatives from building and planning, asset management and communications will also be involved in the actions identified.
- The strategy has been written in a format whereby a 'shortened and accessible' version is available, which can be expanded to provide more information within each section.



## 11. Appendices

### I. Action plan

Leadership		
Objective	Action	Success Measures
L1. Ensure there is a culture of sharing good practice between schools, to improve the consistency of provision for children and young people with disabilities.	<p>Partnership work between the SEND Service, Inclusion Service and schools to establish ways of sharing best practice across localities – including the use of welfare rooms, flexible behaviour policies and examples of reasonable adjustments.</p> <p>Establish partnerships between specialist provision and mainstream provision for coaching and mentoring opportunities.</p> <p>Provide a platform for the sharing of good practice, as part of the Engagement and Participation group.</p>	<p>Schools will have methods and procedures in place for sharing practice across localities – evidence will be seen in consistent provision across schools in each area.</p> <p>Each mainstream school will have a contact at a specialist setting for advice and support.</p> <p>Good practice will be shared on platforms accessible to schools and parents.</p>
L2. All schools to be legally compliant and meet their duties under the Equality Duty.	<p>LA to audit accessibility plans published on school websites and inform schools of training available.</p> <p>LA to provide training for providers on the Equality and Accessibility requirements and related health requirements.</p> <p>Schools to attend training and ensure they are legally compliant with regards to their Accessibility duties.</p>	<p>100% of schools will have a current accessibility plan published on their school website.</p> <p>All schools, including academies will have attended training on Equality and Accessibility.</p> <p>Early years providers and Post 16 settings will have access to training appropriate to their needs.</p>
Joint Commissioning		
Objective	Action	Success Measures
JC1. To have improved family support mechanisms for outside of the school, including outside of term time.	<p>Establish a parent led working group, to identify where family support is required and how this can be put into place, with the potential involvement of the Inclusion Service, health, social care, communities, and SEND department.</p> <p>Establish ways in which holiday provision (including the Holiday, Activities and Food programme) can support families, involving schools and their premises where possible.</p>	<p>Family support section added to the Local Offer with a range of options for families to work with.</p> <p>Holiday providers have access to training and support around SEND and Accessibility, so they can support families during this period.</p> <p>Increased attendance of SEND children at holiday provision.</p>

Co-production		
Objective	Action	Success Measures
CP1. To seek and receive feedback from children and young people and their families to ascertain their ideas and concerns around accessibility across the borough.	<p>Support the SPCV in establishing a Child's voice to SEND.</p> <p>Schools to develop new ways of receiving feedback from children and their families, and how the feedback impacts on school improvement.</p>	<p>Protocols in place for children's voice, and regular involvement of children in accessibility developments from this action plan.</p> <p>Survey results show improved trust and communications between families and schools, with reports of partnership working to meet needs.</p>
CP2. To improve communications between the local authority, health, social care, schools, and parent/carers.	<p>Working group for Engagement and Participation (as part of the Joint Additional Needs Management Board) to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Local Offer</li> <li>- Funding clarity</li> <li>- Support for school/parent communications and best practice</li> <li>- Pathways of support (including SENDIAS)</li> <li>- Ways of sharing good practice</li> <li>- Parental feedback protocols for advice from LA services</li> <li>- Partnership working across LA services.</li> </ul> <p>Schools to evaluate their own Engagement and Participation protocols and use advice from the working group school representatives to improve these.</p>	<p>High level of satisfaction reported in survey to schools and parents about communications across LA, health, social care, and schools.</p>
Inclusive Culture		
Objective	Action	Success Measures
IC1. To ensure earlier intervention for children and young people, enabling them to receive support pre-diagnosis.	<p>LA to work with schools in using the Graduated Approach, to identify opportunities for earlier intervention and support. (Support may include working with SENCOs to identify better and more flexible use of budgets to access services).</p> <p>To establish an Inclusion Service that tackles non-attendance issues, in partnership with parents, and related partners.</p>	<p>The Graduated Approach will be in situ and used by schools to support earlier intervention.</p> <p>Schools will report that they have access to a range of pre-diagnostic options within their scope. (Identified through survey feedback)</p> <p>Parents/carers will report positively around their experiences with the Inclusion service and supporting their child/children back into education settings. (Identified through survey feedback)</p>
IC2. LA to develop a plan to ensure appropriate and effective provision to meet the needs of most children with SEND in borough.	<p>Expectations set with schools on their responsibilities for auditing accessibility within their provision.</p> <p>Schools to use auditing tools successfully to plan for future needs and offer more places for children with SEND.</p>	<p>Increased percentage of children with Special Needs and Disabilities are educated in the borough.</p> <p>A decrease in the number of children who are not on roll in a school and receiving tuition provision or attending out of borough and independent provision.</p>

	<p>Asset Management Team to develop their approach to Asset Management Plans alongside schools.</p> <p>Tuition services group to ensure contractual and safeguarding arrangements are in place for children receiving tuition at home, and plans are established for a timely return to the education setting.</p> <p>Alternative Provision Strategy completed and applied across the LA.</p> <p>SISS Accessibility meetings identify the accessibility needs of specific children, but also consider long term and future needs.</p>	<p>Forward thinking of children's needs will mean schools are better prepared to offer places to a range of SEND children, therefore an increase in the numbers of successful consultations.</p>
Preparing for Adulthood / Transition		
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Success Measures</b>
PfA1. Review and develop information available to parents regarding school placements, provision, and post 16 placements.	<p>Alongside engagement and participation working group and transition pathway, review information provided to parents around school placement and provision, including post 16.</p> <p>Schools to work with post 16 providers to ensure relevant information is shared with families and young people, to help them choose the appropriate next steps in their/their child's education</p>	<p>Schools and parents/carers will report better parental engagement and understanding of school placements during transition periods.</p> <p>The Local Offer will provide information required for parents to make informed choices.</p> <p>Better information will be available to schools, families, and young people from post 16 providers, and shared effectively. (Identified through feedback from schools, young people, and families)</p>
Timely Access		
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Success Measures</b>
TA1: Improve relationships between parents/carers, schools, and the local authority by ensuring clarity in procedures and roles of the EHCP service.	<p>Engagement and Participation group to identify the sharing of policies and protocols from the EHCP Service.</p> <p>Workforce development planning within the EHCP Service to ensure all staff have appropriate training in their duties, and guidance/protocols are adhered to.</p>	<p>Local Offer with show clear guidance on processes within the EHCP Service.</p> <p>Schools and parents will provide positive feedback on relationships with the EHCP Service. (Identified through survey feedback)</p> <p>EHCP Service workforce stability, and staff to report good understanding of their roles and responsibilities.</p>
TA2: To ensure timescales are adhered to in schools and that parents/carers have timely access to information and advice.	SISS, EP and Health colleagues to ensure family consultation forms a consistent part of their reporting processes.	Parents included and aware of all advice/guidance received. Parent consultation recorded as part of process.

	Schools to put processes in place to share advice and guidance with families in the most appropriate, timely and accessible way.	Positive feedback from parents identified in survey, around the sharing of information.
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## II. Useful Resources - Pdnet

- A network for those supporting learners with a physical disability
- Resources added by professionals:

<https://pdnet.org.uk/resources/standards/>

The pdnet Standards provide a practical structure for schools and settings to self-evaluate current provision and reflect on the effectiveness of their organisation in meeting the diverse needs of children and young people with physical disability. A set of Standards has been developed for all three educational phases: Early Years, Schools & Post-16. Four key areas identify the knowledge, skills, actions and attitudes needed to successfully support and nurture a learner with a physical disability:

**Standard 1: Vision, ambition and expectation**

**Standard 2: Identifying and assessing need**

**Standard 3: Meeting diverse need**

**Standard 4: Enabling individual outcomes**

- Training is also available for schools.
  - Level 1: Raising Awareness of Physical Disability
  - Level 2: Supporting Learners with Physical Disability
- Accessibility Planning Toolkit
  - The pdnet Accessibility Planning Toolkit aims to support schools to effectively evaluate the accessibility of their provision, plan how to improve access for people with disabilities and write a robust and dynamic Accessibility Plan.
  - Specialist Teachers in the SISS: Sensory and Physical Impairment team can advise further on auditing and reviewing accessibility needs for pupils.

## 12. Key References

- The Equality Act 2010  
[Equality Act 2010: advice for schools - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/equality-act-2010)
- The Children and Families Act 2014  
[Children and Families Act 2014 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6)
- SEN Code of Practice  
[SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/sen-code-of-practice)
- The Public Sector Equality Duty (2011)  
[Public sector equality duty - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/public-sector-equality-duty)