

Accessibility Strategy 2017-2019

Children's Services
SEN Service

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Introduction

The Equality Act 2010 replaced existing equality legislation including the Disability Discrimination Act and others. Its function has been to simplify the law and bring together the duties and requirements within one piece of legislation. The effect of the Equality Act is to extend protection to groups of people who were previously covered by separate laws and to incorporate the provisions included within previous equality legislation.

The Equality Act has introduced a single Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) (sometimes also referred to as the 'general duty') that applies to public bodies, including maintained schools and academies (including Free Schools) and which extends to all protected characteristics - race, disability, sex, age, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment. This combined equality duty came into effect in April 2011. The duty has three main elements. In carrying out their functions, public bodies are required to **have due regard to the need to:**

- eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- foster good relations across all characteristics - between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it. The Equality Act covers exactly the same groups of individuals that were protected by the previous legislation. However, the headings of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity are now known as 'protected characteristics'. For more information on the Hampshire County Councils Equality and Diversity visit www.hants.gov.uk/equality.

Requirements for local authorities to put in place an accessibility strategy are specified in schedule 10 of the Act: Accessibility for disabled pupils. This schedule provides for accessibility arrangements for pupils in schools as set out in section 88.

- (1) An accessibility strategy is a strategy for, over a prescribed period—
 - (a) increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the schools' curriculums;
 - (b) improving the physical environment of the schools for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the schools;
 - (c) improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is readily accessible to pupils who are not disabled
- (2) The delivery in sub-paragraph (1)(c) must be—
 - (a) within a reasonable time:

In keeping with the legislation, this Accessibly Strategy sets out the ways in which Hampshire County Council will increase access to education for disabled pupils, in the schools and settings for which it is responsible. We will work with schools to ensure that both the curriculum and schools IT meets accessibility requirements set out within both Education and Equalities legislation.

1(a) The purpose and direction of Hampshire local authority's strategy: vision and values

Hampshire County Council and its partner agencies are committed to improving the outcomes and life chances of all children and young people within the county. Our aims are to strengthen inclusive opportunities for learning and living for all children and young people with special educational needs and disability (SEND), to promote their achievements and outcomes and to use resources in the fairest and most effective way possible.

The 2014 SEND reforms have offered Hampshire local authority the opportunity to reflect on the practice and procedures pointing to special educational needs (SEN) within the county. The local authority is committed to improving outcomes for children and young people with SEND, building on the existing services and quality of provision that already exists within the local authority.

We want the very best for Hampshire children, starting with early years through to their transition into adulthood. There are many challenges for schools and the local authority, to ensure that we can deliver the very best education for all children. We need to respond to the changes ahead and to make efficient and cost-effective use of public money in the context of challenging economic circumstances and in a changing and increasingly more diverse school system of maintained schools and non-maintained academies and free schools.

Our aim is to ensure that children and young people, including those with SEND are at the heart of the vision in Hampshire. Our strategy aims to provide the very best education for all our children, delivered as locally as possible to the child's home and local community.

It is important to note that because a pupil has a disability this does not necessarily mean that he or she has a special educational need. A pupil with a disability has a special educational need if this disability prevents or hinders him/her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions. Children and young people may have either a disability and/or a special educational need.

The Social Model of Disability

Hampshire fully endorses the 'social model' of disability, which proposes that it is society which dictates who is excluded – not the nature of the disability itself and recognises that removing barriers is as much about encouraging positive attitudes and behaviour traits as it is about removing physical barriers.

In a changing world, where social interaction, teaching and learning and access to information, goods and resources is increasingly delivered electronically, removing barriers experienced by those with impairments and disabilities is crucial and needs to be central to the delivery of services and information.

Capacity building in mainstream schools

We recognise the importance of taking into account the needs of all children and young people identified as having SEND, the majority of whom receive their education in a mainstream setting.

1(b) Information from pupil data and school audits

The nature of schools in Hampshire

Hampshire is a large shire county with 11 districts. There are a total of 523 schools comprising 427 mainstream primary schools, 69 mainstream secondary schools, 26 special schools and three nursery schools. Within the mainstream schools there are 57 resourced provisions. There are nine early years (SEN) hubs for those with SEN to complement the early years provision available in some of the special schools.

There is a strong relationship between the local authority and its community of schools, including the academies. Details of Hampshire schools and the SEN provision available can be found at www.hants.gov.uk/sen-schools-resources.

Every school is required to identify and address the special educational needs (SEN) of the pupils that they support. Our schools in Hampshire prepare an annual SEN information report which includes their arrangements for the admission of disabled children, and those with special educational needs the steps being taken to prevent these children from being treated less favourably than others, the facilities provided to enable access to the school for disabled children and their accessibility plan showing how they plan to improve access progressively over time.

The SEN information reports can be found on the Hampshire Local Offer under Education and Childcare
www.hantslocaloffer.info/en/Education_and_childcare.

Early Years, childcare and school settings

Changes to legislation introduced in 2002 extended the Disability and Discrimination Act to cover all aspects of education and childcare (Equality Act 2010). The duties make it unlawful to discriminate, without justification, against present and prospective children and young people with disabilities, in all aspects of early years and childcare provision and school life. The main requirements to schools and early year's services, Part 4 of the Act states: *'not to treat children and young people less favourably and to take reasonable steps to avoid putting them at a substantial disadvantage.'*

To ensure this happens:

- schools are required to complete a disability audit and write an Action Plan to increase accessibility over time
- local authorities are required to consult schools and write an Accessibility Strategy for improving accessibility

The Plans and Strategies must include the following three elements:

1. Improvements in access to the curriculum
2. Physical improvements to increase access to education and associated services
3. Improvements in the provision of information in a range of formats for children and young people with disabilities.

Hampshire's Early Years Advisory Team provides support and advice to registered and prospective early years education providers to ensure that all

children's needs are met and that the standards are continually improving for all. As an immediate priority we will ensure prompt advice and support is provided where an individual child or young person is to be admitted to a school or early years setting. We support the inclusion of all children through the requirement for all providers to have a SEN Co-ordinator working within the setting. The Early Years Advisory Team also offers Early Years providers (settings within the private maintained, voluntary sector and schools) access to training and networking events as part of their continuous professional development.

Additional resource from the local authority High Needs funding can be made available to support providers in their duty to meet children's individual needs and to make reasonable adjustments to enable all children to access the early years Foundation Stage and/or Ofsted registered out of school care (breakfast, after school and holiday clubs).

Key principles for Inclusion

- All children and young people will have access to a high quality broad, balanced and relevant curriculum that affords them the opportunity to achieve well and experience success.
- With appropriate training, strategies and support nearly all children and young people can be successfully included in mainstream provision.
- Where children and young people are in special provision, opportunities will be sought for inclusion at a later stage or for them to access some aspects of mainstream provision.
- The views of children and young people will be taken seriously and independence will be fostered.
- Consultation and working in partnership with parents and carers will be seen as a priority.
- Early Years and childcare providers, schools and the local authority, working in partnership with Health and Social Care services will actively seek to remove barriers to learning and participation.
- Support and guidance from education, health and social service personnel will be offered to early years and childcare providers and schools to prevent difficulties arising, ensure early identification, effective intervention, monitoring and evaluation.
- All new provision will be fully inclusive.

The Early Years SEN Advisory Team works with providers to ensure that premises are accessible and, wherever possible, assist providers to make improvements to their environment to be able to meet the needs of all children in their locality both now and in the future.

Children with significant additional needs are offered a home based Portage service. The Portage Team are available to support the child's transition in accessing a funded Early Years Education place through the Early Years SEN team.

The Early Years Advisory Team and Early Years SEN Inclusion team work together to ensure all children can access and benefit from universal provision whilst also providing additional specialist services as appropriate. For more

information visit www.hants.gov.uk/childrens-services/specialneeds/sen-home/sen-intro.

All schools and registered early years education providers have an SEN Policy detailing how they support an inclusive education for all young people, linked into the nine protected characteristics. The policy should support an integrated and effective working across all agencies working with children and young people, and will focus on improving outcomes for all children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities.

Special schools in Hampshire

Special schools and resourced provisions within mainstream schools in Hampshire have a good reputation for providing for children and young people with SEN, including the highly regarded Outreach service to support mainstream schools. There is currently a focus on reshaping this Outreach service so that it too reflects the spirit of the 2014 SEND reforms.

The local authority analyses data to help ensure that provision is available to meet demand, for example increasing the resourced provision places available for children with social communication and autistic spectrum disorder (ASD) needs as this has been an increasing demand in recent years.

There is currently a countywide review of the travel arrangements made for children with statements or Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans to ensure this service is effective and efficient. This incorporates the introduction of personal travel allowance to families, and a review of the geographical location of special schools and specialist provision around the county of Hampshire to try to ensure supply meets demand.

Complementary to the review of travel arrangements is a countywide focus on inclusion so that children with SEND are enabled, as far as possible, to attend their local mainstream school. This requires a focus on the provision and support that can be made available to the mainstream schools to enable this to happen. There needs to be a cultural change by both parents and schools that children with SEN can be effectively supported within a mainstream setting, and that progress can be made with the correct approach.

We are working closely with colleagues in health and social care to ensure that a more co-ordinated approach is made towards ensuring families receive the support they need, and that along with the voluntary sector, services work in a much more integrated way so that quality provision and outcomes for children and young people 0-25 can be realised.

It is the local authority's policy to integrate students with disabilities in mainstream settings where this is appropriate for their learning. However, some young people have needs that are so significant and complex that they require specialist facilities and resources.

Accessibility capital funding

Hampshire County Council works closely with schools to identify projects to support accessibility in all schools. However, whilst the local authority does not receive a separate capital allocation for accessibility works a budget has been allocated within the Children's Services Capital Programme to improve the

physical access to schools. From 2017/18 financial year, the annual budget for accessibility capital projects will be £500,000 per year.

The local authority commissioned a large number of projects to ensure sufficient places were available and also included within the programme any urgent accessibility issues. A total of 3 new build primary schools. In addition to these projects significant improvements have been made on general accessibility in Schools with a total of £3,672,654 of investment over the last 5 years from the Schools Access Initiative funding allocation.

The majority of these projects are pupil led requirements and are carried out as and when required. Works have addressed a number of issues of various size and complexity in schools, with allocations ranging from as little as £9K up to over £160K. This funding has been allocated to ensure that students have unrestricted access to the curriculum. It has supported extensions to and refurbishment of existing buildings providing ramps, automatic doors, accessible toilets and medical facilities.

Examples of projects from 2012-2017

AIS - Analysis of Previous Years Spend 2012/13-2016/17

Year	Budget £	Total Spend £	Variance £	Most Expensive Project
2012/13	750,000	575,058	174,942	54,072 Sunhill Junior
2013/14	750,000	662,388	87,612	112,428 Anton Junior
2014/15	750,000	784,103	-34,103	107,621 Riverside Special
2015/16	750,000	901,105	-151,105	186,468 Kempshott Junior
2016/17*	750,000	750,000	0	115,000 Rowner Junior*
Total	3,750,000	3,672,654	77,346	575,589

* Estimated

No. of Projects	Total	Equip Only	Adaptations
2012/13	48	23	25
2013/14	68	36	32
2014/15	50	9	41
2015/16	57	12	45
2016/17#	27	1	26
Total	250	81	169
	100%	32%	68%

To date

All mainstream schools receive money for special educational needs and support. Schools can decide how to spend this money. The funding is arranged as follows:

Element 1 - Schools receive money for each pupil who attends based on actual pupil numbers called the Age Weighted Pupil Unit (AWPU). Some of this money

may be used for general SEN provision including the cost of providing the SENCo.

Element 2 – Is specific SEN funding and is to provide SEN support for children who need it. This is support that is additional to or different from the support that most other children get. Government guidance says that schools should provide the first £6,000 (in addition to the AWPU) of additional or different support for those children who need it, including those with an EHC plan (or a Statement of SEN).

Schools should use some of their budget to buy resources and make provision for children who need additional help. This can take many forms for example:

- Changes to the curriculum
- Special equipment or teaching materials
- The use of additional information technology
- Small group work
- Support in the classroom
- A base to work or have quiet time

Element 3 – Where a school has a child who needs a high level of provision, they can request ‘Top Up Funding’ from the local authority which is in addition to Element 1 and 2 funding they receive.

Post-16

The Education Funding Agency funds post-16 education and through close working with the local authority has allocated the following High Needs (Element 3) post-16 places across Hampshire education providers for 2016/17:

Post 16 Provider	High Needs	High Needs
	places 16-18 yr. olds	places 19-25 yr. olds
Forest Park School	9	0
Henry Tyndale School	21	0
Hollywater School	11	0
Icknield School	12	0
Limington House School	21	0
Osborne School	18	0
Rachel Madocks School	17	0
Ringwood School Academy	1	0
St Francis Special School	19	0
The Burgate School And Sixth Form	1	0
Treloar School	31	0
Yateley School	2	0
Alton College	19	5
Barton Peveril Sixth Form College	20	0
Basingstoke College Of Technology	36	3
Brockenhurst College	60	8
Eastleigh College	19	3

Fareham College	13	3
Farnborough College Of Technology	2	7
Peter Symonds College	18	
Havant College	2	1
Queen Mary's College	58	4
Post 16 Provider	High Needs places 16-18 yr. olds	High Needs places 19-25 yr. olds
Sparsholt College Hampshire	21	
St Vincent College	75	49
The Sixth Form College Farnborough	8	0
The South Downs College	55	10
Totton College	60	29
Treloar College	23	31
Total	652	119

This is reviewed on a yearly basis, more information can be found at www.gov.uk/government/publications/high-needs-allocated-place-numbers.

2. The main priorities in the framework strategy

At a strategic level, accessibility is a core principle of the Council which permeates its work. In respect of the local authority's duty to provide an accessibility strategy.

2(a) Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the schools' curriculums

We place equality principles at the heart of service delivery. Our services are designed and reconfigured to achieve this; as a result a focus on increasing access to the curriculum has been prioritised. Key to this are:

- Service delivery
- Training, advice and guidance
- Developing a range of specialist provision which shares and supports the development of good practice, eg through delivery of outreach support and through the development of good practice case studies.

Service delivery

The School Improvement Service - They ensure that inclusion and support for equalities, including those with SEN and disabilities is central to the work of the service with strong commitment to Equality and Achievement and is included as a key performance priority in all Learning and Improvement service planning. This is underpinned by developing the importance of new technologies in delivering, enhancing and opening up the curriculum for all learners, including those with disabilities. Whilst this service is open to all Hampshire schools, academies are free to purchase this elsewhere.

SEN Services includes teams such as the SEN Assessment and Review Team, Educational Psychology Service, the Sensory Support Team (Hearing Impaired/Visual Impairment and Specific Learning Difficulties), Early Years SEN Team and the Speech, Language and Communication Team. These services

assist schools and settings to improve access, improve opportunities for interaction and engagement and to personalise and develop the curriculum for disabled pupils.

Ongoing work is undertaken with schools to support them in improving practice to:

- remove barriers to learning
- improve access through technologies and by making reasonable adjustments
- adopt inclusive teaching strategies and improve classroom organisation and practice
- promote dyslexia friendly and communication friendly approaches to learning.

Feedback from young people through the work of the SEND Reforms has raised the importance of maintaining opportunities for face to face work. This has highlighted how important it is to engage with young people and their families directly and not just remotely or through printed information. An essential element of this strategy is the work promoting person centred planning and transition, through a programme of training and development.

Hampshire County Councils strategy seeks to prioritise capacity-building and to develop our schools and settings and the workforce to promote the most effective inclusive learning and accessible curriculums.

Training, advice and guidance

This is being achieved through building a network of support and expertise, to assist schools in supporting access for pupils wherever they live within Hampshire. Developing capacity in mainstream schools remains a key priority and is delivered through:

- We are able to offer a comprehensive programme of training at all levels which ranges from introductory level training for support staff, through to professional networks for SENCOs and teaching staff and includes postgraduate level study programmes, eg use of new technologies and the National SENCO Award. Accessibility is a key strand in the training programmes. Training is bookable through Hampshire Services at **www.hants.gov.uk/servicesforschools/about-hampshire-services**
- Information, advice and guidance including resources and materials is available through our Local Offer website at **www.hantslocaloffer.info**

Specialist provision within Hampshire

In addition to the services listed above, Hampshire County Council has developed a range of specialist provision in order to meet the learning needs of children within its boundaries.

Our strategy is to support the majority of children in their local mainstream schools. In each school setting, the curriculum can be tailored and personalised to improve accessibility to learning. If additional support is required to meet a child's needs, mainstream schools can access specialist input from the local authorities' central SEN support services, or on an outreach basis, from Hampshire's special schools and resourced provisions.

2(b) Improving the physical environment of the schools for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the schools

As set out above, a large number of schools have improved access for their students through the targeted use of capital funding. The local authority has taken a strategic approach to the use of such funding to ensure that all areas across the local authority have benefited. Funding has also been used to address specific access issues when they have been identified as part of a larger capital project. This has helped to develop Hampshire's strategy for improving the physical environment and accessibility of schools.

The council recognises that children and young people learn, interact and socialise in environments that are not only physical, but are virtual and electronic. It is important that these electronic interactions do not exclude people with impairments. In education today Virtual Learning Environments (VLEs), Learning Platforms, Mobile Apps and websites are all part of the learning process; if these 'web products' are inaccessible this can affect the attainment of those young people. National and international guidance is available to meet the needs of these young people in the form of British and World Standards for web accessibility; this is being brought to the attention of schools and providers in the advice about schools' and settings' access plans.

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

Accessible information is made available to pupils with disabilities in a number of ways.

The Hampshire Local Offer (www.hantslocaloffer.info) provides information on Education, Social Care services, Health and leisure activities. It is a comprehensive online database of providers, organisations, clubs, groups and services. It allows people to find, from one centralised list of diverse providers, the people and organisations that best meet their needs and will support them to live an independent life. It also links to the Hampshire Family Information Service which offers a free impartial information and signposting service for children, young people (up to 19 years with additional needs) and their families with additional needs, learning difficulties or disabilities. The Family Information Service provides families with information on activities, events, news and issues that are relevant to their needs more information is available at www.hants.gov.uk/childcare/parents.

Hampshire County Council (www.hants.gov.uk) is committed to providing a website that is accessible to the widest possible audience, regardless of technology or ability. As such we are continually working to increase the accessibility and usability of our website and in doing so adhere to best practice guidelines.

3. Making it happen

3(a) Management, co-ordination and implementation

The strategy is one of a number of approaches adopted by the council to help meet its stated priority 'keeping children safe and improving their education' supporting improvement of attainment for all children and young people, including those with disabilities and barriers to their learning. The strategy has been developed in full consultation with the Children Service management group and the Cabinet Member for Children Services. It will be submitted for adoption by the Director of Children's Services.

For the services working most closely with schools and settings, regular monitoring of impact is undertaken and this feeds into service development and planning. The local authority is driving forward an approach to integrated service delivery, which seeks to co-ordinate services to best support families, including those with disabilities.

The local authority's Home to School transport policy sets out the ways in which children and young people with disabilities can receive support with transport and help to develop independence with travel as an aspiration.

3(b) Accessibility of the strategy itself

This strategy has been developed in accordance with equality principles and an equality impact assessment (EIA) has been written to support this document

The strategy is available on the Hampshire County Council's website and can be made available in other formats (eg large font) on request.

3(c) Reviewing the Accessibility Strategy

This strategy will be monitored regularly (annually) by the SEN Service and formally reviewed every three years, the reporting mechanism will be via Children's Services Department Management Team.

You can download this publication at:

<http://documents.hants.gov.uk/childrens-services/accessibility-strategy2017-19.pdf>

If you would like more information or a copy of this publication in another language or format (eg: large print or in an audio format) please contact: **0300 555 1384**, **enquiries.sen@hants.gov.uk** or Textphone **0300 555 1390**.

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