



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Planning to increase access to schools for disabled pupils

Guidance

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Planning to increase access to schools for disabled pupils

- Audience** This guidance is aimed at local authorities and responsible bodies.
- Overview** This updated statutory guidance is issued under paragraph 2(4) of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 ('The Act'). This document replaces National Assembly for Wales Circular No: 15/2004 *Planning to Increase Access to Schools for Disabled Pupils* (2004).
- Action required** The guidance should be used when preparing accessibility strategies and accessibility plans; and to assist local authorities and responsible bodies to meet their statutory duties.
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- Additional copies** This document can be accessed from the Welsh Government's website at www.21stcenturyschools.org/?lang=en
- Related documents** *Planning to Increase Access to Schools for Disabled Pupils* (2004)

Mae'r ddogfen yma hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.
This document is also available in Welsh.

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1. Purpose of guidance and background

This updated statutory guidance is issued under paragraph 2(4) of schedule 10 of 'The Equality Act' 2010 ('The Act'). This document replaces the National Assembly for Wales Circular 15/2004 "Planning to Increase Access to Schools for Disabled Pupils" dated March 2004.

This guidance focuses on the preparation of accessibility strategies and accessibility plans which help ensure full inclusion of disabled children in a school environment. It may assist local authorities and responsible bodies meet their statutory duties under Schedule 10 of the Act which provides that

- i) a local authority **must, in relation to a school for which it is a responsible authority**, prepare, implement, review and update written accessibility strategies
- ii) the responsible body for a school **must** prepare, implement, review and update written accessibility plans.

In particular this guidance provides advice on:

- the content of an accessibility strategy and an accessibility plan
- the form in which an accessibility strategy/ plan is to be produced
- the people to be consulted in the preparation of an accessibility strategy /plan

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 ("the DDA") was repealed and replaced by the Act. This legislation harmonises discrimination law and provides a simplified, strengthened, updated legislative framework to protect the rights of individuals and advance equality of opportunity for all. Schools and local authorities have had a duty to provide reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils since 2002, originally under the DDA and, from October 2010, under the Act. The Equality and Human Rights Commission have prepared a guide, Reasonable Adjustments for Disabled Pupils¹, which will help school leaders and local authorities understand and comply with the reasonable adjustments duty. It will also help disabled pupils and their parents understand the duty.

This guidance focuses on the need for local authorities and responsible bodies to prepare and implement strategies and plans which ensure that school and school activities are accessible for disabled pupils. Schools must also consider how to ensure equality for people with the protected characteristics under the Act. The publication "**What equality law means for you as an education provider in Wales: Schools**"² issued by the Equality and Human Rights Commission should be consulted and additional consideration given to the needs of all people using the school and its services, including teachers, parents/carers and those using community facilities.

The Welsh Government is committed to ensuring that all children and young people are as fully engaged in their learning and development as is possible.

¹http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/publication_pdf/Reasonable%20adjustments%20for%20disabled%20pupils_0.pdf

² <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/publication/what-equality-law-means-you-education-provider-wales>

Disabled learners face particular challenges which risk their marginalisation from education, from future employment opportunities and from enjoying a normal social life. Specific barriers include physical, visual and hearing related accessibility constraints and difficulties in accessing suitable IT equipment / resources. However, entrenched, even institutionalised, discriminatory attitudes and behaviours can and often do present the greatest challenge.

- 38% of people believe that disabled people are a burden on society
- 45% of disabled people reported that they experienced problems at school as a result of their impairment
- Nearly two-thirds (65%) of people have admitted that they avoid disabled people because they don't know how to act around them
- More than half (52%) of people assume disabilities are only physical
- More than a third (34%) don't consider hearing loss to be a disability
- People with hearing and visual impairments have the lowest participation in sports, and 72.1% of disabled people take no part in sport or physical activity
- 18% of the UK population are disabled and the majority of disabilities are not visible
- 6% of the child population aged below 16 is disabled. In England 83% of all disabled children attend mainstream school
- Disabled adults are twice as likely to have no formal qualifications as non-disabled adults – 26% and 12% respectively
- By the age of twenty-six, disabled people are nearly four times as likely to be unemployed or involuntarily out of work than non-disabled
- Only 20% of adults with learning disabilities are known to learning disability services
- One in ten children between the ages of one and 15 has a mental health disorder
- Graduate employment rates are much lower for wheelchair users

http://www.efds.co.uk/resources/facts_and_statistics

Overview of education legislation

This guidance does not provide a detailed account of all legislation relating to school education and disability. A summary of particularly relevant legislation is provided at Appendix A but reference should be made to all original legislation and any accompanying advice where more detail is required.

Additional Information

Additional information on accessibility planning in education and the Act is available on the

Equality and Human Rights Commission web site

<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/your-rights/equal-rights/disability/disability-in-education>

and the Welsh Local Government Association web site

<http://www.wlga.gov.uk/education-and-equality>

Single Page Summary

The Welsh Government has adopted the Social Model of Disability which recognises that people with impairments are disabled by the barriers created by society, and that the guiding principles of policy should be:

- to remove these barriers and create an enabling society, and
- to promote the rights and full inclusion of disabled people.

These barriers include people's attitudes to disability, as well as physical and organisational barriers. This guidance is meant to help schools and local authorities identify and address the barriers which can prevent disabled children and young people having equal access to education, and ensure they have the same opportunities as their peers to develop and achieve their potential.

Improving access to education for disabled children means considering

- the curriculum and how it is taught;
- the accessibility of school buildings and their surroundings, school activities including school trips and transport; and
- information and activities provided by schools and how easy it is for disabled pupils and/or their disabled parents to understand.

These are known as the 'three planning duties' and are a statutory requirement of Schedule 10 to 'the Act.

At least every three years, each local authority must prepare, implement, review and update **a written accessibility strategy** which identifies how strategic actions will improve accessibility to education for disabled pupils against each of the three planning duties.

At least every three years, the responsible body for a school must prepare, implement, review and update **a written accessibility plan** which identifies how specific improvements will improve accessibility to education against the three planning duties for existing and prospective disabled pupils.

In preparing accessibility strategies and plans, full and effective consultation must be undertaken to identify appropriate improvements. The consultation must normally ensure that the views of disabled pupils and their parents/carers and appropriate professionals are taken into account.

Reasonable adjustments to cater for future disabled pupils must be embedded in accessibility strategies and plans – there is a need to plan ahead and continuously improve irrespective of whether or not disabled pupils currently attend the schools concerned.

2. Equality, the meaning of disability and discrimination

'The Act' established a single Public Sector Equality Duty. It identifies certain protected characteristics - race, disability, sex, age, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment. In carrying out their functions, public bodies are required to have due regard to these protected characteristics and 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 and people who do not share it
- Foster good relations - between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

For more information on how this duty and 'the Act' must be considered in an educational context see the Equality and Human Rights Publication "**What Equality Law means for you as an education provider in Wales**"³.

The Public Sector Equality Duty applies to all aspects of the running of a school including the employment of teachers. However the protected characteristics of both age and marriage/civil partnership do not apply to the operation of a school as far as they directly relate to pupils.

For the purpose of enabling the better performance of the Public Sector Equality Duty under section 149(1) of the Act, the Welsh Ministers made paragraph 2(4) of schedule 10 of 'The Act' 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011. These regulations impose duties on relevant Welsh authorities (including local authorities).

2.1 The meaning of disability

The term 'pupil' means a child or young person of any age for whom education is, or is required to be, provided.

In accordance with section 6 of the Act, a person (P) is disabled if:

- (a) P has a physical or mental impairment, **and**
- (b) the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on P's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

The definition of disability covers physical impairments, which includes mobility and sensory impairments. It also covers mental impairments which include learning difficulties and any impairment resulting from a mental illness. In the latter case, the mental illness need not be 'clinically well-recognised' but it must still have a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. Each of cancer, human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection and multiple sclerosis is deemed to be a disability, as is severe disfigurement (Equality Act, Schedule 1, paragraphs 3 and 6).

³ <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/publication/what-equality-law-means-you-education-provider-wales>

Disability also covers those with a progressive condition, such as muscular dystrophy, which leads to a person having an impairment which will in the future have a substantial adverse effect on the person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities (Equality Act, Schedule 1, paragraph 8).

The effect of the impairment must be substantial and it must have an adverse effect which is greater than having a minor impact. This is because having an impairment does not in itself mean that a person is disabled by it.

For example, a child may have asthma or diabetes but the condition may not be severe enough to have a substantial impact on the child's ability to carry out everyday activities. In this case the child would not be disabled.

An impairment is to be treated as having a substantial adverse effect on the ability of the person concerned if it would be likely to have a substantial adverse impact without measures being taken to overcome it.

For example, a person with a significant hearing loss may be able to hear reasonably well with hearing aids but without them would have little functional hearing. That person would be disabled. **However**, an exception is made in relation to people with poor eyesight which is fully corrected by spectacles or contact lenses is not deemed to be disabled on account of the eyesight impairment (Equality Act, Schedule 1, paragraph 5).

2.2 Long-term effects

The meaning of 'long term effects' is covered in Schedule 1 of the Act.

The effect of an impairment is long-term if it:

- (a) has lasted for at least 12 months, **or**
- (b) is likely to last for at least 12 months, **or**
- (c) is likely to last for the rest of the life of the person affected.

2.3 Reasonable adjustments

Schools and local authorities have a duty to provide reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils. This duty requires a school to take positive steps to ensure that disabled pupils can fully participate in the education provided by the school and enjoy the other benefits, facilities and services which the school provides.

Guidance for the practical implementation of this in schools can be found on the Equality and Human Rights Commission web site ⁴

⁴http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/publication_pdf/Reasonable%20adjustments%20for%20disabled%20pupils_0.pdf

⁶<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/publication-download/reasonable-adjustments-disabled-pupils>

2.4 Discrimination

Discrimination can be direct or indirect. Direct discrimination of a disabled pupil is where that disabled pupil is treated less favourably than another because of his or her impairment or disability.

Direct discrimination would be where a pupil with HIV or with a severe disfigurement was refused admission to a school on the basis of that characteristic.

However, it is not discrimination to treat a disabled pupil more favourably than one who is not disabled.

For example, a pupil with dyslexia may be given additional time to complete a written examination and that may not be considered discrimination.

Disabled pupils may experience indirect discrimination where a particular policy, as applied, disadvantages them (or would, if it was applied, disadvantage them).

A special school providing for learning disabled pupils has a policy which requires that pupils attending residential trips are fully continent. The policy has the effect of discriminating against those who are not fully continent and excluding them from residential trips. If the reason for not being fully continent was due to a disability this would be indirect discrimination based on disability. It is permissible to indirectly discriminate where such discrimination is objectively justifiable but it is unlikely that the school would be able to justify the action.

Discrimination arises when a disabled pupil is treated less favourably not because of the disability itself, but for a reason related to his/her disability and that treatment cannot be justified.

A pupil with cerebral palsy who is a wheelchair user is told that she will be unable to attend a school trip to a local theatre putting on a play she is currently studying in English, because the building is not wheelchair accessible. The pupil and her parents are aware that the play is also on at a theatre, which is accessible, in a neighbouring city. However, the school does not investigate this option. This is likely to be discrimination arising from a disability⁵

⁵ Example from [What equality law means for you as an education provider – schools \(EHRC\)](#)

3. Accessibility strategies and accessibility plans – overview

This Chapter provides an overview of the requirements of the Act as it relates to the legal requirement for

- a) Local authorities to prepare, implement and update accessibility strategies for all schools for which they are the responsible body
- b) The responsible body of any school in Wales to prepare, implement and update accessibility plans

The requirement for Accessibility Strategies and Plans was established under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. This requirement remains under the Act.

Estyn's Common Inspection Framework provides that as part of Estyn's inspection, "ethos, equality and diversity" will be assessed. This means that if equality measures are not implemented effectively, the overall inspection grade will be restricted.

3.1 Accessibility strategies

The local authority is the responsible body for the preparation of an accessibility strategy covering all publicly funded schools in their area. In preparing and implementing their accessibility strategies, local authorities need to co-ordinate and co-operate with other agencies such as social work services, National Health Service Boards, youth services and third sector organisations. It is also important to consult with pupils (and not only disabled pupils), parents/carers and education staff. This requirement for wider consultation reflects the requirement for the accessibility strategy to identify the needs of existing and future pupils.

3.2 Accessibility plans

Accessibility plans must be prepared by, and relate to, each individual school. For all maintained schools, the responsible body for preparation of an accessibility plan is the local authority. For Voluntary Aided schools, the responsible body is the Governing Body. For an independent school, the responsibility is that of the proprietor. The requirement to prepare accessibility plans includes pre-school nurseries and pupil referral units maintained by the local authority.

3.3 The three planning duties

Accessibility strategies and accessibility plans must both identify:

- How schools and local authorities will increase the quality and extent to which disabled pupils can fully participate in the curriculum, including after and out-of-school activities? (Articles 23 and 29 of the UNCRC)
- What physical environmental improvements will schools and local authorities need to secure in order to maximise access to education, benefits facilities and services for disabled pupils? (Articles 6 and 28 of the UNCRC)

- How will schools and local authorities improve the delivery of accessible information to disabled pupils? (Articles 2, 4 and 13 of the UNCRC).
- How are children and young people involved in decision-making (Article 12 of the UNCRC).

These are known as the three planning duties.

Accessibility strategies and plans must be:

- in writing;
- for an identified prescribed period;
- implemented;
- reviewed and if necessary, revised;
- clear with regard to the allocation of resources to implement it; and
- be given to the Welsh Ministers if there is a request to do so.

In preparing or carrying out a review or revision of an accessibility strategy or plan, regard must be given to any guidance, including this guidance, issued by the Welsh Ministers.

Accessibility strategies and plans must be prepared, implemented, evaluated, revised and re-issued on a rolling three year basis and must consider all aspects of education and associated services provided by schools. These include not only the curriculum but also break, lunch times, schools sports, extended-curriculum activities and all aspects of attending school. This requirement includes pre-school nurseries and pupil referral units maintained by the local authority.

Where there has been inadequate or no satisfactory discharge of such duty, The Education (Wales) Measure 2009 gives children and young persons the right to initiate legal proceedings in the Special Educational Need Tribunal for Wales (SENTW) themselves. They can also make a claim to SENTW about disability discrimination in schools. The Welsh Ministers may direct the local authority or responsible body to comply with the requirements of the Act or to comply with any order issued by the SENTW following a successful claim. See the Welsh Government publication “**Children’s rights to appeal and make a claim to the Special Educational Needs Tribunal for Wales - Statutory guidance for local authorities**”⁶ for further information.

⁶ <http://gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/publications/guidance/childrens-rights-to-appeal-and-make-a-claim-to-the-sentw/?lang=en>

4. The preparation of accessibility strategies and plans

Accessibility strategies are prepared by LAs and consider general, strategic issues impacting on all schools in their area which receive public funding.

Accessibility plans are prepared by the responsible body for each individual school and identify specific actions which are particularly relevant to that school.

4.1 Accessibility strategies

An accessibility strategy should cover all the schools, nurseries and pre-school centres for which a LA has responsibility. It should include the provision of nursery classes in local authority centres which are not schools, such as community centres, and any education provided by the authority in, for example, Forest Schools or on Gypsy/Traveller sites. Out of school activities and services provided on school premises are also covered by this requirement, even if a private or voluntary provider is responsible for such activities. Wherever this guidance refers to schools, it should be interpreted as including all these situations. It is expected that where a local authority negotiates contracts with any such provider, it will ensure that the needs of disabled pupils are met to the same extent as would be expected at any fully maintained establishment. LAs may also wish to include provisions in relation to children receiving education in hospital settings; however, there is no legal requirement to do so.

It is for responsible bodies, in drafting their strategies, to decide whether or not they wish to include their improvements under separate or combined headings, or in any other way. For example, improvements may be detailed in respect of each school that will benefit from them, with a separate heading for authority-wide initiatives.

The planning duty requires LAs to adopt a strategic approach to ensure that disabled pupils have increased accessibility to all maintained schools in their area. If an accessibility strategy forms part of a wider overall improvement plan then it must be clear, easily identifiable and able to be easily extracted as an accessibility strategy from the wider plan so that it is available for reference.

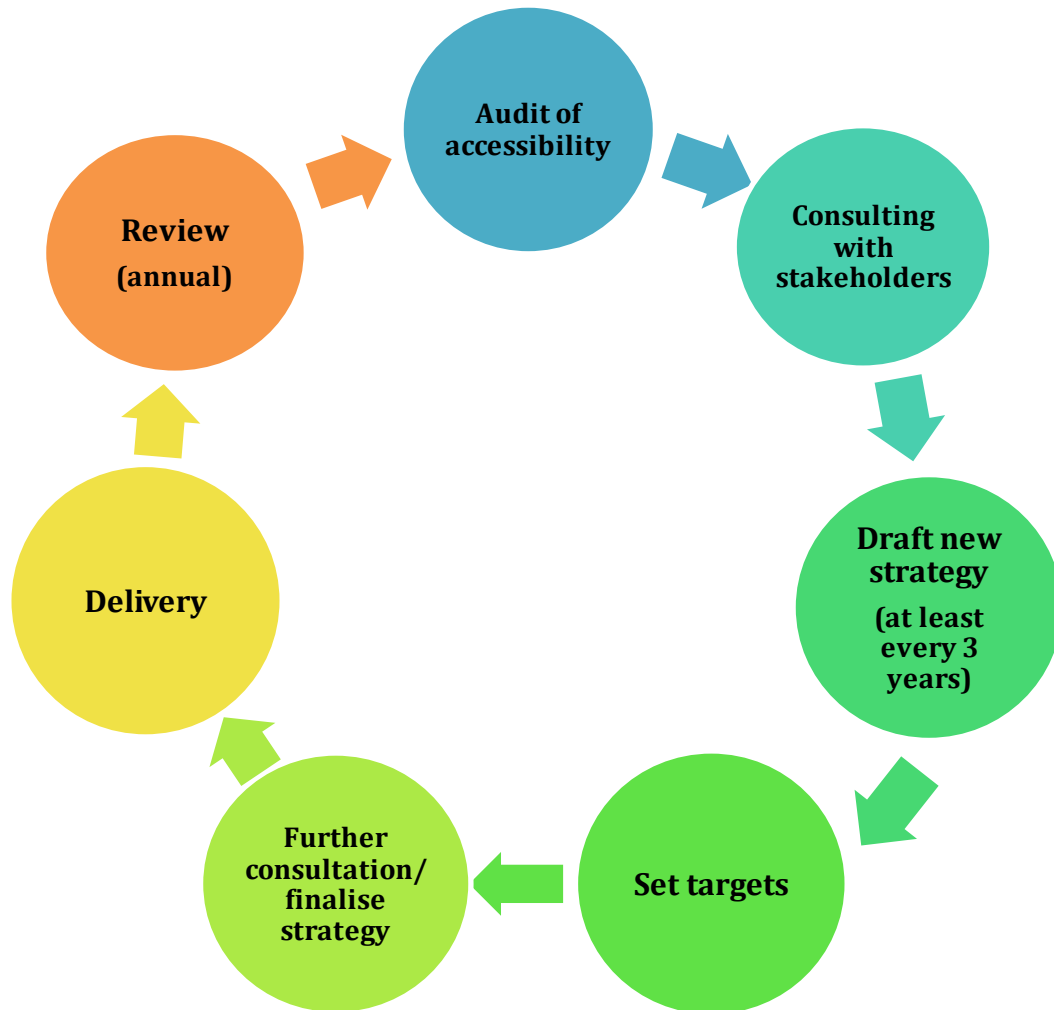
4.2 Accessibility plans

Accessibility plans must be prepared on an individual school basis by the responsible body for that school taking into account the specific circumstances of an individual school. The plan must identify how, within that school, the needs of disabled pupils are met and how increasing accessibility to the school buildings, curriculum and information provided by the school is being achieved.

4.3 Preparation

There are strong similarities in the approach which will be needed for the preparation of either an accessibility strategy or an accessibility plan. The flow chart below outlines the stages in preparing accessibility strategies. A similar process may be used on an individual school basis when preparing an accessibility plan.

Preparing and reviewing accessibility strategies and plans



The steps above form the cycle of the development implementation and review of accessibility strategies and plans. **The actions suggested for each step are set out below.**

Audit/Review of accessibility - review the outcomes of previous strategies/plans. Identify what worked and why it worked; what was less successful and why that was the case; and whether the needs still remain. Identify remaining barriers to accessibility. Where no accessibility strategy or plan is available, undertake research to identify any previous accessibility barriers and also to identify best practice in schools.

Consulting with stakeholders - consult with a broad cross-section of service providers, users and third sector organisations.

Draft the new strategy or plan - focus on desired outcomes and suggested improvement priorities to achieve those outcomes ranked as:

short - addressed within 1st year

medium - started or addressed during the current accessibility strategy

long term - started but seen as an ongoing process

Outcomes should also be ranked according to both cost and impact.

Set targets - SMARTER- (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, time-related, evaluated and reviewed) targets should be used to specify what outcomes will be achieved, and by when.

Further consultation/finalise strategy - consultation should be as wide as possible and information provided on why subsequent decisions in drafting have been taken. The consultation must enable those affected by the accessibility strategy/plan to provide their views. Therefore the consultation process must also be fully accessible.

Publication – both the accessibility strategy and individual school accessibility plans must be available to anyone on request, in any alternative format required. Good practice is to publish the accessibility strategy and individual school accessibility plans on the local authority web site (where applicable) and on individual school websites. It should be clear to users how to find any local authority accessibility strategy and how to find individual school accessibility plans.

Implementation – implementation of both the accessibility strategy and individual school accessibility plans must be evidenced and annual reviews (see below) undertaken to identify progress made and barriers remaining, together with their solutions.

Review – Annual review meeting. A framework should be in place to evaluate the success of the strategy and plan in consultation with stakeholders.

In preparing accessibility strategies and plans, local authorities and responsible bodies will also be required to consider any additional duties arising under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

4.4 Planning group

LAs normally establish a planning group to prepare and develop the accessibility strategy. The planning group is often led by education officials who may take the lead in developing the strategy, but its remit must be wider. Each LA must decide the composition of the planning group and typically participants may include or involve – *as a minimum*:

- access officers/officers in charge of disability access across the authority;
- quality improvement officers;
- pre-school co-ordinators;
- educational psychologists;
- officials from the buildings/capital investment/estates department;
- social work services;
- head teachers;
- local health professionals/therapists;
- design professionals;
- parents' group/forum; and
- community representatives, third sector organisations and disabled as well as non disabled pupils.

When bringing forward an *individual school accessibility plan*, a planning group which reflects all aspects of school life will also need to be established. However it is likely that such a planning group will be smaller in size and perhaps have as its core the head teacher, governor with designated responsibility for SEN, a parent of a disabled pupil and representative(s) from disability organisations. Relevant expertise must be secured to develop, implement and evaluate the plan and this may include disabled pupils, their parents, specialist teachers, local voluntary and disability organisations and local authority key officers. This expertise will be vital to identify barriers to successful implementation of the plan and also to identify solutions.

Any audit or review exercise must not be restricted to considerations of physical access alone but **must** cover each of the three planning duties. In addressing the three duties, the strategy and individual plans should look at wider considerations. These might include, for example, the need for staff training, the need for additional space/rooms for pupils with protected characteristics, the availability of teaching materials in alternative formats, the use of inclusive teaching methods and schools' experiences of and attitudes towards pupils with protected characteristics.

As a starting point, and particularly if there is an absence of an existing accessibility plan, answering the questions in Appendix B "Identifying Barriers: example of questions to consider when preparing an accessibility plan" will help a school identify their current position and prioritise areas to address. Internet searches will also provide current examples of accessibility plans for other schools which may provide assistance, although the circumstances of each school are different and as such, individual accessibility plans for schools may vary greatly.

Given the extended definition of disability discrimination introduced by the Act, responsible bodies may wish to ensure there is strong staff awareness of these issues through continuous professional development.

4.5 Consulting with key interested parties

Consultation is an important part of the audit process because it provides evidence of views on accessibility, the effectiveness of past strategies and plans and the validity of the proposed new approaches. The key parties to be considered are the service providers, the service users and third sector organisations.

LAs should consult with staff in their own schools including those providing education on Gypsy/Traveller sites. Other consultees should include partner agencies involved with property services, social work services and Local Health Boards, as well as allied health professionals such as occupational therapists, speech and language therapists, who will also have valuable contributions to make. LAs may also want to work with local Further Education colleges to improve pupils' access to the curriculum while they are on link placements.

Responsible bodies must consult with disabled and non-disabled pupils and their parents, taking a proactive approach to ensure that the diversity of children's additional support needs is addressed. Sectors of the community at risk of being marginalised from the mainstream consultation process must be identified and brought into consideration. Responsible bodies should continually involve children and young people in decision making to inform strategy development, including planning and review. All participation

should follow the standards set out in the Children and Young People's National participation Standards for Wales.

Planning groups should consider how their accessibility strategy/plan is addressing access for disabled children to services provided in schools by other groups, such as parents' groups providing out of school care on a voluntary basis.

4.6 Drafting the strategy or plan

To draft the *accessibility strategy*, the planning group must have information about all the barriers or potential barriers to participation for disabled pupils. These may be barriers in individual schools or pre-school provision, or barriers to education provided to children on Gypsy/Traveller sites, or they may be common areas for improvement in all or most of the schools in the authority's area. In drafting an individual *school accessibility plan*, areas of general accessibility improvement as well as improvements needed to facilitate accessibility for specific existing or future pupil needs should be considered.

A template of suggested headings which could be included in an accessibility strategy or plan is provided below. These are example headings and therefore this is only a suggested template; format and content can be changed to whatever a responsible body feels is most suitable. Local Authorities and School Governing Bodies should also provide an appropriate level of evidence to demonstrate how they have sufficiently considered need within the audit assessment, including evidence from children and young people.

Introduction

Outline of what the strategy/plan is for
Requirements of legislation and guidance
Time period covered

Approach to developing the strategy/plan

Information about membership of the planning group
Summary of responsible body's assessment of current levels of accessibility for the school estate it is responsible for
Summary of recent progress made, improvements implemented as a result of the review and evaluation of previous strategies/plans
Summary of consultations/audits undertaken in developing the strategy/plan and how priorities were determined (if any criteria were used, these should be included)
Responsible bodies should continually involve children and young people in decision making to inform strategy development, including planning and review. All participation should follow the standards set out in the Children and Young People's National participation Standards for Wales.
How inclusivity was achieved in the consultation exercise
Summary of key areas of accessibility/schools where improvements are needed

Increasing access to the curriculum

List of short, medium and long-term priorities for improvements to ensure that pupils have access to a full curriculum – consider including:

- staff training – especially for mainstream class teachers
- provision of learning support and auxiliaries
- availability and suitability of auxiliary aids (e.g. laptops,)
- provision for assessments
- examinations targets to be met during the period of the strategy/plan (includes timescales)

Improving access to the physical environment

List of short, medium and long-term priorities for improvements which ensure that pupils have physical access to schools – consider including:

- access to all school buildings and external areas for pupils with physical impairments *and/or* hearing impairments *and/or* visual impairments
- improved access to sports facilities
- school transport
- out of hours activities
- targets to be met during the period of the strategy /plan (include timescales)
- identify all planned refurbishments to schools to ensure that improvements to access can be carried out as part of the work

Improving communication and access to school information

List of short, medium and long-term priorities for improvements which ensure that effective two-way communication with pupils is improved. Consider including:

- improving the availability of school information/work in alternative formats for pupils with visual impairments, hearing impairments and learning difficulties, and ensuring that pupils' views are sought and taken account of
- ensuring that any necessary communication aids/technology provided is supported, so that pupils can participate and communicate their views and their work to school staff
- targets to be met during the period of the strategy/plan (include timescales)

Other issues

- For example, include plans to raise awareness about disability amongst school staff and pupils through school activities.
- Identify links and explain how connections will be made with other initiatives or programmes and plans.
- Identify and include accessibility requirements within tenders

Conclusions and action plan

- Resulting action plan for each year, including details of who will take each target/action point forward and specific timescales identified;
- any resources expected to be allocated for each target; and
- the performance measure which will be used to evaluate whether the target has been achieved.

The impact and ease of delivery should also be identified.

Quality and commitment to implementation is vital. The focus of the accessibility strategy or plan should be on *how* and *when* lasting outcomes and improvements will be achieved, using a clear, short format.

Individual schools are not required to prepare accessibility strategies. However, it is expected that individual school accessibility plans will take account of the local authority's local improvement plan and, where appropriate, refer to the authority's accessibility strategy.

Similarly, a school's standards and quality report, which is integral to self-evaluation and to the process of school improvement, will build on the audit section of the school development plan and will set out how well the school is doing and what the school needs to do next. For maintained schools, these standards and quality reports can, in turn, inform the local authority's accessibility strategy.

An example checklist for the process of preparing and implementing an accessibility strategy or plan is provided below.

Planning group set up/individuals to take the lead identified	
Decisions taken as to how and where the accessibility strategy/plan will fit into other planning frameworks and service delivery plans	
Audit carried out of existing accessibility of provision	
Initial consultation with school(s) and experts completed	
Early discussions held with other agencies and organisations about joint improvements which might be taken forward	
Short, medium and long-term priorities for each of the three planning duties identified, together with their respective impacts and costs; accessibility strategy/plan drafted	
Sources of funding identified for taking forward measures identified in the strategy/plan	
Goals and targets set for progress during the period of the strategy/plan	
Any further consultation carried out with a wide range of interested groups	
Arrangements made for implementing the strategy/plan	
Accessibility strategy finalised and placed on local authority and schools' web sites or Accessibility plan finalised and placed on individual school web site and, if appropriate, local authority web site	
Progress monitored and reviewed regularly, with the strategy/plan revised where necessary	
Progress evaluated towards the end of the period of the strategy/plan in order to inform the priorities for the next accessibility strategy/plan	

5. The three planning duties: increasing access to school education for disabled pupils

Schedule 10 of the Act⁷ contains specific statutory details relating to accessibility strategies and plans. This Chapter provides further information relating to the requirement to consider the three planning duties in the accessibility strategies and plans.

5.1 Improving access to the curriculum

An accessibility strategy or plan is, over a period of time prescribed by regulations, for —

(a) increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school's curriculum

(b)

(c)

(i) within a reasonable time; and

(ii) in ways which are determined after taking account of their impairments and any preferences expressed by them or their parents

Disabled pupils have exactly the same curriculum entitlements as their non-disabled peers. Early intervention and prevention should enable more children to have their wellbeing needs met in a more inclusive way through universal services.

The Act does not define what is meant by the curriculum. However, it should be recognised as the totality of experiences planned for children and young people through their education, wherever they are educated. This totality includes the ethos and life of the school as a community, curriculum areas and subjects, interdisciplinary learning and opportunities for achievement.

Many of the barriers to full participation in education may be similar for groups of disabled pupils. It will therefore be useful for the responsible body to take a strategic, proactive approach as well as a reactive approach to removing these barriers.

Ensuring the availability of facilities which can accommodate the full curriculum and needs of future disabled pupils, for example by locating classrooms dedicated to particular uses (e.g. music, science or art) in areas of the school which are fully accessible, is an example of a proactive measure. A reactive measure may require the alteration of the specific layout of a classroom to accommodate a pupil with a specific accessibility need.

At a strategic, proactive level a local authority may wish to describe in its accessibility strategy how learning support and auxiliary provision could be better distributed across the authority's schools.

⁷ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/schedule/10?view=plain>

Responsible bodies may wish to establish in their accessibility plans that the provision of auxiliary aids, such as specialist equipment, will be available as matter of routine for pupils with certain impairments and ensure that all new relevant procurement exercises include the supply of such auxiliary aids. Similarly, contracts to procure paper based curriculum resources (such as textbooks or worksheets), should include a requirement for such resources to be supplied in electronic formats to assist any future pupils for whom print-based formats are inaccessible.

Accessibility strategies and plans should include details of how the responsible body intends to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can fully access the curriculum by securing staff training and identifying the use of alternative approaches for teaching and support. Schools are encouraged to share good practice and collaborate on initiatives with other schools or agencies, including therapists and other health professionals. When preparing strategies, school staff should be encouraged to inform the planning group preparing the strategy or plan not only about areas for improvement, but also to contribute examples of good practice, where initiatives are working well.

When considering provision for disabled children and young people with significant health needs, their parents and carers including professionals, social workers and any significant others should be fully involved and consulted in the preparation of the strategy or plan. The document can also usefully describe arrangements for improved working with health professionals, other agencies and the third sector.

In considering how disabled pupils' access to the curriculum can be improved, responsible bodies should **not** focus on specific curriculum areas or individual subjects such as Welsh, English, mathematics, languages, sciences, music and physical education. All aspects of the curriculum, including out of school care and activities, must be considered. Planning should include initiatives to overcome any barriers preventing, or making it difficult for, disabled children and young adults to participate fully in school trips and activities such as school plays, after-school clubs and study support clubs. The ethos of the school must be one which celebrates diversity and encourages inclusion.

Example:- Books for All

Pupils who are blind or partially sighted generally benefit from printed materials made available in electronic or alternative formats e.g. large print or Braille. Other groups of disabled pupils may also benefit from curriculum materials provided in alternative formats. For example, pupils with dyslexia may benefit from material provided in large print, or using a particular font, or printed on coloured paper. Some may prefer to use audio books or to use a computer which reads out text. Pupils with physical impairments may require material presented digitally on a computer which they access using switches or other form of assistive technology.

The Books for All website provides advice on how learning materials can be obtained, used and prepared in accessible alternative formats.

Since 2010, the Copyright Licensing Agency (CLA) has operated a 'Print Disability Licence'. This free licence, obtainable from the CLA, allows non-profit making organisations, such as local authorities and schools, to reproduce, and circulate, copyright works in a format accessible to print-disabled pupils. Alternative formats include large print, Braille or audio books. The licence covers provision of material to include not just those people who have a visual impairment but also those with

any print disability that prevents them from accessing print materials such as books.

Responsible bodies may want to include in their accessibility strategies how they will implement arrangements like Books for All to benefit print disabled pupils by improving their access to curriculum materials.

The above example demonstrates how a responsible body's duties to an individual disabled pupil under the Act can be complemented by its planning duties through accessibility reporting. There is a duty under the Act to provide accessible information in an alternative format. This could be seen as a reasonable adjustment. At the same time the responsible body may introduce school based or system wide approaches to producing accessible information that will benefit larger numbers of print disabled pupils. Accessibility planning encourages a systematic approach to evaluating current and future arrangements for disabled pupils.

Additional examples of increased access to the curriculum

Assistive technology (such as: touch-screen computers, interactive whiteboards, text-to-speech software, keyboards, computer mice, viewing aids etc.) are available to support individual children's additional needs and promote independent learning.

Specialist software, ensuring the compatibility of home and school IT systems, to facilitate the transfer of homework from school to home for visually impaired children.

The provision of an induction loop in a building may assist those who have a hearing impairment. However, some pupils may not use a hearing aid and may instead lip read. This would mean that teachers must take particular care to face the pupil when speaking to the class, which is clearly a reasonable adjustment. This example illustrates why a school must consult with each pupil to identify what the appropriate and reasonable adjustment is for them.

5.2 Improving the physical environment

(2) An accessibility strategy or plan is, over a period of time prescribed by regulations, for —

(a).....

(b) improving the physical environment of the school, or 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 school(s)

(c).....

(i) within a reasonable time; and

(ii) in ways which are determined after taking account of their disabilities and any preferences expressed by them or their parents

A suitable school environment is fully accessible to all disabled pupils and should also offer no hindrance to disabled teachers in the performance of their duties.

In developing the school estate and improving its ability to meet the needs of all disabled people, responsible bodies will have regard to advice already issued by the government. Non-statutory advice produced by the Department for Education in **Building Bulletin 102 Designing for disabled children and children with special educational needs: Guidance for mainstream and special schools** is particularly helpful. However there may be conflict with other guidance. Therefore an informed consideration of the issues concerned should be evidenced in an accessibility strategy. For example, the need to ensure effective ventilation of a building must be achieved in a way which does not compromise the internal acoustic environment for those with a hearing impairment.

The responsible body preparing the accessibility strategy or plan must adopt a broad approach which seeks to improve access outside as well as within schools; for example, to ensure buses used for school trips and for school transport are accessible to disabled pupils.

Improvements to arrangements may include:

- physical access (such as architectural planning for accessibility: the installation of ramps, handrails, widened doorways, lifts, automatic doors, accessible toilets, showers and changing areas, adapted/adjustable furniture and equipment, ensuring sufficient space for manoeuvring and storing equipment, floor coverings and evacuation procedures)
- access for pupils with visual impairments (such as: improvements to signage, route finding systems which enable pupils to find their way round a school easily; colour contrasting for door frames, handles and to steps to enable pupils to make best use of their residual vision; adjustable lighting; blinds; tactile paving outside the school; evacuation procedures)
- access for pupils with hearing impairments (such as: induction loops/radio systems/infrared systems; adjustable lighting; sound insulation for walls, floors and ceilings; evacuation procedures; floor coverings and soft furnishings)
- access for pupils with other impairments (such as requirements for space: the provision of pupil support bases, quiet rooms, sensory rooms/play areas, therapy rooms and way finding systems). Occupational therapists and access officers should, wherever possible, be consulted for advice.

5.3 Improving communications

(2) An accessibility strategy or plan is, over a period of time prescribed by regulations, for —

(a).....

(b).....

(c) improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is readily accessible to pupils who are not disabled

(i) within a reasonable time; and

(ii) in ways which are determined after taking account of their disabilities and any preferences expressed by them or their parents

Improving the communication and delivery of information to disabled pupils is a key component of the Equality Act.

In communicating with all pupils, responsible bodies must ensure that disabled pupils are included fully. For example a deaf pupil in a mainstream school may need to use an induction loop or have access to a sign language interpreter at school assemblies. School staff may need in-service training tailored to help them communicate effectively with pupils with specific language and communication difficulties. The role of the Named Person in health for pre-school children, and in education for school age children, will be vital in supporting communication with disabled children and their families.

Responsible bodies should take steps to improve how disabled pupils can give their views on any issue about which they have an interest, gather in those views and consider them. Consideration should be given to whether class work or homework could be given in alternative forms. This would include how any homework, or other work pupils do in alternative forms, can best be marked/commented on by school staff and also how any pupil with a disabled parent or carer can secure their advice in the same way as that given by non-disabled parents. Pupils' communications with teaching and auxiliary support staff as part of their learning should also be considered under the "access to the curriculum" duty.

However, there will be other non-curricular activities which pupils will be informed about and disabled pupils should be able to give their views or ask questions about these activities in the same way as their peers. Pupils should also be able to communicate with other staff, pupils or people working in a school, for example, in the dining room or in the school office and during out-of-school activities.

Responsible bodies should consider how improving communication can be addressed and ensure awareness is raised amongst all school staff of the difficulties pupils with particular impairments may have in communicating with other people.

Written information should be as accessible to disabled pupils and prospective disabled pupils as it is to non-disabled pupils. The strategy/plan should identify how this will be achieved. This includes, for example, information provided to prospective pupils in the form of brochures or web site entries about the school, school development plans and other information such as inspection reports.

Specific impairments and preferences expressed by disabled pupils, prospective pupils or their parents should inform how information is provided. For example, a blind pupil may require information provided in Braille or in an accessible digital form so the file can be downloaded to a personal computer and read in large print or used with text-to-speech software.

All information used within and issued by the school is covered by this duty and includes, for example:

- school newsletters
- handouts and worksheets
- timetables
- test and examination papers
- posters and information about school events
- homework
- signage used in the school

Provision of homework, handouts and worksheets, school newsletters, posters and information about school events should all be in an accessible format.

The provision of information in an alternative format must be provided within a reasonable time. The Act does not define what a ‘reasonable time’ is but determining what is reasonable must be related to the context and purpose for which the information is required. For example, if a teacher provides information about homework to the class then the disabled pupil should receive it in alternative format at the same time as their peers. In other circumstances a short delay may be acceptable, for example, providing information about a school trip arranged for the following term. Ensuring that the above is achievable will require accessibility strategies and plans to include procedures for making information available in a range of formats which may include:-

- Braille
- Large print
- Sign language
- Symbol system
- digital formats including PDF
- audio formats – CD, MP3, QR code
- improving the accessibility of language e.g. easy read or simplified text
- accessible web pages

Web sites should follow the Web Accessibility Initiative Web Content accessibility guidelines.

It is important that quality assurance measures are in place to ensure that content placed on web pages will continue to be accessible in the future.

5.4 Checklist for use in planning ICT

The following checklist is not intended to be comprehensive but illustrates a sample of practical functions which disabled pupils may require in order to access the curriculum or other information issued by a school. ICT managers, staff involved in procurement functions and schools can use this as a starting point from which to review whether certain reasonable adjustments are in place.

Access to ICT and Assistive Technology (AT)	
The school or local authority’s stock of shared netbooks, laptops or tablets can be booked out by disabled pupils for specific learning tasks.	
The school or local authority has a pathway or procedure, and staff with expertise, to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify pupils who require ICT and/or AT to access the curriculum. • Assess and provide appropriate ICT and/or AT • Accessibility of school computers and ICT 	
All school computers have text-to-speech (TTS) software installed for reading documents and web pages	
Headphones are available for use with TTS where required.	
Control Panel settings can be easily and quickly changed to enable access for each disabled pupil, including where needed, the facility for Right click functionality. Such adjustments can be saved to a user’s profile.	
Specialist software and hardware required by disabled learners can be easily and quickly installed and used on school computers.	
Computer refreshes or re-imaging are planned to accommodate existing	

assistive software and hardware used by disabled pupils.	
Where computer refresh or re-imaging will result in current assistive technology not being usable, replacement or upgrade takes place so that the disabled pupil is not disadvantaged.	
Access to Learning Resources	
Learning resources (e.g. textbooks, reading books, teacher generated materials, assessments, homework) can be provided in a format that learners can access, such as Digital, Audio, Large Print, on Coloured paper, Braille, etc.	
Online learning resources and online assessments used can be adapted so that they do not disadvantage disabled pupils.	
Learners can transfer work to and from school and home using e.g. file sharing on the intranet or Internet, or on a memory stick	
Learners who use ICT for writing and recording can print their work	
Staff and pupil awareness and expertise	
Staff (teaching, support, librarian and technical) are aware of legal obligations to provide access to the curriculum and to curriculum resources under Equality Duties, with particular reference to Guidance on Auxiliary Aids and Services.	
Procurement decisions for hardware and software have due regard to accessibility and reasonable adjustment duties under the Act. In particular, no extra cost should be charged for changes made to systems as part of reasonable adjustments made.	
Staff and pupils are aware of Control Panel options on schools computers and any specialist hardware and software installed.	

6. Considerations for the accessibility plan

Having identified barriers to access for disabled pupils, schools need to bring forward actions to eliminate those barriers. Schools should list all of the necessary adaptations, including realistic cost estimates and an assessment of the beneficial impacts arising. These might be divided into categories such as staff training; teaching and learning practices; refurbishment and maintenance (e.g. use of colour when redecorating and replacing floor coverings or furniture); minor capital expenditure; major capital expenditure.

Schools should then draw up short, medium and long term priorities and devise strategies to address these priorities with clear implementation arrangements and a timeframe for the work. Where priorities involve capital works, these need to be included in the responsible body's plans for capital expenditure.

Schools need to resource their accessibility plans adequately. This means the costs of implementing the plan are incorporated into current and future budget commitments. Maintained schools should liaise with their local authorities about resources to fund capital projects.

6.1 Setting goals and targets

Goals and targets should be specific enough to enable them to be measured (e.g. all staff to receive disability awareness training within two years; one science lab, ICT room, art room and drama studio to be wheelchair accessible).

A short term strategy might include working within a local cluster of mainstream and special schools to share good practice in differentiating the curriculum. A medium term strategy might be to ensure that all staff received disability equality training within two years with an induction programme established for new staff. A longer term priority might be to plan to make the common areas of the school and selected classrooms physically accessible. The school needs to secure agreement to the necessary funding and include time frames and evaluation strategies to enable the school to judge how effective implementation of the plan has been. In line with Article 4 of the UNCRC (General Comment No.5 – General Measures of Implementation), schools and local authorities must ensure that the 'maximum extent of available resources' is allocated to ensuring that the action resulting from strategies and plans are met. This will include the increasing and protecting the visibility of children and young people's needs in budget setting of schools and LAs.

6.2 Consultation on the plan

A plan is only likely to succeed if those responsible for its implementation have ownership of it. Schools should therefore consult their staff, pupils, parents and governing body. All those involved in producing the plan should have a final opportunity to comment before it is signed off. The plan must be approved by the body legally responsible for it; in most cases this will be the governing body. Responsible bodies should continually involve children and young people in decision making to inform strategy development, including planning and review. All participation should follow the standards set out in the Children and Young People's National Participation Standards for Wales.

6.3 Finalising and publicising the plan

Schools should take account of consultation responses in finalising their plans.

Maintained schools have a duty to publish information about their accessibility plans in their governors' annual report to parents. This might be a summary of the full accessibility plan, making it clear where copies of the full plan can be obtained from. Independent schools are required to make a copy of their accessibility plan accessible from the outset. Schools may be asked to provide their strategies in alternative formats e.g. braille, audio tape, large print.

6.4 Implementation

Once a school has produced an accessibility plan, the school has a statutory duty to implement the plan and to allocate adequate resources to it.

6.5 Review the plan

Evaluation is needed to determine whether goals are being achieved and whether the implementation programme is producing value for money. Schools are required to keep the accessibility plan under review and revise it as necessary.

For each of the three planning duties, the accessibility plan should identify adaptations which could achieve increased accessibility for disabled pupils – whether or not such disabled pupils are already attending the school. This is so that procurement decisions are informed and will at the very least enable future adoption of solutions which facilitate increased accessibility. Effective consultation will identify both the range of disability which schools may need to consider, as well as any specific accessibility requirements arising from existing school age or pre-school age disabled pupils. The accessibility plan may then take forward planned, prioritised actions to ensure that enhanced accessibility becomes a matter of routine. Appropriate arrangements should be put in place, which require schools and Local Authorities to involve children, young people and their parents in the review, scrutiny and evaluation of plans and strategies.

6.6 ICT

Identifying accessible hardware, software and IT connectivity solutions will facilitate their future use by disabled pupils, who may need to connect their own laptop or tablet devices to the school network. Standard computer seating/infrastructure/ whiteboards etc. must be able to accommodate wheelchair users whether they are a pupil or a teacher. Control Panel settings on school computers must be easily changeable by teachers to facilitate the needs of individual pupils within their class which may vary according to ambient lighting.

6.7 Buildings and services

Anticipating the needs of disabled pupils and teachers before they arise is an important part of accessibility strategies. So, for example, the design of buildings and refurbishment works and the issue of tenders for the supply of goods or services over several years should anticipate the accessibility needs of future pupils, irrespective of whether or not such needs currently exist. Ensuring the availability of low floor school transport which can accommodate wheelchairs; the provision of text-to-speech software on all computers and that there will be no charge for any future changes to systems necessary as a reasonable

adjustment are all examples of how this forward thinking should be identified and incorporated as a condition of funding with agreement contracts.

Where existing buildings are not fully wheelchair friendly, what adaptations can be implemented which will increase their accessibility? This may vary from physical works through to changing the location or layout of specific classrooms so that they become more accessible to those with mobility needs. As a matter of routine, signage should be of a nature and located so that it is easily visible to future wheelchair users as well as those with special visibility needs; personal and school equipment storage space should also be easily accessible to such individuals.

6.8 Evaluation

Evaluation arrangements should be developed in connection with goals, targets and time frames set in the plan.

In addition to meeting goals and targets, the success of an accessibility plan might be illustrated by:

- observable changes in staff confidence in teaching and supporting disabled pupils with a range of needs;
- evidence of the greater involvement of disabled pupils in the full life of the school (for example, participation in after school clubs, leisure, sporting and cultural activities and on school trips and school transport);
- greater satisfaction of disabled pupils and their parents with the provision made for them and their participation in the life of the school;
- audits carried out on the main curriculum areas;
- progressive planned improvements to the physical environment of the school; and
- information for pupils available in a range of formats.

6.9 Ensure the future of the accessibility plan

Incorporation of accessibility planning into wider policy will ensure that the commitment to the plan extends beyond the planning group and so inspire confidence that commitment is real.

The accessibility plan may be a separate component within the school's development plan. Over time, the plan should become an integral component of forward planning - a consistent thread which runs through all the school's plans and policies, including plans related to premises management, the curriculum, information technology, support services and staff training.

6.10 Additional advice

The Social Model of Disability captures all persons specified under the Act. The Welsh Government publication "**Access to Education and Support for Children and Young People with Medical Needs**"⁸ provides specific advice to schools and local authorities on meeting the educational needs of children and young people with medical needs.

⁸ <http://learning.wales.gov.uk/resources/browse-all/education-and-support-for-children-and-young-people-with-medical-needs/?lang=en>

The **Special Educational Needs Code of Practice for Wales**⁹ provides information specific to pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) including the related definition and legislative framework.

⁹ <http://learning.wales.gov.uk/docs/learningwales/publications/131016-sen-code-of-practice-for-wales-en.pdf>

Appendix A: Relevant legislation

Equality Act 2010

Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011

Part IV of the Education Act 1996¹⁰ (as amended by sections 1-8 of the Education (Wales) Measure 2009)

Education (Special Educational Needs) (Information) (Wales) Regulations 1999

Special Educational Needs Tribunal for Wales Regulations 2012

Special Educational Needs Code of Practice for Wales

The Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015

Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014

¹⁰ The draft Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Bill makes provision for a new statutory framework for supporting children and young people with additional learning needs (ALN). This will replace existing legislation (including Part IV of the Education Act 1996) surrounding special educational needs (SEN).

Appendix B: Identifying barriers – example of questions to consider when preparing an accessibility plan

Section 1

How does the size and layout of areas, including all academic, sporting, play, social facilities; classrooms, common rooms, the assembly hall, canteen, library, gymnasium and outdoor sporting facilities and playgrounds enable access for all pupils?

How can pupils who use wheelchairs move around the school without experiencing access barriers, such as those caused by doorways, steps and stairs, toilet facilities and showers?

Are all pathways of travel around the school site and parking arrangements safe, and are routes logical and well signed?

Are emergency and evacuation systems set up to inform ALL pupils, including disabled pupils and pupils with SEN; including alarms with both visual and auditory components?

Are non-visual guides used, to assist people to use buildings including lifts with tactile buttons?

Could any of the décor be confusing or disorientating for disabled pupils with visual impairment, autism or epilepsy?

Could any signage be confusing or inadequate for disabled pupils?

Are all areas to which pupils should have access well lit?

How do areas of storage enable disabled pupils to access aids and equipment?

What steps are made to ensure the inclusion of people with impairments that affect their hearing and vision from arranged events? E.g. considering a room's acoustics, noisy equipment and presentation of material.

How is furniture and equipment selected, adjusted and located appropriately to ensure its suitability for disabled pupils?

Section 2

How do you ensure that teachers and teaching assistants have the necessary training to teach and support disabled pupils?

How is the best use of teaching assistants achieved?

How are your classrooms and all teaching areas optimally organised for disabled pupils?

How are lessons responsive to pupil diversity?

How are all pupils encouraged to take part in music, drama and physical activities?

Are there a variety of activities, including discussion, oral presentation, writing, drawing, problem solving, use of library, audio-visual materials, practical tasks and information technology?

What considerations do staff make for the additional mental effort expended by some disabled pupils, for example in using lip reading?

Do staff recognise and allow for the additional time required by some disabled pupils to use equipment in practical work?

Do staff provide alternative ways of giving access to experience (or understanding) for disabled pupils who cannot engage in particular activities, for example some forms of exercise in physical education or participation in music lessons for pupils with hearing impairments?

How do you know that access to computer technology and other auxiliary aids

appropriate to their needs, is available for disabled students?

Are school trips, including overseas visits, made accessible to all pupils irrespective of attainment or impairment?

How often do staff, governors and pupils receive training and education in disability equality issues?

How do you ensure that everyone is made to feel welcome?

Are there high expectations of all pupils?

How do you ensure that all pupils feel equally valued?

How do staff seek to remove all barriers to learning and participation?

How do you ensure that all staff, governors and pupils understand and share a philosophy of inclusion?

Section 3

Do you provide information in electronic format, large print, on audiotape or in Braille for pupils and prospective pupils who may have difficulty with standard forms of printed information?

How do you know that when information is presented to groups it is always done so in a user friendly way for pupils with visual impairments e.g. by reading aloud overhead projections and describing diagrams?

Are RNIB guidelines on producing written information in accessible formats followed?

How do you ensure that staff are familiar with technology and best practices developed to assist disabled people?

How was the 'responsible body' made aware of their duties and responsibilities under the Act' 2010?

Is the duty to make reasonable adjustments evidenced in all school plans?

How do you know that the school internal complaints procedure is working effectively?