



ACCESSIBILITY PLAN



Spittal Community First School Accessibility Plan 3-year covered by the plan: 2024 - 2027

Date adopted: April 2021

The priorities set below are to be achieved within the timescale of this reporting cycle.

Introduction

The SEN and Disability Act 2001/10 extended the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) to cover education. Since September 2002, the Governing Body has had three key duties towards disabled pupils, under Part 4 of the DDA:

- not to treat disabled pupils less favourably for a reason related to their disability;
- to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils, so that they are not at a substantial disadvantage;
- to plan to increase access to education for disabled pupils.

The Equality Act 2010 replaced all existing equality legislation, including the Disability Discrimination Act.

According to the Equality Act 2010 a person has a disability if:

- (a) He or she has a physical or mental impairment, and
- (b) The impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

The government's definition of disability and long-term adverse effects can be read in full [here](#).

The Accessibility Plan is structured to complement and support the school's Equality Objectives, and these are also published on the school website.

This plan sets out the proposals of the Governing Body of the school to increase access to education for disabled pupils in the three areas required by the planning duties:

- increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school **curriculum**;
- improving the **environment** of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services;
- improving the delivery to disabled pupils of any **information which is provided in writing**.

It is a requirement that the school's accessibility plan is resourced, implemented and reviewed and revised as necessary. What follows are our action plans showing how the school will address the key, new priorities identified in the plan and how we will address them.

Vision and Values

We know that we can best achieve our aims by working in close partnership with families. We feel that the school is at the heart of the local community, and we strive to maintain and develop as many links as possible with people and services around us.

At the present time the challenge for us is to continue to improve levels of attainment and quality of provision for every child and to provide a school which works in partnership with and is accountable to the community it serves. We are committed to giving all our children every opportunity to achieve the highest standards. This policy helps to ensure that this happens for all the children in our school. Inclusion takes into account a child's protected characteristics, disability and vulnerability.

Developing the plan: consultation

The priorities for the Accessibility Plan for the school were identified by:

- The Governing Body

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- Head Teacher (in consultation with children, parents and carers)
- SENDCos
- Schools' DEI lead from Northumberland County Council

Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can access the school curriculum

Parental Support

We recognise that one of the best ways to ensure the success of the support we give a child with a disability in school is to support parents to establish the same principles at home and to understand the strategies that are evidence-based..

Over the three years of this plan we will: Establish and develop parental drop-ins to learn more about skills such as managing challenging behaviour, setting boundaries, using now and next boards.

As a staff we will undertake [Peep](#) training, which we feel will engage and help our families, as it values and concentrates on the parents' involvement, knowledge and achievements.

Elklan training

We currently have three members of staff completing [Elklan](#) training. Elklan equips staff with the knowledge, skills and strategies to enrich speech, language and communication for all children and young people but particularly those with speech, language and communication needs. The training also provides practical advice and strategies to support the children, parents and families.

Over the three years of this plan we will: See the learning shape our focus on key areas such as: Supporting understanding through non-verbal communication and visual strategies, communication Friendly Settings, adult-child interaction, developing expressive language skills, developing play for language, supporting children with unclear speech & phonological awareness

Zones of regulation

The Zones of Regulation is an internationally renowned intervention which helps children to manage difficult emotions, known as 'self-regulation'. We realise that it is hard to access the curriculum if you feel dysregulated. From time to time, all of us (including adults) find it hard to manage strong feelings such as worry, anger, restlessness, fear or tiredness, and this stops us from getting on with our day effectively. Children who feel these emotions often find it hard to learn and concentrate in school.

The Zones of Regulation aims to teach children strategies to help them to identify their emotions and cope with these feelings so they can get back to feeling calm and ready to learn. These coping strategies are called 'self-regulation'. At Spittal First School we want to teach all of our children good coping and regulation strategies so they can help themselves when they experience anxiety and stress.

Over the three years of this plan we will

Be using the Zones of Regulation as a framework, to help children to:

- Recognise when they are in the different Zones and learn how to change or stay in the Zone they are in.
- Increase their emotional vocabulary so they can explain how they are feeling.
- Recognise when other people are in different Zones, thus developing better empathy.
- Develop an insight into what might make them move into the different Zones.
- Understand that emotions, sensory experiences such as lack of sleep or hunger and their environment might influence which Zone they are in.

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- Develop problem-solving skills and resilience
- Identify a range of calming and alerting strategies that support them

Improving the physical environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services:

Reorganisation challenges

From September 2025, the partnership's first schools will expand their age range up to 11 to become primary schools and Berwick Academy will become an age 11 to 18 secondary academy from September 2026. Our school will become a primary school with years 5 and 6 on the site. With space at a premium, and a very small budget for physical improvements to the building, this will mean that we need to find an alternative to the low stimulus quiet room which we created to make an inclusive learning environment for children with disabilities.

Over the three years of this plan we will:

Undergo a transition from First to Primary School.

Establish some new, inclusive learning spaces, including SEND adaptations.

Continue to build on the good practice we have established such as providing sensory circuits, Dark Dens and quiet workstations and elective quiet lunch options.

Improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information that is provided in written formats.

We offer children a range of strategies and practical support in school, for example, coloured overlays for ADHD and Dyslexia; Coloured overlays reduce the perceptual distortions of text that children sometimes describe. They enable some children to read text more fluently and with less discomfort and fewer headaches.

Now and Next boards provide a visual prompt to help children to move on from one activity to another or to prepare them for what will happen next.

Visual Timetables: A visual timetable, timeline or visual activity schedule is a way of supporting a child to predict what will happen next. Visual timetables can help children who: struggle to understand what is being said, find it difficult processing spoken information, have poor auditory memories (difficulty listening and remembering information they have heard), have reduced understanding of time and the passing of time, have increased anxiety related to change, or moving from one activity to another.

Over the three years of this plan we will

Introduce best communication practice emerging from the training and initiatives being implemented in school.

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Appendix I: Useful resources

Making printed information accessible.

Resources and guidance: [Accessible Communication Formats](#) (Government guidance)

[Creating accessible documents](#) factsheet (Abilitynet)

[Abilities and assistive technology](#) (UK Association for Accessible Formats)

[The Sensory Trust information sheet on clear and large print](#)

[Dyslexia Style Guide](#) (British Dyslexia Association)

[What Works?](#) (A database of evidence based resources for professionals from the Communication Trust)

[Custom eyes](#) Schools and individuals can join the scheme which can reprint (at RRP) large print tailor made books which include:

- picture books
- fiction
- non-fiction
- Oxford Reading Tree
- GCSE and A Level English texts and textbooks
- revision guides for Key Stages 2, 3 and 4

[Northumberland County Blind Association](#) undertake commissions to transcribe documentation to Braille.

[Easy Read UK](#) can convert documents to Easy Read format.

[Audit tool for sensory preferences](#)

If the sensory responses and preferences of Neurodiverse communities are better understood it will be possible to create shared environments that more closely meet everyone's needs. There is an online audit tool hosted by the BBC to ensuring that building design considers physical accessibility for neurodivergent people.

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Appendix 2

Consultation with pupils about accessibility in school.

What helps us to learn and be happy in school? (date completed)

What is the perfect start to a day if we want you to feel good about learning?

Think about days you feel you learn best, what are they like?

Are there things that school has or does that help you to learn better?

What is not so helpful in the classroom and what makes things difficult?

What could make things easier?

Are there any times of the day, or things that happen in school that worry you?