

Branton Community Primary School
Breamish Valley Community Nursery



Accessibility and Equality

Policy and Plan

April 2015

Last review May 2021

This Accessibility Policy and Plan are drawn up in compliance with current legislation and requirements as specified in Schedule 10, relating to Disability, of the Equality Act 2010.

School Governors are accountable for ensuring the implementation, review and reporting on progress of the Accessibility Plan over a prescribed period.

Branton First School and Breamish Valley Nursery are committed to providing an accessible environment which values and includes all pupils, staff, parents and visitors regardless of their education, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional and cultural needs. We are committed developing a culture of awareness, tolerance and inclusion.

We plan, over time, to ensure the accessibility of provision for all pupils, staff and visitors to the school. An Accessibility Plan will be drawn up to cover a three year period. Under the Equality Act 2010, the school complies with the general equality duty and the new specific duties. The equality duty now includes all those with protected characteristics, which makes it unlawful for a school to discriminate against a pupil or prospective pupil by treating them less favourably because of their:

- sex,
- race,
- disability,
- religion or belief,
- sexual orientation,
- gender reassignment,
- pregnancy or maternity.
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General Equality Duty

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) has three main elements.

1. Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act,
2. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it,
3. Foster good relations across all characteristics - between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The duty to have “due regard” to equality considerations means that whenever significant decisions are being made or policies developed, thought must be given to the equality implications.

Specific duties

Schools have a duty to make reasonable adjustments for pupils with a disability. The DfE non-statutory guidance states that this duty can be summarised as follows:

- Where something a disabled pupil is placed at a disadvantage compared to other pupils then the school must take reasonable adjustments to try and reduce/remove the disadvantage.
- Schools will be expected to provide an auxiliary aid or service for a disabled pupil when it would be reasonable to do so and if such an aid would alleviate any substantial disadvantage that the pupil faces in comparison to non-disabled pupils.
- Schools are not subject to the other reasonable adjustment duty to make alterations to physical features because this is already considered as part of their planning duties.

Reasonable adjustments

Factors a school may consider when assessing the reasonableness of an adjustment, may include the financial or other resources required for the adjustment, its effectiveness, its effect on other pupils, health and safety requirements and whether aids have been made available through the Special Educational Needs route. Cost will play a major part in determining what is reasonable. For example, a small rural primary school may not be able to provide specialised IT equipment for any disabled pupils who may need it and it may not be reasonable for the school to provide that equipment. On the other hand, a much larger school might reasonably be expected to provide it.

The guidance states that many pupils with a disability will have an SEN statement and auxiliary aids provided by the LA and so may not require anything further. However, if the disabled pupil does not have a statement or EHC Plan (or the statement/plan doesn't provide the necessary aid) then the

duty to consider reasonable adjustments and provide such auxiliary aids will fall to the school (after the relevant provisions come into force).

The reasonable adjustments duties on schools are intended to complement the accessibility planning duties and the existing SEN statement provisions which are part of education legislation, under which Local Authorities have a duty to provide auxiliary aids to pupils with a statement of special educational need/ Education and Healthcare Plan (EHC Plan).

In addition to the duty to consider reasonable adjustments for particular individual disabled pupils, schools will also have to consider potential adjustments which may be needed for disabled pupils generally. Accessibility planning Accessibility plans in Branton First School and Breamish Valley Nursery are aimed at:

- Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum;
- Improving the physical environment of schools to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided; and
- Improving the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils.

The school will provide adequate resources for implementing plans and regularly reviews them. An accessibility plan may be a freestanding document but may also be published as part of another document such as the school development plan. Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum. The curriculum covers teaching and learning and wider provision embracing clubs; leisure, sporting and cultural activities; and school trips.

Planning for improved access to the curriculum includes consideration of school and classroom organisation and support, timetabling, curriculum options, deployment of staff and staff information and training. Curriculum audits can support the school to review patterns of achievement and participation by disabled pupils in different areas of the curriculum, e.g. the inclusion of physically disabled children in PE, and then to identify action to increase participation.

Improving the physical environment of schools

This strand of the planning duty covers improvements to the physical environment of the school and physical aids to access education. The physical environment includes steps, stairways, kerbs, exterior surfaces and paving, parking areas, building entrances and exits (including emergency escape routes), internal and external doors, gates, toilets and washing facilities, lighting, heating, ventilation, lifts, floor coverings, signs, interior surfaces, room decor and furniture.

Improvements to physical access include ramps, handrails, lifts, widened doorways, electromagnetic doors, adapted toilets and washing facilities, adjustable lighting, blinds, induction loops, communication aids, well designed (passive) room acoustics and way-finding systems. The provision of 'quiet' areas and improvements to the physical safety of the environment, indoors and outdoors, may also enhance access for children with learning disabilities.

Improved access in existing buildings can often be achieved by rearranging room space, removing obstructions from walkways, changing the layout of classrooms, providing designated storage space or reallocating rooms to particular subject specialisms. Physical aids to access education cover ICT equipment, desks, chairs, writing equipment, science equipment etc. e.g. through enlarged computer screens and keyboards, concept keyboards, communication aids, switches, photocopying enlargement facilities, specialist desks and chairs and portable aids for children with motor co-ordination and poor hand/eye skills such as extra robust scientific glassware and specialist pens and pencils.

Improving the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils

This part of the duty covers planning to make written information normally provided by the school to its pupils – such as handouts, timetables, textbooks, information about school events – available to those with a disability (including those with significant low reading acquisition levels). This might include alternative formats such as large print, the use of ICT and the provision of information orally, through lip speaking or in sign language. The information should take account of pupils' disabilities and views expressed by pupils or their parents about their preferred means of communication. The school should consider how all information normally provided in a written format including work sheets, timetables, school examination papers, newsletters, information about school events, trips and extracurricular provision could be made accessible to all those with a disability.

References

The Equality Act 2010: Advice for school leaders, school staff, Governing bodies and local authorities

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/equality-act-2010-advice-for-schools>

Equality Act Guidance downloads from the Equality and Human Rights Commission – includes Guidance for education providers – what the equality law means for you as an education provider.

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/human-rights/human-rights-act>

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/human-rights-act/article-2-first-protocol-right-education>

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/publication-download/what-equality-law-means-you-education-provider-schools>

Resources

Planning to increase access to schools for disabled pupils. National Assembly of Wales. Although this document is dated (2004) it still includes useful information for all schools looking for information on how to develop an Accessibility Plan.

<http://gov.wales/dcells/publications/publications/circularsindex/04/disabled-access/nafwc1504-e.pdf%3bjsessionid=8h4hTHMS1kndYGJPDWr9GCJJtw8JqnYmr5Z2GQtcDfnyyvdGy61!-1416705544?lang=en>

Reviewed January 2019

Reviewed May 2021

Next Review April 2022

Improving the Curriculum Access			
Target	Strategy	Success Criteria	Timeframe

Increase confidence of all staff in differentiating the curriculum	-Be aware of staff training needs on curriculum access Assign CPD for dyslexia, differentiation and recording methods -Online learning modules if required	All teachers are able to more fully meet the requirements of disabled children's needs with regards to accessing the curriculum	On-going
All out-of-school providers plan to ensure the participation of the whole range of pupils	-Review all out-of-school provision to ensure compliance with legislation	All activities will be conducted in an inclusive environment with providers that comply with all current and future legislative requirements	On-going
Classrooms are optimally organised to promote the participation and independence of all pupils	-Review and implement a preferred layout of furniture and equipment to support the learning process in individual class bases	Lessons start on time without the need to make adjustments to accommodate the needs of individual pupils	On-going
Ensure classroom support staff have specific training on disability issues	-Be aware of staff training needs -Staff access appropriate CPD -Online learning modules if required	All staff aware of individuals needs	As required
Review PE Curriculum to ensure all are able to access PE	-Gather information on accessible PE and disability sports	All to have access to PE and be able to excel	Ongoing

	-Advice from disabled sports specialists		
Review information to parents/carers/ pupils to ensure it is accessible.	-Provide information and letters in clear print in "simple" English -School office will support and help parents to access information and complete school forms -Ensure website and all document accessible via the school website can be accessed by the visually impaired.	All parents/carers and children receive information in a form that they can access	Ongoing
Make available school brochures, school newsletters and other information for parents in alternative formats	-Review all current school publications and promote the availability in different formats for those that require it	All school information available for all	Ongoing
Raise the awareness of adults working at and for the school on the importance of good communications systems.	-arrange training as necessary	All aware of pupils needs	As required
The school is aware of the access needs of disabled pupils, staff, governors, parent/carers and visitors	-To create access plans for individual disabled pupils as part of the IEP process when required -Be aware of staff, governors and parents access needs and meet as appropriate	IEPs in place for disabled pupils and all staff aware of pupils needs All staff and governors feel confident their needs are met Parents have full access to all school activities	As required

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Through questions and discussions, find out the access needs of parents/carers -Consider access needs during recruitment process 	Access issues do not influence recruitment and retention issues	
Layout of school to allow access for all pupils to all areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Consider needs of disabled pupils, parents/carers or visitors when considering any redesign 	Re-designed buildings are usable by all	As required
Ensure accessibility of access to IT equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Alternative equipment in place to ensure access to all hardware -Liaise with VI/HI on information with regard to the visual impaired and hearing impaired pupils 	Hardware and software available to meet the needs of children as appropriate	As required
All fire escape routes are suitable for all	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Make sure all areas of school can have wheelchair access -Egress routes visual check 	All disabled staff, pupils and visitors able to have safe independent egress	On-going and as required, as appropriate

