

London Borough of Sutton

London Borough of Sutton
School's Accessibility Strategy
DRAFT DOCUMENT

September 2014

This is a draft document. LB Sutton is in the process of consulting with schools on this document. It will be revised and updated accordingly.

Introduction

Local Authorities must, for the schools for which they are responsible, prepare an accessibility strategy based on the same principle as the accessibility plans for schools. This accessibility strategy therefore applies to local authority maintained schools, nurseries, children's centres and early year's settings. This accessibility strategy sets out how the local authority will support schools, for which it is the responsible body, to comply with these duties.

The Equality Act 2010 and related Equality Duty 2011, replicate the duty upon school's as laid out in the previous Disability Discrimination Act 1995. It is clear that schools continue to have a duty to produce an accessibility plan. Schools must implement accessibility plans, which are aimed at:

- increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum;
- improving the physical environment of schools to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided; and
- improving the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils.

Schools will need to have regard to the requirement to have an accessibility plan, provide adequate resources for implementing plans and must regularly review them. This is the responsibility of the governing body. An accessibility plan may be published as part of another document such as the school development plan. It must be freely available to parents/carers.

At the time of writing, (September 2014) there are 42 maintained schools in the London Borough of Sutton. This includes 1 special school and 14 bases attached to mainstream schools. Many schools have a mix of old and new buildings, whilst others are housed in listed buildings or have been planned and built in the last five years.

Definitions and Legal Framework

Disability: The Equality Act 2010 defines a disability as "when a person has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities". This broad description covers physical disabilities, sensory impairments, such as those affecting sight or hearing, and learning disabilities. It will also include some specified medical conditions such as HIV, multiple sclerosis and cancer. Long term is defined as lasting, or likely to last, for at least 12 months.

The effect must be:

- substantial (defined as more than minor or trivial)
- adverse (unfavourable or injurious)
- long-term (lasting or liable to last for at least a year or as long as a person lives)

A child or young person does not have a learning difficulty or disability solely because the language (or form of language) in which he or she is, or will be, taught is different from a language (or form of language) which is, or has been, spoken at home.

Discrimination: A school must not disadvantage a disabled pupil because of something that is a consequence of their disability. This includes indirect as well as direct discrimination, i.e. a school must not do something that applies to all pupils but is more likely to have an adverse effect on disabled pupils. Discrimination in relation to disability in this accessibility strategy reflects changes specified in the Equality Act 2010.

The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 replaced disability discrimination legislation and provides a single, consolidated source of discrimination law. Its approach is characterised by reference to 'protected characteristics' of which disability is one. The Local Authority (LA) is subject to both the general and specific duties set out in The Equality Act. These cover all aspects of equality, including disability. Specifically with respect to people with a disability, The Equality Act confirms previous duties around accessibility planning and the need to make reasonable adjustments.

Reasonable Adjustments

For schools the duty is summarised as follows:

- where something a school does, places a disabled pupil at a disadvantage compared to other pupils, then the school must take reasonable steps to try and avoid that disadvantage;
- schools will be expected to provide an auxiliary aid or service for a disabled pupil when it would be reasonable to do so and if such an aid would alleviate any substantial disadvantage that the pupil faces in comparison to non-disabled pupils;
- schools are not subject to the requirement of reasonable adjustment duty concerned with making alterations to physical features because this is already considered as part of their planning duties.

The term "auxiliary aids" found in The Equality Act 2010 covers both auxiliary aids and services but there are no legal definitions for what constitutes auxiliary aids and services. Examples of what may be considered an auxiliary aid could be; hearing loops; adaptive keyboards and special software.

In September 2012 the duty to provide auxiliary aids and services (including specialist equipment) as part of the reasonable adjustment duty was extended to include schools. This places schools under a duty to provide aids and services where it is reasonable and where it would prevent a disabled pupil being put at a substantial disadvantage when compared to his or her non-disabled peers. The exception to this duty is where the aid or service is specified in an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC Plan) or a Statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN Statement). In which case, the responsibility to provide the aid or service lies with the Local Authority.

Schools will have to consider whether to provide auxiliary aids as a reasonable adjustment for disabled children. This will particularly be the case where a disabled child does not have an EHC Plan (SEN Statement) or where the plan does not provide the auxiliary aid or service.

There should be no assumption, however, that if an auxiliary aid is not provided under the SEN remit then it must be provided as a reasonable adjustment. Similarly, whilst schools and LAs are under the same reasonable adjustment duty, there should be no assumption that where it is unreasonable for a school to provide an auxiliary aid or service, for example on cost grounds, it would then be reasonable for the LA to provide it. All decisions would depend on the facts of each individual case and it must be considered if a disabled person would, but for the provision of an auxiliary aid, be put at a substantial disadvantage in relation to a relevant matter in comparison with persons who are not disabled.

Charging arrangements for making reasonable adjustments

It is unlawful for a setting or school to charge a child for making reasonable adjustments in any circumstances, whatever the financial cost to the school and however the setting or school is funded.

Example: An independent school provides a dyslexic disabled pupil with overlay sheets to assist him in reading text, and weekly sessions with a specialist teacher. The school adds the cost of these adjustments to the pupil's school fees. This would be unlawful discrimination.

Equality and Human Rights Commission, Reasonable Adjustments for Disabled Pupils, 2012

Children and Families Act 2014; The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014 and The Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years

CaF Act, Section 30 requires the Local Authority to publish a 'local offer' in which it sets out details of all services and provision available to children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities. The Local Offer for LB Sutton can be found at <http://localoffer.sutton.gov.uk/>

SEND Regulations, schedule 2 The information includes a requirement to set out where the LA's Accessibility Strategy may be obtained.

Section 69(3)(b) requires all schools to include their Accessibility Plan in their SEN Information Report. These same duties are referenced further throughout the Code of Practice.

Principles

LB Sutton will seek to ensure that schools and settings for which we are responsible do not discriminate against disabled pupils or disadvantage them because of something that is a consequence of their disability.

This includes indirect as well as direct discrimination, i.e. a school must not do something that applies to all pupils but is more likely to have an adverse effect on disabled pupils. Schools must implement, and keep under review, accessibility plans.

Sutton has developed a local continuum of mainstream and specialist provision to meet our aim of catering for the needs of all our children within our local community. We expect our schools to be inclusive and to provide a broad and balanced curriculum, including the National Curriculum, differentiated to meet the specific needs of individuals and groups of pupils, and delivered through first class teaching.

The LA will support schools and settings to agree reasonable adjustments to allow full access to their facilities and activities. They will not be expected to make very substantial financial commitments, but to be active in searching for reasonable alternatives. For example, it may not be possible to provide physical access for pupils with mobility difficulties to all areas within the school premises, but planning of accommodation for curricular activities may enable all pupils to have full access to all subjects within the curriculum. When considering the duty to make reasonable adjustments, schools and settings should not just wait until the need arises to admit a particular individual, but should anticipate needs and plan a broad range of accessibility improvements over time.

Participation in the school curriculum

In considering adjustments to allow access to the curriculum, schools should include the broader aspects of school life such as leisure, sporting and cultural activities, school visits and after school clubs. When planning delivery of the curriculum they need to consider flexible grouping arrangements that enable pupils with disabilities to work with their peers, including:

- peer support through buddying or mentoring arrangements,
- small group paired work and
- outreach support.

There should be tracking of individual progress and achievement of pupils with disabilities and this should extend beyond core subjects to include, for example, participation and progress in physical education. The LB Sutton will support and challenge schools to have high expectations for the achievement and attainment of children and young people with SEND.

Schools should ensure effective support for disabled pupils from their staff by an ongoing programme of professional development for the staff team. Schools within the LA share good practice and Wandle Valley school offers an Outreach Programme to enable schools to work with children with challenging behaviour. The LA provides a central training programme to provide support for school managers, teachers, support staff and governors to develop their knowledge and understanding of issues related to disability discrimination and access to the curriculum. The LA also maintains central support teams to provide advice and support to individual schools about disabilities, e.g. the ASD Advisory Service and the Sensory Advisory Service. See *Appendix one Integrated Support Services*

Maintaining and improving SEN provision in Sutton

The LA continues to monitor and assess the need for ongoing development of resourced provision. It is the aim of the authority to educate children and young people for whom we are responsible within their community as much as practicable. With this in mind, a new base attached to a mainstream school, Avenue Primary, was opened in September 2014 to accommodate children with moderate learning difficulties (MLD). There are also plans to build an additional base for young people with severe learning difficulties (SLD) and challenging behaviour as an extension to Sherwood Park School, which will be called Sherwood Hill (due to open Sept 2015)
See Appendix two London Borough of Sutton Specialist Provision

Improving the physical environment

All new school buildings have to comply with the school building regulations and the London Borough of Sutton has already completed a programme of works to existing schools.

Schools and settings should keep access to premises under review, especially when considering use of their delegated capital funding, taking account of:

- Physical access to all curriculum areas (to include not just access to rooms but, for example height of work surfaces)
- Toilet and changing facilities for pupils
- Toilet facilities for disabled members of staff and visitors
- Designated areas for visiting therapists to work with pupils
- Exterior surfaces and paving and gates
- Disabled parking
- Lighting and heating
- Signage
- Soundfield systems
- Provision and maintenance of specialist equipment and ICT, furniture and portable aids.

Advice about physical adjustments to buildings can be given by the Capital Projects and Planning Manager, Resources Directorate

Improving the availability of accessibility information

The **Sensory Impairment Service** can advise schools on how to make written materials available in alternative formats for individual pupils with sensory difficulties and has facilities to adapt texts. Schools should consider the use of ICT and the provision of information pictorially and orally.

The Sensory Impairment Service offers support in the following ways:

How we support schools

- information and general advice on hearing and visual impairment
- specific advice on individual pupils
- training for staff
- sensory awareness training for pupils
- functional hearing and vision assessments of individual pupils
- additional equipment for pupils to use in the classroom to support inclusion
- advice for IEPs and target setting
- advice on acoustics and controlling sound levels in the classroom
- advice on mobility and making spaces sight-friendly
- examination concessions advice
- lip speakers for SATs and GCSEs
- targeted interventions for individual pupils
- support for transitions
- ELSA sessions to improve self esteem

How we support children and young people

- getting pupils' views on their sensory needs
- providing and evaluating additional equipment
- individual short term 1 on 1 sessions to meet identified goals
- encouraging optimum use of hearing and vision aids
- encouraging independence and positive self-esteem
- 1 to 1 support in identified areas
- feeding back pupils' views to schools and clinics

How we support parents

- a Deaf Instructor, who is a deaf adult, helps parents with communication skills
- free British Sign Language training courses for Sutton parents of deaf children
- support for Ophthalmology/Audiology appointments
- advice on activities and resources
- working in partnership through the early years using specialist monitoring tools

Detailed information for the Sensory Impairment Service and contact details can be accessed on Sutton's Local Offer <http://localoffer.sutton.gov.uk/>

This Accessibility Strategy is publicly available in Sutton's Local Offer.

Appendix One

London Borough of Sutton Support Services

Autism Spectrum Disorder Service

The Autism Spectrum Disorder Service (ASD) offers advice and support to school staff and a range of professionals and parents/carers so that they can understand the needs of children with Autism, from 2 years to 19 years, and develop specific strategies to support their progress.

Contact is made by the school SENCo to the service.

Early Support Service

The Early Support Service offers support, advice and coordination of needs to families where there is a child or children aged 0-8 years with additional needs or disabilities. The child's needs would require input from at least 2 specialist services. The current early support coordinator is a registered health visitor who works exclusively with families where children have additional needs.

Contact fran.boto@sutton.gov.uk or fran.boto@smcs.nhs.uk

English as an Additional Language Service

The English as an Additional Language (EAL) Service Advisory Team supports pupils in Sutton schools who are learning English in addition to their first or home language. This is primarily when they arrive in the UK at any age with little or no English, but also includes when they have become more fluent in spoken English but still need language support to achieve their full academic potential.

Contact is made by the school SENCo to the service.

Learning Support Service

The service assesses, teaches and gives advice for children in primary school who are experiencing difficulties with reading, writing, spelling or maths.

Contact is made by the school SENCo to the service.

Sensory Impairment Service

The Service for Sensory Impairment aims to provide flexible support to children and their families/carers from the earliest days of diagnosis through to leaving school, enabling each child to achieve their full potential.

The Sensory Impairment Service will contact school SENCos directly if information is received from health concerning one of their pupils. Contact is made by the school SENCo to the service.

Sutton Information, Advice and Support Service (formerly Sutton Parent Partnership Service)

Sutton Information, Advice and Support Service offer impartial information, advice and support to parents and carers of children with special educational needs or disabilities. From September 2014 the service has been extended so that it also offers this same support to young people.

Contact telephone 020 8770 4541 or visit www.sutton.gov.uk/spps

Behaviour Support Team

Sutton Behaviour Support Team (SBST) works closely with members of school staff, and with individuals or groups of pupils in school. The team is made up of Behaviour for Learning Specialists and a Play Therapist for primary-aged pupils, and trained Child and Adolescent Mental Health Workers (CAMHS) for primary and secondary pupils. All team members have experience of working with pupils whose behaviour is affecting their learning, or the learning of others. Schools request the support for pupils and for members of staff through the completion of a referral. For pupil support they must have signed parental permission.

Early Years SEN Advisory Team (Area SENCo. Team)

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) covers children from birth to the end of their reception Year.

We support all early years and schools who deliver the EYFS and are in receipt of the Free Entitlement Funding (FEF) including Maintained Schools (Nursery and Reception Classes) Independent Schools (Nursery and Reception Classes) Pre-Schools, Playgroups, Day Nurseries and Childminders in developing and maintaining good inclusive practice, in line with the principles of the Early Years Foundation Stage and the SEND Code of Practice.

The first point of contact for parents is their child's key person and /or the setting SENCo. The first point of contact for settings is their individual Area SENCo.

Speech Language and Communication Support

The team works with schools to identify and support pupils with speech language and communication needs. Sutton schools may refer pupils about whom they have concerns with consent of parents and carers. The team shares the names of all pupils in EYFS/KS1/KS2 with the local NHS speech therapy service to co-ordinate support. The team carry out an initial assessment for all pupils to clarify the extent and the nature of a pupil's difficulties before agreeing further action with the school. Contact is made by the school SENCo to the service.

Sutton Portage Service

Portage is a (term time) home visiting educational service for pre-school children who have special needs/ disability. It offers a flexible and fun approach to learning. Portage ensures that during the child's early years, parents/ carers, who are the key figures in their child's care and development, are supported in becoming his/ her best teacher. In partnership with parents the Portage worker will assess the needs of the child, build upon the abilities the child has already acquired, and teach the skills the child has yet to learn. Portage shows you how to make learning enjoyable and successful and offer parents/ carers the opportunity to discuss and plan their child's development. Portage also offers a link for parents/ carers and their children with the transition from home to pre-school.

Contact Pam Fry, Portage Coordinator 020 8770 4834, or Lesley Boys – Portage administrator: 020 8770 4812 (term time only).

Detailed information for the Sutton Support Services and contact details can be accessed on Sutton's Local Offer <http://localoffer.sutton.gov.uk/>

Appendix Two

London Borough of Sutton Specialist Provision

Special Schools

Carew Academy (A) Church Road Wallington, Surrey, SM6 7NH	020 8647 8349 Age 7 – 16 main school Age 11 – 16 ASD provision
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For children with moderate learning difficulties including a specialist provision for children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder.

Sherwood Hill School
Contact Sherwood Park School below

Age 11-19

For children with severe learning difficulties and challenging behaviour
Opening September 2015

Sherwood Park School Streeters Lane Wallington, Surrey, SM6 7NP	020 8773 9930 Age 3 - 19
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For children with severe learning difficulties and profound and multiple learning difficulties.

Wandle Valley School (A) Welbeck Road Carshalton, Surrey, SM5 1LP	020 8648 1365 Age 5 - 16
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For children with Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties.

Primary Opportunity Bases

Amy Johnson Primary School Opportunity Base Mollison Drive Wallington, Surrey, SM6 9JN	020 8669 3978 Age 4 - 7
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For children with Learning Difficulties

Avenue Primary School Opportunity Base Avenue Road Belmont, Sutton, Surrey, SM2 6JE	020 8642 5138 Age 4 - 7
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For children with learning difficulties

Bandon Hill Primary Wood Field
Oakfield ASD Base
Stanley Park Road
Carshalton, Surrey SM5 3HW

020 8643 5377

For children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder who benefit from being taught in separate classes from mainstream.

Foresters Primary School Opportunity Base
Redford Avenue
Wallington, Surrey, SM6 9DP

020 8669 6910

For children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder who can manage to integrate for part of their education in mainstream classes

Green Wrythe Primary School Opportunity Base
Rainbows
Green Wrythe Lane
Carshalton, Surrey, SM5 1JP

020 8648 4989

For children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder who benefit from being taught in separate classes from mainstream.

Muschamp Primary School Opportunity Base
Muschamp Road
Carshalton, Surrey, SM5 2SE

020 8669 2514

For children with speech and language difficulties

Rushy Meadow Primary School Opportunity Base
Fellowes Road
Carshalton, Surrey, SM5 2SG

020 8669 7588

For children with hearing impairment

Thomas Wall Nursery
Dragonflies Base
Robin Hood Lane
Sutton, Surrey, SM1 2SF

020 8642 5666

For children with complex communication difficulties

Secondary Opportunity Bases

Glenthorne High School Opportunity Base (A) 020 8644 6307
Sutton Common Road
Sutton, Surrey SM3 9PS

For children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder who can attend a mainstream school

Greenshaw High School Speech and Language Base (A) 020 8715 1001
Grennell Road
Sutton, Surrey SM1 3DY

For children with speech and language difficulties or communication impairment

Overton Grange High School Opportunity Base (A) 020 8239 2383
Stanley Road
Sutton, Surrey SM2 6TQ

For children with moderate, severe or profound hearing impairment

Stanley Park High School 020 8647 5842
Damson Way
Carshalton, Surrey SM5 4NS

Department for Autism

Aqua

For children with ASD who are able to integrate into mainstream school

Ignis

For children with ASD who are unable to integrate fully into mainstream school

Post 16 Provision

Cheam High School Post 16 Entry Level Group (A) 020 644 5790
PEP
Chatsworth Road
Cheam, Surrey SM3 8PW

For Post 16 young people with Moderate Learning Difficulties

Detailed information for these provisions and all the mainstream schools in LB Sutton and the contact details can be accessed on Sutton's Local Offer
<http://localoffer.sutton.gov.uk/>

Appendix Three

Broad areas of need (chapter 6 CoP 2014) and examples of specific adjustments

Communication and Interaction

6.28 Children and young people with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) have difficulty in communicating with others. This may be because they have difficulty saying what they want to, understanding what is being said to them or they do not understand or use social rules of communication. The profile for every child with SLCN is different and their needs may change over time. They may have difficulty with one, some or all of the different aspects of speech, language or social communication at different times of their lives.

6.29 Children and young people with ASD, including Asperger's Syndrome and Autism, are likely to have particular difficulties with social interaction. They may also experience difficulties with language, communication and imagination, which can impact on how they relate to others. They may benefit from some of the following:

- a dedicated support worker
- staff to have awareness training
- time to get used to the school site
- preparation for changes of routine
- extra time to read, understand and produce answers in exams
- access to email facilities

Cognition and Learning

6.30 Support for learning difficulties may be required when children and young people learn at a slower pace than their peers, even with appropriate differentiation. Learning difficulties cover a wide range of needs, including moderate learning difficulties (MLD), severe learning difficulties (SLD), where children are likely to need support in all areas of the curriculum and associated difficulties with mobility and communication, through to profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD), where children are likely to have severe and complex learning difficulties as well as a physical disability or sensory impairment.

6.31 Specific learning difficulties (SpLD), affect one or more specific aspects of learning. This encompasses a range of conditions such as dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia. Some useful support measures may include:

- hand outs in plain English or with symbols
- extra time in exams
- hand outs and exam papers in preferred format e.g. on different coloured paper
- use of literal language and keeping oral instructions simple and concise
- clear explanation of specific tasks and changes of routine
- use of coloured overlays or pens

Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties

6.32 Children and young people may experience a wide range of social and emotional difficulties which manifest themselves in many ways. These may include becoming withdrawn or isolated, as well as displaying challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour. These behaviours may reflect underlying mental health difficulties such as anxiety or depression, self-harming, substance misuse, eating disorders or physical symptoms that are medically unexplained. Other children and young people may have disorders such as attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactive disorder or attachment disorder.

6.33 Schools and colleges should have clear processes to support children and young people, including how they will manage the effect of any disruptive behaviour so it does not adversely affect other pupils. The Department for Education publishes guidance on managing pupils' mental health and behaviour difficulties in schools. *See link in Appendix four, References and useful resources*

- a named contact to go to for support when necessary
- flexibility in attendance and punctuality during times when difficulties are worse than usual
- a quiet room to rest in
- maintenance of confidentiality about your condition

Sensory and / or Physical Needs

6.34 Some children and young people require special educational provision because they have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of the educational facilities generally provided. These difficulties can be age related and may fluctuate over time. Many children and young people with vision impairment (VI), hearing impairment (HI) or a multi-sensory impairment (MSI) will require specialist support and/or equipment to access their learning, or habilitation support. Children and young people with an MSI have a combination of vision and hearing difficulties. Information on how to provide services for deaf blind children and young people is available through the Social Care for Deaf blind Children and Adults guidance published by the Department of Health.

6.35 Some children and young people with a physical disability (PD) require additional ongoing support and equipment to access all the opportunities available to their peers.

- hand outs and exam papers in preferred format
- time to get used to the school site
- arrangements for practical and field work
- assistive technology e.g. a computer or word processor
- note takers
- extra time for course work and exams

These lists are not exhaustive and are intended to be examples only.

Appendix Four

References and useful resources

London Borough of Sutton's Local Offer

<http://localoffer.sutton.gov.uk/>

DfE document, The Equality Act 2010 and schools, May 2014

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/315587/Equality_Act_Advice_Final.pdf

The Equality Act 2010, Part 6, chapter 1, Schools

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/part/6/chapter/1>

Equality and Human Rights Commission

<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/private-and-public-sector-guidance/education-providers/schools-guidance/key-concepts/reasonable-adjustments>

Teaching Agency

http://www.education.gov.uk/ta-assets/~media/get_into_teaching/resources/life_as_a_teacher/adjustments_for_disabled_students.pdf

DfE document, Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions, September 2014

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/349435/Statutory_guidance_on_supporting_pupils_at_school_with_medical_conditions.pdf

DfE document, Mental health and behaviour in schools, June 2014

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/326551/Mental_Health_and_Behaviour_-_Information_and_Tools_for_Schools_final_website_2_25-06-14.pdf

Achievement for All: www.afa3as.org.uk

Autism Education Trust: www.autismeducationtrust.org.uk

Communication Trust: www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk

Dyslexia SpLD Trust: www.thedyslexia-spldtrust.org.uk

I CAN – the children's communications charity: www.ican.org.uk

MindEd: www.minded.org.uk

National Sensory Impairment Partnership: www.natsip.org.uk