

# **Accessibility Strategy 2015/2018**

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## Introduction and Legislative Context

### **The Equality Act 2010**

The Equality Act 2010 (the 2010 Act) supersedes all previous disability discrimination legislation. Its approach is characterised by reference to 'protected characteristics' of which disability is one. The Local Authority is subject to both the general and specific duties set out in the 2010 Act. These cover all aspects of equality, including disability. Further details of the general and specific duties and how they apply to local authorities can be found on the Equalities and Human Rights Commission website.

Specifically with respect to people with a disability the 2010 Act reaffirms previous duties around accessibility planning and the need to make reasonable adjustments. These duties are set out below.

### **Reasonable Adjustments (schedule 13 of the 2010 Act)**

The 2010 Act sets out three requirements in relation to reasonable adjustments:

- The first requirement is a requirement, where a provision, criterion or practice of a school puts a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage in relation to a relevant matter in comparison with persons who are not disabled, to take such steps as it is reasonable to have to take to avoid the disadvantage.
- The second requirement is a requirement, where a physical feature puts a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage in relation to a relevant matter in comparison with persons who are not disabled, to take such steps as it is reasonable to have to take to avoid the disadvantage.
- The third requirement is a requirement, where a disabled person would, but for the provision of an auxiliary aid, be put at a substantial disadvantage in relation to a relevant matter in comparison with persons who are not disabled, to take such steps as it is reasonable to have to take to provide the auxiliary aid.

The situation with regard to schools and the reasonable adjustment duty is as follows:

- Schools are subject to the first and third requirements.
- Compliance with the second requirement is through the development of accessibility plans (see below).

### **Accessibility Plans/Strategies (schedule 10 of the 2010 Act)**

All schools must prepare an accessibility plan and all local authorities must prepare an accessibility strategy in relation to schools for which it is the responsible body. The next comprehensive revision of accessibility plans and strategies is due by **31 March 2015** and subsequently at intervals of three years.

An accessibility plan is a plan for:

- increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school's curriculum,
- improving the physical environment of the school 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 school, and
- improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is readily accessible to pupils who are not disabled.

This accessibility strategy sets out how the local authority will support schools for which it is the responsible body to comply with these duties.

### **Public Sector Equality Duty (Section 149 of the 2010 Act)**

All local authorities and schools have a general duty under the 2010 Act to have due regard to the need to

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Specifically, they must publish information to demonstrate their compliance with the general duty and this could contain information as to how the duty will be discharged in relation to disabled pupils. The first set of information must be published by 6 April 2012 and subsequently at intervals of not greater than one year.

One or more specific and measurable objectives in relation to the general duty must also be published by 6 April 2012 and subsequently at intervals of no more than four years.

### **Children and Families Act 2014 (The 2014 Act) - including The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014 (The SEND Regulations) and The Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (The SEND CoP)**

Section 30 of the 2014 Act requires the Local Authority to publish a 'local offer' in which it sets out details of all services and provision available to children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities. It states that regulations may set out the information to be included in the Local Authority's local offer. The information is set out in schedule 2 of the SEND Regulations and includes a requirement to set out where the Local Authority's Accessibility Strategy may be obtained.

Section 69(3)(b) of the 2014 Act requires all schools to include their Accessibility Plan in their SEN information Report. These same duties are referenced further throughout the SEND CoP.

# 1 Starting Points

## 1A Purpose and direction of the Local Authority's strategy: vision and values

**“Disabled people are doing less well than non-disabled people across a wide range of indicators and opportunities. Disabled people are more likely to achieve lower outcomes in terms of employment, income and education. They are more likely to face discrimination and negative attitudes, and often experience problems with housing and transport.”**

*Improving the Life Chances of Disabled People  
Prime Minister's Strategy Unit, January 2005*

**While there is a basic legal rationale for an accessibility strategy, i.e. to support schools in complying with their statutory duties, its overarching aim continues to be to improve levels of presence, participation and achievement of all children and young people with disabilities in Sandwell.**

**Special educational needs and disability are not interchangeable terms but how disabled pupils are supported by schools to achieve their full potential is fundamentally a question of inclusion.**

**The approach in Sandwell is underpinned by our vision for inclusion which states:**

We believe that every child and young person (C&YP), irrespective of age, gender, ethnicity, disability or sexual orientation should have the right to be included as a valued, respected and equal member of the learning community with support according to need. This means they should share a range of common experiences including:

- Quality inclusive early years provision;
- Quality education in schools serving their local communities which ensures access to a broad, balanced curriculum within an inclusive learning environment which:
  - Sets suitable learning challenges
  - Responds to and meets pupils' diverse learning needs
  - Overcomes potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils
  - Enables them to become successful lifelong learners
  - Supports them in their preparation for adulthood and independent living
  - Maximises the effective use of technology for learning and access to learning.

We believe that the attitudes, skills and expertise of all those who work with children, especially their parents and carers, are fundamental to the

successful development of an inclusive learning community. Sandwell is committed to developing and extending these through training, curriculum development, research, and sharing good practice. This will support the aim that all children and young people are welcomed into their learning communities and can fulfil their potential. We believe that successful inclusion is beneficial both to those children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) who are included and to their peer groups. Particular efforts will be directed towards groups of children who, because of failures in our systems, are termed 'hard to reach' and who are, therefore, particularly vulnerable in terms of social exclusion.

### **National Curriculum Inclusion Statement**

At a national level the national curriculum inclusion statement sets out three key principles.

- To set suitable learning challenges.
- To respond to children and young people's diverse learning needs.
- To overcome potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils

All Sandwell policies and strategies support our vision for inclusion and are consistent with the three national principles. As is consistent with the aspirations of the 2014 Act we will look to develop them in future in consultation with all stakeholders, in particular children and young people and their parents / carers, in order to promote a sharing of vision and values across the borough.

This approach is supported by:

- A wide programme of training and development work.
- A comprehensive Local Offer
- The Sandwell Inclusion Quality Mark.
- The promotion of a shared vision by Inclusion Support, Schools, School Improvement Advisers, Health colleagues and organisations from the private, voluntary and independent sectors

### **Previous Strategies and Initiatives for Children and Young People (C&YP) with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) 2008 - 2014**

Sandwell MBC produced a wide-ranging action plan, covering Health, Education and Social Care, as part of its strategy for C&YP with SEND in 2008. This was to address the 20 recommendations of a previous scrutiny panel report. The time-frame for this action plan expired in March 2011 by which time many of the recommendations had been implemented.

However, the period of 2008 - 2014 has been one of enormous change in the field of SEND. A number of government initiatives and new legislation has completely transformed the landscape.

These include:

- May 2008: The Aiming High for Disabled Children Programme which aimed to transform services for disabled children in the areas of short breaks, parent participation, transition to adulthood and accessible childcare.
- Late 2010 onwards: The drive to create more autonomous schools including academies and free schools.
- March 2011: The SEN and Disability Green Paper 'Support and Aspiration, A New Approach to Special Educational Needs and Disabilities' which set out plans for a new assessment process, greater choice of school for parents and the option of a personal SEN budget by 2014.
- May 2012: 'Support and Aspiration, A New Approach to Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, Progress and Next Steps'. This document sets out the results of consultation and restates the plans set out in the original green paper. It also sets out a legislative timetable with firm proposals for the new system to be in place by 2014.
- September 2012: The extension of the duty to make reasonable adjustments through the provision of auxiliary aids and services to include schools
- March 2014: Children and Families Act. Wide-ranging changes to duties with regard to children and young people with SEN and disability.
  - The introduction of Education Health and Care Plans to replace statements of SEN, including the provision of a personal budget covering health, education and social care needs
  - The publication of a Local Offer
  - Putting the wishes of families at the centre of decision making
  - Increased emphasis on co-operation between agencies and the joint commissioning of services
- June 2014: Special Education Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years. Statutory guidance for schools, Local Authorities and other agencies following the passing of the Children and Families Act.

When preparing a new strategy in 2015 the local authority has considered the implications of these initiatives, particularly the last two, as it looks to support and challenge schools over their duty to promote accessibility.

**Key actions:**

- To work with schools to increase the participation of C&YP with SEND and their parents and carers in all aspects of school life, including after-school and extra-curricular activities.
- To reinvigorate the Sandwell Inclusion Quality Mark and increase the number of schools achieving it.
- To work with schools to develop mechanisms to incorporate the views of C&YP with SEND and their families in their accessibility plans and any action plans that arise from them.
- To work alongside other agencies to support schools in
  - The monitoring and review of their Accessibility Plans
  - Producing the next iteration of the plan from April 2015
  - The production of SEN Information Reports
  - Producing action plans relating to the general and specific equality duties required by the Equality Act 2010
- To improve the accuracy, consistency and completeness of data relating to C&YP with SEND.



## 1B Information from data sources

### Definition of disability

The Equality Act gives the following definition of disability:

“A person has a disability if he/she has a physical or mental impairment and the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities”. The effect must be:

- Substantial (defined as more than minor or trivial)
- Adverse (unfavourable or injurious)
- Long-term (lasting or liable to last for at least a year or as long as a person lives)

This definition is deliberately broad and includes any physical or mental disability including sensory impairment. It also covers disabilities such as mental illness, mental health problems, learning disability, autism, ADHD, asthma, dyslexia, diabetes, epilepsy, severe and challenging behaviour which arises from a specific condition where the effect on the ability to carry out normal day to day activities is substantial, long-term and adverse.

Children and young people with severe disfigurements are included in the definition as the Act provides that this is to be treated as having a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. It also includes children and young people diagnosed with HIV, cancer and MS from the point of diagnosis. For the purpose of this definition ignore the effect of medication and any auxiliary aids.

### Definition of special educational needs (SEN)

**The Children and Families Act 2014 specifies that a child or young person has special educational needs if he or she has a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.**

A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she

(a) has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or

(b) has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions.

A child under compulsory school age has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she is likely to satisfy the criteria set out in (a) and (b) above when of compulsory school age (or would be likely, if no special educational provision were made).

A child or young person does not have a learning difficulty or disability solely because the language (or form of language) in which he or she is or will be taught is different from a language (or form of language) which is or has been spoken at home.

**Special educational provision** for a child aged two or more or a young person, means educational or training provision that is additional to, or different from, that made generally for others of the same age in:

- (a) mainstream schools in England,
- (b) maintained nursery schools in England,
- (c) mainstream post-16 institutions in England, or
- (d) places in England at which relevant early years education is provided.

Special educational provision for a child aged under two means educational provision of any kind.

Not all children with SEN are disabled under the terms of the Equality Act. By the same token, not all children with a disability have SEN. These are distinctions which are in need of clarification at school and authority level in order to improve the quality of our data.

**Examples of children in an educational setting where their impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities:**

*A ten-year-old girl has learning difficulties. She has a short attention span and has difficulties remembering facts from one day to the next. She can read only a few familiar words and has some early mathematical skills. To record her work in class she needs to use a tape recorder, pictures and symbols.*

*A fourteen-year-old boy has been diagnosed as having ADHD. He often forgets his books, worksheets or homework. In class he finds it difficult to concentrate and skips from task to task forgetting instructions. He often fidgets and makes inappropriate remarks and in the playground. Sometimes there can be outbursts of temper.*

In both of the above examples, reading, writing and participating in activities in class and/or in the playground, which are all normal day-to-day activities are adversely affected to a substantial degree.

Both of these young people would be classed as disabled under the act.

**Data relating to C&YP with SEND:**

Data relating specifically to the disabled population of a local authority is notoriously difficult to pin down. The legal definition given above is, to a degree, subjective and subject to change through legal challenge. There is also a lack of consistency in the categories used to record disabilities which makes comparisons between different datasets very problematic. One

possible solution is the use of a proxy SEN measure. This was used during the Aiming High for Disabled Children programme when introducing the parent satisfaction indicator (NI54). It equated the disabled population with the SEN population at school action plus and above. This is the approach taken in this strategy and since 2011 we have been able to obtain an overview of SEND in Sandwell from national datasets released by the Department for Education (DfE).

A glossary of terms explaining these categories is on page 61.

Although new categories of SEN have been included in the new SEN Code of Practice which came into force on 1 September 2014, the latest DfE consultation on SEND data seems to suggest that the categories for the school census will remain the same (with the exception of Social, Emotional and Mental Health replacing Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties) and that the categories used in the Individual Learner Record will be brought into line with those used in schools. The results of the consultation will be included in the data for the academic year 2015 – 16.

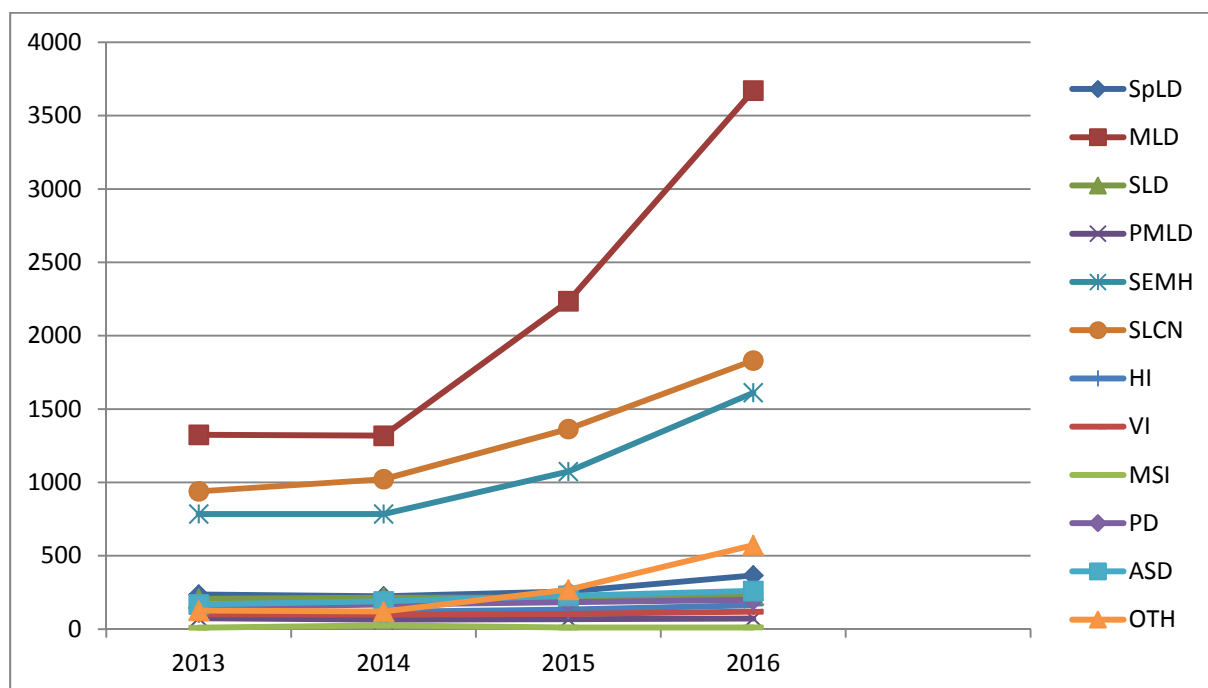
**School census data relating to pupils with SEND from 2013 to 2016:**

The table below shows the number of Sandwell pupils in mainstream or special schools who have SEND and who are at School Action Plus or who have a Statement of SEN under the previous SEN arrangements. It also shows data from the first two years of the new SEND arrangements

SEN Category of Need	2013	2014	2015	2016
SpLD	235	223	256	366
MLD	1324	1318	2236	3671
SLD	206	213	213	230
PMLD	74	64	67	72
SEMH	769	784	1074	1611
SLCN	939	1022	1364	1831
HI	107	117	133	162
VI	101	98	103	118
MSI	9	25	10	11
*PD	147	168	183	199
ASD	168	189	227	260
OTH	126	120	269	572
<b>Totals</b>	<b>4205</b>	<b>4341</b>	<b>6135</b>	<b>9103</b>

*\*Pupils who present with a medical condition are included in the PD category.*

### Graphical representation of the trends in data relating to SEND 2013 - 2016



#### Commentary on Table / Graph

The table and graph above show some remarkable data when it comes to comparing figures under the old SEND arrangements with those under the new arrangements. If we take the figures at face value it appears that the overall number of children with SEND has increased by over 100% between 2014 and 2016. Clearly this is not the case and other factors are at play. Under the old arrangements only those children and young people at school action plus or with a statement were included. With the abolition of those categories it appears that schools have been less discriminating and have included a significant number of children who are receiving minimal amounts of additional support from within schools' own resources and who would have been categorised as school action under previous arrangements. Nevertheless, the figures do make comparisons with previous years problematic and we may need to wait to see how the numbers change over the next couple of years before coming to any final conclusion.

The trend of putting a large number of children in the 'OTH' category continues to grow despite advice to schools from central government to restrict its use to exceptional cases. We will need to work with schools as to the reasons for the increase and to promote clear assessments of a pupil's primary SEN

What is clear, however, is that the main categories of need continue to be MLD, SEMH along with Speech, Language and Communication and, while not all the children reported under these categories would meet the definition of disability for the strategy, these areas continue to be the main focus of work for the Local Authority

Examples of Local Authority initiatives which include materials for schools to support pupils include:

- Enable Plus
- Every Child a Talker
- CLASS initiative
- WELLNet
- SEMH Curriculum
- Therapeutic Mentoring
- Behaviour Recovery
- SEMH Quality Mark for Schools
- Wellcom Assessment Tool
- Early Language Intervention
- Language at my Level
- Babies Toddlers Talker Early Language Intervention

Further work will be undertaken with schools in the form of a small scale audit to ensure that census data is being entered accurately and that the issues identified in the previous strategy (e.g. confusion between SpLD and SLD) have been addressed.

The Local Authority has considerable data relating to the attainment of C&YP with SEND. One of the main actions arising from this strategy will be to analyse this data comprehensively to identify trends.

Another reason for analysing data is so that the LA can act in an anticipatory way in planning future provision. For this reason it is important to include data in relation to pre-school children.

### Pre-School Children / School Census categories June 2014

Number of Pre-School Pupils aged between 0 and 5 years (who are <u>not</u> on the roll of any mainstream Sandwell LA school/setting)	
Category of Need	No: of children
PMLD	16
PD	29
MLD	83
SLCN	79
BESD (SEMH)	34
MSI	-
VI	17
HI	32
ASD	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>297</b>

Although the figures above broadly reflect the headline ratios of the main dataset, caution should be exercised in the use of the above data because many of the children have multiple needs which cannot be represented in a single category. Additionally very few children in this age group will have received a diagnosis of ASD. Finally, caution should always be exercised when categorising children at this very young age.

#### Other datasets

Organisations that support disabled children (e.g. Inclusion Support) will hold data concerning the children with whom they work. However, it is not likely to add any detail that is not held centrally by the Local Authority or contained within the census.

Data in relation to disability is also held on the Child Health System. However, it is difficult to interrogate this data as it tends to be recorded by diagnosis.

Work is currently being undertaken by Public Health through the development of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 0-5 to address the challenge of datasets from health, social care and education which are based on a variety of categories.

**Key Actions:**

Improve the data (including its accuracy and quality) as follows:

- Continue work with schools to ensure that data contained in the School Census is robust and accurate which will allow for a more accurate identification of the disabled population. Specifically investigate the extent to which certain categories are miscoded. In addition, schools may need support to move from the previous 2 stages of School Action and School Action Plus to the single non-statutory category of SEN Support.
- Undertake audit of census data to check reliability.
- Work with Local Authority colleagues to improve the reach and accuracy of data contained within the ONE system
- Consult with data intelligence colleagues to investigate the extent to which data relating to the attainment of CYP with SEND can be interrogated and used effectively.
- Work with other partners (e.g. Research Sandwell) to ensure that other datasets, such as that relating to pre-school children, provide accurate and usable information.
- Support schools to make effective use of data relating to the progress of pupils with SEND as the assessment landscape changes
- Support schools to make better use of all data that is available from external sources.

## 1C Views of those consulted during the development of the strategy

Future versions of this strategy will be informed by consultations with pupils, parents and schools. The results of consultations from previous iterations of the strategy and the consultation questionnaires used are shown in Appendix 1 at the end of this document.

### **Key Actions:**

- Carry out specific consultations with pupils, parents and schools during the lifetime of the strategy
- Explore ways by which the views of pupils and parents can influence schools' planning in relation to accessibility.



## 2 The Main Priorities of the Strategy

### 2A Increasing access to the curriculum for disabled pupils

The Inclusive Learning division of Sandwell's Children's Services operates a co-ordinated approach to developing a curriculum accessible to and appropriate for C&YP with SEND as part of its work with schools. This is supported by the new SEN and Disability Code of Practice as well as the latest revisions to the OfSTED Inspection Framework. We will support and challenge schools to have high expectations for the achievement and attainment of C&YP with SEND in line with the three principles of the National Curriculum Inclusion Statement.

This involves the following teams and individuals from the Local Authority and partner agencies:

- School Improvement Advisers
- SEN adviser
- LA Lead Officer for Accessibility
- Inclusion Support (including The Sensory Support Team and Inclusion Support Early Years)
- Paediatric Therapy Teams
- Community Nursing Teams

Consultation with the above teams will help with:

- Designing appropriate/accessible teaching programmes and strategies
- Setting appropriate objectives and overcoming barriers for C&YP with SEND across the whole of the school curriculum (including activities that take place away from school and outside normal school hours)
- Ensuring that C&YP with SEND are supplied with appropriate aids to allow for access to the school curriculum
- Ensuring that curriculum plans make the most of the advances in formative assessment/assessment for local learning

We acknowledge that the successful inclusion of C&YP with complex SEND places huge demands on the skills of classroom teachers and support staff. Consequently, all of the above teams offer training and development opportunities to individual schools, federations, and learning communities to improve the quality of teaching and learning, and to raise standards for all pupils.

## **The Provision of High Cost Equipment**

In September 2012 the duty to provide auxiliary aids and services (including specialist equipment) was extended to include schools. This places schools under a duty to provide aids and services where it is reasonable and where it would prevent a disabled pupil being put at a substantial disadvantage when compared to his or her non-disabled peers. The exception to this duty is where the aid or service is specified in a statement of SEN (or, after 1 September 2014, an Education, Health and Care Plan) in which case the responsibility to provide the aid or service lies with the Local Authority.

The Local Authority has set aside an amount of funding from the High Needs Block to fund specialist equipment for disabled pupils. Because of this from 1 April 2015 the Local Authority will only provide equipment for those disabled pupils who are the subject of an Education Health and Care Plan and thus in receipt of High Needs Block funding. For other disabled pupils the duty to provide the equipment will rest with the school in line with the requirements of the Equality Act. Any purchases can still be administered by the Local Authority SEN Team and this will allow for economies of scale when purchasing equipment and for the redistribution of equipment should a particular child cease to need it.

The duty to provide equipment costing less than £150 remains with schools. Similarly, should equipment that has been purchased by the Local Authority be lost or damaged then the responsibility to replace it (subject to the exception set out above) will lie with the school.

## **Overview**

The period 2015-18 will be a challenging time in the area of SEN and disability. It will continue to be a focus area for the Department for Education as the provisions of the new Children and Families Act are implemented from September 2014 over the lifetime of this strategy. The new Act has been accompanied by the publication of a new SEN and Disability Code of Practice reflecting the new duties for the Local Authority, schools and other partner agencies in respect of children and young people with SEN and disability up to the age of 25.

As such, a key role for the Local Authority will be to keep schools fully informed of the implications of this new legislation and new national policy initiatives.

### **Key Actions:**

- Maintain a comprehensive programme of training and development for schools and other agencies. This is to ensure that schools and other agencies
  - Are fully conversant with the new SEN arrangements brought in by the 2014 Act and the new SEND CoP

- have access to the latest examples of good practice in providing access to all aspects of school life for C&YP with SEND.
- Ensure that support, training and development is in place to support schools in ensuring that teaching at all stages is appropriate to all learners and reflects the three principles of the National Curriculum Inclusion Statement
- Continue to promote and support the effective and meaningful participation of C&YP with SEND and their parents/carers in the development of accessible schools.
- Work with schools to audit the effectiveness of delegated funding and its impact on progress and improved outcomes for C&YP with SEND.
- Work with schools to ensure that support mechanisms (including the deployment of support staff) are effective and contribute to improved outcomes and progress.
- Develop a comprehensive communication and development strategy to engage with schools around the new arrangements brought in by the 2014 Act and the new SEND CoP.
- Continue to monitor with schools and Local Authority SEN and finance colleagues the effectiveness of the Local Authority's approach to the provision of High Cost Equipment as part of ensuring compliance with the duty to provide auxiliary aids and services.

## 2B Improvements to the physical environment of schools

### Legal Context

Schools are not subject to the second reasonable adjustment duty to make changes to the physical environment. But they are required to produce an Accessibility Plan that shows how improvements will be made over time and what resources will be committed to ensure that the improvements happen. A key Local Authority role will be to support schools with this planning.

### New Building Work

Major building work has taken place at a significant number of Sandwell Schools regardless of whether they are maintained schools or Academies. Some of this work has involved the refurbishment / remodelling / rebuilding of existing provision and some has been new build to respond to increased demand for school places.

All new builds/extensions are compliant with legislation relating to accessibility for disabled people and this factor has been given due consideration during the remodelling/ refurbishment of existing buildings. The programme should make a significant improvement to the physical environment of these schools.

## Building on Previous Work

Work during the period of the previous strategy was based on the physical access audits carried out in all primary schools during 2005/06. These gave some indication of the overall accessibility of the primary school stock. Secondary schools were omitted because there was an expectation that accessibility issues would be taken care of through the BSF programme. The collated data showed that only 25 schools and 3 Residential Centres met the minimum Building Regulations Part M 2004 compliance of 85% for accessibility. As part of the previous strategy the Local Authority drew up a list of minimum accessibility requirements and prioritised schools which do not meet this minimum level for Schools Access Initiative (SAI) match-funded work. These requirements continue to be the factors that govern decisions about additional funding.

The minimum requirements for accessibility were agreed as follows:

- Two level or ramped entrances [main entrance/pupil entrance - close as possible to a dropped kerb for wheelchair users.
- Handrails on all ramps, steps and stairs.
- At least one accessible toilet– with clear signage.
- Accessible canteen/full range of associated services.

In addition, all schools are being encouraged to purchase a hearing enhancement system for their main reception area.

New audits using an IT based system are currently being undertaken. The results of these audits will be analysed over the life of this strategy to identify new priorities for action.

Following on from the access audit of residential centres the Local Authority has completed a long-term piece of work at Ingestre Hall involving the remodelling of some dormitory accommodation and the installation of a lift. This has significantly improved the access for pupils with a physical disability.

## Funding

The funding for projects to support increased accessibility by improving the physical environment of schools has come primarily from two sources:

- Schools Access Initiative (SAI) or Local Authority Controlled Voluntary Aided Programme (LCVAP)
- School's own devolved formula capital (DFC)

The amount of funding available through SAI has declined dramatically over recent years and now stands at £100,000 per annum. LCVAP is even more stretched and voluntary aided schools have found it difficult to secure additional funding for accessibility work. Because of the significantly reduced amount of funding available the use of SAI funding will need to be particularly focused. It will be used to increase the number of schools meeting the minimum access requirements set out above and these projects will be funded 100%. It will also be targeted at schools with specialist provisions to allow them to meet the needs of their pupils more effectively. Provisions for pupils with ASD are likely to be a priority reflecting the increase in incidence of children and young people with needs relating to speech, language and communication shown in the data table above. Any remaining funding will also be used for individual development projects in which case the school will be required to contribute 50% of the cost.

A previous action in this strategy was to encourage schools to make more use of their DFC funding. This has decreased significantly in recent years and this action has been removed from this version of the strategy

**Key Actions:**

- Reports from any physical access audits to be analysed to enable improved Part M compliance for Sandwell schools by prioritising the use of the Schools Access Initiative funding.
- Identify projects to enhance the physical environment of schools with specialist focused provisions, with particular reference to ASD / SLCN.
- To fund schools as far as possible through SAI fully-funded projects to help them meet the minimum level criteria.
- Develop communication and engagement strategy with schools to remind schools of their planning duty and to signpost to potential sources of support and funding

## 2C Improving the provision to disabled pupils of information that is provided in writing to pupils who are not disabled

Schools have existing duties around the production of accessible information for parents, staff and other members of the local school community. The Local Authority will work with schools to support them in improving the accessibility of written information for pupils in terms of format and content.

Written information in this context includes displays, worksheets, text books, signage and notes written by teachers on pupils' work

Schools should consider how they could provide information in for example:

- Large print
- Braille
- Audio format
- British Sign Language
- Symbols
- Easy read

There are a number of services in the Local Authority able to provide advice in this area:

- Inclusion Support can give advice in the following areas:
  - The Sensory Support Team (VI) can provide large print and modified versions of any text for visually impaired pupils. Braille versions would also be available.
  - The Sensory Support Team (HI) would be able to provide advice on appropriate grammatical and syntactical content to make written information more accessible for individual HI pupils
  - Other Teams would be able to give advice on the modifications needed to make information more accessible for pupils with a variety of learning difficulties
- Ideal for All, based at the Independent Living Centre, 100 Oldbury Road, Smethwick, B66 1JE, provides a multimedia service including Braille, audio transcriptions, large print, video, DVD and the internet.

**\*Modifications needed to make information accessible for pupils whose first language is not English is not within the scope of this strategy**

**Key Actions:**

- Promote the Sandwell Inclusion Quality Mark which will identify whether written information in a school is accessible to disabled pupils
- Produce a directory of services able to support schools in the production of accessible information
- The Local Authority will ensure that there is a training and development programme to advise and train SENCOs, Teachers and Teaching Assistants in respect of the differentiation of written information.
- To work with partner agencies e.g. special schools to run regular sessions in the use of support systems such as Makaton and Picture Exchange Communication Systems.

## 3 Making It Happen

### 3A Management, Co-ordination and Implementation

This Accessibility Strategy will link to the Service Plans of the SEN Service, Inclusion Support and other support services for children with disabilities. It will be monitored and managed by the Accessibility Strategy Group. The implementation of the Plan will be reviewed at least annually.

#### Key Actions

- Regularly (at least annually) review action plan to ensure implementation.
- Report on progress relating to the actions at meetings of the Accessibility Strategy Group

### 3B Availability of the Accessibility Strategy Document

Copies of this strategy can be obtained from:

- The Sandwell MBC website as part of the SEND Local Offer
- The Accessibility section of the SEN virtual office on the Council Extranet
- From the SEN Service (contact Jayne Ingram at Sandwell Council House on 0121 569 8227 or e-mail [jayne\\_ingram@sandwell.gov.uk](mailto:jayne_ingram@sandwell.gov.uk) )

#### Key Actions

- To ensure that the Strategy can be made available in a variety of formats if required e.g. Braille, large print, audio etc.
- To communicate widely where the strategy can be found

#### List of Contacts

Simon Whitlow  
Sensory Support Team Co-ordinator  
(Lead for Accessibility Planning)  
0845-352-7552

Moira Tallents  
SEN Inclusion Adviser  
0121-569 8150

Trudy Wilkes  
Team Lead – Capital Programmes  
Planning, Programmes and Property  
0121-569-8165



## Accessibility Strategy Action Plan 2015 - 2018

Activities	Action	Responsibility	Timescale	Success Criteria	Progress
<p><b>1A: To develop vision and values that inform the accessibility strategy:</b></p>	<p>To work with schools to increase the participation of C&amp;YP with SEND and their parents and carers in all aspects of school life including after school and extra-curricular activities</p>	<p>SEN Adviser (SENA)  Local Authority Officer for Accessibility (LAOA)</p>	<p>March 2018</p>	<p>School evidence (e.g. registers of attendance) evidence participation</p>	
	<p>To work with schools to develop mechanisms to incorporate the views of disabled children and their families in their accessibility plans and any action plans that arise from them</p>	<p>LAOA</p>	<p>March 2018</p>	<p>School accessibility plans can evidence input from pupils and parents</p>	

Activities	Action	Responsibility	Timescale	Success Criteria	Progress
	To work alongside other agencies to support schools in the monitoring and review of their Accessibility Plans and in the production of SEN Information Reports and action plans relating to the general and specific equality duties	Accessibility Strategy Group (ASG) SENA LAOA	Annually to March 2018	Schools produce high quality plans	
	To reinvigorate the Sandwell Inclusion Quality Mark and increase the number of schools achieving it	Inclusion Support (IS) SENA LAOA	Monitored annually	Evidence of year-on-year increase in number of schools achieving SIQM	

Activities	Action	Responsibility	Timescale	Success Criteria	Progress
<b>1B: To develop data and information to support the accessibility strategy:</b>	Continue to work with schools to ensure that data contained in the School Census is robust and accurate which will allow for a more accurate identification of the disabled population. Specifically, investigate the extent to which categories are miscoded	LAOA	March 2018	Census data accurately reflects school population	
	Undertake audit of census data to check reliability	LAOA	March 2018	Audit completed and results fed into review of accuracy of census data	
	Work with Local Authority colleagues to improve the reach and accuracy of information held within the ONE system.	LAOA	March 2018	ONE data relating to SEND consistent with other datasets	

Activities	Action	Responsibility	Timescale	Success Criteria	Progress
	Consult with data intelligence colleagues to investigate the extent to which data relating to the attainment of C&YP with SEND can be interrogated and used effectively.	LAOA SENA	March 2018	Extent of data held by data intelligence clear and potential use identified	
	Work with other partners (e.g. Research Sandwell to ensure that other datasets (e.g. pre-school) provide accurate and usable data.	LAOA	March 2018	Other datasets accurate and consistent with central datasets	JSNA has made a start with this.
	Support schools to make effective use of data relating to the progress of pupils with SEND as the assessment landscape changes	SENA IS	March 2018	Schools able to evidence use of guidance to improve their use of data	
	Support schools to make better use of all data available to them	LAOA	March 2018	Extent of data sources explored and how they can be used to inform plans / strategy	

Activities	Action	Responsibility	Timescale	Success Criteria	Progress
<b>1C: Views of those consulted in the preparation of the strategy</b>	Carry out specific consultations with pupils, parents and schools during the lifetime of the strategy	LAOA	March 2018	Consultations completed and results collated	
	Explore ways by which the views of pupils and parents can influence schools' planning in relation to accessibility	SENA LAOA	March 2018	Evidence of pupil and parental input into school plans	
<b>2A: Increasing Access to the Curriculum for Disabled Pupils</b>	Maintain a comprehensive programme of training and development for schools and other agencies in relation to: - New SEN arrangements - Sharing good practice re curriculum access for SEND pupils	IS SENA	To March 2018	Evidence of courses from training manual	

Activities	Action	Responsibility	Timescale	Success Criteria	Progress
	Ensure teaching at all stages is appropriate to all learners and reflects the three principles of the National Curriculum Inclusion Statement	IS SENA	March 2018	Evidence from direct observation and Ofsted inspection reports shows improvement in quality of teaching	
	Continue to promote and support the effective and meaningful participation of C&YP with SEND in the development of accessible schools	See 1c above			
	Work with schools to audit the effectiveness of delegated funding and its impact on progress and improved outcomes for C&YP with SEND	SENA	March 2018	First round of conversations completed and results analysed to identify trends	New funding system needs time to bed in to judge effectiveness

Activities	Action	Responsibility	Timescale	Success Criteria	Progress
	Work with schools to ensure that support mechanisms (including the deployment of support staff) are effective and contribute to improved outcomes and progress	SENA	March 2018	Schools are able to demonstrate through evidence that changes will contribute to improved outcomes	
	Develop a comprehensive communication strategy to engage with schools around the new national developments in SEND brought in by the 2014 Act	LAOA	July 2016	New methods of communication identified and schools receiving prompt notification of news	
	Explore with schools and local authority finance colleagues the long-term implications of the new auxiliary aids duty for schools	LAOA	July 2016	New policy for the provision of equipment agreed with schools	High Cost Equipment process in place

Activities	Action	Responsibility	Timescale	Success Criteria	Progress
<b>2B: Improvements to the Physical Environments of Schools</b>	Reports from any new physical access audits to be analysed to enable improved Part M compliance by prioritising the use of Schools Access Initiative funding	Planning, Programmes and Property Team (PPPT)  ASG	March 2018	Audits completed and analysed. Results fed to Accessibility Strategy Group	
	To fund schools as far as possible through SAI fully-funded projects to help them meet minimum level criteria	ASG  PPPT	March 2018	Increase in schools meeting minimum level criteria	
	Develop communication and engagement strategy with schools to remind them of their planning duty and to signpost to potential sources of support and funding	LAOA  PPPT	July 2016	Schools receive prompt and complete information in respect of duty. Evidence of planning for improvements in Accessibility Plans	
	Target proportion of SAI funding to ASD Focus Provisions to reflect increased incidence of ASD/SLCN	LAOA  PPPT	March 2018	Refurbishment of Focus Provisions for ASD completed	



Activities	Action	Responsibility	Timescale	Success Criteria	Progress
<b>2C: Provision of Information to Disabled Pupils</b>	Promote the Sandwell Inclusion Quality Mark as a vehicle for identifying to what extent written information is accessible to disabled pupils	IS SENA	March 2018	Schools able to evidence modifications to written information	
	Produce a directory of services to support schools in the production of accessible information	LAOA	March 2018	Directory produced	
	Ensure that there is a training and development programme to advise and train SENCOs, teachers and teaching assistants in respect of the differentiation of written information	IS SENA	March 2018	Evidence of courses from training and development catalogue. Evidence of attendance by school	

Activities	Action	Responsibility	Timescale	Success Criteria	Progress
	Work with partner agencies e.g. special schools to run regular sessions in the use of support systems such as Makaton and Picture Exchange Communication System	SENA	March 2018	Courses run – evidence from attendance sheets that schools have taken part	
<b>3A: Management, Co-ordination and Implementation</b>	Ensure that progress against actions is regularly reported to the Accessibility Strategy	LAOA ASG	March 2018	Minutes record discussions around progress of the strategy	
	Ensure that plan is reviewed and, if necessary, updated at least annually	LAOA ASG	March 2018	New versions of strategy produced	
<b>3B: Accessibility of the Strategy</b>	To ensure that the strategy is available in a variety of formats	LAOA ASG	December 2015	Strategy available in variety of formats	
	To publish the strategy widely and communicate to partners where it can be found	LAOA ASG	July 2015	Strategy available on a number of platforms	On intranet and to be uploaded to website.

## Appendix 1: Consultation Questionnaires

The questionnaires used as part of this strategy are included below along with details of any responses received

The earlier responses received are shown in black

One of our primary schools undertook a significant consultation with its pupils (34), staff (15) and parents (7) in April 2014 – their additional responses are detailed in red

### Questionnaire for School Staff

**Dear Head Teacher/SENCO/Inclusion Manager**

Please could you complete the questionnaire below to help us to gather some information, as part of our consultation for Aiming High for Disabled Children and for reviewing the Local Authority's Accessibility Strategy.

*For the purpose of this consultation, disabled pupils are those pupils who are at School Action Plus, are in a Focus Provision, are receiving PAP Funding or have a Statement of Special Educational Needs.*

**Definition of Disability in the Equality Act: A pupil can be considered as having a disability if he/she has a physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.**

Please note:

*Physical impairments: include sensory impairments.*

*Mental impairments: include mental illness/mental health problems, learning difficulties/behaviour difficulties.*

*Long-term: likely to last 12 months or more.*

*Substantial: more than minor or trivial.*

#### 1. Access to the Physical Environment

- 1.1 Are pupils who have disabilities able to access and move around the classroom(s) and all other parts of your school easily? Yes  No

*Please tick the appropriate box*

***If you have answered 'No', please provide some details:***

- 1.2 Have you made any improvements to the physical Yes  No

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environment of your school in the last 5 years, to enable pupils who have disabilities to access the areas their non-disabled peers are able to access?

*Please tick the appropriate box*

***If you have answered 'Yes', please provide some details below of your improvement projects and whether any of them were supported by Schools Access Initiative funding:***

- 1.3 Have you got any plans for further work to improve accessibility for pupils with disabilities? Yes  No

*Please tick the appropriate box*

***If you have answered 'Yes', please provide some details below***

*Please note:*

*Schools Access Initiative funding is available (on a match-fund basis) for projects that improve accessibility for disabled pupils. See the Accessibility part of the SEN Section of the Virtual Office for details.*

**2. Access to Information Provided in Writing**

- Does your school ensure that disabled pupils are able to access all the information that is provided in a written form (work on the board, worksheets, homework etc.)? Yes  No

*Please tick the appropriate box*

**3. Access to the Curriculum/Extended Services**

- 3.1 Are pupils with disabilities able to participate in everything in your school, which their non-disabled peers take part in (this includes all subject areas and things like school trips and activities that take place in school before and after the normal school day)? (See attached list of examples of activities) Yes  No

*Please tick the appropriate box*

***If you answered 'No', which subject areas, activities, clubs or trips offered by your school, are disabled pupils not able to take part in?***

- 3.2 What are the barriers that prevent disabled pupils taking part in the above subject areas or activities?

- 3.3 What is your school doing to attempt to remove the above barriers?

3.4 Do you need any support from the LA to enable you to remove some of the barriers and if so, what support would you require?

3.5 Are all pupils (including pupils who have disabilities) aware of all of the activities and clubs available in your school? Yes  No

Not sure

*Please tick the appropriate box*

3.6 Are all pupils (including pupils with disabilities) aware of the activities and clubs available in other schools or leisure centres in the area where they live? Yes  No

Not sure

*Please tick the appropriate box*

***If your answer to the above question was 'No' or 'Not Sure', is there anything your school could do to make all your pupils more aware of what leisure activities are available in your local area and which of those are accessible for disabled pupils?***

3.7 Do any disabled children and young people from other schools attend any extended day activities at your school? Yes  No

Not sure

*Please tick the appropriate box*

***If you answered 'Yes', please provide details of the activities attended and the numbers of disabled children and young people that attend them***

Name of School: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Post Held: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for providing the above information

Please return your completed questionnaire to:

Simon Whitlow, Lead Officer for Accessibility, c/o SEN Service, PO Box 16230, Sandwell Council House, Freeth Street, Oldbury, West Midlands, B69 9EX

## Collation of Responses to Staff Questionnaire

### Access to the Physical Environment

#### 1. Are pupils who have disabilities able to access and move around the classrooms and all other parts of the school easily?

- Yes = 3      No = 12

#### Reasons for answering no?

- Both key stages have stairs with no disabled accessibility
- KS2 is on two storeys with no lift access, Y2 classroom only accessible by steps, Foundation Stage not easily accessible during the day
- No automatic doors, stairs everywhere, no wheelchair access to KS2 playground
- Y 4, 5 and 6 are only accessible by stairs, also the KS2 library. Music room and computer suite are on 1<sup>st</sup> floor. The dining hall is only accessible by stairs
- Cannot access 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of KS2 building (stairs)
- Wheelchair access is difficult. Anyone in a wheelchair could access either side of the school but could then not access the other side because of steps.
- No wheelchair access to KS2 classrooms
- No indoor ramps or lifts
- Steps to all KS2 rooms, KS1 down steps to most
- We have lots of stairs, narrow corridors and sharp corners/doorways
- Lots of stairs in all parts of the school
- No wheelchair access, not much room in classrooms – tables too close together

#### 2. Have you made any improvements to the physical environment of your school in the last 5 years to enable disabled pupils to access the areas their non-disabled peers are able to access?

- Yes = 0      No = 13      N/R = 2

#### 3. Have you any plans for further work to improve accessibility for disabled pupils?

- Yes = 2      No = 4      Unsure = 6      N/R = 3

#### If 'yes' please give details

- Ramp at front of building
- Ramps, maybe lift?

### Access to Written Information

**1. Does your school ensure that disabled pupils are able to access all information that is provided in written form?**

- Yes = 12    No = 1    N/R = 2

### Access to the School Curriculum

**1. Are disabled pupils able to take part in all activities in which their non-disabled peers take part?**

- Yes = 10    No = 3    N/R = 2

**If 'no' what activities are disabled pupils not able to take part in?**

- Forest school, cookery – no low-level facilities for wheelchair users

**2. What are the barriers that prevent disabled pupils taking part in these activities?**

- No disabled access
- No smooth pathways (for access to Forest school)

**3. What is your school doing to attempt to remove the above barriers**

- Unsure

**4. Do you need any support from the LA to enable you to remove some of the barriers and ,if so, what support would you require?**

- Funding for disabled access
- More consultation

**5. Are all pupils (including disabled pupils) aware of all of the activities and clubs available in your school**

- Yes = 12    No = 0    Not sure = 2    N/R = 1

**6. Are all pupils (including disabled pupils) aware of all of the activities and clubs available in other schools or leisure centres in the area where they live?**

- Yes = 5    No = 0    Not sure = 9    N/R = 1

**If 'no' or 'not sure' is there anything your school could do to make your pupils aware of leisure activities available in your local area and which ones are accessible for disabled pupils?**

- More information from local leisure / sports clubs
- Have pamphlets in reception

**7. Do any disabled children from other schools attend any extended day activities at your school?**

- Yes = 1      No = 9      Not sure = 4      N/R = 1

**If 'yes' how many children and for what activities?**

- 2 children at KS1 multi-skills after-school club

**Commentary on Staff Responses**

- Staff appear to be more aware of issues relating to the physical environment in the school
- Staff are not sure about plans to improve physical access – has Accessibility Plan been shared?
- No issues raised in relation to differentiation of lessons to increase access to the curriculum or modifications to written resources
- Staff would welcome consultation with LA on how to remove barriers to accessibility



## Questionnaire for Disabled Pupils

Initially the curriculum questionnaires were given to pupils in one of the Local Authority focus provisions. Other pupils will be consulted in the early stages of the strategy. The pupils completed the questionnaires with the assistance of appropriate adults (e.g. LSAs, learning mentors, SENCO) as/if required.

### Instructions to Support Staff:

Dear Colleague

Please could you help us to gather some information from \*disabled pupils at your school by completing the attached questionnaire with at least one disabled pupil. Please use the questions as the basis for a dialogue with the pupil(s) to collect the information requested. **You may need to rephrase questions and/or use pictures /symbols etc to assist pupils to understand what is required. Feel free to use whatever support mechanisms a pupil needs, but please avoid influencing their views/opinions.**

*\*For the purpose of this consultation, disabled pupils are those pupils who are at School Action Plus, are in a Focus Provision, receiving PAP Funding or have a Statement of SEN.*

### Definition of Disability in the Equality Act:

**A person can be considered as having a disability if he/she has a physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.**

Please note:

*Physical impairments: include sensory impairments*

*Mental impairments: include mental illness/mental health problems/learning difficulties/behaviour difficulties*

*Long-term: likely to last 12 months or more*

*Substantial: more than minor or trivial*

Dear Pupil

We want to make sure that all children and young people have the chance to take part in all the activities their school offers. But for some children and young people this is not always easy. This may be because they have a physical disability, or difficulty with their sight or hearing or they might find reading, writing and remembering lots of information difficult.

We are asking pupils to answer some questions. We will read all your answers and use your views to make plans to improve schools.

*You may need an adult to help you to read these questions and/or write your answers for you. That adult will not discuss anything you say with anyone in your school – so don't be afraid to give your honest views and opinions.*

**1. Physical Environment**

- 1.1 Are you able to move around the classroom(s) and all other parts of your school easily? Yes  No

*Please tick the appropriate box*

- 1.2 Are the other children and young people able to move around the classroom(s) and all other parts of your school easily? Yes  No

*Please tick the appropriate box*

- 1.3 If you or other young people in your school have any difficulty moving around the classroom(s) or any other parts of your school what sort of things do you think would make it easier or better?

**2. Information Provided in Writing**

- 2.1 Are you able to read and understand everything that is written down (presented in a written form) for you (e.g. what your teacher writes in your books, written homework, written worksheets, writing on the board)? Yes  No

*Please tick the appropriate box*

- 2.2 Do you think that all the other children and young people in your school are able to read and understand everything that is presented in a written form? Yes  No

*Please tick the appropriate box*

- 2.3 If you or other children and young people in your school have difficulty reading or understanding information that is presented in a written form, what do think would make it easier or better?

**3. The Curriculum (including extended day activities)**

**3.1** Are you able to do all the things in your school, which other young people do (this includes all of the lessons and things like school trips and activities that take place in school before and after the normal school day)? *See attached list of examples of activities.* Yes  No

*Please tick the appropriate box*

**3.2** Are all the other children and young people in your school able to take part in all of the activities offered by your school (including school trips)? Yes  No

*Please tick the appropriate box*

**3.3** If you answered no, which activities, clubs or trips offered by your school, are you unable to take part in?

**3.4** Why do you think you are unable to take part?

**3.5** What sort of things would help you to take part?

**3.6** What sort of activities and clubs would you like to take part in?

**3.7** Are those activities and clubs available in your school? Yes  No

*Please tick the appropriate box*

**3.8** In lessons do teachers give you work that is different to other children? Yes  No

*Please tick the appropriate box*

**3.9** If you answered yes to question 8, how is it different?

**3.10** If you answered no to question 8, would you like the work to be different and how would it be different?

Please ask a member of staff from your school to send your completed questionnaire as soon as they can to

Jayne Ingram, SEN Service  
Children and Families, Sandwell Council House,  
PO Box 16230, Oldbury, West Midlands B69 3DE  
Tel. 0121-569-8227

**Dear Colleague**

Before returning this questionnaire in the envelope provided, please provide the information requested below, for our subsequent collation/analysis. This is for office use only, and individual pupil's details will not be shared with anyone.

**Name of School:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of Pupil:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Year Group:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Male/Female** \_\_\_\_\_ **Ethnic Origin:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Nature of Pupil's Disability:** \_\_\_\_\_

*(Please see above definition and attached sheet of examples)*

\*Support Provided: SA / SA+ / PAP / FP / Statement

\* Please circle as appropriate

## Collation of Responses to Pupil Questionnaire

### Access to the Physical Environment

**1. Are you able to move around the classroom and all other parts of your school easily?**

Yes = 33      No = 1

**2. Are the other children and young people able to move around the classroom and all other parts of your school easily?**

Yes = 33      No = 1

**3. If you or other children have difficulty moving around what sort of things would make it easier or better?**

- Lifts and escalators (x17)
- Disabled lift
- Ramps (x2)
- More space (x2)
- Bigger classrooms so there is space
- Map
- Help them
- Safer stairs

### Access to Information Provided in Writing

**1. Are you able to understand everything that is written down for you?**

Yes = 31      No = 3

**2. Do you think that all the other children and young people in your school can read and understand everything that is written down for them?**

Yes = 21      No = 13

**3. If you or other children and young people in your school find it hard to read or understand what is written down for them what would make it easier or better?**

- Some people struggle with their work and have to put their hand up to tell the teacher
- Pictures (x2)
- Print outs of sheets in their language (x2)
- Bigger print outs and using interesting pictures
- Bigger writing and simple words
- Adults getting them to read every day
- Simpler books to start off with – then start using harder books

- Scanner
- Record to explain what to do
- It would be better if parents read with their child as they reach higher year groups
- Bigger writing and reading better
- Bigger writing, a teacher with them, spare glasses, more time reading
- More learning clubs (x2)
- Help them to pronounce the words
- Spell it or take it apart
- Kindle
- Don't join letters
- Glasses
- You can print answer sheets to children that speak a different language
- Make it more clear
- Ask the teacher
- The board could be more clean

### **Access to the Curriculum (including Extended day Activities)**

**1. Are you able to do all things in your school, which other young people do (this includes all of the lessons and things like school trips and activities that take place in school before and after the normal school day)?**

- No
  - Yes
  - Yes I feel able to take part
  - Yes mostly but not always PE as this is sometimes outside and not suitable for me
  - Not really – I can't go on all school trips to places like Drayton Manor but they do sort out something else for us. I might not be able to stay to after-school clubs because the transport won't do lots of collections.
  - I can do lessons but I can't go to trips because my mom says I can't go to trips because I have loads of medical problems. If I am ill there is no doctor to call to come and take me to the hospital.
  - Yes
  - Yes with support, not some trips
  - Yes
  - Yes
  - Yes
  - We can take part but transport is a problem
  - Some school trips I can't do because they are at roller-coaster rides
  - Yes
  - Yes, as long as transport is provided
  - No (Yes in lessons)
  - Yes
- Yes = 33      No = 1



- Activities are not suitable for me – not suited to a wheelchair user.
- Activities are not suitable for me – not suited to a wheelchair user.
- PE activities not suitable to wheelchair users
- I couldn't get on the rides without help. PE activities are not suitable
- Because if I get knocked over if there is a big crowd of people trying to get one place at a time and I don't take part in trips because I'm scared if I will get knocked over
- No disability access
- We can't get out of our wheelchairs to do the sports
- They don't have the correct equipment for us
- PE activities not suitable to wheelchair users
- I couldn't get on the rides without help. PE activities are not suitable
- Because if I get knocked over if there is a big crowd of people trying to get one place at a time and I don't take part in trips because I'm scared if I will get knocked over
- No disability access
- We can't get out of our wheelchairs to do the sports
- They don't have the correct equipment for us
- Because of my disability
  
- **Feeling ill or parents say no**

#### **5. What sort of things would help you take part?**

- Specialised PE equipment
- PE that is adapted to include wheelchair users
- Someone to help me on. Suitable activities
- If I had someone with me that would support me and help me.
- Venues with access
- Correct equipment
- Correct equipment
- Having LSP
- Transport, suitable activities offered

#### **6. What sort of activities and clubs would you like to take part in?**

- I like cooking and doing gym. Do horse riding in my own time
- PE
- I would like to do basketball, so I enjoy sports club
- Nothing else
- Bowling, ice-skating, shopping, cinema, Pizza Hut, go to see a show (Disney on Ice, theatre, pantomime)
- I already do activities on a Wednesday
- Art
- Football, PlayStation
- Table-tennis



- Football
- Sport club on Wednesday
- Homework club, breakfast club, reading book club, wheelchair football
- Art clubs, cooking clubs
- Crafts
- Wheelchair football
- Football
  
- Singing / dancing
- Newspaper club,
- Film club (x5)
- Football club (x4)
- Art club (x2)
- Sports clubs (x5)
- Cinema
- Library club (x3)
- Pokemon club
- Multi-skills
- Garden club
- PE, Dancing, yoga

**7. Are those activities and clubs available in your school?**

- Some of them
  - Yes
  - Yes, I go every Wednesday
  - Yes, lots of extra activities are available
  - Not really
  - Yes
  - Yes
  - No
  - Yes
  - Yes
  - Yes
  - Just homework club
  - Yes
  - Yes
  - Yes, but focusing on GCSE revision so can't participate as it coincides with the session
- Yes = 22      No = 6      N/R = 6

**8. In lessons do teachers give you work that is different to other children?**

- No
- Sometimes
- My work is sometimes different so that I can see it and understand it

- Sometimes, or I do smaller amounts
- Sometimes – I don't need easier work but people just presume I do
- No, I don't get different work because I don't need it
- No
- Yes
- Yes
- Yes
- The work is the same apart from doing tables – they withdraw me
- No it is for my working level
- No
- No
- Yes
- No – not needed
- No

• Yes = 16    No = 16    N/R = 2

**9. If you answered yes to question 8, how is it different?**

- Their work is harder
- Sometimes the font is bigger so that I can see it
- I have been withdrawn into specialised English and Maths groups
- They think I need more simple work
- Tasks broken down
- It's easier
- I can do it better
- I struggle with tables they withdraw me
- Enlarged
  
- More difficult
- Blue table get the easy stuff and I can do that
- Dependent on learning level
- Because different levels (x3)
- Because different groups have different tasks
- Because there are different sets
- Some people get lower level work than others
- I get harder work
- Other groups having different work
- Work is different based on different learning levels

**10. If you answered no to question 8, would you like the work to be different and how would it be different?**

- No, I don't want to be treated differently to other students
- Just to be allowed to work on the netbooks more rather than writing
- It is OK the way it is already
- I would like more music lessons
- I would like more practical lessons
- Easier work in lessons
- No
- No
  
- Different questions but the same level
- No
- For each of us to have works at our levels
- No because I could be working lower than most people
- No
- No, I don't want to be different – everyone is the same
- Yes
- No because we work together
- No
- Don't know
- I don't want different work because if I don't understand it I won't be able to ask my next-door person
- No because we can all work together as a team
- I would like to have spellings and extra maths work
- It can be harder
- No!
- Yes because I would like harder work

**Is there anything else you would like to add?**

- No, I am happy with what the school has to offer me
- I am happy
- I would like to come to the homework club
- I would like drum lessons

## Analysis of Responses

There was previous anecdotal evidence which pointed to areas of concern for disabled pupils. Although the sample size is small these responses do seem to back up that evidence.

Areas that need to be addressed as part of this strategy are:

- Accessibility to the physical environment does not appear to be a big issue but the respondents do realise that there is scope for improvement, particularly with the provision of lifts.
- Children who responded appear to regard access to written information as an issue for other young people and not for them. Issues relating to EAL are outside the scope of this strategy but we should take heed of their reference to the required reasonable adjustments (modified text, adult support and the provision of specialist equipment)
- Failure to differentiate activities (either in formal lessons such as PE or on trips) Children are aware that other pupils are given different work because they are at different levels but equally they are wary about being treated differently and being given work that is significantly different to their peers.
- Availability (or lack) of transport to allow disabled pupils to attend clubs / activities
- Lack of specialist equipment to allow access to activities
- Availability of support (including trained staff to meet the needs of pupils with more complex medical needs)
- Lack of parental confidence that their children can take part in activities

## Questionnaire for Parents/Carers

Dear Parents/Carers

Under the terms of the 2010 Equality Act the Local Authority has to produce an Accessibility Strategy. This strategy outlines the Local Authority's plans to support schools for which it is the responsible body to increase access for disabled pupils to:

- School buildings
- Information which is normally provided in writing to other pupils
- The curriculum within schools (including extended day activities)

The strategy is currently being reviewed and as part of this review, the Local Authority is carrying out some consultation with interested parties including school staff, parents and pupils.

We would be grateful if you could spend a few minutes completing the attached questionnaire. Your responses will help the Local Authority produce a strategy which will support the development of access for all pupils including those with a disability.

*If you require any assistance to complete the attached questionnaire please contact Simon Whitlow on 0845-352-7552.*

*For the purpose of this consultation we are considering disabled pupils to mean those pupils who are at School Action Plus, are in a Focus Provision, receiving PAP Funding or have a Statement of Special Educational Needs.*

### **Definition of Disability in the Equality Act:**

**A person is disabled if he/she has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial, long-term and adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day- to- day activities.**

Please note:

*Physical impairments: these include sensory impairments.*

*Mental impairments: include mental illness/mental health problems/learning difficulties/behaviour difficulties.*

*Long-term: has lasted or is likely to last 12 months or more.*

*Substantial: more than minor or trivial.*

We would like you to provide the information requested below, for our subsequent collation/analysis. This is for office use only, and your child's details will not be shared with anyone. However, you do not have to provide the information requested on this page if you do not wish to do so.

**Personal details** (this is optional)

**Name of your Child:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Year Group:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of their School:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Male/Female** \_\_\_\_\_ **Ethnic Origin:** \_\_\_\_\_

*\* Please circle as appropriate*

**Nature of your Child's Disability:** \_\_\_\_\_

*(Please see above definition and attached sheet of examples)*

**\*Support Provided:** Support at School Action Plus/PAP Funding/Place in a Focus Provision/Has a Statement of Special Educational Needs/Not Sure

*\* Please circle as appropriate*

**1. Physical Environment**

**1.1** Is your child able to move around the classroom(s) and all other parts of their school easily? Yes  No

*Please tick the appropriate box*

**1.2** Are the other children and young people able to move around the classroom(s) and all other parts of your school easily? Yes  No

Not sure

*Please tick the appropriate box*

**1.3** Does your child's school have signs in pictures/symbols as well as in words to help pupils to find their way around? Yes  No

*Please tick the appropriate box*

**1.4** If your child (or other young people in their school) have any difficulty moving around the classroom(s) or any other parts of their school, what sort of things do you think would make it easier or better for them?

**2. Information Provided in Writing**

**2.1** Is your child able to read and understand everything that is written down (presented in a written form) for him/her e.g. what the teachers write in their books or on the board, written homework, written worksheets etc. ? Yes  No

*Please tick the appropriate box*

**2.2** What does your child's school do to make it easier for him/her to understand written information?

2.3 What (else) do you think your child's school could do to make it easier for your child to understand all the information that their school gives them in a written form?

**3. The Curriculum (including extended day activities)**

3.1 Is your child able to do all the things in their school, which other young people do (this includes things like school trips and activities that take place in school before and after the normal school day)? (See attached list of examples of activities)

Yes  No

*Please tick the appropriate box*

If you answered 'No' to the above question, which activities, clubs or trips offered by your school, is your child unable to take part in?

3.2 Why do you think your child is unable to take part in the above activities?

3.3 What sort of things would help your child to take part?

3.4 What sort of activities and clubs would your child like to take part in?

3.5 Are those activities and clubs available in their school? Yes  No   
Not sure

*Please tick the appropriate box*

3.6 Are those activities and clubs available in other schools or leisure centres in the area where you live? Yes  No

Not sure

*Please tick the appropriate box*

3.7 If you answered 'Yes' to either question 3.5 or 3.6, does your child take part in those activities? Yes  No

3.8 If you answered 'No' to question 3.7 please explain why your child does not/or is unable to take part in the activities

3.9 If you could choose where your child takes part in the activities, where would you like them to take place?

3.10 Are there any services which may help you that you cannot access? Yes  No

If 'Yes', please specify

3.11 Please use the space in this box to tell us anything else you think we should know, or that you would like to say in relation to any area on this questionnaire?

Thank you for giving us this information.

Please return your completed questionnaire to:

Simon Whitlow  
Inclusion Support  
Connor Education Centre  
Connor Road  
West Bromwich, B71 3DJ

**Tel: 0845-352-7552**

***Calls cost 7p per minute plus your phone company's access charge. This number will be changing to a local 0121 number in the near future***

**Data Protection Act 1998**

This information is collected solely for the purpose of informing Sandwell's Accessibility Strategy and individual data will be held within Sandwell's Children and Families Division. Aggregated data will be shared with the Accessibility Strategy Group but no data which could identify an individual will be shared

If you have a query or concern regarding this, please contact Simon Whitlow on the number above.



## Collation of Responses to Parents Questionnaire

In order to facilitate responses from parents and carers a modified questionnaire was distributed asking for parental comments under the three main headings

- The Physical Environment
- Written Information
- The school curriculum

A breakdown of responses is given below

### The Physical Environment

- Good access in school
- Good access – uses wheelchair ramp
- School needs a sensory room
- Access is good because it's a special school
- New build means that access is good
- Concerns about privacy around toilets
- Full access to physical environment

The recent consultation undertaken by the primary school used the full questionnaire – a collation of the responses is set out below

#### 1. Is your child able to move around the classroom and all other parts of the school easily?

- Yes = 7      No = 0

#### 2. Are other children able to move around the classroom and all other parts of the school easily?

- Yes = 6      No = 0      Not sure = 1

#### 3. Does your child's school have signs in pictures/symbols as well as words to help pupils to find their way around?

- Yes = 5      No = 2

#### 4. If your child (or other young people have difficulty moving around the classroom or school what sort of things do you think would make it easier or better for them?

- Stairlifts, lifts, ramps, ample space between furniture, clutter-free walkways

### Written Information

- More use of email could alert parents to any information for children
- Can access with support

- Planner difficult to read which makes helping more problematic

**1. Is your child able to read and understand everything that is written down for him/her?**

- Yes = 4      No = 3

**2. What does your child's school do to make it easier for him/her to understand written information?**

- Use symbols when marking children's work
- Reading interventions (small groups and 1:1)
- High ratio of support staff within classrooms (intervention champions)
- Word mats (individual)
- They use pictures as well as words

**3. What else do you think your child's school could do to make it easier for him/her to understand written information?**

- Keeping WALT's and other instructions to their briefest form

**The School Curriculum**

- Only able to access after school activities in learning support area – not able to access mainstream activities
- No transport available for after school activities – need to develop independent travel skills
- Would like more accessible activities in the following areas
  - Sports
  - Music
- Important for school to provide activities as no suitable activities available close to child's home
- Confidence and emotional maturity important factors in accessing activities
- My child is well included in all parts of the curriculum
- School has been very helpful and caring has 1:1 help for PE
- Worried about post-16 - child is very vulnerable and will find independent travel very difficult
- We work with the school to give access to homework
- Range of after school activities not great for child's age
- Not much thought given to SEN children
- Lack of suitable activities
- Lack of communication between teachers means that some staff are unaware of child's learning difficulties
- Can sometimes be over-supported
- Does not like being different – leaves lessons early to meet transport
- Signs and symbols aid access to curriculum

**1. Is your child able to do all the things in their school which other young people do (including activities before and after school)?**

- Yes = 6      No = 1

**2. What sort of activities and clubs would your child like to take part in?**

- Football, play activities
- Singing, dance

**3. Are these activities available in their school?**

- Yes = 4      No = 0      Not sure = 1      N/R = 2

**4. Are these activities available in other schools/centres in the area where you live?**

- Yes = 1      No = 0      Not sure = 4      N/R = 2

**5. Does your child take part in these activities?**

- Yes = 2      No = 2      N/R = 3

**6. If 'no' why does your child not take part in the activities?**

- Age limits

**7. If you could choose where your child takes part in the activities where would you like them to take place?**

- School
- School, local sports facilities, church

**8. Are there any services which may help you that you cannot access?**

- Yes = 0      No = 6      N/R = 1

**9. Is there anything else you would like to tell us?**

- Consideration to disabled parents should also be given. School encourages parental involvement but unfortunately the building restricts less mobile parents / carers.

## Commentary on Parental Responses

There is a degree of consistency with the pupil responses in that parents talk about

- A perceived lack of activities appropriate for disabled children
- No transport being available if their child attends an after-school club
- Their anxieties about their child attempting something new (such as independent travel)

They also agree that physical access to buildings does not seem to a major issue given that there has been a significant amount of rebuilding in schools in the borough. A majority of parents thought that their children's needs were well catered for in school although a few noted issues relating to 'over-support' and a lack of communication between staff.

The responses of the latest consultation are consistent with previous ones. It is also interesting to see reference to the need to ensure access for disabled adults as well as children. This is covered under a different part of the 2010 Act and has different implications in terms of redress. Training for schools will need to make this clear.

## Appendix 3

### Glossary

<b>ADHD</b>	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
<b>ASD</b>	Autistic Spectrum Disorder
<b>ASDAN</b>	An Awarding Body – Accrediting Achievements in Personal Skills Development
<b>BDA</b>	British Dyslexia Association
<b>BESD</b>	Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulty
<b>BSF</b>	Building Schools for the Future
<b>C &amp; YP</b>	Children and Young People
<b>C&amp;YP</b>	Children & Young People
<b>CAD</b>	Computer Aided Design
<b>CAMHS</b>	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service
<b>CPD</b>	Continuous Professional Development
<b>D &amp; T</b>	Design and Technology
<b>DES</b>	Disability Equality Scheme
<b>EAL</b>	English as an Additional Language
<b>ELP</b>	Enhanced Learning Provision
<b>GCSE</b>	General Certificate of Secondary Education
<b>GT</b>	Gifted and Talented
<b>HI</b>	Hearing Impairment
<b>HIV</b>	Human Immunosuppressant Virus
<b>HT</b>	Head Teacher
<b>HTCs</b>	Head Teacher Consultants
<b>ICT</b>	Information Communication Technology
<b>IDP</b>	Inclusion Development Programme
<b>IWB</b>	Interactive White Board
<b>KS1</b>	Key Stage 1

<b>KS2</b>	Key Stage 2
<b>LDD</b>	Learning Difficulty/Disability
<b>LSA</b>	Learning Support Assistant
<b>LSP</b>	Learning Support Practitioner
<b>MeD</b>	Medical Need
<b>MFL</b>	Modern Foreign Language
<b>MLD</b>	Moderate Learning Difficulty
<b>MR</b>	Medical Reasons
<b>MS</b>	Multiple Sclerosis
<b>MSI</b>	Multi Sensory Impairment
<b>OFSTED</b>	Office for Standards in Education
<b>OTH</b>	Other
<b>PAP</b>	Pupil Allocation Panel
<b>PD</b>	Physical Disability
<b>PE</b>	Physical Education
<b>PECs</b>	Picture Exchange Communication System
<b>PLASC</b>	Pupil Level Annual School Census
<b>PMED</b>	Physical-Medical
<b>PMLD</b>	Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulty
<b>PRU</b>	Pupil Referral Unit
<b>SAI</b>	Schools Access Initiative
<b>SATS</b>	Standard Assessment Tests and Tasks
<b>SEMH</b>	Social Emotional and Mental Health
<b>SEN</b>	Special Educational Needs
<b>SEN D</b>	Special Educational Needs or Disabilities
<b>SENAT</b>	Special Educational Needs Advisory Teacher
<b>SENCO</b>	Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator
<b>SIPS</b>	School Improvement Partners
<b>SIQM</b>	Sandwell Inclusion Quality Mark
<b>SLCN</b>	Speech, Language and Communication Needs

<b>SLD</b>	Severe Learning Difficulties
<b>SpLD</b>	Specific Learning Difficulties
<b>STEMS</b>	Structure to Enable Meaningful Sentences
<b>TA</b>	Teaching Assistant
<b>TNR</b>	Times New Roman – A type of font
<b>VAK</b>	Visual, Auditory, Kinaesthetic
<b>VI</b>	Visual Impairment
<b>YOT</b>	Youth Offending Team