pdnet
A network for those supporting
learners with physical disability

ACCESSIBILITY PLANNING:

A Toolkit for Schools

Developing your Accessibility Plan to support the effective inclusion of learners with a physical disability

Contents

THIS IS AN INTERACTIVE PDF

Foreword

pdnet is a national network committed to ensuring that every learner with a physical disability is able to achieve their potential. We provide professionals in education with the tools, support and training they need to be able to able to support the increasing numbers of learners with a physical disability. pdnet believes that a well-written and reviewed Accessibility Plan is a powerful tool to drive inclusion in schools.

There are over 36,788 children and young people with a physical disability (PD) within the educational system. However, far too often we hear that children and young people are not fully included and are unable to access activities with their peers. Improving the quality of Accessibility planning in schools is a vital step in supporting the inclusion of these learners.

Whilst there is a statutory requirement for schools to have an Accessibility Plan to support the inclusion of learners with SEND, it is disappointing that research by the [Alliance for Inclusive Education](#) found just 48% of educational professionals and 21% of parents had heard of Accessibility Plans, with only one in five believing they have improved opportunities for disabled children.

To explore these findings in further detail, pdnet invited schools to participate in a national survey which helped gain insight into current practice around the writing and use of Accessibility Plans, particularly in relation to learners with a physical disability. Of the responding schools, data collected indicated just 36% of plans link to the School Improvement Plan, only 40% involve

stakeholders, including parents, in the information collection process, only 21% consult with students, and just 67% of Accessibility Plans are published on the school website. Equally concerning is, whilst 81% of responding schools have undertaken adaptations and adjustments to improve access for pupils with a disability, only 43% of these were identified on their Accessibility Plan.

To support schools to improve the quality of their Accessibility Plans and the writing, monitoring and review processes involved, pdnet has developed this comprehensive and interactive Toolkit. We believe it has the capacity to strengthen a school's Accessibility Plan, significantly improving the inclusion of all learners with SEND, including those with a physical disability.

The pdnet Accessibilty Toolkit has been developed with support from the Whole School SEND Consortium. The work contributes to DfE contract 'Strategic Support to the Workforce in both Mainstream and Special Schools', the aim of which is to support EVERY school to deliver an inclusive education for ALL children and young people.

Acknowledgements

Introduction

The pdnet Accessibility Planning Toolkit aims to support you and your colleagues to effectively evaluate the accessibility of your school and plan how to improve access for people with disabilities, particularly those with a physical disability.

It is designed to guide you through the process of:

- understanding your school's legal duties and responsibilities,
- reviewing your existing Accessibility Plan,
- considering what your school currently does well,
- thinking about how you might improve access and participation,
- writing a robust and dynamic plan that is sustainable over the subsequent years.

A well-constructed and reflective Accessibility Plan should be an effective vehicle to support the inclusion of all learners in school, including those pupils with disabilities.

An important aspect of Accessibility Planning is awareness of the underpinning legislation. The starting point is the Equality Act 2010 which lays out statutory duties for schools (maintained and non-maintained schools, academies, free schools, maintained and non-maintained special schools) to enable pupils with disabilities to access all aspects of the curriculum and school life.

It is the responsibility of a school's Governing Body to make sure the school meets the requirement to prepare, publish and implement an Accessibility Plan. This is not a new duty, Accessibility Plans have been a legal requirement since 2002. Statutory guidance published by the Department for Education states the plans must be reviewed every three years, although schools can identify a longer period if needed.

The Accessibility Plan sets out how the school plans to increase the extent to which pupils with disabilities can participate in the curriculum, can access information and can access the physical environment, that is all school buildings and the whole site.

The school's Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) policy and the local authority's Local Offer also play a substantial role in guiding the development of provision for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities.

Although the focus of the Accessibility Planning Toolkit is on pupils with physical disabilities, it should be stressed that all types of disability should be considered during the process of developing an Accessibility Plan. This will ensure that a school is taking a holistic approach to planning for full social and educational access and inclusion for all.

How to use this Toolkit

PDF Workbook

The main component of the pdnet Accessibility Planning Toolkit is this interactive PDF workbook, which houses all of the information you'll need in an easy to use format. The workbook includes:

1 — **Step-by-step guidance for accessibility planning**

2 — **Opportunities to reflect and record current school practice**

3 — **Case study examples, related specifically to supporting learners with a physical disability**

4 — **Links to supporting resources, including editable templates and training materials**

The workbook contains hyperlinks to both internal and external resources. Clicking an internal link will take you to the relevant page within the document. External links will direct you to download or access a resource that is hosted online.

You can return to the contents page at any time by clicking the home icon at the bottom right of each page.

Reflect, Respond, React

Each section of the workbook considers a key aspect of accessibility planning, then gives the opportunity to 'reflect, respond and react' to what the information means for your school.

You are able to type your response directly into the workbook. To use this feature you must ensure that the PDF is saved to your computer and that you have Adobe Acrobat Reader installed. Don't forget to press save as you work through!

REFLECT
Questions to encourage you to think about your role, your school context and your current provision for supporting learners with a physical disability.

RESPOND
Opportunity for you to record and save your response.

REACT
- Access additional resources to support your accessibility planning for learners with a physical disability.
- Disseminate knowledge and/ or deliver training to school staff
- Proceed to the Accessibility Plan template to complete the corresponding section

Supporting Resources

A number of resources to assist you in the process of developing your school's Accessibility Plan are included in this toolkit. Some of these are included in the workbook, and others are hyperlinked and available to download from the pdnet website. You may wish to download these documents before you start using the Toolkit. Resources include:

- **pdnet Accessibility Plan Template**

- **pdnet Accessibility Audit**

- **Staff Consultation PowerPoint**

- **School Journey Long-term Plan - Primary**

- **School Journey Long-term Plan - Secondary**

- **CSAR-STEP Approach Template**

Note: Throughout the Toolkit the SENCO is cited as the key person to review and develop the Accessibility Plan. Although it is often the SENCO who has this responsibility in schools it is not always the case as another staff member may have this responsibility e.g. designated lead for medical conditions, health and safety team etc. In this workbook 'SENCO' is used as shorthand for whoever has this responsibility.

Background Knowledge

The Legal Context

Objective: To understand the school's legal duties and responsibilities

The Equality Act 2010 is the key to understanding a school's legal duties and responsibilities.

Schools are required to comply with a part of the Equality Act 2010 called the public sector Equality Duty (also known as the PSED or simply the "Equality Duty"). The Equality Duty has two parts: the "general" duty and "specific" duties.

The general duty is the overarching legal requirement for schools to consider how their policies, practices and day-to-day activities impact on pupils, staff and visitors.

Schools are required to have "due regard" to the need to:

• eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation,

• advance equality of opportunity,

• foster good relations.

There are two specific duties for schools which aim to assist them to meet the general duty. They are:

• to publish information to show how they are complying with the Equality Duty (this is referred to as the Equality Statement and must be published and updated at least annually),

• to prepare and publish one or more specific and measurable Equality Objective(s) at least every four years.

A further requirement of the Equality Act 2010 and the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Code of Practice of September 2014 is that schools also produce an Accessibility Plan.

In particular, a school is required to develop a plan that shows how it will develop the following three areas:
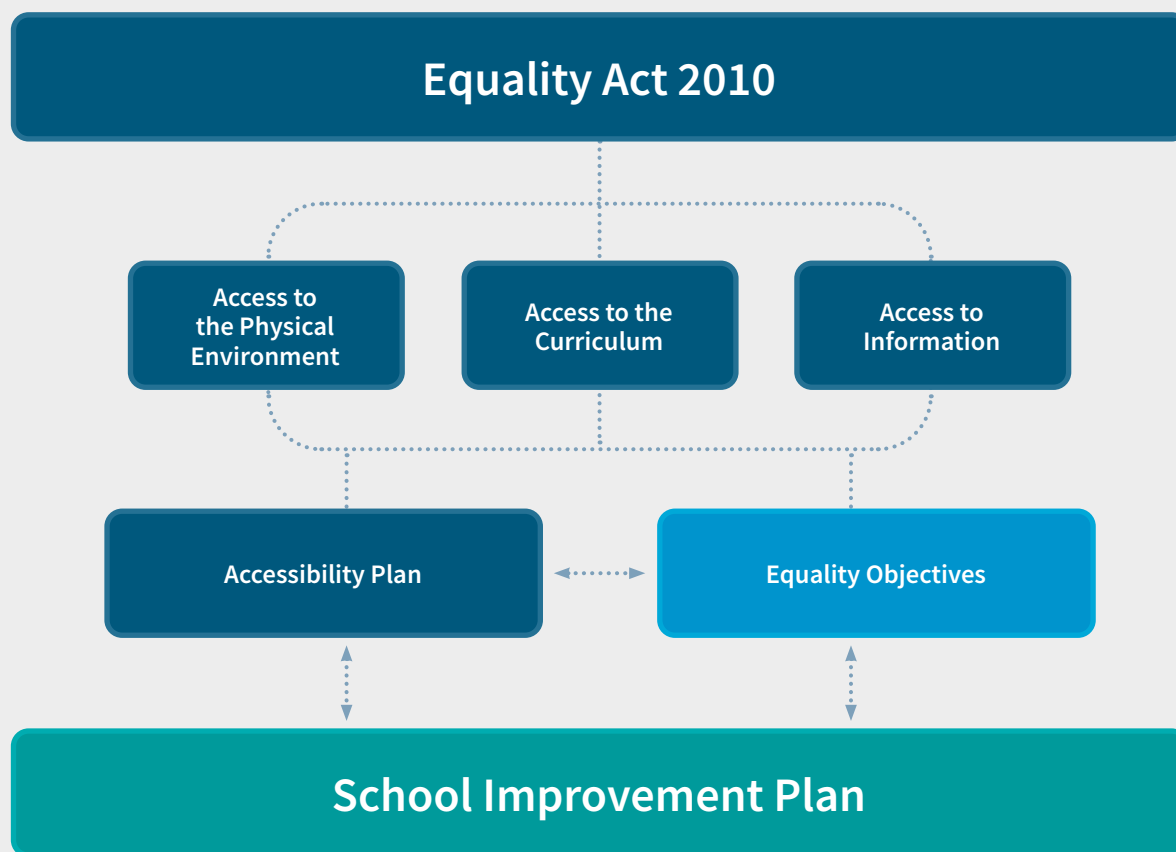
• to increase the extent to which pupils with a disability can participate in the school's curriculum,

• to improve the physical environment of the school to ensure pupils with a disability are able to take advantage of education and other benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the school,

• to improve the delivery of information to pupils with a disability, so information is as available as it is for pupils who are not disabled.

The Legal Context

There is a clear relationship between a school's Equality Objectives and their Accessibility Plan, which are supportive of each other. They can be reviewed and developed at the same time through the process outlined in this Toolkit. It seems natural and would be good practice to tie both of these into the School Improvement Plan. *See fig 1.*

Equality Act 2010

| Access to the Physical Environment | Access to the Curriculum | Access to Information |

Accessibility Plan ⟷ **Equality Objectives**

School Improvement Plan

Relationship between Equality Objectives and Accessibility Plan *Fig 1.*

REFLECT

How do you ensure that all staff have a current understanding of equality legislation, for example through induction training, policy review or CPD?

RESPOND

Don't forget to save! 💾

REACT

Provide staff training around equality legislation to raise awareness of their duties to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those with disabilities and without.

Use the PPT. slides provided as part of this Toolkit, or direct staff to undertake pdnet L1 training 'Raising Awareness of Physical Disability'.

Definition of Disability

Objective: To understand the definition of disability

The Equality Act 2010 states that a person has a disability if:

- they have a physical or mental impairment,

- the impairment is substantial, and

- there is a long-term adverse effect on their ability to perform normal day-to-day activities.

For the purposes of the Act, these words have the following meanings:

- 'substantial' means more than minor or trivial,

- 'long-term' means that the effect of the impairment has lasted or is likely to last for at least 12 months (there are special rules covering recurring or fluctuating conditions),

- 'normal day-to-day activities' include everyday things like eating, washing, walking and going shopping.

It should be noted that this definition does not just cover physical disabilities but also covers:

- medical needs,

- sensory processing needs,

- hearing impairment,

- visual impairment,

- learning needs,

- impairment resulting from, or consisting of, a mental illness.

In addition, there are a range of 'hidden impairments' such as dyslexia, speech, language and communication needs, autism, auditory processing disorder, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and others.

Having an inpairment does not necessarily mean that a pupil is disabled, but rather it is the effect on the pupil's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities in one or more of the following areas that has to be considered:

- mobility,

- manual dexterity,

- physical coordination,

- continence,

- ability to lift, carry or otherwise move everyday objects,

- speech, hearing or eyesight,

- memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand,

- perception of risk of physical danger.

REFLECT

How do you ensure that all staff have an on-going understanding of disability, for example through induction training, policy review or CPD?

RESPOND

Don't forget to save! 💾

REACT

Provide staff training around the definition of disability, how to consider and identify learners with a disability and the type of support needs linked to accessing to the environment, curriculum and learning.

Use the PPT. slides provided, or direct staff to undertake pdnet L1 training 'Raising Awareness of Physical Disability'.

Reasonable Adjustments

Objective: To understand the term 'reasonable adjustments' and the school's responsibility to ensure that these are made for pupils with a disability

Schools, other education providers and local authorities must make reasonable adjustments to make sure that children and young people with a disability (with and without SEN) are not at a substantial disadvantage. This includes providing equipment and/or services.

Schools have a duty to make reasonable adjustments for pupils with a disability:

- schools must take reasonable steps to avoid placing pupils with a disability at a disadvantage in relation to other pupils,

- schools are expected to provide an auxiliary aid or service for a disabled pupil when it would be reasonable to do so, and where such an aid would alleviate any substantial disadvantage the pupil faces in comparison to their non-disabled peers.

Whilst there is no specific definition on what may be 'reasonable' it is for schools to decide the reasonableness of adjustments based on the individual circumstances of each pupil. Factors to consider may include:

- the effectiveness of the adjustment,

- its effect on other pupils,

- health and safety requirements,

- whether the provision of aids would be helpful,

- financial or other resources available.

The reasonable adjustments duty is intended to complement the accessibility planning duties.

In addition to the whole school approach to accessibility, specific challenges that each curriculum subject brings should be considered and this information incorporated into the Accessibility Plan. Curriculum leads or Heads of Department should consider how they are making reasonable adjustments to enable all pupils with disabilities to access their subject and what more they need to do to improve accessibility to their curriculum area, their specialist physical environment and information.

REFLECT

How do you ensure that all staff have an on-going understanding of reasonable adjustments for learners with a physical disability, for example through induction, policy review or CPD?

How do you ensure that consideration is given to access to the curriculum, environment and information in individual subject areas?

RESPOND

Don't forget to save! 💾

REACT

Provide staff training to raise awareness of the school's duty to make reasonable adjustments.

Use the PPT. slides provided, or direct staff to undertake pdnet L1 training 'Raising Awareness of Physical Disability'.

Being Anticipatory

Alongside the requirement to make reasonable adjustments is the requirement that schools anticipate and plan to meet the needs of pupils with disabilities. Schools need to consider both current and future pupils.

Current Pupils: For pupils who already attend the school, anticipatory planning relates to the need to consider and plan for their needs and provision from a long- term perspective, throughout their journey through school.

It is also important to consider transitions for pupils with a disability both year to year within school, and transitions between settings, schools and colleges. Figure 2 gives an example of a simple School Journey Long-term Plan from Nursery to Y6. It identifies the known key events over the coming years so that school is able to plan well in advance for these.

An example of a Long-term Plan for a secondary pupil can be downloaded here.

A template for a Long-term Plan can be downloaded here.

Future Pupils: Schools also have a duty to anticipate the needs of those with a disability who might potentially require access to the school in the future, but who do not currently do so. An example scenario might be a school that has never had a pupil on roll who is a wheelchair user.

The school is required to plan and prepare now, in advance, to enable easy access should a pupil who uses a wheelchair require a place at the school in future.

Any planning and targets related to enabling access to wheelchair users would be included within the Accessibility Plan. The Toolkit examines this in greater detail on page 24.

	Autumn	Spring	Summer
EYFS	Individual Healthcare Plan (IHCP) written (including Risk Assessment) Access to EYFS indoor and outdoor areas, Main Entrance and Reception and Main Assembly Hall	Access to Forest / Wild Area	Access to After School Club Review IHCP and plan transition
	Across the year: Festivals and celebrations, class assemblies and performances		
Reception	Access to Breakfast Club Access to PE: gymnastics	Access to PE, games and dance Trips in local area	Review IHCP and plan transition
	Across the year: Festivals and celebrations, class assemblies and performances		
Year 1	Access to KS1 classrooms, playgrounds, intervention spaces, Library and Dining Hall		KS1 Sports Day Review IHCP and plan transition
	Across the year: Festivals and celebrations, class assemblies and performances		
Year 2	KS1 Production (December)	Trip to Chester Zoo	KS1 Sports Day Review IHCP and plan transition
	Across the year: Festivals and celebrations, class assemblies and performances		
Year 3	Access to KS2 classrooms and playgrounds	Trip to Science Museum	KS2 Sports Day Review IHCP and plan transition
	Across the year: Festivals and celebrations, class assemblies and performances		
Year 4	Swimming lessons	Swimming lessons Trip to Art Gallery	KS2 Sports Day Review IHCP and plan transition
	Across the year: Festivals and celebrations, class assemblies and performances		
Year 5		Science Week at local secondary school	KS2 Sports Day Review IHCP and plan transition
	Across the year: Festivals and celebrations, class assemblies and performances		
Year 6	Outdoor Activities Residential KS2 Production (December)	Transition to Y7 planning; writing IHCP and risk assessment with secondary school SATs access arrangements	KS2 Sports Day Transition visits to new school Prom Leavers' Assembly
	Across the year: Festivals and celebrations, class assemblies and performances		

Developing your Accessibility Plan

What is an Accessibility Plan?

Objective: To understand the key components of an Accessibility Plan

An Accessibility Plan shows how a school intends, over time to, improve and increase access for pupils with a disability.

The Accessibility Plan should also include consideration of access for disabled staff, parents/carers and visitors and, where required, identify specific areas for improvement. However, the primary focus is accessibility for pupils.

The Accessibility Plan should summarise what is already in place and should state development priorities in each of the three areas specified by the Equality Act 2010:

- to increase the extent to which pupils with a disability can participate in the curriculum,

- to improve the physical environment of schools to increase the extent to which pupils with a disability can take advantage of education and associated services,

- to improve communication with pupils with a disability along with communicating to them information that is provided in writing for pupils who are not disabled, in appropriate alternative formats and taking account of any preferences expressed by them or their parents.

Schools also have a duty to make reasonable adjustments for individual pupils with a disability to ensure they can be involved in every aspect of school life, in partnership with their families, and that barriers to learning are removed.

Schools should bear in mind that this includes an anticipatory component, relating to pupils with disabilities currently on roll and pupils with disabilities who have not yet joined the school. Further information about the requirement to be anticipatory can be found on .

The Accessibility Plan should be actioned within a reasonable timeframe and should be subject to regular review and revision, at least every three years.

Reviewing your current Accessibility Plan

Objective: To review your current Accessibility Plan

Your first task is to review your school's existing Accessibility Plan, which might be coming towards the end of its three year life span. Your existing plan is unlikely to be in the format suggested in this Toolkit, but this is not a problem.

Whatever format your Acccessibility Plan uses, your review should follow the same process of collating information from a number of sources and evaluating whether the school has met the stated targets. For each target, identify:
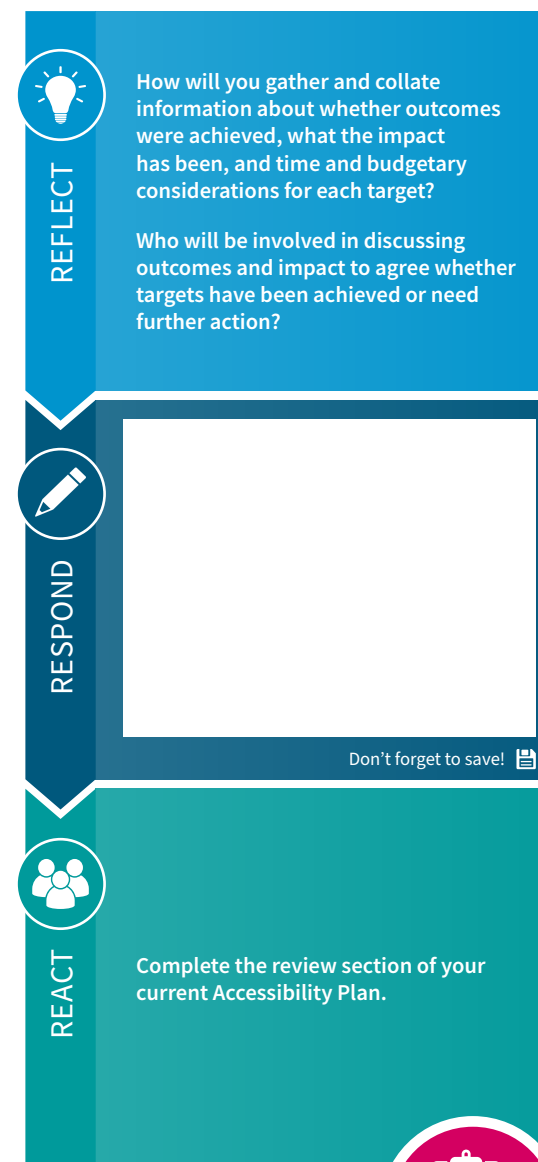
- whether the desired outcome was achieved,

- whether this was achieved in the agreed timescale,

- whether this was achieved within the agreed budget,

- the impact this has had on access for pupils, parents/carers, staff and visitors,

- whether next steps are indicated.

It would be beneficial for a team of staff to work together to review the targets. This team could include the SENCO, SEND Governor, SEND staff, Business Manager, Site Manager or other key members of staff.

Once a review has taken place you will then be in a position to be able to develop and write your school's Accessibility Plan covering the next three years.

Objective: To consider the format of your Accessibility Plan

Following the review of your school's existing Accessibility Plan, you may choose to adopt a new format. As part of this Toolkit pdnet has developed an Accessibility Plan template which you are able to download, edit and personalise for your school. Alternatively, you may wish to continue with your current format and instead use the guidance provided to audit and strengthen your existing Accessibility Plan.

REFLECT

How will you gather and collate information about whether outcomes were achieved, what the impact has been, and time and budgetary considerations for each target?

Who will be involved in discussing outcomes and impact to agree whether targets have been achieved or need further action?

RESPOND

Don't forget to save! 💾

REACT

Complete the review section of your current Accessibility Plan.

The pdnet Accessibility Plan format

This section of the Toolkit will take you step-by-step through the process of completing your Accessibility Plan in the pdnet format. The process is not linear but is set out in a way that allows you to gather information and gradually build up your Accessibility Plan. *See Fig 3*.

The pdnet Accessibility Plan is made up of:

1. Opening Statement: Context, Aims and Objectives

2. School and Pupil Data Analysis

3. Consultation with Stakeholders

4. Good Practice in School

5. The Accessibility Action Plan

- Plan to increase the extent to which pupils with a disability can participate in the school's curriculum.

- Plan to improve the physical environment of the school to ensure pupils with a disability can access all benefits, services and facilities offered by the school.

- Plan to improve the delivery of written information to pupils with a disability so information is available equally to all pupils.
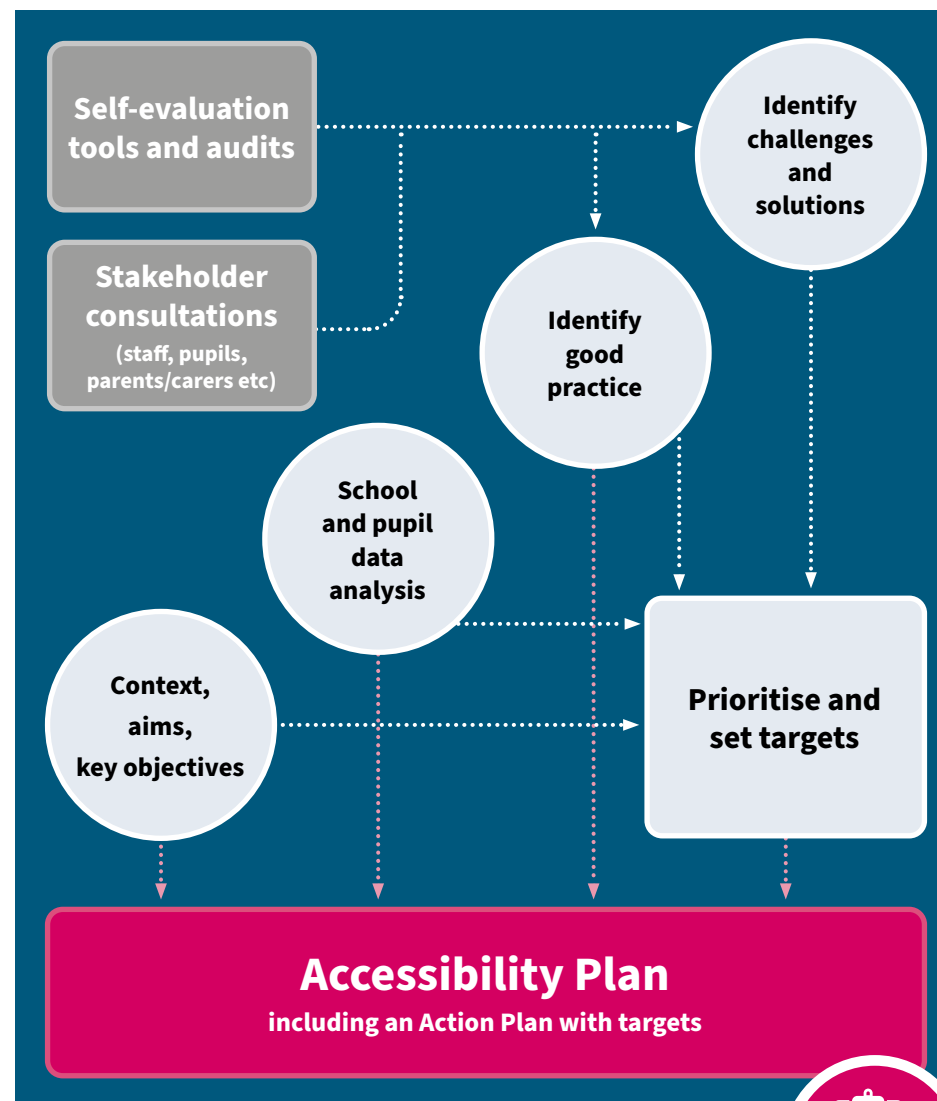
6. Sources of Information

Using the pdnet Accessibility Plan Template

The pdnet Template can be downloaded here.

As you work through the template you will be prompted where to insert the relevant information for your school. Further instructions can be found on the first page of the template.

You must ensure that any Accessibility Plan derived from the guidance in the pdnet Toolkit reflects your establishment's specific circumstances.

Accessibility Plan Process *Fig 3.*

1. Opening Statement

The first step in developing a new Accessibility Plan is to consider your 'Opening Statement' that describes the scope of the Accessibility Plan. This can be divided into three parts:

1 Context: School location, community, values, ethos and mission statement   **2** Aims of the Accessibility Plan   **3** Key objectives of the Accessibility Plan

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1.1 School Context

Objective: To consider the context in which your school operates

When describing the school context there are a number of areas to consider and include:

- underpinning values
- ethos
- mission statement
- vision for the future
- location and environment
- local community profile
- pupil population
- building age and condition
- outdoor environment and site access

How would you describe your school, ensuring you capture its values, ethos and vision for the future?

Don't forget to save! 💾

Summarise your school's context in Part 1: Opening Statement.

See page 36 for a case study example.

1.2 Aims

Objective: To write clear aims for the Accessibility Plan

The aims of the Accessibility Plan will be broad statements of intent that set out what the school hopes to achieve by the end of timescale of the plan.

Aims will link with the school's values, ethos, mission statement and the overarching educational and social aims of the school.

Capturing the aims of an Accessibility Plan may be a task that the SENCO and Senior Leadership Team work on together.

How do you identify the aims of the Accessibility Plan? How do you consult with the Headteacher/SLT and Governing Body to agree aims? How do you link these to the School Improvement Plan and/or Equality Objectives?

Don't forget to save! 💾

Summarise your school's aims in Part 1: Opening Statement.

See page 36 for a case study example.

1.3 Key Objectives

Objective: To write clear key objectives for the Accessibility Plan

The objectives of the Accessibility Plan will be specific statements that define measurable outcomes, i.e. what steps will be taken to achieve the aims.

The objectives of an Accessibility Plan should plan to:

- ensure all pupils, including those with disabilities are fully involved in school life and are making good progress,

- consider the three areas covered under the duty: access to the curriculum, access to the physical environment and access to information,

- identify barriers to access and participation and find practical solutions to reduce, minimise the impact or overcome them,

- work collaboratively with pupils with a disability, their parents/carers and other stakeholders to create appropriate provision,

- increase the confidence, knowledge, skills and expertise of teachers and support staff when teaching or supporting a wide range of pupils with a disability,

- meet the requirements of the Equalities Act and the SEND Code of Practice in respect of pupils with a disability, staff, parents/carers and visitors, promoting equality of opportunity and fostering good relation between those who have a disability and those who don't.

Schools should commit to:

- provide a fully accessible environment which values and includes all pupils, staff, parents and visitors regardless of their education, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional and cultural needs,

- challenge negative attitudes about disability and accessibility and to developing a culture of awareness, tolerance and inclusion,

- provide all pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum, differentiated and adjusted to meet the needs of individual pupils.

The key principles should underpin the development of a more inclusive environment and curriculum, setting suitable learning challenges, responding to a pupil's diverse learning needs and overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils.

Capturing the objectives of an Accessibility Plan may be a task that the SENCO and senior leadership team work on together.

REFLECT

How do you identify the objectives of the Accessibility Plan?

How do you consult with the Headteacher and Governing Body to agree objectives?

How do you link these to the School Improvement Plan and/ or Equality Objectives?

RESPOND

Don't forget to save! 💾

REACT

Summarise your school's key objectives in Part 1: Opening Statement.

Refer to page 36 for a case study example.

2. School and Pupil Data Analysis

Objective: To understand your pupil population and use data to inform the Accessibility Plan

Schools can collate and use different levels of data (e.g. pupil, school, local and national) in a range of ways to inform the Accessibility Plan, for example, to:

- identify the numbers of pupils regarded as disabled,

- anticipate the potential impact on attendance,

- anticipate the potential impact on Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs,

- anticipate the impact on physical accessibility,

- anticipate the impact on access to clubs and other off-site activities including trips or residential trips,

- identify areas for future development or improvement,

- prioritise targets for future development and improvement.

All school staff including governors and the leadership team should have knowledge and understanding of the needs of pupils with physical disabilities over their time in school. This is particularly pertinent if the learner has a degenerative or deteriorating condition.

REFLECT

How do you collate, interrogate and analyse data on pupils with disabilities?

RESPOND

Don't forget to save! 📄

REACT

After interrogating and analysing the data on pupils with disabilities in your school, complete Part 2: Use of School and Pupil Data.

Refer to page 38 for a case study example.

3. Consultation with Stakeholders

Consulting with Staff

Objective: To have clear procedures for consulting with staff about accessibility

Schools are required to ensure that staff are consulted and, where appropriate, involved in identifying priorities. This may involve consultation with individual members of staff, e.g. those directly involved in supporting pupils with a disability, curriculum leads, heads of department, site manager etc. or groups of staff e.g. Senior Leadership Team, site team etc. or the whole school staff.

To support this process you may wish to use the Staff Consultation PowerPoint provided as part of this Toolkit.

Further information about staff consultation can be found on page 21.

Consulting with Other Stakeholders

Objective: To have clear, agreed procedures for consulting with other stakeholders about accessibility

Schools are required to ensure that, as well as consulting staff, all stakeholders, especially pupils and parents, are consulted and, where appropriate, involved in identifying priorities that:

- allow the views of pupils, both disabled and non-disabled to be taken into account,

- allow the views of parents/carers to be taken into account and to ascertain their views on provision for pupils with a disability,

- consult the full Governing Body & SEND Governor,

- involve, as appropriate, outside agencies such as Local Authority (LA) services, specialist services or appropriate health professionals who can support school in meeting the individual needs of pupils with a disability,

- ensure the development of the plan is in line with the Local Authority Accessibility Strategy,

- involve quality assurance officers or challenge partners, as appropriate,

- ensure the views of ALL those consulted are taken into consideration and the plan modified, where reasonable, to meet the needs of stakeholders,

Consulting with staff and other stakeholders will provide you with information about what the school is doing well and what areas require further scrutiny and improvement.

REFLECT

Who are the stakeholders in your school?

How do you consult with pupils, staff, parents/ carers, governors and other stakeholders to ensure that you are supporting access for pupils with disabilities?

How do you record what your school is doing well in terms of accessibility for pupils with disabilities?

RESPOND

Don't forget to save! 💾

REACT

Use the PPT. slides provided to support staff consultation.

After consulting with your school's stakeholders, complete Part 3: Consultation with Stakeholders.

Refer to page 39 for a case study example.

4. Good Practice in School

Objective: To identify what the school is doing well

At this point it is important to take stock and consider what reasonable adjustments the school already makes for pupils with disabilities, what the school is doing well, and what could be done to improve accessibility. Remember that this relates to access to the curriculum, physical environment and information.

Staff Consultation

A staff consultation meeting is a useful way to gather information about your school's good practice. It can be a very positive experience, giving staff the chance to share good practice and celebrate what is good about the school.

To support this process you may wish to use the Staff Consultation PowerPoint provided as part of this Toolkit.

pdnet Standards

The pdnet Standards provide a practical structure to help evaluate your school's provision in meeting the needs of pupils with a physical disability.

The associated Self-Evaluation Tool provides a simple, effective way for schools to work through the Standards, resulting in the creation of a personalised action plan that can be exported to a PDF upon completion. Access the Tool for free here.

Standards related to other types of disability

Other condition-specific SEND organisations will have similar Standards which can also be considered and feed into the holistic Accessibility Plan.

REFLECT

Do you have a clear picture of how well your school supports the inclusion of learners with a disability?

What is your school doing well/ what good practice can you evidence?

Do you have a clear picture of how accessible the physical environment is for pupils with a physical disability?

RESPOND

Don't forget to save! 💾

REACT

Use the pdnet Self-Evaluation Tool to evaluate your school's provision in meeting the needs of learners with a physical disability.

Use the PPT. slides provided to help gather staff views on what your school is currently doing well for pupils with disabilities.

Complete Part 4: Good Practice in School.

Refer to pages 40-44 for case study examples.

5. Identifying Challenges and Barriers to Access

Objective: To identify challenges and barriers to access , find solutions and set targets

As part of the process of gathering information and views from all stakeholders, areas of improvement will be identified within each of the three aspects: curriculum, physical environment and information. A wide range of areas for improvement may have been identified and so it may be necessary to prioritise.

Firstly, prioritise the challenges that you feel your school needs to address. A number of factors will influence your decisions about priorities, including your school context, school and pupil data, targets on the School Improvement Plan, areas of strength in your school and, of course, areas that need urgent attention as indicated by the consultation with stakeholders.

Consider each teaching situation/ area of the school/ information requirement that requires improvement using a CSAR approach that looks at the:

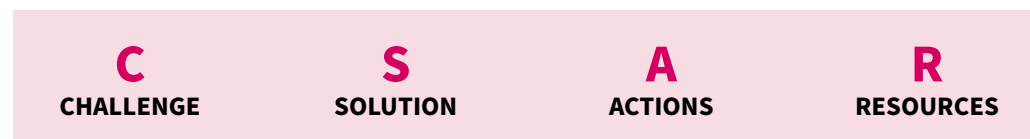| **C**	**S**	**A**	**R**
CHALLENGE	SOLUTION	ACTIONS	RESOURCES

Figure 4 shows how the CSAR-STEP approach can support you to analyse challenges and generate solutions and actions

When considering the 'Challenge', it is helpful to break this down into STEPS that consider:

S	**T**	**E**	**P**
Space	Task	Equipment	People

A worked example using the CSAR-STEP approach can be found on page 24.

Download the CSAR Step Template here

CSAR STEP Approach *Fig 4.*

Aspect	Access to the Curriculum / Physical Environment / Information		
C CHALLENGE	**What is the barrier to access in this situation?**		
	S Space	Is this barrier related to use of space or the environment?	
	T Task	Is this barrier related to the task?	
	E Equipment	Is this barrier related to equipment?	
	P People	Is this barrier related to people and access to support?	
	Challenge:		
S SOLUTION	**What needs to be done to enable access? What does the solution look like?**		
	Solution:		
A ACTIONS	**What needs to be done to achieve the solution? What target(s) need to be recorded on the relevant Accessibility Action Plan?**		
	Actions: Target:		
R RESOURCES	**What resources are required to achieve this solution?**		
	Financial: Staffing: Timescale:		

5.1 Physical Access to Buildings and the School Site

Objective 1: To have clear and agreed procedures for consulting with other stakeholders about accessibility

When reviewing areas for improvement, it may be that you identify challenges related to physical access to the school building(s) or site. Access to the physical environment, particularly for pupils with a physical disability, may need some additional consideration and time.

The 'Building Regulations 2010 (Part M) Access to and use of buildings, volume 2: buildings other than dwellings' outline the minimum requirements for public buildings, including schools, in terms of facilities and access for people with disabilities.

All new school buildings have to comply both with the Building Regulations and The Education (School Premises) Regulations 1999 and should be accessible to pupils with disabilities, including physical disabilities.

If you have an older school building, or are not sure whether your school is compliant, then a site wide environment access audit that refers specifically to Planning and Buildings regulations may be required as part of this work.

On the following page you will find information about the pdnet Accessibility Audit which may be helpful, but you may also require advice from an expert in the field of Building Regulations.

5.1 Physical Access to Buildings and the School Site

Objective 2: To identify whether your school premises has the capacity to meet the needs of pupils with complex needs and disabilities

It is important to remember that the Building Regulations state <u>minimum</u> requirements for access to the physical environment by people with disabilities. Pupils, staff and visitors have a range of physical disabilities, some of which may preclude access to the physical environment even when basic compliance is achieved e.g. a powerchair user may find it difficult to access a disabled bathroom.

People with complex physical needs may require additional strategies to enable physical access or additional facilities to ensure they are safe and well whilst participating in school activities e.g. a pupil who requires hoisting for personal care support. Even if you do not currently have pupils, staff or visitors who require these facilities it is important to remember the duty to be anticipatory and consider how provision can be improved through your accessibility planning.

Improving access to the physical environment of the school or buildings can often be achieved by simple changes such as re-timetabling, re-arranging layout in rooms and internal spaces, monitoring that corridors are kept clear of obstructions or designating storage areas for equipment used by pupils with a disability. Other improvements may include installation of handrails, ramps and lifts, widening doorways or fitting automatic doors.

It would be helpful to periodically carry out an in-house audit of the physical environment in relation to this group of people. The pdnet Accessibility Audit is available for you to use to consider your own school environment. Bear in mind that this is not exhaustive and cannot cover all aspects of this field or all nuances of your school site and situation but does go some way to highlighting key areas. It would be helpful to seek advice from any local authority specialist services or outreach teams to support an audit of the school environment with this group of people in mind.

Depending on your local authority, you may be able to access additional funding to support the development of facitilies. The picture regarding funding varies across the UK.

REFLECT

Do you have a clear picture of your school's current position in relation to meeting statutory duties under *The Building Regulations 2010 Part M* to support access for all people with disabilities?

RESPOND

Don't forget to save! 💾

REACT

Read the Building Regulations 2010 Part M.

Consider whether you need to carry out an audit to ensure you are meeting statutory Building Regulations and the duty to support access for all people with disabilities.

Use the pdnet Accessibility Audit to ensure you are able to accommodate and meet the needs of all people with disabilities, including those with physical disabilities.
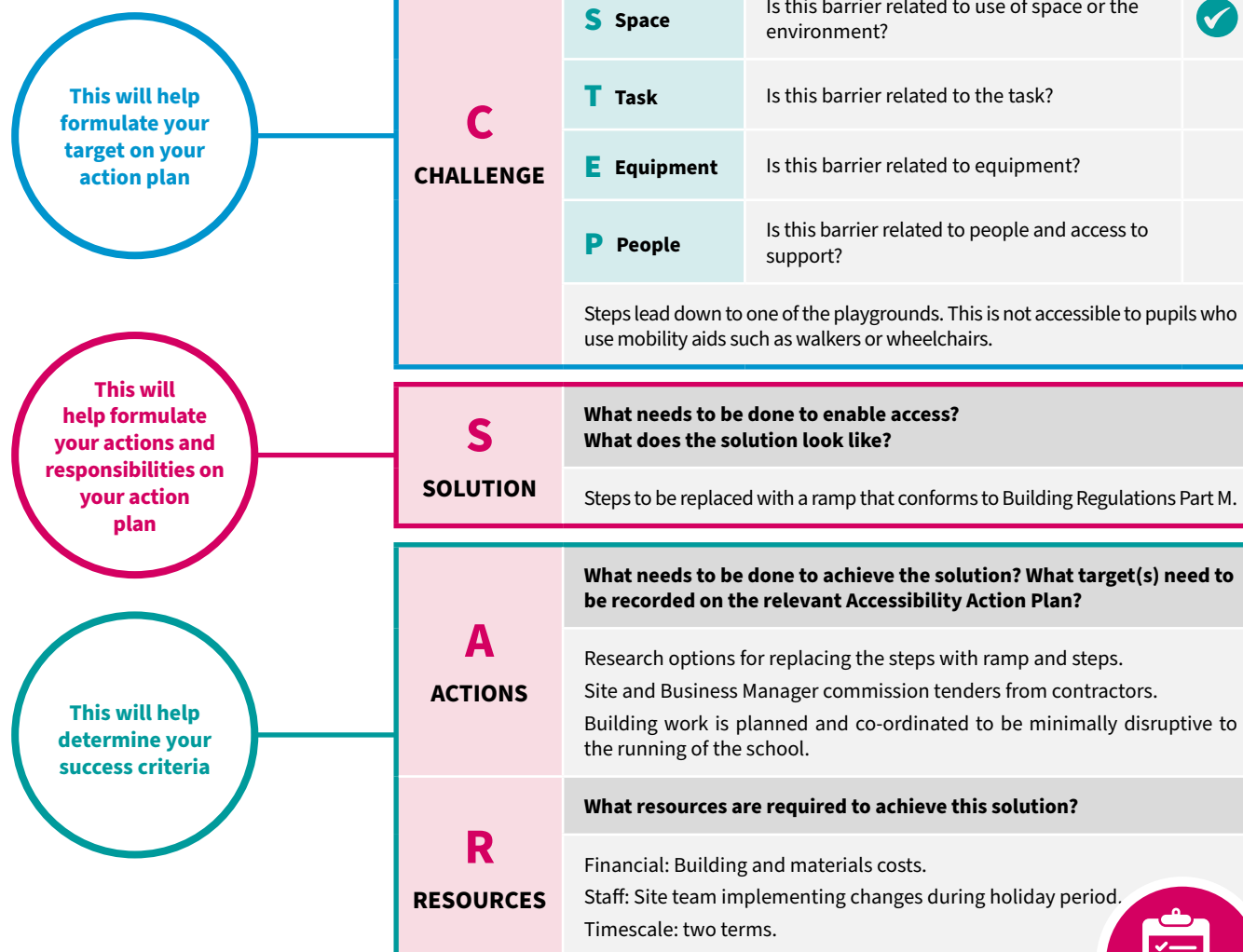
5.2 Setting Targets on the Action Plan

Objective: To complete the action plan within the Accessibility Plan

By working in consultation with all stakeholders, you will have gathered information about what is working well and what are the areas in which the school could improve. This will enable you to:

- identify challenges to access for pupils with disabilities,

- use a solution-focused approach to decide how you can creatively make changes to improve access,

- prioritise which challenges must be addressed over the next three years.

Here is a worked example of the CSAR-STEP approach to focus on a priority challenge. The school has identified an area of the outdoor environment that has a barrier to access for pupils with a physical disability.

CSAR STEP Example *Fig 5.*

This will help formulate your target on your action plan

This will help formulate your actions and responsibilities on your action plan

This will help determine your success criteria

Aspect	Access to the Curriculum/ Physical Environment/ Information		
C CHALLENGE	**What is the barrier to access in this situation?**		
	S Space	Is this barrier related to use of space or the environment?	✓
	T Task	Is this barrier related to the task?	
	E Equipment	Is this barrier related to equipment?	
	P People	Is this barrier related to people and access to support?	
	Steps lead down to one of the playgrounds. This is not accessible to pupils who use mobility aids such as walkers or wheelchairs.		
S SOLUTION	**What needs to be done to enable access?** **What does the solution look like?**		
	Steps to be replaced with a ramp that conforms to Building Regulations Part M.		
A ACTIONS	**What needs to be done to achieve the solution? What target(s) need to be recorded on the relevant Accessibility Action Plan?**		
	Research options for replacing the steps with ramp and steps. Site and Business Manager commission tenders from contractors. Building work is planned and co-ordinated to be minimally disruptive to the running of the school.		
R RESOURCES	**What resources are required to achieve this solution?**		
	Financial: Building and materials costs. Staff: Site team implementing changes during holiday period. Timescale: two terms.		

5.2 Setting Targets on the Action Plan

Your next step is to convert this thought process into realistic targets, with costings and timescales, to achieve these improvements. **See Fig 6.**

Once you have recorded the targets in an action plan, you can take it to the senior leadership team and governing body for agreement.

Action Plan Example *Fig 6.*

Target 1: To achieve full physical access to the lower playground for all pupils.

Action / Strategy	Resource Implications	Timescale	Responsibility	Success Criteria
Research options for replacing the steps with ramp and steps.	*Costings would be specified here* See Page 26	Half a term	Site Manager and Business Manager	1. Ramp and steps in place and in use by all pupils.
Site and business manager commission tenders from contractors.		One term	Site Manger and Business Manager	2. Ramp and steps conform to Building Regulations.
Building work is planned and co-ordinated to be minimally disruptive to the running of the school.		Two terms in total	Site Manager, Business Manager and Headteadcher	

REFLECT

How do you record the targets you have set for improving accessibility? How do you share the completed Accessibility Plan with the Governing Body to agree and approve the targets?

RESPOND

Don't forget to save!

REACT

Use the CSAR-STEP template to help identify challenges, find solutions and set targets.

Record targets in Part 5: Accessibility Action Plan.

Refer to pages 45-47 for case study examples.

5.3 Financial Planning

Objective: To ensure that implementation of the Accessibility Plan is supported through effective financial planning

The Headteacher together with the Governing Body or appropriate committee should review the financial implications of the School Accessibility Plan and factor these as part of the general budget review process. The plan should be financed by identifying costs, determining priorities and incorporating targets into current and future budget commitments. Targets identified and actions to be taken as part of the Accessibility Plan could be included as part of the School Improvement Plan.

REFLECT

How does your school allocate resources to support effective implementation of the Accessibility Plan?

RESPOND

Don't forget to save! 🖫

REACT

Consult with Governors, Headteacher and Senior Leaders with budget responsibilities. Check the targets are realistic and achievable within the allocated timescale.

Specify costs and timescales for targets in Part 5: Accessibility Action Plan.

Refer to pages 45-57 for case study examples.

6. Sources of information

Objective: To record the sources of information used to develop the Accessibility Plan

Information from a range of sources is collated and scrutinised during the development of an Accessibility Plan. It is good practice to evidence these within the plan.

Sources of information that may inform the Accessibility Plan include:

- school and pupil data,

- pdnet Self-Evaluation Tool and any other SEND audits,

- staff consultation,

- pupil voice,

- parent/carer views,

- other stakeholders' consultation (specify),

- School Improvement Plan – current targets,

- Equality Objectives.

REFLECT

What are the sources of information that your school has used to develop the Accessibility Plan?

RESPOND

Don't forget to save! 🖫

REACT

Complete Part 6: Sources of Information.

See page 48 for a case study example.

Don't forget to use the pdnet Self-Evaluation Tool to evaluate your school's provision in meeting the needs of learners with a physical disability.

Next Steps

Ratification by the Governing Body

Objective: To gain agreement from the Governing Body that the Accessibility Plan is to be implemented

The Governing Body is responsible for ensuring that the Accessibility Plan is reviewed and prepared but this task is usually delegated to the Headteacher, Senior Leadership Team or an individual member of staff with a relevant role, such as the SENCO.

Following review and development of a new Accessibility Plan, it should be presented to the Governing Body or an appropriate committee for discussion, final amendments, if necessary, and agreement.

How do you ensure that Governors are aware of their responsibilities in relation to accessibility? How do you ensure that your school's Accessibility Plan goes through the proper channels?

Don't forget to save! 💾

The Accessibility Plan has been agreed. How do you ensure that all staff are made aware of the new targets? How do you ensure that targets remain in the spotlight and that the school takes appropriate action to meet them over the coming months and years?

Access to the Accessibility Plan

Objective: To have a clear understanding of the requirement to make the Accessibility Plan openly available and plan for its release in a variety of formats

The Accessibility Plan should be available to all in the school and the wider community. Although not specified, this is usually achieved by publication on the school website and and made available in printed format on request.
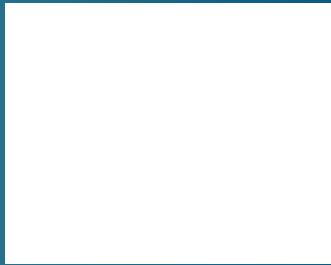
The plan should also be available in different formats, as required, including large print, simplified text (plain English), Braille and a range of languages appropriate to the school community.

All school staff including governors should be made aware of the Accessibility Plan following review or on induction, in the case of new members of staff.

How do you ensure your school's Accessibility Plan is openly available in a variety of formats?

Don't forget to save! 💾

The Accessibility Plan must be published and made available to the public.

Consider how this might be achieved.

Next Steps

Relationship to Related Policies and Review Cycles

Objective: To understand that the Accessibility Plan should be reviewed within an agreed timescale and consider how this could be built into the existing cycle of policy review by the Governing Body

The Accessibility Plan should be reviewed every three years in line with Equality Objectives.

The Accessibility Plan should be read in conjunction with the following policies, strategies and documents:

- School Improvement Plan,

- curriculum policies,

- Equality Statement and Objectives,

- staff training and development plan,

- governor training plan,

- Health and Safety Policy,

- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy,

- Local Offer response and Information Report,

- off-site visits procedures,

- Whole School Behaviour Policy & procedures,

- asset management plan,

- complaints procedures.

REFLECT

How does your school embed 'accessibility' across all policies and ensure a consistent approach?

How might you synchronise the reviewing of existing policies to support a more comprehensive review of overarching equality issues?

RESPOND

Don't forget to save! 💾

REACT

Work with Headteacher, SLT and Governing Body to consider how school policies and the Accessibility Plan might be streamlined and synchronized.

Supporting Resources

Case Study

Downloadable resources

Click on the icons below to download the resources. You will need to be connected to the internet.

⬇   pdnet Accessibilty Plan Template

⬇   pdnet Accessibility Audit

⬇   Staff Consultation Powerpoint

⬇   School Journey Long-term Plan - Primary

⬇   School Journey Long-term Plan - Secondary

⬇   CSAR-STEP Approach Template

Case Study

Reviewing and writing an Accessibility Plan – an ideal scenario

The following case study demonstrates how a school might use the *Accessibility Planning Toolkit* and accompanying resources to review and write an effective Accessibility Plan. It is based on a hypothetical school and deliberately illustrates an 'ideal scenario' in terms of the provision it offers. This enables the case study to give a wide range of examples of aspects that could be considered and may be included in an Accessibility Plan.

The case study includes:

- Contextual information to set the scene

- A breakdown of the SENCO's actions and outcomes

- A sample Accessibility Plan

The case study, like the Toolkit, focuses on supporting pupils with physical disabilities. However, access should not be compartmentalised and it is recommended that all types of disability (*long-term, complex or fluctuating medical needs, sensory support needs, autism, speech, language, communication needs and cognition and learning needs*) are considered and given the same consideration during the process of review.

Townsville School

Townsville School is a medium sized school in an urban location within a diverse community. The school is well regarded, being thought of as inclusive and aspirational for all its pupils.

The school site is made up of the main building, which was built in the mid-60s, with asphalt and grassed areas used for recreation and sports. The SENCO, who is new to the school, has been asked to review the Accessibility Plan and set new targets to further improve the school's accessibility for pupils, staff and visitors with disabilities.

The SENCO decides to use the pdnet Accessibility Planning for Schools materials to assist in the review and development of a new Accessibility Plan.

Case Study

Townsville School: SENCO's actions and outcomes

	SENCO Actions	Outcomes
1	SENCO downloaded all the materials and read through the Toolkit notes.	Gained an overall picture of the task ahead and began to identify steps to be taken to achieve the goal of reviewing the existing Accessibility Plan and developing a new one, including setting appropriate targets on an Action Plan.
2	Began focus work looking at equality legislation. Worked through the pdnet Level 1 training and reread through Section 1 Background Knowledge.	Refreshed knowledge of equality legislation: general and specific duties and the requirement to produce a plan to develop services and improve access for pupils, staff and visitors with disabilities, understanding of disability and the duty to make reasonable adjustments. Arranged time for all staff to work on and complete pdnet Level 1 training to ensure all staff have a baseline knowledge of equality legislation and duties.
3	Considered the targets on the current Accessibility Plan.	Gathered and collated information on outcomes, timescale, budget and impact of each target, ready for review.
4	Collaborated with Business Manager and Assistant SENCO to review existing Accessibility Plan.	All targets reviewed and outcomes recorded. All targets were achieved and none were carried forward to the new Accessibility Plan.
5	Looked at the existing Accessibility Plan in terms of format and compared to pdnet template. Format tabled for discussion as an agenda item at the next SLT meeting.	SLT agreed to use the pdnet format from this point onwards.
6	SENCO considered the school context in relation to accessibility.	SENCO completed the first part of the Opening Statement section of the Accessibility Plan, describing the school's context, values, ethos and mission statement.
7	SENCO tabled aims and objectives for discussion as an agenda item at the next SLT meeting.	SLT agreed aims and objectives for the Accessibility Plan. These were recorded in Part 1: Opening Statement of the template.
8	SENCO reviewed the school and pupil data to map the numbers of pupils with disabilities.	The information was recorded in Part 2: School and Pupil Data Analysis in the Accessibility Plan Template, and the section 'what the data tells us' completed. As well as having an accurate picture of the range of pupils with disabilities in the school the SENCO noted the impact of disabilities on pupils' attendance and SEMH. This information was also recorded in Part 2: School and Pupil Data Analysis in the Accessibility Plan Template.
9	SENCO considered how to consult with various stakeholders and decided to begin with the staff. SENCO downloaded the pdnet Staff Consultation PowerPoint and supporting materials.	SENCO delivered the consultation session to the whole school staff including, teachers, teaching assistants, site team, catering staff, admin staff, PE coaches, before and after-school club staff and SLT. This gained information on the staff's opinions on: • what the school is doing well • what areas might be improved • what other stakeholders need to be consulted • suggestions as to how this might be carried out.
10	SENCO reviewed the staff consultation and considered all areas of disability: • Physical disability/ies • Long term, complex or fluctuating medical needs • Sensory support needs • Autism • Speech, language and communication needs • Cognition and learning needs	SENCO identified three priorities for the plan as staff had identified the need to improve access for pupils with physical disabilities, autism and speech, language and communication needs.

Case Study

Townsville School: SENCO's actions and outcomes

SENCO Actions	Outcomes
11 SENCO carried out an audit of provision for the three priority areas in collaboration with other key staff e.g. lead teacher for Autism. • Physical Disabilities – *pdnet Standards and Self-Evaluation Tool* • Autism – *Autism Education Trust Standards* • Speech, language and communication needs - *Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists and Association of Language Therapists in Independent Practice: Guidance on quality standards for local authorities and schools as commissioners of speech and language therapy services in the UK*	SENCO felt that carrying out these audits was extremely helpful. Since the standards cover all aspects of supporting a pupil with those specific needs, it gave the SENCO confidence in knowing that nothing had been missed out and a good picture of provision and practice had been gained. The Report and Action Plan from the pdnet Standards Self-Evaluation Tool were very helpful for informing the Accessibility Plan.
12 SENCO researched Building Regulations Part M and discovered that the last audit was over ten years ago. SENCO commissioned a buildings audit to confirm that the school was compliant.	School achieved basic compliance with the Building Regulations Part M, but it was clear that the school was not prepared for meeting the needs of pupils with more complex needs e.g. pupil requiring a high level of personal care.
13 SENCO identified that the school was not accessible to potential pupils with complex physical needs and that this needed to be addressed in the light of the duty to be anticipatory.	SENCO and Site Manager conducted the pdnet Accessibility Audit in-house to identify areas for development in terms of accessibility for pupils with complex physical needs.
14 Following on from the staff consultation, the SENCO consulted with pupils, parents/ carers and disabled members of the wider community in different ways: • Pupils – the School Council held a single agenda item meeting, coming off timetable for a morning. They took part in disability awareness raising activities and then completed a walk round the school to look at access. Pupils fed back to the governors via a short presentation. • Parents/ carers joined with a disabled 'expert' from the local community to take part in a focus group at the school hosted by the SENCO and the SEND Governor.	The SENCO collated information from all sources in order to identify priorities and set targets on the Accessibility Plan. The information came from: • pupils via the School Council • parents/carers via the focus group • members of the local community via the Focus Group • staff via the consultation meeting • SEND audits, including the pdnet Self-Evaluation Tool SENCO completed Part 3: Consultation with Stakeholders, Part 4: Good Practice in School and Part 5: Sources of Information in the Accessibility Plan Template.
15 SENCO worked alongside the SEND Governor to identify priorities and set targets in the three key areas of access to: • the curriculum, • the physical environment and • information in relation to the three groups of pupils with a disability identified in the consultation – physical disability, autism and speech, language and communication needs.	Challenges were identified and the CSAR-STEP solution focused approach was taken to identify solutions, actions, targets and resources required.
16 SENCO consulted with the Business Manager and Headteacher about the budgetary implications of the targets.	It was agreed that the targets were achievable under the current budget.
17 SENCO finalised targets and recorded them on the Accessibility Plan.	SENCO completed Part 6: Accessibility Action Plan in the Accessibility Plan Template.
18 SENCO shared the Accessibility Plan at the next Governing Body meeting.	At the meeting the plan was discussed in relation to other policies, the Equality Statement, Equality Objectives and the School Improvement plan.
19 SENCO liaised with school office staff to make the Accessibility Plan available.	The Accessibility Plan was available: • for download from the website • as a paper copy from reception, on request, • in two versions: full version and plain English summary, • as a mp3 audio file accessed from the website • in a symbol format from the website. The Accessibility Plan was also uploaded as evidence for the schools' self-evaluation against the pdnet Standards. This can be shared with Ofsted, as required.

Case Study

Townsville School

Townsville School

Accessibility Plan

Date agreed: April 2020

Review date: March 2023

Developed by: Sarah Williamson, SENCO

Part 1. Opening Statement

School Context

Townsville School welcomes pupils from the vibrant, diverse community that surrounds the school. We are proud that our school is well regarded and is known throughout the area as being caring and inclusive.

At Townsville School we strive to provide a safe, caring and nurturing environment built on trust and respect. Our mission statement 'Safe-Happy-Learn' reflects our understanding and belief that all children and young people need to feel secure both physically and emotionally in order to learn and achieve their potential. We celebrate the uniqueness of every pupil and value everyone's contribution to the life of our school.

Our guiding principle is our belief that full social and educational inclusion can be achieved and reflected in our school; a school where there are no 'invisible pupils' and where all feel a sense of belonging and participation rather than just 'being there'.

We aim to help our pupils to develop to become confident, independent and resilient individuals. We aim high and are aspirational in how we expect our pupils to behave and what we expect them to achieve. We offer high quality teaching that enables our pupils to achieve their potential and take pride in their achievements.

Townsville School is committed to the full social and educational inclusion of all pupils and takes positive actions to ensure that this is the case for pupils with disabilities. The school has a commitment to identifying barriers and challenges to access and learning and making reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils to enable full participation.

Aims

Townsville School aims to deliver an ambitious vision for pupils with disabilities, that is demonstrated by all staff.

The school aims to ensure that pupils with disabilities make good progress from their starting points through flexible quality first teaching incorporating adaptations and modifications to enable access and interventions, where appropriate.

The school aims to 'level the playing field' for those with disabilities and strives to provide appropriate, well considered support that is delivered seamlessly across all teaching, learning and social situations and maximises independence.

Objectives

All staff will demonstrate knowledge of equality legislation in relation to pupils, staff and visitors with disabilities and understand their role in implementing it.

All staff will have a 'can do' attitude underpinned by a collaborative, problem-solving, solution-focused approach to new challenges, as they arise.

The school will have systems in place that support the access and inclusion of pupils with disabilities e.g. Risk Assessments, Moving and Handling Plans, Individual Healthcare Plans, Communication Passports, Transition Plans, School Journey Long Term Anticipatory Plan etc.

The school will continue to improve the physical school environment and facilities to enable pupils with complex physical needs to fully access the school site.

Part 2. School and Pupil Data Analysis

School and Pupil Data Analysis

Current pupil data shows that at the start of academic year 2019-20 there are 30 pupils regarded as disabled under the definition within the Equality Act 2010. Pupil data is collated according to primary area of need, but for some pupils this is more challenging as they have co-existing conditions or areas of need.

To reflect this complexity and map the multiple impacts of disabilities on pupils, the following table further analyses the needs of the pupil population in terms of overlapping conditions and their impact on SEMH and attendance.

Area of Need	Number of pupils where…			
	This is their primary area of need	This is their primary area of need, but also has additional co-existing conditions	There is an impact on SEMH	There is an impact on Attendance
Physical disability/ies	3	1	3	1
Long term, complex or fluctuating/ degenerative medical needs	1	0	1	0
Sensory support needs	1	Hearing: 1	1	0
Autism	9	4	7	2
Speech, language and communication needs	2	2	2	1
Cognition and learning needs	14	5	7	2

What the data tells us

Townsville School has 30 pupils on roll who have a disability and that are protected under the Equality Act 2010. 13 of these pupils have multiple conditions that impact on more than one aspect of their social and educational inclusion.

A high proportion of these pupils experience an impact on their mental health and wellbeing (21 of the 30 pupils). For 6 pupils there is an impact on attendance at school. Further work is required to investigate whether this is related to school and what next steps might be appropriate for these pupils, as individuals and as a group, e.g. would they benefit from an appropriate SEMH intervention or play/music/art therapy, do they require referral to CAMHS etc.

Part 3. Consultation with Stakeholders

Consultation with Stakeholders

At Townsville School we ensure we consult with all stakeholders around accessibility planning. This includes consultation with staff, pupils, parents/carers, governors and the wider community. The consultation ensures that the views of ALL are taken into consideration and the plan modified where reasonable to meet the needs of stakeholders.

This Accessibility Plan has been written in consultation with:

The full school staff team which includes Governors, Headteacher, Senior Leaders, Business Manager, Site Manager, Site team, Teachers, Teaching Assistants, Admin staff, Catering staff, Before and After-School Club staff and PE Coaches.

The consultation process involved:

• Staff consultation meeting
• Parent/carers and disabled members of the local community focus group
• Pupil voice activity by the school council
• Meetings with SLT
• Meetings with Governing Body

Part 4. Good Practice in School

Access to the Curriculum

At Townsville School we strive to enable access to the curriculum for pupils with a disability. The following statements outline the range of strategies we use to help achieve this:

- Pupils at Townsville School with disabilities have access to the full curriculum and, where necessary, this is tailored to best suit their individual needs.
- Adaptations may be necessary to ensure that pupils with a disability are able to equally access the curriculum alongside their peers via appropriate teaching and learning opportunities.
- Staff recognise that not all pupils with a disability have special educational needs. School interrogates and analyses data to monitor the attainment and progress of pupils with disabilities.
- Where a pupil does have additional educational needs then they are able to access learning interventions alongside their peers.
- Staff are deployed, as appropriate, to support pupils to access the curriculum.
- Staff understand the needs of individual pupils and how to best support access to the curriculum, including how to use any aids, equipment or ICT.
- Staff understand the need to balance the support provided with the need to maximise the pupil's independence. Whenever possible, staff facilitate independent access to the curriculum.
- Our school uses a number of strategies and programmes to support the inclusion of pupils with disabilities e.g. use of visual timetables, use of symbols for communication and PECS.
- Our school provides CPD / staff training on areas of need identified as being important for accessing the curriculum e.g. training in Makaton, use of visual timetables, speech, language and communication strategies, sensory processing training.

We make effective use of ICT aids, equipment and resources to support access for pupils with a physical disability by providing:

- portable appropriately sized laptop or tablet
- appropriately positioning of equipment for ease of use
- appropriately sized screen
- specialist keyboards, mini keyboards, keyguards, on-screen keyboards
- adapted mice, switches, joysticks, tracker-balls which may include alternative positioning such as a head or foot switch
- adapted stylus alternatives e.g. T bar, golf ball and mouth-stick
- eye-gaze technology
- specialist software including Clicker 8
- specialist speech to text software e.g. Dragon
- specialist text to speech software and equipment e.g. C-pen

Staff ensure that any equipment used by the pupil is readily available for use in lessons or elsewhere, as required. Procedures are in place for staff to monitor aids and equipment to ensure that it is safe and fit for purpose and systems are in place for staff to report faults and action repairs.
Procedures are in place for staff to feedback the effectiveness or otherwise of aids and equipment so that its use can be reviewed, and if necessary, more appropriate aids or equipment provided.

Aids and equipment are used effectively to support access to the curriculum for pupils with physical disabilities. Examples of this include:

- The pupil's seating and positioning is supported by provision of specialist chairs e.g. hi-lo class chair or adapted school furniture e.g. science stool with back, arms and footrest etc.
- The pupil's seating and positioning is supported by provision of flexible surface solutions e.g. rise and fall desk, rise and fall equipment in specialist areas e.g. food technology (hob, sink, oven), science (sink, gas tap / electrics on bench), art, textiles, design technology etc.
- Aids are provided for pupils with motor coordination and poor hand/eye skills, e.g. extra robust scientific glassware, specialist pens and pencils, writing slopes, adapted rulers, a range of adapted scissors, dycem (sticky mat) etc.
- Adapted PE equipment is provided for pupils with physical disabilities e.g. lightweight bats and balls, easy-catch balls, scarves, large football for wheelchair football, low level nets etc.

Equipment to support access to the curriculum, in particular responding to the curriculum, is available for pupils with associated speech, language and communication needs. This includes:

- PODD book
- communication boards
- voice output devices (talkers)
- single message recording devices
- symbols e.g. Widgit, Boardmaker
- photographs
- eye gaze technology

Time out of class / absence management:

Our school acknowledges that pupils with a disability may require time out of class for a number of valid reasons, including:

- physiotherapy programmes delivered by staff in school
- appointments with visiting healthcare professionals in school e.g. physiotherapist, occupational therapist, specialist nurse etc.
- increased likelihood of the need to access therapeutic interventions e.g. art therapy, play therapy etc.

Our school acknowledges that pupils with a disability may require time out of school for a number of valid reasons, including:

- to attend healthcare appointments,
- increased likelihood of absence due to ill health,
- absence due to surgery or medical procedure.

Our school has strategies in place to ensure that the pupil accesses the content of the curriculum that has been missed e.g. on return to class the teacher spends time briefing the pupil and supporting with task, pupil has access to online learning, work is sent home if pupil is recuperating and is well enough to do some activities etc.

Our school ensures that the pupil's absence record takes into account medical needs and the pupil is not unduly penalised.

Assessment and Examinations:

- Staff make reasonable adjustments to tests, examinations and assessment tasks to enable pupils with disabilities to access them.
- As required, examination access arrangements (pre-examination adjustments for candidates sitting formal examinations such as GCSEs, A Levels etc) are arranged under JCQ rules and put in place for pupils with a disability. Arrangements are based on evidence of need and normal way of working e.g. extra time, readers, scribes and practical assistants.

Challenging areas of the curriculum e.g. PE, swimming, Sports Day etc.

- Pupils with disabilities are able to fully access and participate in all aspects of the PE curriculum: games/ sports /gymnastics /dance /swimming.
- Adjustments and adaptations are made to enable full participation on an individual basis and may include, provision of adapted equipment, provision of moving and handling support to transfer position etc.
- If appropriate, a pupil focused PE Support Plan, that includes risk assessment and identifies specific areas of support, is in place.
- Sports that are traditionally associated with people with disabilities such as Boccia, table cricket and seated volleyball are included in the PE curriculum for all pupils.
- Pupils with disabilities are able to fully access and participate in the school Sports Day.

Pupils are supported to access the benefits, services and facilities as part of the wider curriculum offered by the school. The range of strategies used to help achieve this access are:

- Our school supports all pupils to access all aspects of school life, including access to the wider curriculum e.g. extra-curricular clubs, after-school and breakfast clubs and off-site trips, visits and residentials.
- Pupils with disabilities are able to access all off-site visits and events due to careful advance planning by staff. Visits and events are planned individually to take in to account the needs of attending pupils with disabilities.
- Pupils with disabilities are able to access extra-curricular clubs, after-school clubs and breakfast clubs due to careful planning by staff.
- Barriers and challenges to participation are analysed using a risk assessment proforma and action is taken to minimise or reduce those identified risks using a solution-focused approach.
- A pupil specific risk assessment is completed to support access to school clubs and after-school/ breakfast clubs where barriers to access are identified and reasonable adjustments made.
- When necessary, additional staffing is provided for school clubs and after-school/ breakfast clubs to enable pupils with personal care needs or medical support needs to attend e.g. pupil with diabetes, epilepsy, pupil who needs catheterisation etc.
- Sports Day is adapted to include activities accessible for all including pupils with a physical disability who may use mobility aids or equipment e.g. power or manual wheelchairs, walking frame.
- A pupil specific risk assessment is completed for all off-site trips and visits in addition to the class/ group generic risk assessment.
- Accessible coaches/alternative transport options are always used for trips involving pupils with disabilities.
- Adjustments and adaptations are made to enable full participation on an individual basis and may include, provision of adapted equipment, provision of moving and handling support to transfer position etc.

Access to the Physical Environment

At Townsville School, we strive to enable access to the physical environment for pupils with a disability. The following statements outline the range of strategies we use to help achieve this:

- The school site complies with the Planning and Building Regulations: Part M.
- The school recognises that compliance does not guarantee that the site is accessible for pupils with complex needs and recognises the need to be anticipatory in terms of meeting future such needs e.g. provision of an accessible large space fitted as a hygiene suite with rise and fall changing bed, hoist, rise and fall sink and toilet.
- Pupils with disabilities have good access to the majority of the school site, achieved by a long-term strategy of investment in building accessibility.
- School undertakes a full buildings accessibility audit every three years as part of the process of reviewing the Accessibility Plan.
- The Site Team, SENCO and pupil (if age appropriate) carry out a half termly/ termly walk around the site to review physical accessibility.
- School consults the following stakeholders around changes to improve access to the physical environment: pupils, parents/carers, specialist services, disabled people's groups, local community, academy trust, diocese, local authority.

Mobility and moving around School

- The majority of the school site is accessible to all pupils with disabilities, including those with physical disabilities who use mobility equipment such as a powerchair, manual wheelchair and walker.
- Pupils are able to access upper floors either independently or with support, using the lifts around the site.
- Staff encourage pupils with disabilities to move around the site as independently as is possible.

Risk Assessment

For an individual pupil with disabilities, access to the site is supported by a comprehensive risk assessment that covers the following indoor and outdoor environment areas of the school:

- access to the site
- reception/ main entrance
- the pupil's route into school
- classrooms
- specialist subject areas e.g. food tech etc.
- intervention areas
- calm spaces and withdrawal areas
- corridors
- dining hall
- assembly hall

- performance area/ stage
- sports hall
- PE changing areas
- locker areas
- toilets
- hygiene suites
- medical rooms
- outdoor pathways
- outdoor recreation areas
- outdoor playing fields/ multi-sports areas

Access to Information

At Townsville School, we strive to provide access to information for pupils with a disability. Our school ensures that delivery of information, such as letters, information about the school/ school events and the website are accessible to pupils, staff, parents and visitors with disabilities. The following statements outline the range of strategies we use to help achieve this:

- The school provides information in alternative formats e.g. plain English, use of visuals and symbols.
- The school informs people how they can access information in other formats such as Braille, signing, audio files, video files and identify how they can access this provision if requested, within a reasonable time frame.
- The school utilises technology to share information in a variety of formats e.g. social media, apps etc.
- The school identifies how textbooks, worksheets and other pupil information is selected and provided to meet a diversity of pupil needs.
- The school utilises technology to share information with pupils e.g. specialist software, app.

Part 5. The Accessibility Action Plan

Area 1: To increase the extent to which pupils with disabilities can participate in the school curriculum

Target: To enable pupils with a physical disability to write and record information efficiently and effectively.

Action/ Strategies	Resource Implications	Timescale	Responsibility	Success Criteria
Research options for alternative keyboards.	Time set aside for research.	Half a term	SENCO	1. Research completed. Specialist assessment commissioned. 2. Assessment completed within timescale. 3. Equipment received within timescale. 4. Staff supporting familiar with equipment within timescale. 5. Pupil familiar with equipment within timescale. 6. Pupil regularly uses the equipment for writing and recording. 7. Evaluation demonstrates pupil effectively using the equipment for all written work with teacher(s) noting improved quality, quantity and speed of recording.
Arrange specialist assessment for relevant pupils.	Cost of specialist assessment.	Half a term	SENCO	
Purchase equipment as recommended.	Cost of equipment.	One term	Finance Team	
Allocate time for staff training on use of equipment and practice use.	Time set aside out of class – cover arranged.	One term	Assistant Head	
Allocate time for pupil training on use of equipment and practice use.	Time set aside out of class.	One term	Class teacher/ Tutor	
Evaluate the effectiveness of provision of equipment.	Time set aside for SENCO to meet class teacher and TA support team for evaluation and review.	After two terms	Pupil, SENCO, Teachers	

Area 2: To improve the physical environment of the school to ensure disabled pupils can access all benefits, services and facilities offered by the school

Target: To achieve full physical access to the lower playground for all pupils.				
Action/ Strategies	**Resource Implications**	**Timescale**	**Responsibility**	**Success Criteria**
Research options for replacing the steps with ramp and steps.	Time set aside for SENCO to meet Site Manager and Business Manager.	Half a term	Site and Business Manager	1. Feasibility established.
Site and Business Manager commission tenders from contractors.	Time set aside for Business Manager to coordinate this. Costs established and agreed.	One term	Site and Business Manager	2. Specifications, plans and quotes received and reviewed.
Building work is planned and co-ordinated to be minimally disruptive to the running of the school.	Time set aside for Site Manager to coordinate with builders to implement during school holidays.	Two terms	Site and Business Manager and Head teacher	3. Ramp and steps in place and in use by all pupils. Ramp and steps conform to building regulations. 4. Completed in school holidays with no disruption to teaching and learning.

Area 3: To improve the delivery of information to disabled pupils so information is available equally to all pupils

Target: To enable learners with disabilities to access information around the school by accessing alternative visual information such as symbols presented alongside written information.

Action/ Strategies	Resource Implications	Timescale	Responsibility	Success Criteria
School to purchase software to enable easy production of symbol-based information and resources e.g. Widgit, Boardmaker, PCS	Cost of software. Time set aside for installation.	Half a term	SENCO and Business Manager	Software installed.
Staff to receive training on use of visuals and symbols from the school's Speech and Language Therapist.	Cost of training. Time set aside for staff to receive training – cover arranged.	One term	SENCO and SALT	Training completed for relevant admin, teaching and TA staff.
Staff to receive training on software to produce information presented in a consistent symbol format.	Cost of training. Time set aside for staff to receive training – cover arranged.	Two terms	SENCO	Training completed for relevant admin, teaching and TA staff.
Review and evaluation meeting.	Time set aside for SENCO to meet with admin, teaching and TA staff to review and evaluate use and provision.	Three terms	SENCO	Use of symbols evident around school on displays, signs, noticeboards and other sources of information. Evidence of pupils responding to symbols by talking to peers and adults about content.

Part 5. Sources of Information

Sources of information

A variety of sources of information have been used to develop this Accessibility Plan:

- views from consultations with stakeholders
- the pdnet Self -Evaluation Tool summary
- a commissioned Building Regulations Audit Report
- an in-house pdnet Accessibility Audit for the Physical Environment summary
- the Autism Education Trust Standards self-evaluation summary
- the Royal College of Speech & Language Therapists and Association of Language Therapists in Independent Practice: Guidance on quality standards for local authorities and schools as commissioners of speech and language therapy services in the UK self-evaluation summary

Acknowledgements

This Accessibility Planning Toolkit has been developed with funding and support from the Whole School SEND Consortium who are currently delivering the Department of Education SEND Schools' Workforce Support Contract.

The project was led by Di Caesar and Ann Sullivan who wrote the materials based on knowledge and experiences shared by a number of people. Our thanks is extended to;

- The headteachers, SENCOs and teachers from over 80 schools who responded to the national Accessibility Plan Survey. The survey helped us gain insight into current practice around the writing and use of accessibility plans, particularly in relation to learners with a physical disability.

- pdnet Regional Groups and members for sharing your collective expert knowledge through dedicated focussed discussions which has been central to the development of the toolkit.

- Chris Eridani Ball (DfE) and the Gloucestershire County Council Access Planning Team, your guidance and advice has been crucial in shaping the toolkit, which pdnet believes has the power to make schools truly inclusive for all.

The project co-ordination and design of the Toolkit was led by Kate Drurey at the SDSA.

If you have any comments or feedback about the Accessibility Toolkit please get in touch by emailing support@pdnet.org.uk.

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About the Authors

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Ann has over 30 years' experience in both mainstream and specialist schools, as a primary class teacher, secondary learning support teacher and SENCO. From 2009 onward she was a SEND advisory teacher, supporting schools to meet and manage the needs of pupils with physical disabilities and complex medical needs, becoming an SLE (Specialist Leader in Education) in 2015.

Ann is now an educational consultant and trainer, specialising in teaching of reading, spelling and writing through phonics for pupils with SEND, particularly those with multiple and complex needs. She is the author of the Phonics for Pupils with Special Educational Needs programme, published by Speechmark Routledge in 2018.

👤 Di Caesar

Di has over 30 years of experience of both mainstream and special education sectors, including 10 years as a Governor for a local secondary school. She currently leads the Physical Disability and Sensory teams within Gloucestershire County Council Education and Inclusion Specialist Support Services which comprises a range of professionals including Specialist Teachers, Occupational Therapists, Speech and Language therapists and Mobility and Assistive Technology roles.

Di is an experienced manager and has been involved in developing policy and provision at a local, regional and national level which contributes to improving outcomes for children and young people with physical disability. This work has been supported by her role as Lead Advisory Teacher for physical disability in Gloucestershire since 1999.

Funded by
Department for Education