



LONDON BOROUGH OF SUTTON

ACCESSIBLE SCHOOLS:

ACCESS STRATEGY

2003-2006

April 2003

F:\Secure\Muriel\Plans\Access Strategy0306

## **INTRODUCTION**

Local Education Authorities are required by April 2003 to have an accessibility strategy to increase access to schools for disabled pupils that runs initially for three years until 31 March 2006.

LEAs are required to consult all schools and local dioceses in preparing their strategy.

## **DEFINITION OF DISABILITY**

A person has a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

## **PLANNING AND MONITORING PROCESS**

Some access audits have already been carried out and the LEA is building activities into relevant plans such as the Asset Management Plan and the Education Development Plan. Our SEN policy and provision is being reviewed and the resultant action plans and documentation will cross reference to the access strategy and incorporate relevant activities.

This access strategy identifies outcomes and we will monitor progress towards achieving these.

We have had two consultation sessions with schools and circulated the draft strategy to all schools for comment.

Once finalised the strategy will be published electronically and will be available in hard copy and alternative formats.

An access strategy group of officers will monitor progress once a term and report to the Inclusion Planning Sub Group of the Primary and Special Education Planning Group and the Secondary Education Planning Forum who will evaluate the strategy annually.

In order to ensure an approach to planning which incorporates the appropriate monitoring and evaluation of all actions and reflects ongoing needs, these key themes will be incorporated into an annual planning cycle from 1<sup>st</sup> April to 31<sup>st</sup> March between 2003 and 2006. This will enable a cohesive approach to planning which incorporates the Education Development Plan and the Plans for Continuing and Professional Development alongside the SEN Plan and Inclusion Strategy. The monitoring and evaluation arrangements of individual aspects of the plan will be identified within these separate plans; evaluation of the impact of the whole plan will be the responsibility of the Inclusion Task Group.

## **PLANNING DUTY**

There are three strands to the planning duty which are covered in this strategy and these are, access to:

- The curriculum
- Improving the Physical Environment of schools
- Improving the delivery of information to disabled pupils

## **OVERALL PRIORITIES**

In developing the LEA access strategy we have identified the following overall priorities for the next three years, which we will review annually:

- The co-ordination of curriculum and programmes of continuing professional development
- The co-ordination of financing at LEA and school level of both individuals and groups
- Planning in advance to meet the needs of current and future pupils through consultation and liaison with schools and all relevant LEA teams
- Sharing good practice
- Providing relevant data and information

## **Section One: Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum Plan for 1<sup>st</sup> April 2003 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2006.**

Sutton's plan to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum is designed to support schools in their responsibility for providing a broad and balanced curriculum for all pupils including those with a disability.

The following four priority areas of development have been identified in relation to curriculum access:

1. Providing Continuing and Professional Development to support the understanding of the educational implications of different disabilities and the management of particular health needs in the classroom.
2. Developing a website to support inclusion of pupils with SEN and/or disabilities.
3. Providing attainment data to schools in order to support monitoring of pupils with SEN and/or disabilities.
4. Maintaining and developing information on LEA Support Services to schools.

### Curriculum Access Strategy

Areas of Development	Outcomes	Links to plans and LEA guidance	Time Frame	Responsibility	Budget	Monitoring
<b>1 Continuing and Professional Development</b>	Governors, headteachers, teachers and support staff have access to training which supports their knowledge and understanding of issues related to disability discrimination and access to the curriculum	1.1 EDP D7 Provide effective training to support the implementation of the SEN Code of Practice and the Disability Codes of Practice	March 2003-April 2004 Continuing into EDP 2004-5 EDP 2005-6	Inspector (SEN and Inclusion)	EDP	
		1.2 Inclusion Strategy Action 1 Target 1 & 2 Action 4 Target 10	April 2003-March 2004	Various – monitoring through the Inclusion Planning Sub Group	EDP	
		1.3 EDP D8 Increase opportunities for pupils with a statement to access mainstream education	March 2003-April 2004 Continuing into 2004-5 and 2005-6	Inspector (SEN and Inclusion)	EDP	
		1.4 CPD Programme	Sept 2002-July2003 Continuing into 2004 –5 and 2005-6	Assistant Head of School Improvement	Standards Fund and identified costs to schools	
		1.5 Governors Training Programme		Training and Development Manager	Standards Fund and identified costs to schools	

<b>Areas of Development</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Links to plans and LEA guidance</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Monitoring</b>
<b>2 Developing a Website (Link to information strategy)</b>	2.1 Governors, headteachers, teachers and support staff have access to information on issues related to disability discrimination and access on the Sutton website	EDP 2004/5 EDP 2005/6	March 2004-April 2005	Inspector (SEN and Inclusion)	EDP	
<b>3 Provision of Attainment Data To Schools</b>	3.1 Schools will be provided with end of key stage attainment data on specific groups of pupils with a disability known to the LEA	EDP D11 2003/4 Improve access for pupils with disabilities EDP 2004/5 EDP 2005/6	March 2004-April 2005 March 2005-April 2006	Inspector (SEN and Inclusion)	EDP	

Areas of Development	Outcomes	Links to plans and LEA guidance	Time Frame	Responsibility	Budget	Monitoring
<b>4 Information to schools on LEA Support Services (See also information section of the strategy)</b>	Schools will be kept up to date on service specifications and criteria of access for individual pupils	4.1 EDP D2 Improve the management of behaviour to reduce disaffection of pupils	March 2003-April 2004	Inspector (SEN and Inclusion)	EDP	
		4.2 EDP D4 Improve the identification and provision for pupils in year 1 (pupils with dyslexia)	March 2003-April 2004	Co-ordinator Learning Support Service	EDP	
		4.3 Inclusion Strategy Action 1 Target 3	April 2003-March 2004	Executive Head of Parent, Pupil and Student Services	Within allocated service time	
		4.4 Guidance to support the Assessment of Pupils for Intervention at School Action Plus (Revisions to be published as they arise)	March 2003-April 2006	Head of SEN	SEN Budget	

## **Section Two: Improving the physical environment of schools**

### **Plan for 1<sup>st</sup> April 2003 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2006.**

#### **Broad strategy for improving physical access**

- To plan in advance for the immediate needs of current and future pupils, through consultation with schools and liaison between the LfL Property Group and SEN team.
- To aim for all schools to have an accessible entrance, and other priorities required for public access required under the DDA (Disability Discrimination Act).
- When carrying out building works at schools, to improve access wherever practical.
- To widen the number of fully accessible schools by making more general improvements when it is required for an individual pupil.
- If there are spare resources, to make further access improvements, following audit information or requests from schools to be more inclusive.

Further access improvement will be prioritised according to:

- Number of pupils who would benefit
  - Number of essential specialist areas to be made accessible
  - Number of classrooms to be made accessible
  - Cost
- i.e. in essence, the LEA will prioritise works to try to make the maximum impact with as little cost before expenditure is committed on more difficult buildings

### **Access information available**

Most schools completed a broad self-assessment as part of the suitability assessment survey in 2001.

Two-thirds of all schools received an access audit for the DDA, covering the sections of the building that are used by the general public for none education purposes.

To obtain complete access information on a school, a full access audit would need to be carried out by someone trained to do so.

Until this is carried out it is recommended that schools complete the 'Identifying Barriers to Access: A Checklist', section 2 'Is your School designed to meet the needs of all pupils', which is included as annex 1 of this strategy. Schools will need to complete this for their access plan.

### **Information used to prioritise work**

Until a full access audit is carried out, the suitability assessment and DDA audit will be used. This will be supported by local information from schools when available, especially for those schools that have not received a DDA audit. It is recommended that schools complete the 'Is your School designed to meet the needs of all pupils' checklist outlined above, and raise any concerns with the LEA. These can then be used as a means to prioritise work, and to inform future access audits.

### **Access Audit**

The LEA is currently in discussion with a view to commissioning full access audits. Once these audits have been completed, a more specific series of targets can be implemented based on the expenditure available.

The access audit will need to involve the school in that it should include information on schools' attitudes to and experience of inclusion, existing specialist provision for disabled pupils and staff training needs; and should identify management barriers to access for disabled pupils.

### **Paying for physical improvements - Equipment and minor works**

When building works to improve access can be classed as capital, i.e. significant work, generally at least £2,000 in value that has general long term benefit, the LEA will provide financial support, subject to available resources.

Revenue works are the responsibility of the school, and covers good management practice to ensure the physical environment is suitable e.g. contrasting colours on steps, and clear signs.

Whilst the LEA will organise a planned programme for access improvements, some expenditure will be earmarked for school led priorities required throughout the year. Schools should contact the Authority as soon as possible, and certainly by the 31 October to receive financial support in that financial year. In line with the Asset Management Plan (AMP) policy statement, a 15% contribution is required from schools.

***Works required for an individual pupil that do not have a long term benefit for the school:*** The LEA is still to resolve the exact responsibility for payment in these cases i.e. when payment should be made by the school, when it should be met by the LEA as part of the statement process, and when it should be met from general Access Initiative funds. This forms an area of development in this strategy.

### **Finance available to improve physical access**

In 2003/04 £329k is available for community and foundation schools, £78k for VA Schools. Some remaining expenditure from 2002/03 is also to be carried forward and be allocated. The DfES will provide indicative grants for the 2004/05 and 2005/06 financial years by April 2003, and it is hoped the 2003/04 level of finance will at least be maintained.

### Improving the physical environment of schools

Areas of Development	Outcomes	Links to plans and LEA guidance	Time Frame	Responsibility	Budget	Monitoring
<b>5 Undertaking access audits and feeding information to schools (Link to information action plan)</b>	5.1 The DDA audit report will be sent to all the schools that had one (approximately two-thirds of schools).	N/A	By 28 April 2003	Head of Property Group (Learning for Life)	N/A	Done
	5.2 Access audits of all schools to be completed and provided to all schools.	N/A	By 20 December 2003	Head of Property Group (Learning for Life)	Schools Access Initiative	In hand
<b>6 Implementing improvements to the physical environment – short term</b>	6.1 A programme of works for 2003/04, based on the DDA audit, the suitability and other information will be published.	AMP (Asset Management Plan)	By 31 March 2003	Head of Property Group (Learning for Life)	Schools Access Initiative	Working on this
	6.2 All schools will have an accessible entrance for visitors.	AMP	By 1 September 2004	Head of Property Group (Learning for Life)	Schools Access Initiative	
<b>7 Implementing improvement works to the physical environment – long term future targets to be implemented following access</b>	7.1 X schools able to offer the full curriculum for pupils in a wheelchair.	AMP	To be confirmed	Head of Property Group (Learning for Life)	Schools Access Initiative	Figures to be defined in next year's plan
	7.2 X schools will have appropriate facilities to accommodate a pupil with a specific hearing impairment	AMP	To be confirmed	Head of Property Group (Learning for Life)	Schools Access Initiative	



## **Section Three: Improving information available Plan for 1<sup>st</sup> April 2003 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2006.**

### **Priority areas identified for improving information**

Co-ordinating information available for planning through co-operation between Learning for Life, Health and Social Services colleagues

Improving the information available to schools on central services from the LEA related to disability

Increasing the availability of information in different formats for parents and pupils

Increasing the opportunity for feedback to the LEA on levels of satisfaction with provision made for disabled pupils

### **Present Position**

In November 2002 we launched a comprehensive review of Sutton's SEN policy and provision. A major part of the exercise will be the collection of data to inform planning of provision and services.

A Strategy for Disabled Children is about to be finalised.

A survey by Contact A Family has informed the Strategy and led to a successful bid for Health Improvement Programme Funds to develop a Disability Directory

We are developing guidance for LEA staff in the preparation of documentation in alternative formats.

### Improving information

Areas of Development	Outcomes	Links to plans and LEA guidance	Time Frame	Responsibility	Budget	Monitoring
<b>9</b> <b>Improving the quality of information available for planning through co-operation with Health and social services colleagues</b>	9.1 Baseline planning data collected and analysed for the review of SEN Policy and Provision	SEN Development Plan	March 2003	Head of SEN	N/A	In hand – need to review delivery dates
	9.2 Agreed process of annual data collection agreed and implemented	SEN Development Plan	December 2003	Head of SEN	N/A	Needs to be included in the updated SEN policy
<b>10</b> <b>(Link to improving physical environment)</b>	10.1 Sharing relevant accessibility information with schools - access audit information provided to schools					
<b>11</b> <b>Improving the information available on central services from the LEA related to disability</b>	11.1 Information on LEA Services available for low incidence needs (Hearing Impairment and Visual Impairment) has been reviewed and schools positive about improvements	Review of SEN Policy and provision	December 2003	VI/HI co-ordinators	N/A	Updated information for the SEN policy requested for the end of September

Areas of Development	Outcomes	Links to plans and LEA guidance	Time Frame	Responsibility	Budget	Monitoring
	11.2 Disability Directory available	Health Improvement Programme bid	To be checked	Children's Information Centre with project co-ordinator	Health Improvement Project money	Muriel to check progress with Jo Winsloe
<b>12</b> <b>(Link to curriculum access strategy)</b>	12.1 Information on relevant central support services reviewed and updated as necessary with positive feedback from schools.	SEN Development Plan	2004	Integrated Support Services	N/A	Leaflets being prepared for publication for all services – Paul to confirm timescale
	12.2 Develop information and guidance on adaptations	N/A	2005	To be agreed	N/A	
	12.3 Role of special schools as sources of support and advice developed	SEN Development Plan	2003	SEN Project Officer	N/A	
<b>13</b> <b>(Link to curriculum access strategy)</b>	13.1 Web site links established to sources of information on different types of disability and educational implications	N/A	2005	To be agreed	N/A	

<b>Areas of Development</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Links to plans and LEA guidance</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Monitoring</b>
	13.2 Resource base/s of suitable materials established	N/A	2006	To be agreed	SEN Standards Fund	
<b>14 Increasing the availability of information in different formats</b>	14.1 Audit of teaching materials, text books and other information in alternative formats completed	N/A	September 2003	VI/Hi Co-ordinators (with Library service staff)	N/A	Paul to check progress and report back
<b>15 (Link to curriculum planning CPD programme)</b>	15.1 Guidance on making materials available in alternative formats provided to schools	N/A	July 2003	Executive Head of PPSS	N/A	First draft of new procedures completed
	15.2 Training to help in the production of materials included in CPD programme	N/A	2004	To be agreed	N/A	
<b>16 Increasing the opportunity for feedback on levels of satisfaction with provision made for disabled pupils</b>	16.1 Satisfaction survey (including parents and pupils) carried out as part of the SEN Review	N/A	Summer 2003	Head of SEN	Standards Fund	
	16.2 Programme of regular feedback from schools and parents established.	N/A	2004 ongoing	SEN Project Officer	N/A	