



# Devon Accessibility Strategy 2017- 2020



Devon  
Children and  
Families  
Partnership

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# 1. Introduction, purpose and methodology

*“We have high aspirations for all our children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, and will ensure that they are at the heart of everything we do and part of every decision we make”*

[Devon’s Multi-agency Strategy for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities 2017-2020](#)

This document is focussed solely on the parts of the Equality Act 2010 relating to children and young people with a disability and their access to schools maintained by Devon County Council and to academies and free schools within the authority.

## Why?

Under the Equality Act (2010) Devon County Council (DCC) must, for the schools for which it is responsible, prepare an Accessibility Strategy. This accessibility strategy applies to local authority maintained schools, nurseries, children’s centres and early years settings.

The Accessibility Strategy sets out the local authority plan to increase access to education for pupils with disabilities in all schools. Schools should take account of the local authority strategy when drawing up their own school accessibility plans. The strategy is also relevant to academies and free schools as well as settings not maintained by the local authority. All schools have a statutory duty to draw up and publish a school accessibility plan. As well as general duties for public bodies, the Equality Act states the legal obligations that schools, early years providers, post-16 institutions, Local Authorities and others have towards disabled children and young people

This is a requirement of law. Schedule 10 of the Equality Act clearly sets out what every Local Authority in England and Wales must do as part of their accessibility strategy

(appendix 1).

The Equality Act 2010 and The Special educational needs and disability (SEND) code of practice: 0 – 25 years 2015 provide the legal framework for this strategy.

Disability is a protected characteristic within the terms of this Act. This strategy makes clear Devon County Council’s priorities in improving accessibility for children and young people who have a disability and to outline maintained schools’ and settings responsibilities in meeting these requirements.

## What?

The duty has three main elements. In carrying out their functions, public bodies are required to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act,
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic (disability) and people who do not share it,
- foster good relations across all characteristics - between people who share a protected characteristic (disability) and people who do not share it

This strategy sets out how Devon County Council will support schools and settings, including those for Early Years and Post 16, for which it is the responsible body, to comply with these duties, specifically to:

- increase the extent to which pupils with a disability can participate in the curriculum;
- improve the physical environment of schools and settings to increase the extent to which pupils with a disability can take advantage of education and associated services; and
- improve the availability of accessible information to pupils with a disability and their parents

## How?

All stakeholders: children, young people, schools, settings and services working with schools were consulted, through an on-line questionnaire from November 2017- January 2018 to identify strengths of current provision and to identify key areas for improvement. This information, in conjunction with consultations as part of the [SEND Strategy 2017-2020](#) was used to identify goals and priorities for the 2018-2019 Accessibility Strategy Action plan (appendix 3).

## Devon's strategic direction

As part of the Council's improvement work, the [SEND Strategy 2017-20](#) has been developed which sets out Devon's vision and strategic priorities, demonstrating the local areas commitment to joint working across all partners.

The strategic priorities have been informed by Devon parents and carers 'burning issues', the local area self-evaluation, feedback from groups and individuals, findings from the Local Government Association (LGA) Peer Review in November 2016 and feedback through consultation on the SEND Strategy.

The six priorities are;

1. Working Together
2. Inclusive Education
3. Preparation for Adulthood
4. Choice & Control
5. Engagement
6. Health & Wellbeing

Devon's accessibility strategy links to the above priorities identified in the [SEND Strategy 2017-2020](#) and the SEND Strategy Implementation Plan 2017-2020.

Between November 2017 and January 2018, a consultation with stakeholders: schools and settings, children and young people, parents, services for schools and members of the SEND Improvement board identified specific goals and priorities in relation to the Council's accessibility strategy. Schools completed the on-line survey. Babcock LDP advisory teams supported children and young people to complete the questionnaire. Devon Information and Advice Service signposted and supported parents, with the children, young people and parent questionnaire. The questionnaires were also available from the LO website.

## 2. Accessibility consultation

### Schools and settings questionnaire

- 126 teachers and senior leaders from a range of nursery, primary, secondary, special school and post-16 provisions completed the on-line accessibility questionnaire.
- Staff were asked to answer each question with a score out of 1-5, 1 strongly disagree and 5 strongly agree

Staff were asked 19 questions that covered:

#### Access to the curriculum

Aspirations, training and expertise, attainment and progress, provision of auxiliary aids, participation in school life.

86% strongly agreed and agreed that staff have high expectations and aspirations for CYP with SEND

65% strongly agreed and agreed that staff have specialist skills and expertise to meet the needs of CYP with SEND

48% strongly agreed and agreed that CYP are attaining well and making good progress

67% strongly agreed and agreed that auxiliary aids are used to ensure that CYP fully access the curriculum

#### Access to buildings

Accessibility of buildings, pathways, toilets and changing facilities, emergency and evacuation systems, furniture and equipment, adaptations for CYP with sensory needs

48% strongly agreed and agreed that they regularly use a physical access checklist to assess the accessibility of classrooms and buildings

36% strongly agreed and agreed that they consult regularly with CYP regarding accessibility of classrooms, toilets and changing facilities

66% strongly agreed and agreed that there are calm low sensory areas available in their settings

64% strongly agreed and agreed that furniture and equipment is selected, adjusted and located appropriately

## Access to information

Engagement of CYP and parents in co-production of plans, accessibility of DCC Local Offer, accessibility of school and settings websites, accessibility of information to CYP and their parents, arrangements for meetings with parents and families.

88% strongly agreed and agreed that they give CYP and their families information about Devon Information and Advice Service (DIAS) and signpost them to other advice and agencies

51% strongly agree and agree that the Local Offer website is informative, helpful and easily accessible

75% strongly agree and agree that the school's information report and accessibility plan is on the school's website and is also available as a hard copy for parents

50% strongly agree and agree that they work with CYP and their families to ensure that the school's website is clear and easy to access information

## Children, young people and parents' questionnaire

The questionnaire asked CYP and their families

- how they learn in school/college?
- accessibility of the school/setting/college building?
- accessibility of information that is given to them and parents/carers from school/College?

64 children, young people and their parents completed the CYP questionnaire.

## Access to the curriculum

How CYP learn, if teachers understand their learning needs, if they are listened to, if equipment is provided to support learning

68% said that their teachers were very good or good in having the highest standards of what they could achieve and expected them to do their best

37% said their teachers were very good or good in understanding how they learnt and planned lessons so CYP could show their learning

42% said that there were very good or good opportunities to tell their teachers how they best learned and their ideas were used to plan the learning

7% said that they always had equipment in school that helps with learning e.g. writing slope, computer software, adapted PE equipment and 48% said they sometimes had access to auxiliary aids that helps with their learning

## Access to buildings

Accessibility of classrooms and buildings, lighting and sound, toilets and changing facilities,

77% said that they can easily access toilets and changing areas.

68% said that they very easily or easily move around the school building.

11 % said that teachers ask me how easy it is to move around the school building and learn in school

## Accessibility of information

Accessibility of letters home, the school website, who to ask for help, the SEN Information Report, the Local Offer

78% said that letters that were sent home were easy to read

77% said that the school/setting website was easy to use and find information

66% said that the Local Offer website was easy to use and access information

83% said the school/setting were flexible in their arrangements for review/parents' meetings

# 3. Background

## Local Context

Devon is a large shire county and is the third largest county in England. There is a wide range of provision available to meet the needs of children and young people with a disability.

There are:

- 200 maintained primary schools
- 93 primary academies
- 6 maintained infant schools
- 2 infant academies
- 5 maintained junior schools
- 2 junior academies
- 13 maintained secondary school
- 23 secondary academies
- Maintained primary schools with additionally resourced provision: 4 communication and Interaction resource bases, 2 Hearing Support Centre (HSC) and 1 speech and language base
- Maintained secondary's with additionally resource provision (3 Communication and Interaction Resource Bases, 1 Physical Disability (PD), 1 Hearing Support Centre (HSC)
- 10 maintained special schools
- 1 maintained Pupil Referral Unit
- 3 Pupil Referral Units with academy status

The Council's partnership with schools is well-established and long term with specialist teams providing advice and support to schools and settings. Babcock Education in a joint venture with Devon County Council and provides commissioned services to support positive outcomes for children and young people in Devon.

Devon LA, through Babcock LDP, is part of the South West consortium working with Plymouth and Exeter University's to deliver the mandatory National Award for SEN Coordination. In September 2017 the course programme commences with its ninth cohort of SENCO's/schools ensuring high quality training, consistency of local message and expectations of practice are shared across the county. The programme to date has trained over 200 SENCOs, receives strong support and positive feedback. The quality of the course is recognised by the national providers reference group.

## SEND Improvement Board

The strategic responsibility for the implementation of the strategy will be led through The SEND Improvement Board) which includes representation from:

- SEND Whole System Lead (Senior Responsible Officer)
- Head of Education & Learning, DCC
- Devon Parent Carer's Voice
- Children & Young Peoples Commissioning Lead (NEW Devon CCG)/
- Working Together Lead
- Senior Manager Children's Social Work (DCC)
- Commissioning Manager Children & Families (DCC)
- Senior Manager Early Help (DCC)
- SEN Strategy Manager (DCC) /Operational Delivery Lead
- Adult Social Care Disability Lead (DCC)
- Babcock LDP
- Special Heads Association of Devon (SHAD)

- Devon Association of Primary Heads (DAPH)
- Devon Association of Secondary Heads (DASH)
- Early Years
- Devon Association of Governors (DAG)
- Public Health (DCC)
- Information, Participation & Engagement Lead
- Virgin Care Ltd
- Communications Lead (DCC)
- Programme Manager
- Programme Support

## 4. Definitions

### Special educational needs (SEN)

A child or young person has SEN if they have 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:

- has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or
- 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 meet the definition above or when of compulsory school age (or would be likely, if no special educational provision were made). (Children and Families Act 2014)

### Disability

A person is disabled “if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities”.<sup>2</sup> This includes physical disabilities, sensory impairments, learning disabilities and some specified medical conditions, HIV, multiple sclerosis and cancer are all considered disabilities, regardless of their effect.

*It is important to note that because a pupil has a disability this does not necessarily mean that he/she has special educational needs*

### Reasonable adjustments

This duty applies only to disabled people. This Accessibility Duty recognises and promotes the principles identified for schools, i.e.

- Where something a school does places a pupils with a disability at a disadvantage compared to other pupils then the school must take reasonable steps to try and avoid that discrimination
- Schools are not subject to the other reasonable adjustments duty to make alterations to physical features because this is already considered as part of their planning duties
- In addition to having a duty to consider reasonable adjustments for particular identified pupils with disabilities, schools also have to consider potential adjustments which may be needed for disabled pupils generally, as it is likely that any school will have a pupil with a disability at some point. **It is important to note that the duty on schools to make reasonable adjustments is anticipatory.** Schools should not wait until a pupil with a disability arrives before making or planning to make adjustments. This may be too late and could lead to the pupil being substantially disadvantaged, it is important, therefore, for schools to plan a broad range of accessibility improvement over time.

<sup>2</sup> (Equality Act 2010)

# 5. The Legal Framework

## Duties within the Equality Act 2010

Local authority accessibility strategies and school accessibility plans are a requirement of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. As well as general duties for public bodies, the Equality Act states specific duties, mainly:

- not to treat pupils with SEND less favourably and for a reason related to their disability
- to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils, so that they are not at a substantial disadvantage
- to publish and implement an accessibility strategy to increase access to school education for disabled pupils

## Auxiliary Aids

In September 2012 the duty to provide auxiliary aids and services (including specialist equipment which could include laptops and tablets) 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 pupil with a disability 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 an Education, Health and Care Plan in which case the responsibility to provide the aid or service lies with the local authority (LA). Examples of auxiliary aids include assisted listening devices (ALD) such as radio aids, adapted physical education equipment, adapted keyboards and computer software.

## School Accessibility Plans

Every school must have a school accessibility plan, which shows how they intend to improve accessibility for pupils with a disability, and by when these improvements will be made. The plan must comply with the statutory duties as detailed in Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

The Local Authority will provide a model Accessibility toolkit for schools and settings to support them in auditing accessibility of: curriculum, environment and information. (Appendix 2)

## The Children and Families Act and the SEND Code of Practice: 0-25

The Children and Families Act came into force on the 1st September 2014. Part 3 of this Act and associated regulations reforms the duties, policies and procedures relating to children and young people with SEND. The SEND Code of Practice: 0-25, 2015 provides statutory guidance relating to Part 3 of the Children and Families Act.

The SEND Code of Practice: 0-25 (2015), promotes inclusive education and describes how the Equality Act and the Children and Families Act 2014 work together to ensure this:

‘The Children and Families Act (2014) secures the general presumption in law of mainstream education in relation to decisions about where children and young people with SEN should be educated and the Equality Act 2010 provides protection from discrimination for disabled people.’<sup>5</sup>

Putting children/young people and their families at the centre is a key message of the SEND Code of Practice: 0-25 and is at the heart of Devon’s Council’s strategic planning.

## Admissions:

The SEND Code of Practice (2015) emphasises that educational settings including further education establishments must not have discriminatory admissions policies. It states that:

‘The Equality Act 2010 prohibits schools from discriminating against disabled children and young people in respect of admissions for a reason related to their disability.

Where a child or young person has SEN but does not have an Education Health and Care Plan they must be educated in a mainstream setting except in specific circumstances set out in the SEND Code of Practice: 0-25’.<sup>17</sup>

Devon County Council is responsible for admissions to maintained schools, academies and free schools in the county. In partnership with schools the council works hard to ensure that schools do not:



- discriminate in the arrangements that it makes for deciding who is offered a place;
- place any terms on a person's admission which are discriminatory;
- refuse a place for discriminatory reasons;
- harass a person who has applied for a place at your school;
- victimise a person in relation to admission to school.

The 2017 Draft Fair Access Protocol outlines how the local authority will respond where a school wishes to refuse admission to a child or young person.

## 6. Making it happen

### How we will increase access to the curriculum.

#### You said:

##### What is working well

*"Staff never stop in their efforts to support my daughter to succeed. They are passionate and positive about her future"*

*"I feel my teachers expect the same from me as from everyone else. I think this is a good thing."*

*"All staff are committed to removing barriers to learning and enabling children with SEND to achieve their potential"*

*"Staff are becoming increasingly skilled, both through experience and training"*

##### What we need to change

*"Not all staff are trained to plan for complex needs"*

*"Sometimes difficult for whole staff team to access health training e.g. refreshers around epilepsy and managing medications"*

*"Easier access to expertise and services that can help in isolated rural areas"*

*"My daughter has a short term memory loss. She needs a lesson summary to help with homework. I have asked but this has not been done."*

The Local Authority will	Schools will
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide on-going guidance and training to schools to support them in the effective implementation of the Equality Act 2010 and Children and Families Act 2014</li> <li>• Support the acquisition of specialist skills and expertise within, across and between mainstream settings and focus support offer to schools on high incidence areas of need e.g. <b>mental health, autism, attachment</b></li> <li>• Ensure that the voice of children and young people with SEND, and their parents, are heard more clearly in education settings and actions are taken accordingly</li> <li>• Develop a whole system approach to capturing the voice of all children &amp; young people with SEN &amp; Disabilities</li> <li>• Develop the Local Offer Reference Group (LORG) as a formal mechanism for parent/carers to feedback to the SEND Improvement Board</li> <li>• Develop and publish a Local Offer of services and provision that is available to children and young people with SEND, in liaison with families, Health and schools</li> </ul> <p><i>(cont'd)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have regard to national and local guidance on meeting the duties set out in the Equality Act 2010 and Children &amp; Families Act 2014 with regard to SEND</li> <li>• The school has an understanding of the progress, academic achievement of disabled pupils and has an anticipatory approach to meeting the needs of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs</li> <li>• Include improvements that increase access to the curriculum in their Accessibility Plan that is published on the school website.</li> <li>• Plan for and teach children with learning needs through a range of interventions and teaching strategies</li> <li>• Have regard to delivering the curriculum that includes catch-up programmes and appropriate support for vulnerable children</li> <li>• Establish effective ways of assessing and monitoring the progress of vulnerable groups</li> <li>• Evaluate outcomes of provision and adapt this accordingly</li> </ul>

The Local Authority will	Schools will
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure the SEND Local Offer website responds to the views of families</li> <li>• Regularly review school's compliance of <a href="#">Local Offer</a></li> <li>• Ensure availability of CPD opportunities for school staff to support and enhance the understanding of accessibility in the curriculum through the directory of training and services provided by <a href="#">Babcock LDP</a></li> <li>• Identify children and young people with SEN and disabilities at the earliest stage, including through universal health services</li> <li>• Continue to develop and strengthen the newly designed multi-agency diagnostic pathway for Autism/ neuro-developmental conditions</li> <li>• The LA will promote and strengthen the understanding of Early Help ensuring that identification of need is at the earliest possible point</li> <li>• Provide opportunities for <a href="#">Governor training</a> in relation to increasing access to the curriculum and governor responsibilities</li> <li>• Provide opportunities for SENCOs to regularly meet, share good practice and keep up to date with new developments</li> <li>• Allocate funding for the provision of specialist equipment for individual children in line with the LA guidelines</li> <li>• Encourage liaison between early year's settings and schools to ensure good transition and from there promote good transition practice for all phases of education. Devon's Transition Project aims to build on good practice to establish consistent expectations and to enable parents/carers to have quality materials to support transition for their child/Young Person.</li> <li>• Provide opportunities for capacity building in schools through advice and support available through <a href="#">Babcock LDP SEN Support Teams</a></li> <li>• Use the <a href="#">Graduated Response tool</a> with schools to support identification of need, assessment and effective provision</li> <li>• Deliver the Devon Inclusion Project</li> <li>• Monitor the provision made by all settings that provide statutory SEN provision, intervene when necessary and support the sharing of good practice</li> <li>• Encourage high aspirations for the most vulnerable learners</li> <li>• Strengthen the tracking of outcomes for children with SEND</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure effective support for vulnerable children in transition</li> <li>• Apply funding appropriately to ensure that vulnerable groups are not disadvantaged in relation to non-vulnerable groups</li> <li>• Provide regular and effective professional development for staff and governors</li> <li>• Work in partnership with parents</li> <li>• Listen to the voice of the child and young person and ensure they are appropriately engaged in decisions made about their educational provision</li> <li>• The delivery of the teaching and the curriculum does not discriminate against disabled pupils. This includes school trips and any curriculum enhancing events/ activities.</li> <li>• Whole school training and individual staff training reflects the support needs of disabled pupils</li> <li>• Provide auxiliary aids required to support disabled pupils in accessing the curriculum. This includes reviewing whole school and class subject resources are evaluated for their suitability to meet the needs of disabled pupils within the setting (e.g. ICT equipment, text books, play equipment). This also includes ensuring annual service/maintenance checks are made on auxiliary aids if necessary</li> <li>• Support all pupils to have positive attitudes towards disability and actively promote disability awareness within their settings</li> </ul>

## How we will increase access to the physical environment

### You said:

#### What is working well

*"There is an autism lead in the school. She is a teaching assistant and is passionate about her role and has influenced positive changes."*

*"This year we have had very successful transition of three pupils into Yr 7 with sensory and physical difficulties"*

*"We are planning to install a toilet and wet room for children with a disability. Visits by Occupational Therapists and Physiotherapists help us to make sure we have the correct equipment in place"*

#### What we need to change

*"The building, in some areas, is not compatible for wheelchair access"*

*"We know what needs to be done but have an old building in need of updates"*

*"No paths or designated parking in village near school"*

*"Sometimes it's a bit hard to move around in crowded corridors."*

The Local Authority will	Schools will
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan new buildings and significant extensions/ adaptations that comply with accessibility requirements and enable access for individuals with physical and sensory difficulties, and where needed, those with medical conditions</li> <li>• Work with the School Admissions, the 0-25 SEN Team and other local authority and externally commissioned staff to assist with issues regarding individual placements</li> <li>• Commission audits to advise on the required adaptations and additional resources needed to accommodate children/young people with physical or sensory impairments or complex medical conditions</li> <li>• Continue to review existing provision of buildings other than schools for which the local authority is responsible, e.g. children's centres so that they comply with the latest accessibility legislation and requirements</li> <li>• Monitor transition arrangements for children coming into schools for the first time and those moving across school phases</li> <li>• Liaise with schools that have buildings under local authority control to support and fund adaptations that go beyond the threshold funding arrangements</li> <li>• Support schools in reviewing the physical access audit of their premises and ensuring they understand the 'anticipatory duty'</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep under review the physical accessibility of the school building and site and make timely arrangements to accommodate access and medical conditions</li> <li>• School policies regarding physical environments reflect an anticipatory approach to meeting the needs of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs</li> <li>• Include improvements that increase access to the physical environment in an Accessibility Plan that is published on the school website</li> <li>• Comply with the anticipatory duties as set by the Equality Act 2010</li> <li>• Respond to the expectations set out in local and national guidance on meeting the Equality Act 2010 and Children &amp; Families Act 2014 with regard to SEND</li> <li>• Fund projects that increase access to the physical environment from their own resources and, where appropriate, to liaise with the Local Authority</li> <li>• Adhere to the specific guidance contained within this Accessibility Strategy</li> <li>• Undertake any improvement projects in liaison with their contractors and adhere to building regulations and Health &amp; Safety requirements</li> <li>• Ensure that curriculum needs are met by providing access to appropriate classroom facilities</li> <li>• Carry out risk assessments for school trips to ensure they are accessible for pupils with mobility, sensory or medical difficulties</li> <li>• Provide effective professional development for staff and governors to ensure they understand the expectations and requirements within the Equality Act 2010 and Children &amp; Families Act 2014</li> <li>• Keep parents/carers informed of developments and plans</li> <li>• All disabled pupils and those with special education needs must have a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) written and agreed with parent/carer. Staff are aware of the plans and appropriately trained.</li> </ul>

## How we will increase access to information

### You said:

#### What is working well

*“As parents we have been treated very much as partners in the process. They have listened to us, but we have also listened to them and respected their knowledge and experience. Honesty has played a huge part.”*

*“Our school is in the process of changing our website and will be fully consulting children and parents to make sure it is fully accessible”*

*“Our website was designed by parents, governors and staff”*

#### What we want to change

*“Some parents say that the Local Offer website is a little overwhelming and is difficult to navigate”*

*“I only found out about Devon Information and Support (DIASS) through the request for an assessment for my child”*

*“As a parent I have not been consulted about whether I can easily access information from the school website”*

The Local Authority will	Schools will
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure the Local Offer website is informative, helpful and easily accessible for parents and young people.</li> <li>• Develop arrangements to offer accessible information for those without internet access</li> <li>• Develop good practice guidelines for organisations to use when communicating with parents and young people</li> <li>• Provide information to pupils and their families in accessible formats whenever needed</li> <li>• Provide advice to schools and maintained settings from its specialist teaching and advice services about how best to support children and young people with accessing information, e.g. <a href="#">the Hearing Impairment and Visual Impairment Teams</a> offer a range of support from signing to Braille</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure they are proactive in researching and using a range of communication techniques and technologies, seeking advice of relevant professionals where necessary</li> <li>• Information made available to non-disabled pupils should be made available in an accessible format for disabled peers. This includes access to suitable communication system (e.g. visual aids, Makaton, etc.) when being involved in decision making and matters important to them.</li> <li>• Careers advice for disabled pupils includes information on reasonable adjustments at work and support available in work</li> <li>• Monitor and review the skills and expertise of staff to support pupils with disabilities</li> <li>• Involve pupils and their families in decisions and processes regarding the accessibility of information for example co-production of the school's SEN Information Report</li> </ul>

## 7. Devon County Council's expectation and best practice:

Consultation with families, children and young people, schools, settings and services for schools identified much good practice in schools and settings across the authority. The consultation also highlighted areas for development. As well as actions identified, through the consultation process, to ensure that schools and settings are compliant with the requirements of the 2010 Equality Act Devon County Council would expect that:

- Schools review their accessibility plans on a 3 year schedule, alongside their SEN Information Report, SEN Policy, Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions Policy and these documents are made available on the school website.
- There is a lead in the school responsible for leading a review of the school's Accessibility Plan and they look to consult/review with: disabled pupils, their parents/ carers, school staff, bodies responsible for the school
- The school understands the definition of disability (as outlined in the Equality Act 2010) and has an up to date record of disabled pupils, their relevant impairment, and any auxiliary aids or services they may need.
- All school policies address how reasonable adjustments around provision, criterion or practice within that policy will be made for disabled pupils (e.g. School Trip Policy, Learning Policy, Behaviour Policy, SEN Policy, Risk Assessments)

## 8. Funding:

To deliver the outcomes identified in this Strategy, existing funding streams will be directed toward the priorities identified.

- Ensure statutory provision is in place in mainstream schools
- Ensure there are sufficient special school places in Devon to meet demand – Devon County Council increased places by 11% between 2013 and 2016
- Use of specialist independent providers only when the SEN of a child or young person requires that level of specific provision and it cannot be met in mainstream or special schools within Devon

The Council will continue to look at ways to improve its efficiency and effectiveness to deliver the same quality and range of services for less money, or to deliver more for the same level of expenditure. Wherever possible, the LA will seek to develop services and projects in conjunction with key partners in the delivery of services for children and young people such as Health.

## 9. Monitoring and Review:

Devon Council recognises the need to monitor, evaluate and review the processes within the Authority and schools and settings to ensure that accessibility is increased and the best use is made of all available resources.

*"A local authority must keep its accessibility strategy under review during the period to which it relates and, if necessary, revise it" (3)*

It is the duty of all those working within local authority maintained schools and settings and Devon County Council on areas associated with accessibility to ensure that this Strategy is implemented and adhered to. Implementation and monitoring of this strategy will be overseen by the SEND Improvement Board. The Board will be responsible for providing programme oversight and to lead on implementation of the strategy's priorities, linking to other programmes as appropriate. This partnership approach aims to improve the engagement of all agencies and ensure that we work in a collaborative way to identify and meet the needs of children in Devon.

The strategy covers the period 2017-2020 and will be regularly reviewed and revised as necessary within that time-frame.

(3) Equality Act 2010:Schedule 10 (1-5)

# Appendix 1 : Schedule 10 Accessibility for Disabled Pupils 2017-2020

## Accessibility strategies

1. A local authority in England and Wales must, in relation to schools for which it is the responsible body, prepare—
  - (a) an accessibility strategy;
  - (b) further such strategies at such times as may be prescribed.
2. An accessibility strategy is a strategy for, over a prescribed period—
  - (a) increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the schools' curriculums;
  - (b) improving the physical environment of the schools for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the schools;
  - (c) improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is readily accessible to pupils who are not disabled.
3. The delivery in sub-paragraph (2)(c) must be—
  - (a) within a reasonable time;
  - (b) in ways which are determined after taking account of the pupils' disabilities and any preferences expressed by them or their parents.
4. An accessibility strategy must be in writing.
5. A local authority must keep its accessibility strategy under review during the period to which it relates and, if necessary, revise it.
6. A local authority must implement its accessibility strategy.

2. (1) In preparing its accessibility strategy, a local authority must have regard to—
  - (a) the need to allocate adequate resources for implementing the strategy;
  - (b) guidance as to the matters mentioned in sub-paragraph (3).
- (2) The authority must also have regard to guidance as to compliance with paragraph 1(5).
- (3) The matters are—
  - (a) the content of an accessibility strategy;
  - (b) the form in which it is to be produced;
  - (c) persons to be consulted in its preparation.
- (4) Guidance may be issued—
  - (a) for England, by a Minister of the Crown;
  - (b) for Wales, by the Welsh Ministers.
- (5) A local authority must, if asked, make a copy of its accessibility strategy available for inspection at such reasonable times as it decides.
- (6) A local authority in England must, if asked by a Minister of the Crown, give the Minister a copy of its accessibility strategy.
- (7) A local authority in Wales must, if asked by the Welsh Ministers, give them a copy of its accessibility strategy.

## Accessibility plans

1. The responsible body of a school in England and Wales must prepare—
  - (a) an accessibility plan;
  - (b) further such plans at such times as may be prescribed.
2. An accessibility plan is a plan for, over a prescribed period—
  - (a) increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school's curriculum,
  - (b) 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
  - (c) improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is readily accessible to pupils who are not disabled.
3. The delivery in sub-paragraph (2)(c) must be—
  - (a) within a reasonable time;
  - (b) in ways which are determined after taking account of the pupils' disabilities and any preferences expressed by them or their parents.
4. An accessibility plan must be in writing.
5. The responsible body must keep its accessibility plan under review during the period to which it relates and, if necessary, revise it.
6. The responsible body must implement its accessibility plan.
7. A relevant inspection may extend to the performance by the responsible body of its functions in relation to the preparation, publication, review, revision and implementation of its accessibility plan.
8. A relevant inspection is an inspection under—
  - (a) Part 1 of the Education Act 2005, or
  - (b) Chapter 1 of Part 4 of the Education and Skills Act 2008 (regulation and inspection of independent education provision in England).
4. (1) In preparing an accessibility plan, the responsible body must have regard to the need to allocate adequate resources for implementing the plan.
  - (2) The proprietor of an independent educational institution (other than an Academy) must, if asked, make a copy of the school's accessibility plan available for inspection at such reasonable times as the proprietor decides.
  - (3) The proprietor of an independent educational institution in England (other than an Academy) must, if asked by a Minister of the Crown, give the Minister a copy of the school's accessibility plan.
  - (4) The proprietor of an independent school in Wales (other than an Academy) must, if asked by the Welsh Ministers, give them a copy of the school's accessibility plan.

# Appendix 2 : Accessibility Strategy Action Plan 2017-2020

Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the schools' curriculums.

## Priority 1: Working together

We will be committed to Early Help and the identification of needs at the earliest possible point through a partnership of families and professionals working together to access appropriate services in their local communities

## Priority 2: Inclusive Education

We will support the acquisition of specialist skills and expertise within, across and between mainstream settings.

We are committed to ensuring all education settings serve the children and young people in their local community and will create a change in our culture that presumes mainstream education at every phase

We will monitor the provision made by all settings that provide statutory SEN provision, intervene when necessary and support the sharing of good practice

We will review SEN provision annually to ensure it is in the right location; of sufficient quality; and that there is a good match between demand and supply.

We will ensure that the voice of children and young people with SEND, and their parents, are heard more clearly in education settings and actions are taken accordingly

## Priority 3: Preparation for Adulthood

We will understand who we are working with and regularly track progress of improved outcomes for children and young people.

## Priority 4: Choice and Control

We will ensure that the views, wishes and aspirations of children, young people and their families are present throughout assessment and planning processes.



<p>Improving the physical environment of the schools for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the schools.</p>	<p><b>Priority 1: Working together</b></p> <p>We will maximise the skills of our workforce and ensure they have a clear understanding of the education, health and social care resources that are available in local communities to meet differing levels of SEN and disabilities.</p> <p>We will be clear about our joint commissioning intentions and arrangements</p> <p><b>Priority 2: Inclusive Education</b></p> <p>We will review SEN provision annually to ensure it is in the right location; of sufficient quality; and that there is a good match between demand and supply.</p> <p>We will ensure that the voice of children and young people with SEND, and their parents, are heard more clearly in education settings and actions are taken accordingly</p>
<p>Improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is readily accessible to pupils who are not disabled.</p>	<p><b>Priority 4: Choice and Control</b></p> <p>We will ensure that children, young people and families have access to timely, jargon free practical information, advice and guidance, when and how they need it</p> <p><b>Priority 5: Engagement</b></p> <p>We will provide clear information, via the SEND Local Offer website, which responds to the views of parents, carers and young people to show 'We are listening'</p>

Action	Delivered by
Accessibility Strategy is agreed by SEND Improvement Board	SEND Improvement Board
Accessibility Strategy and toolkit is published on DCC schools website	
Briefing for schools is made available on meeting Equality Act duties and Accessibility planning	
Accessibility Strategy is reviewed with SEND Implementation Plan 2017-19	SEND Improvement Board

# Appendix 3 : Accessibility Audit Tool for Educational Settings 2017-2020

## Accessibility Audit Tool for Educational Settings

**This accessibility audit tool has been designed for schools and settings to use when developing their accessibility plan. Use of this tool is optional and will help schools and settings feel confident about meeting the expectations and requirements within the SEND Code of Practice (2015) and the Equality Act 2010.**

**Top Tip: We have shaded those aspects that sit within the statutory guidance**

**Information for Governors: Use this tool to support your school/setting when writing your 3 year accessibility plan and to ensure that expectations under the Equality Act 2010 are met.**

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School/setting	Date of completion
Name of person(s) completing audit	Role of person(s) completing audit

### 1. Is our school/setting compliant with the Equality Act 2010?

	Question	Yes ✓	If yes – where can the evidence be found?	No ✓	If no - action to be taken
1	Do you have an Accessibility Plan?				
2	Was your accessibility plan co-produced with children/young people with SEND, their families and other stakeholders?				

## Accessibility Audit Tool for Educational Settings

3	Is everyone in your setting aware of the Equality Act 2010?				
4	Do you have evidence that your setting does not treat pupils/students less favourably and takes reasonable steps to avoid putting disabled pupils/students at a disadvantage in comparison to their peers?				
5	Do you have evidence that your school community endeavours to see the child/young person with SEND first and their disability second? (e.g. disability awareness training, education plans which build on a child/young person's strengths as well as addressing their difficulties)				
6	Have you published your SEN information report?				
7	Is your SEN information report linked to the Local Offer?				

### 2. Do we increase the extent to which CYP with a disability can participate in the curriculum?

1.	Do all our staff have high aspirations and expectations of CYP with SEND?				
2.	Are CYP with SEND included in pupil/student forums e.g. school councils				
3.	Do we ensure that transition from setting to setting is carefully planned and personalised for CYP with SEND?				

## Accessibility Audit Tool for Educational Settings

4.	Do staff have regular and updated access to training of a high quality to meet the learning needs of CYP with SEND?				
5.	Are CYP and their families fully involved in the review of individual plans regarding curriculum access?				
6.	Do we use a graduated approach when meeting the needs of CYP with SEND?				
7.	Do we use the 'assess, plan, do review' cycle to inform the graduated approach?				
8.	Is the attainment gap between CYP with SEND and those without SEND being reduced over time?				
9.	Is the progress made by CYP at 'SEN support' and with an EHC plan as good as that made by CYP nationally?				
10.	Do we ensure that home learning is accessible to all CYP with SEND?				
11.	Are cover staff, including supply teachers, clear about the additional needs of CYP and how to meet these needs?				
12.	Are staff given time to plan for pupils/students who need a highly differentiated/individualised curriculum?				
13.	Do CYP with SEND have access to appropriate information technology?				

## Accessibility Audit Tool for Educational Settings

14	Do all additional adults, build positive relationships, support flexibly and facilitate independent learning?				
15	Are auxiliary aids used (and maintained) to ensure that CYP with SEND are included in the curriculum?				
16.	Do curriculum pathways ensure that CYP are ready for their next stage of education, work and training?				
17.	Is the curriculum suitable and suitably tailored for CYP with SEND ensuring breadth and balance as well as implementing strategies to support CYP prepare for adulthood?				
18.	Are CYP needs assessed quickly and appropriate provision put in place?				

### 3. Is our setting physically accessible?

	Question	Yes ✓	If yes – where can the evidence be found?	No ✓	If no - action to be taken
1	Are our buildings adapted to ensure that the majority of areas are physically accessible for CYP with disabilities?				
2	If adaptations are not possible have we found creative solutions to ensure inclusion e.g. moving classes to accessible classrooms?				
3	Are pathways around the setting and parking arrangements safe, easily accessible and well signed?				

## Accessibility Audit Tool for Educational Settings

4	Are emergency and evacuation systems accessible to all e.g. do alarms have both visual and auditory components?				
5	Are accessible toilets and changing facilities located appropriately and not used for other purposes e.g. storage?				
6	Are calm low sensory areas available in the setting?				
7	Are our rooms (including classrooms) optimally organised for CYP with a physical disability?				
8	Are classroom interiors adapted to ensure access to all areas for CYP with sensory needs e.g. using drapes to reduce noise levels and removing clutter to ensure safe access?				
9	Is furniture and equipment selected, adjusted and located appropriately?				
10	If needed, and possible, are classroom partitions installed in open plan areas to ensure access for CYP with sensory difficulties?				
11	If intercom messages are used are they always relayed to CYP with hearing impairments?				
12	Are all signs and symbols in Braille for CYP with visual impairments and in picture form for those with communication and learning difficulties?				
13	Are highly visible markings used to ensure the safety of CYP with a visual impairment?				
14	Do we consult with CYP with SEND regarding the accessibility of classrooms, toilets and changing facilities?				

## Accessibility Audit Tool for Educational Settings

### 4. How accessible is information, advice and guidance?

	Question	Yes ✓	If yes – where can the evidence be found?	No ✓	If no - action to be taken
1	Are our SEN Information Report and Accessibility Plan online and in hard copy (for those families who do not have internet access)?				
2	Do we promote Devon Information, Advice and Support Service' (DIAS) and Independent Support?				
3	Do we work with parent/carers and young people to ensure that your website is presented in a family friendly way?				
4	Do we hold review/ planning meetings at times when parents are able to attend?				
5	Have we developed communication channels and review processes that enable two-way information sharing with families?				
6	Is information available in a variety of languages?				



## Accessibility Audit Tool for Educational Settings

7	<p>Is information available in a variety of formats including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 'easy read'</li> <li>- large print</li> <li>- symbols</li> <li>- audio?</li> </ul>				
8	Are staff familiar with IT used to share information with people with disabilities?				
9	Do we ensure that CYP know exactly who they can contact for information, advice and support?				
10	Do we give CYP and their families information about Family Information Service (FIS), the Local Offer and SEND Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS)				
11	Do we signpost families without the internet to One Stop Shops and libraries to access information and the Local Offer?				

# Accessibility Audit Tool for Educational Settings

## Detailed Physical Access Check List

Consider each question from the perspective of each type of disability

### **1 of 9 Approach and Car Parking**

	Question	Yes	No	Action
1	Is the building within convenient distance of a public highway?			
2	Is the building within convenient distance of public transport?			
3	Is the building within convenient distance of car parking?			
4	Is the route clearly marked/found?			
5	Is the route free of kerbs?			
6	Is the surface smooth and slip resistant?			
7	Is the route wide enough?			
8	Is it free of such hazards as bollards, litter bins, outward opening windows and doors or overhanging projections?			
9	Is it adequately lit?			
10	Is it identified by visual, audible and tactile information?			
11	Is there car parking for people with reduced mobility?			
12	Is the car parking clearly marked out, signed, easily found and kept free from misuse?			
13	Is the car parking as near the entrance as possible?			
14	Is the car parking are suitably surfaced?			
15	Is the route to the building kept free of snow, ice and fallen leaves?			
16	Is the route level? (ie no gradient steeper than 1:20 and no steps)			

# Accessibility Audit Tool for Educational Settings

## **2 of 9 Routes and external level change including ramps and steps**

	<b>Question</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Action</b>
1	Is there a ramp, with level surfaces at top/intermediate/bottom?			
2	Is it wide enough and suitably graded?			
3	Is the surface slip resistant?			
4	Are there kerbs and are there edges protected to prevent accidents?			
5	Are there handrails to one or both sides?			
6	Are there (alternative) steps & ramp			
7	Identified by visual/tactile information?			
8	Are there handrails to one or both sides?			
9	Are ramps and steps adequately lit?			
10	Are treads and risers consistent in depth and height?			
11	Are all nosings marked and/or readily identifiable?			
12	Are landings of adequate size and are they provided at intermediate levels in long flights?			

## **3 of 9 Entrances – including Reception**

	<b>Question</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Action</b>
1	Is the door clearly distinguishable from the façade?			
2	If glass is it visible when closed?			
3	Does the clear door opening or one leaf when opened permit passage of a wheelchair or double buggy?			
4	Does it have a level or flush threshold, and a recessed matwell?			
5	Is there visibility through the doorway from both sides at standing and seated levels?			

## Accessibility Audit Tool for Educational Settings

6	Is there a minimum 300mm wide wheelchair manoeuvre space beside the leading edge of the door to clear doorswing?			
7	Can the door furniture be used at both standing and seated height?			
8	Can it be easily grasped and operated?			
9	If the door has a closer mechanism does it have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delayed closure action?</li> <li>• Slow-action closer?</li> <li>• Minimal closure pressure?</li> </ul>			
10	If the door is power-operated does it have visual and tactile information?			
11	If the door is security-protected is the system suitable for use by and within reach of people with sensory or mobility impairments?			
12	If there is a lobby, do the inner and outer doors meet the same criteria?			
13	Do lobby layouts enable all users to clear one door before going through the next?			
14	Are signs designed and positioned to inform those with visual impairments and wheelchair users with reduced eye levels?			
15	Does the lighting installation take account of the needs of visually disabled people?			
16	Are floor spaces <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Slip resistant, even when wet?</li> <li>• Of a quality that is sympathetic to acoustics – ie not so ‘hard’ as to cause acoustic confusion?</li> <li>• Firm for wheelchair manoeuvre</li> </ul>			
17	Are junctions between floor surfaces arranged in a way that avoids presenting tripping hazards and causing visual confusion?			

## Accessibility Audit Tool for Educational Settings

18	Is any reception point suitable for approach and use from both sides by people in standing and seated positions?			
19	Is it fitted with an induction loop?			
20	For those progressing to other parts of the building is information provided by signs, supported by tactile information such as a map or model?			

### 4 of 9 Horizontal Movement and Assembly

	Question	Y	N	Action
1	Is each corridor/passageway/aisle wide enough for a wheelchair user to manoeuvre and for other people to pass?			
2	Is each corridor etc free from obstruction to wheelchair users and from hazards to people with impaired vision?			
3	Do any lobbies allow users (including wheelchair users) to clear one door before approaching the next with minimal manoeuvre			
4	Is turning space available for wheelchair users?			
5	Do natural and artificial lighting avoid glare and silhouetting?			
6	Are there visual clues for orientation?			
7	Do floor surfaces: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow ease of movement for wheelchair users?</li> <li>• Avoid light reflection and sound reverberation?</li> </ul>			
8	Are direction or information signs (including means of escape) visible from both sitting and standing eye levels, and are they in upper and lower case, and large enough type to be read by those with impaired vision?			

## Accessibility Audit Tool for Educational Settings

9	Are there tactile signs and information for those with impaired vision?			
10	Is the maintenance of these items checked regularly?			
11	Is lighting designed to meet a wide range of needs?			
12	Is sufficient circulation space allowed for wheelchair users?			
13	Is it maintained clear of obstructions which could create hazards for people with visual disabilities?			
14	Are seating arrangements/spaces suitable for use by people with visual disabilities?			
15	Are all areas for assembly/meeting equipped with an induction loop system?			

### 5 of 9 Doors

	Question	Y	N	Action
1	Do the doors serve a functional/safety purpose?			
2	If glass, are they visible when shut?			
3	Can people standing or sitting in a wheelchair see each other, and be seen from either side of the door?			
4	Does the clear opening width permit wheelchair access			
5	On the opening side of the door is there sufficient space (300mm) to allow the door handle to be grasped and the door swung past a wheelchair footplate?			
6	Is any door furniture/handle at a height for standing/sitting use?			
7	Are door/handles clearly distinguished?			
8	Can the door furniture/handles be easily operated/grasped?			
9	If door closers/mechanisms are fitted do they provide the			

## Accessibility Audit Tool for Educational Settings

	following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• security linkage?</li> <li>• delay-action closure?</li> <li>• Slow-action closure?</li> <li>• Minimum closure pressure?</li> </ul>			
10	Is door/mechanism function checked regularly?			

### 6 of 9 Toilets

	Question	Y	N	Action
1	Is WC provision made for people with disabilities?			
2	Do all lavatory areas have slip-resistant floors?			
3	Are all fittings readily distinguishable from their background?			
4	Are all door fittings/locks easily gripped and operated?			
5	Can ambulant disabled people manoeuvre and raise and lower themselves in standard cubicles?			
6	Is provision made for wheelchair users in disabled toilets?			
7	Is wheelchair approach free of steps/narrow doors/obstructions etc?			
8	Is the location clearly signed?			
9	Is there sufficient space at entry to the compartment for wheelchair manoeuvre and door opening?			
10	Are the door fittings/locks and light switches easily reached and operated?			
11	Is there an emergency call system and is someone designated to respond?			
12	Can the emergency call system be operated from floor level?			

## Accessibility Audit Tool for Educational Settings

13	Is the wheelchair WC compartment large enough to permit manoeuvre for frontal lateral/angled/backward transfer, with or without assistance?			
14	Are the fittings arranged to facilitate these manoeuvres			
15	Are handwashing and drying facilities within reach of someone seated on the WC?			
16	Is the tap appropriate for use by someone with limited dexterity, grip or strength?			
17	Are suitable grab rails fitted in all the appropriate positions to facilitate use of the WC?			
18	Is the manoeuvring area free of obstruction, eg boxed-in pipework/radiators/cleaner's equipment/disposal bins/occasional storage, etc and is any difficulty caused by the activity of service contractors?			
19	If there is more than one standard layout WC compartment provided, are they handed to offer a left-sided approach and a right-sided approach?			

### 7 of 9 Fixtures and Fittings

	Question	Y	N	Action
1	Is any server/counter accessible to all users, including those with hearing impairments?			
2	Is it possible for people with disabilities to serve as volunteers?			
3	Where there are display stands, bookstalls etc are they visible/reachable/accessible by people with disabilities?			



## Accessibility Audit Tool for Educational Settings

4	In any eating/meeting space do tables, chairs and the layout allow for use by wheelchair users and other people with disabilities?			
5	In any staff accommodation is it suitable for use by people with disabilities including wheelchair users with slip-resistant floor, reduced level kitchen units and sink and lever action taps?			
6	Are all relevant locations clearly signed?			

### 8 of 9 Information

	Question	Y	N	Action
1	Is the building equipped to provide hearing assistance?			
2	Does lighting installation of the building take into account the needs of people with visual disabilities?			
3	Are there large-print versions of information about the building/activities available?			
4	Is there braille information available for people with visual disabilities?			

### 9 of 9 Means of Escape

	Question	Y	N	Action
1	Is there a visible as well as audible fire alarm system?			
2	Are final exit routes as accessible to all, including wheelchair users, as are the entry routes?			

## Accessibility Audit Tool for Educational Settings

3	Is there a 'management evacuation strategy' for staff, pupils and visitors, and are staff trained in evacuation procedures?			
4	Is the evacuation strategy checked regularly for its effectiveness?			
5	Are evacuation routes checked routinely and regularly for freedom from combustible materials/obstacles/locked doors?			
6	Are all fire warning devices and detectors checked routinely and regularly			