



STOCKPORT
METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

Children & Young People's Directorate

Accessibility Strategy and Plan

2008-2010

Children & Young People's Directorate



S4. All schools will include accessibility in all aspects of school life and pupil development within their School Improvement Plans. Training opportunities will be offered to all school staff on specific disabilities, disability legislation and wider accessibility issues.

Person responsible:

- Awareness raising; Education Officer, (SEN, Access & Performance), Senior School Improvement Officer (Inclusion)
- Process/provision of information: Education Officer, (SEN, Access & Performance)
- Supporting School: Schools Improvement Officers

Timescale	Plan	Performance Measure/Indicator
2009/09	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publicity programme devised • Accessibility Strategy published and disseminated • Extract leaflet published and disseminated • Education Officer to liaise with School Improvement Staff to expand Accessibility Strategy requirements in the SIP • In conjunction with Specialist Services (LSS, ESSI, INCO's, Therapy Services) School Improvement Service to prepare advice on inclusion of accessibility in school improvement plans and handbooks • Education Officer and Senior School Improvement Officer (Inclusion) to offer training opportunities in disability legislation developments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public/parental awareness of the Accessibility Strategy increased • Awareness raised within schools • Capacity of schools to fulfil obligations of the Strategy enhanced • Schools have increased awareness of the need to plan for accessibility
2009/10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing promotion of public awareness of Accessibility Strategy • Ongoing training opportunity offered • Increased dissemination of information to parents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public/parental awareness of the Accessibility Strategy increased • Awareness within schools raised • Capacity of schools to fulfil obligations of the strategy enhanced • Schools improve accessibility planning

Resources:

Funding for printing advice to be provided within existing resources. Resources will be required for provision of information for parents.

Information and Communication targets

Stockport Council aims to provide information to pupils in suitable alternative formats whenever this is needed. A variety of communication methods may be required and could include use of technology, British Sign Language, picture exchange systems, or use of visual timetables.

IC1. Schools will be supported to promote inclusion through effective communication including appropriate use of ICT and alternative and augmentative communication systems. A policy framework will set out key principles and competencies, models of effective practice, Training and Development programmes and other support services, including partner agencies.

Person responsible:

- CYPDISP

Timescale	Plan	Performance Measure/Indicator
2008/09	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A working group will be established to produce the policy framework • The policy framework will be published • Work will be carried out to raise awareness of the policy framework e.g. deployment of LSA's, appropriate frameworks, implementation of model of progressive (triangle) • Relevant T&D opportunities will be offered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working group constituted • The policy framework is written • All schools receive the policy framework • The level of awareness and understanding of the role of effective communication in schools is raised • Relevant staff have the opportunity to undertake CPD • Schools have access to appropriate sources of advice and support
2009/10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools will implement the policy framework, particularly in their planning processes • Relevant T&D opportunities will be offered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools have access to appropriate sources of advice/support • Schools adopt and implement the policy framework • Schools and support services engage more effectively, • Better and more appropriate use of T&D opportunities will be made
2009/10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation of T & D 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •

Resources:

The working group can be established, and the policy framework written, within existing resources.

Additional resources such as more specialist staff time may be required to support schools to adopt and implement the policy framework.



IC2. Website developments or customer contact developments will meet the respective legislative, Council and national standards agreed for access to information for disabled people.

School staff will be encouraged and trained to create and design websites that will comply with Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) standards, thus providing their information to a wider range of pupils, parents, staff and the public. Website developments or customer contact developments will meet the respective legislative, Council and national standards agreed for access to information for disabled people.

Person responsible:

- Within schools: Head Teachers
- Departmental support: Intranet Development Officer Team

Timescale	Plan	Performance Measure/Indicator
2008/09	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit existing school websites • Make schools aware of WAI standards • Offer training and support to all special schools to develop accessible websites • Offer training and support to all mainstream schools/nurseries within 1 neighbourhood to develop accessible websites • Continue to offer information to schools on WAI standards • Offer training and support to all mainstream schools/nurseries within 2 neighbourhoods to develop accessible websites • Continue to offer information to schools on WAI standards • Offer training and support to all mainstream schools/nurseries within 2 neighbourhoods to develop accessible websites • SMBC web to include CYPDISP info leaflets/resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All schools have information about developing accessible websites • All special schools and services receive appropriate training and support to develop an accessible website • Mainstream schools/nurseries in 1 neighbourhood receive appropriate training and support to develop an accessible website • All schools have information about developing accessible websites • Mainstream schools/nurseries in 2 neighbourhoods receive appropriate training and support to develop an accessible website • All schools have information about developing accessible websites • Mainstream schools/nurseries in 2 neighbourhoods receive appropriate training and support to develop an accessible website

Resources:

Information and advice can be offered from within existing resources. Additional support to schools such as staff/consultancy time or software will be required.

Monitoring and evaluation:

An audit of existing school websites will be carried out. Education Officer, (SEN, Access & Performance) will report on progress to ASPIG. Website feedback will be encouraged.

School Accessibility Audit

SECTION 1 - EXTERIOR OF SCHOOL

Issues	Intermediate Standard	Yes	Advanced Standard	Yes	Remarks	Yes
Access to playgrounds	At least 33% of hard surface areas to be wheelchair accessible		All areas to be wheelchair accessible.		Access width of gates to tennis courts, etc., may need modification.	
Access for transport	No parking areas reserved for disabled transport. Regulate other traffic, including pedestrians to avoid any hazardous conflicts.		Dropped kerbs to facilitate wheelchair access.		Ensure parking space is adequate for vehicles using it, including space for tail lifts, etc where these are used.	
Bollards	At least 1000mm high and not linked by chains.		Painted with a contrasting band 1500 mm above ground level and 150 mm high.		Low-level posts should be excluded from access routes.	
Disabled Parking Spaces	Designated		A minimum of two spaces with level access to the building entrance. Standard 4.8m x 2.4m parking spaces with markings, with 1.2 m marked zone added to rear and 1.2m zone between spaces.		Provide signs as well as marking the space. Large schools will/may need more spaces.	
Entrances	Suitable access route for wheelchair users and other persons with restricted mobility to enable them to enter the building.		A variety of entrances made suitable so that pupils may use the same entrances as their peers without restriction.		Consider door openings, ramps.	

Issues	Intermediate Standard	Yes	Advanced Standard	Yes	Remarks	Yes
Entry Phone / Intercom systems.			Should be sited so that a wheelchair user can operate it. Light signals provided.		May require duplication of equipment to provide satisfactorily for all users.	
External access routes and paths – surface of.			Firm, slip resistant and reasonably smooth. Not cobbles, bare earth, sand or loose gravel. Undulations other than tactile paving should not exceed 5mm under a 3m straight edge. Tactile paving may be used where appropriate but consult user group – e.g. RNIB.		See BS 5395-1 for slip resistant surfaces. Drainage gratings should be positioned outside boundaries of access routes if possible. If not, must be flush with surface and slots must not be more than 13mm wide or holes more than 18mm in diameter.	
External access routes and paths – widths.	At least 1500 mm wide with passing places for wheelchairs that is at least 1800 mm wide, 2 metres long, and not less than 50 m apart. Restricted width of 1000mm acceptable for up to 6 metres to avoid existing obstructions.		At least 1800 mm wide for busy routes. Restricted width of 1000mm acceptable for up to 6 metres to avoid existing obstructions. All pupils able to use the same routes. No obstructions caused by overhanging branches, etc.		Paths may be 1200 mm wide if little used. This is best interpreted as “not usually used by staff/pupils.” If gradients are 1:20 or steeper, see recommendations for ramps. Cross fall should not be greater than 1:50 except in association with dropped kerbs.	

Issues	Intermediate Standard	Yes	Advanced Standard	Yes	Remarks	Yes
Lighting columns	Painted in contrasting colours to make them stand out from their background,		Sited at edge of path, or outside its boundary.		When replacing consider adequacy of level of illumination.	
Ramps Access	Slopes not less than 1:12 At least 1000 mm clear width. 1200 mm preferred.		Slopes not less than 1:15. (1:20 is preferred). Steps should be provided in addition to ramps where ramps are steeper than 1:20. Slopes at 1:15 should not exceed 5 metres in length, and those at 1:20 should not exceed 10 metres. If total <u>rise</u> exceeds 2 metres, provide lift. Absolute minimum width 1200mm. 1800 mm preferred. Landings to be at least 1200mm, clear of door swings or obstructions. Colour surface to contrast in luminance with that of landing.		Provide appropriate handrails to each side, 45-50 mm maximum outside diameter, continuous to ramps and landings. Handrails to be at least 900mm high measured to the top edge and not more than 1000mm. Not to be more than 100 mm beyond edge of ramp and minimum distance between handrails 1000mm. Should extend beyond start and finish of ramp by 300mm Ensure that access to ramps is practicable and not obstructed by bins, stock, etc. Avoid patterning that simulates steps, such as supplied or inserted slip-resistant strips. Surface materials should be slip resistant, firmly fixed and easy to maintain.	
Steps edges painted yellow for contrast						

School Accessibility Audit

SECTION 2 - INTERIOR OF SCHOOL

Issue	Intermediate Standard	Advanced Standard	Remarks
Access to classrooms	Where floors are not level, at least 25% of classrooms to have ramps to their doors.	Level floor surfaces.	Note, for wheelchair users clear width of doorway may need to be increased to at least 800mm. Care will need to be taken to ensure ramps do not create tripping hazard.
Access to common rooms		Fully accessible. Level floor surfaces.	Consider reallocation of rooms if this gives a quicker solution than modification to existing.
Access to dining hall	Basic arrangements made for all pupils to be able to use dining area(s) used by their peers.	Counters modified to accommodate needs of wheelchair users. Furniture arranged to facilitate access to tables. "Buddy" system in place to assist with trays, etc. Space for assistants to sit alongside pupils to assist them, if needed.	Consider acoustics and paint finishes carefully to accommodate needs of pupils. Extra circulation space may be needed to manoeuvre wheelchairs, or to assist pupils with mobility impairments. Additional space may be needed to store wheelchairs, Additional space and equipment may be needed to provide special diets.

Issue	Intermediate Standard	Advanced Standard	Remarks
Access to ICT equipment	A reasonable proportion of ICT equipment to be accessible to pupils with special needs.	All ICT equipment to be physically accessible. Roller balls touch screens and relevant software provided. Room for storage of pupils' equipment. Facility for pupils to change position if necessary.	
Areas below stairs and ramps	If clear height less than 2.1 m a protective guardrail and low level cane detection should be provided.	Enclose area.	
Colour	Use of light colours. Dark colours and poor contrasts avoided.	Use of colours to signal changes in activity or behaviour required, and to help pupils orientate themselves in the school.	Plan colour schemes as a whole for the school, rather than room-by-room. Bear in mind the different effects various colours have on the behaviour of certain groups of children, in terms of soothing or excessive stimulation – consult specialist services if in doubt.
Control barriers	Temporary or permanent control barriers should be designed to take into account needs of wheelchair users and others with restricted mobility.		



Issue	Intermediate Standard	Advanced Standard	Remarks
Corridors	Keep free of clutter/obstructions and regulate way pupils move around school, including issues of discipline and timing. Monitor closely for any specific issues that may need attention.	Corridor widths to be at least 1800mm. 1900mm preferred.	Consider rearranging school accommodation to remove libraries, etc., from corridors. Be aware of tripping hazards and possible disorientation caused by irregular corridor shapes.
Doors (Glass)	Permanent strips on glass within a zone 1400- 1600 mm from the floor contrasting in colour and luminance with background	In addition, frame door at sides and top with opaque high contrast strip at least 25 mm wide.	Bear in mind all lighting conditions. It may be felt that glass doors are better avoided in new buildings.
Door Opening Furniture	Advanced standard applied to at least 25% of premises.	Lever action type. Capable of being operated one-handed. Contrasting in colour and luminance with surface of door.	Location and design of latch and push/pull handles should be consistent throughout the property.
Door Vision Panels	At least one with a minimum zone of visibility between 500mm and 1500 mm from the floor.	Two panels, one accommodating visibility between 500 mm and 800mm, the other between 1150 and 1500mm.	
Door Widths	Minimum door opening 800mm clear.	Ensure door openings of at least 800mm clear width, or 850mm if turn is required to use door. Double doors to give a clear minimum opening of 750mm on one leaf.	There should be at least 300mm and preferably 450 mm between the leading edge of a door and a return wall. (Except where doors open automatically.)



Issue	Intermediate Standard	Advanced Standard	Remarks
Electric sockets	Adequate provision in the majority of rooms. No trailing electrical leads – health and safety issue.	Adequate provision in all rooms, including provision for equipment needed by children with specific needs.	Consider needs of specialist equipment. Consider height, position and colour of sockets.
Floor finishes	Consider carefully when selecting materials for necessary replacement.	Smooth carpeting or matt floors where carpeting is inappropriate for Health and Safety reasons – for example in practical areas. Junctions between different types of surface do not create tripping hazards and avoid visual confusion.	High gloss finishes and large repeating patterns that incorporate bold contrasts should be avoided. Firm or hard, well-fixed and non-directional surfaces best suit wheelchair users. Carpets tend to improve acoustics for hearing-impaired children, but if too deep a pile may cause difficulty for wheelchairs. Bear in mind that slipping potential often varies according to whether the floor finish is wet or dry. Special precautions may be needed if a floor is temporarily wet due to weather conditions or cleaning.
Furniture/benching etc Provision of suitable or adjustable height	School equipped with sufficient suitable furniture/equipment to accommodate needs of existing pupils.	All teaching areas to have suitable fixed or adjustable furniture.	Consider whether fixed height or adjustable height benching, etc., best serves needs of school.
Glass Panels – for example along corridors	Permanent strips on glass within a zone 1400- 1600 mm from the floor contrasting in colour and luminance with background.		



Issue	Intermediate Standard	Advanced Standard	Remarks
Handrails	Provided to all ramps and landings.	45-50 mm outside diameter, continuous to ramps and landings, made from materials that are not cold to the touch, for example hardwood or nylon coated steel	Ensure handrail is easily distinguishable from its background. For example by strong colour contrast. Handrails to be at least 900mm high measured to the top edge and not more than 1000mm. Not to be more than 100 mm beyond edge of ramp and minimum distance between handrails 1000mm. Should extend beyond start and finish of ramp by 300mm
Hazard Protection	Doors/windows arranged so they do not swing into access routes, or hazard protection provided where they do.	Hazard protection provided where any object protrudes more than 100mm into an access route with a lower edge more than 300mm above ground level.	Hazard protection can be a kerb or other solid barrier. It should not extend beyond the front edge of the object nor be set back more than 100mm from its front edge. Include guarding at a height of between 900 mm and 1100 mm
Illumination of stairs and landings	To a minimum of 100 lux at stair level and should be left on especially in corridors		Avoid/dispense with lighting that causes glare, such as spotlights, floodlights or low-level light sources.
Induction Loops or alternative listening systems, for example Soundfield following acoustic survey and recommendation	Available in sufficient rooms to meet the requirements of pupils and staff who require them.	Available in all teaching spaces and administrative accommodation.	Soundfield systems should used for new installations.

Issue	Intermediate Standard	Advanced Standard	Remarks
Lettering on signs	Signs in contrasting colours. Lettering never less than 15 mm high.	Lettering ranged from left, and unjustified. White signs should have black, dark green or dark blue letters. Black signs should have white or yellow letters.	Braille/tactile symbols required in certain settings. See also section on signs below.
Lifts	In multi storey buildings at least one lift of sufficient size to accommodate wheelchairs and others with mobility difficulties. Lift to reach all floors. Absolute minimum lift size 1100 mm wide by 1400 mm deep.	Minimum lift size 2000 mm wide x 1400 mm deep. Lift signed. Audible announcement of lift arrival and direction of travel. Audible announcement of floor reached.	Conventional passenger lift is the preferred option. Clear space of 1500 mm x 1500 mm to be provided in front of lift entrances.
Lighting Levels		Good lighting levels so that teachers' faces are well lit to help pupils with visual and hearing impairment.	
Main electric supply		If possible, routed away from areas used by pupils.	The magnetic field can affect hearing aids.
Noise clutter Ambient noise levels			Consider turning down noise level of computers or providing headphones. Mask sound with wall dividers, bookcases or closed doors. Move pupils away from the noisy area, or nearer the sound source they need to hear. Be aware of noises from heaters; seek to replace where appropriate with quieter equipment.



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Issue	Intermediate Standard	Advanced Standard	Remarks
Paint finishes	Matt surfaces, with contrasting colours around doors and windows, in at least 20% of the school.	Same standards applied to whole of school. Edges of stairs/steps and changes of level clearly marked with distinctive surfaces or colourings.	Should be achievable at small (if any) additional cost by adjusting the specification of the school's routine programme if internal redecoration. Note that certain colours may have varying impacts on children with particular needs and specialist advice may be needed from support services to best accommodate a school's mix of pupils. Specify by using BS4800 in conjunction with BS5252.
Projections into corridors – for example fire hose reels.	Guarded. The protection can be a kerb or other solid barrier. It should not extend beyond the front edge of the object nor be set back more than 100mm from its front edge. Include guarding at a height of between 900 mm and 1100 mm from surface.	Projections eliminated.	New construction will avoid such projections; older buildings may need significant work to remove them.
Ramps (Internal)	Minimum width 1200 mm. Width should be related to level of use. For example 1800 mm minimum for two wheelchairs to pass. Lighting evenly distributed with luminance at top and bottom of at least 100 lux.	No internal ramps – level floor surfaces.	
SENCO dedicated work/admin space		6-10 square metres.	May be combined with medical inspection room, especially in smaller schools.



Issue	Intermediate Standard	Advanced Standard	Remarks
Signage	Principal routes and key rooms to have clear signing that includes symbols as well as letters where appropriate.	All routes and rooms used by pupils and staff, to have clear signing that includes symbols as well as letters where appropriate. Contrasting colours with serif free text. Symbols to be simple and consistent. Tactile information, including Braille to be provided. Signs to be well lit.	The larger and more complex a school, the greater the need for clear signs. Distinguish clearly between signs that direct and signs that indicate arrival. Voice activated signs may be needed in some cases. Think about best height for signs. Preferred fonts Helvetica Medium, Arial, Futura or Avant Garde. Embossed letters are easier to read than indented or engraved ones.
Steps	Tactile surface of raised ribs set parallel to the step nosing should be provided at top and bottom of each flight.	Lighting located at side of flight so that it does not cause anyone to negotiate stairs in their own light. Handrails made from materials that are not cold to the touch, for example hardwood or nylon coated steel and should extend beyond stairs. Nosings integral and distinguishable in colour and tone. Nosings on front face as well as top of each step.	Open risers, spiral stairs and tapered treads not recommended and replacement should be planned where these exist.

Issue	Intermediate Standard	Advanced Standard	Remarks
Storage – for equipment, etc.	Consideration given to efficient use of existing storage and how to use space flexibility.	Adequate storage to avoid classroom clutter while keeping equipment readily available for use. A central SEN store of 5-8 square metres for equipment, etc. A wheelchair and appliance store of 8-10 square metres.	Think of: Storage of mobility aids in entrance areas; Storage of personal possessions, including support equipment. Storage for technicians and other support staff. Storage in admin areas for relevant records.
Toilets (Disabled)	Toilet designed and of suitable size to enable use by wheelchair user. All designated schools should have room for a changing bed, toilet with space either side for left or right transfer, overhead tracking for hoist. Light switches, hand dryer and toilet roll holders at appropriate height for wheelchair user.	More than one disabled toilet, numbers relating to size of school to avoid excessive length of journey to access. Light switches, hand dryer and toilet roll holders in disabled toilet(s) at appropriate height for wheelchair user. At least one toilet to have room for a changing bed, toilet with space either side for left or right transfer, overhead tracking for hoist. Toilets clearly signed.	Some pupils will have particular needs but these should mostly be satisfied if the advanced standard is met. Doors of toilet compartments should be capable of being opened outwards in an emergency. Avoid ceramic tiling and shiny floors. Alarms systems and a system for staff response should be provided.
Washbasins		Height 680-700 mm to top for wheelchair users. 780 mm- 800 mm for ambulant disabled. 720 mm – 740 mm to accommodate both.	



Issue	Intermediate Standard	Advanced Standard	Remarks
Wheelchair turning space (90 degrees)	Minimum space 1300 mm x 1400 mm	Minimum space 1550 mm x 1550 mm.	Note minimum
Wheelchair turning space (180 degrees)	Minimum space 1800 mm x 1450mm	Minimum space 2150 mm x 1600 mm	Note minimum

Notes: This is a working document. It will “grow” in the light of experience/developing requirements.

