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East Dunbartonshire Council

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East Dunbartonshire Council

Education Accessibility Strategy

2017 -2020

Improving Access to Education for Pupils with Disabilities

Contents

Section 1

Context and Background

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Legal Framework
- 1.3 Planning Duties
- 1.4 The Inclusion Context

Section 2

Consultation

- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Summary of Consultation

Section 3

Increasing Access to Curriculum for Disabled Pupils

- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Addressing Barriers to the Curriculum
- 3.3 The Curriculum
 - 3.3a Reasonable Adjustments
 - 3.3b Facilitating accessibility
- 3.4 Transport
- 3.5 Integrating Services and Approaches
- 3.6 Professional Learning
- 3.7 Key Priorities for Action

Section 4

Improving Access to the Physical Environments of Schools

- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Physical Accessibility of East Dunbartonshire School Estate
- 4.3 Planned Improvements to East Dunbartonshire School Estate
- 4.4 Current Initiatives Influencing Strategy
- 4.5 Key Priorities for Action

Section 5

Improving Communication and the Provision of School Information

- 5.1 Introduction
- 5.2 Examples of Good Practice
- 5.3 Key Priorities for Action

Conclusion

Appendix 1: Provision and resources available to support curriculum accessibility in EDC

Appendix 2: ASN Provision in EDC

Appendix 3: Access & Inclusion Advisory Group (AIAG)

Section1

Context and Background

1.1 Introduction

This document sets out East Dunbartonshire Council's (EDC) Education Accessibility Strategy, outlining continuing plans to improve access to a quality education service to all its pupils.

Inclusion is a national and council priority. There is an ongoing duty incumbent on all to:

- promote awareness of disabilities and additional support needs
- create inclusive environments in which the needs of all pupils can be met and in which children and young people can flourish in a safe and nurturing environment.

EDC, along with the Scottish Government, is committed to ensuring that all our young people are safe, nurtured, healthy, achieving, active, respected, responsible and included. There are close working relationships and a shared process for practice to ensure joint planning and co-ordinated intervention in Children's Services. All our young people should have access to positive learning environments and opportunities to develop their knowledge, skills, ambition, confidence and self-esteem to their fullest potential.

This strategy has been developed by a multi-agency Access and Inclusion Advisory Group (**AIAG**) in partnership with key stakeholders including children and young people with disabilities and their carers. It sets out plans to ensure continuous, consistent improvement in access to education for disabled pupils and draws on the principles and recommendations in Scottish Government guidance on improving access to education for disabled pupils (Planning improvements for disabled pupils' access to education, Guidance for education authorities, independent and grant-aided schools, 2014).

1.2 Legal Framework

You are disabled under the Equality Act 2010 if you have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities.

Support for disabled pupils in schools comes under different pieces of related legislation including:

- modifications of the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 contained in the Education (Scotland) Act 2016
- consideration and assessment of wellbeing under the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014;
- the General Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010);
- the additional support for learning (ASL) framework (Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act, 2004 and 2009);
- Accessibility strategies (The Education (Disability Strategies and Pupils' Educational Records) (Scotland) Act 2002).

These various pieces of legislation come together into a strong legislative framework to ensure that children and young peoples' rights are met, and that an atmosphere of inclusion exists in all our educational environments.

1.3 Planning Duties

The Education (Disability Strategies and Pupils' Educational Records) (Scotland) Act 2002 introduced a duty on all local authorities to prepare and implement an accessibility strategy. An accessibility strategy is a strategy for, over a prescribed period –

- (a) increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum;
- (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.

The delivery of (c) must be -

- (i) within a reasonable time;
- (ii) in ways which are determined after taking account of the pupils' disabilities and any preferences expressed by them or their parents

The above (a – c) are referred to as the **three planning duties**.

The Accessibility Strategy complements and is consistent with several of East Dunbartonshire Education priorities, plans and strategies including:

- Getting it right for every child/young person in East Dunbartonshire 2013
- Education Service Curriculum for Excellence Strategic Plan 2015-2018
- Education and Social Work Directorate Business and Improvement Plan 2014-2017
- ASN Strategic Plan 2015-2018
- Supporting Learners through Staged Intervention: Guidance Note (2016)
- Equality Outcomes, required by the Equality Act 2010 (specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012

Compliance with the Acts and Guidance is monitored through a robust, systematic quality assurance programme at local authority and school level with particular reference to the following quality indicators in HGIOS 4:

- 1.5** Management of resources to promote equity, with a specific focus on 'management of resources and environment for learning';
- 2.3** Learning, Teaching and Assessment;
- 2.4** Personalised Support and specifically on 'removal of barriers to learning';
- 2.6** Transitions;
- 3.1** Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality and Inclusion
- 3.2** Raising Attainment and Achievement

(Education Scotland, HGIOS 4, 2015)

1.4 The Inclusion Context

This Strategy for disabled pupils will include those with additional support needs who require special arrangements to allow access to curriculum or information or for physical access. In order that the Strategy is truly inclusive in nature, pupils who require any kind of help to enable them to access education are covered by this Accessibility Strategy, whether formal assessment has taken place or not. A broad range of pupils are therefore included.

Some of the disabilities (such as epilepsy or diabetes), as previously defined by the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995 are 'hidden' and if well controlled, may not necessarily give rise to additional support needs. Those with mild learning difficulties however are not described as 'disabled', even though they may at times require additional support.

Some, though not all, of those with learning difficulties and other disabilities may have additional social, emotional and behavioural needs. Others may have social, emotional and behavioural needs, but no disability. The Strategy adopts an inclusive approach to this wide range of needs.

East Dunbartonshire Early Years Community Assessment Team (EYCAT), a multi-agency screening group, receive referrals for pupils with additional support needs/disabilities within the 0 – 5 years age range. This enables us to begin planning provision and budgeting for children who may require adaptations and equipment as they transition to education. The Early Years Inclusion Service (EYIS) is an example of an EYCAT recommendation. EYIS provide support and advice for families of disabled pupils aged 0-3 years. Early engagement with families provides the opportunity to offer support and advice in a timeously manner whilst supporting and informing the development of planning and provision in preparation of transition to education.

Section 2

Consultation

2.1 Introduction

EDC have made good progress in improving access for disabled pupils since introduction of the Act in 2002 but further work is required to provide consistency in accessibility across all educational establishments.

This strategy provides information on existing supports and services alongside a plan setting out how we can continue to develop and promote inclusive services and provision for disabled pupils.

2.2 Summary of consultation carried out in developing the strategy

Consultation was undertaken with a number of groups and individuals including disabled/non-disabled children and young people, their families and carers, service providers and other multi-agency stakeholders.

A variety of approaches was used to involve and consult with the above groups and individuals and included, for example, seminars, focus groups and questionnaires.

All schools in EDC were approached and asked to circulate questionnaires to ICT co-ordinators to establish the current position in relation to the use of ICT to support curriculum accessibility. The summary of responses was used as a focus for discussion in consultation with the local authority ICT team and contributed to the development of priorities for action.

Six schools were approached and asked to facilitate a discussion with pupils about accessibility issues. The participating schools were a mixture of nursery, primary and secondary mainstream classes/schools across the authority and two special schools. An initial draft Accessibility Strategy was circulated to a number of groups and individuals for formal consultation.

Section 3

Increasing access to the curriculum for disabled pupils

3.1 Introduction

Every child and young person has the right to fulfill his or her potential. This is at the heart of Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) and Curriculum for Excellence (CfE). Some pupils with additional support needs which are severe and complex may require an elaborated or alternative curriculum. For others, different approaches to learning and teaching will be needed and often both will be required.

The primary responsibility for ensuring that disabled pupils have equity of access to the curriculum lies with EDC schools which must ensure that pupils receive their entitlement and opportunities to extend their experiences and understanding in a range of contexts. This covers learning and teaching and the full breadth of the curriculum including after-school clubs, sports, leisure and cultural activities and school visits. Advice and support is available from a range of services including the ASN team, Psychological Services, Health, Social Work and others as required.

3.2 Addressing Barriers to the Curriculum

In considering barriers to full participation in the curriculum, EDC will consider pupils with all types of additional support needs e.g. communication difficulties, specific learning difficulties (i.e. dyslexia, dyspraxia etc), other learning difficulties, specific language impairment, autism spectrum disorders, hearing impairment, visual impairments and physical disabilities/motor impairments. Not all pupils with additional support needs will be defined under the Equalities Act (2010) as 'disabled' and the Authority will look in turn at the additional support needs of this group of learners to facilitate access to the curriculum through for example:

- additional support from staff or other professionals;
- different levels of curriculum delivery;
- use of auxiliary aids or specialist equipment;
- improvements in physical environment including adapting classroom furniture and planning the flexibility of equipment;
- improving the provision of school information (e.g. textbooks or handouts in large print or Braille).

Clear information and guidance is available to schools to enable them to work closely with other agencies. Collaborative planning and working is actively encouraged and guidelines, covering a range of needs, supports inclusion of pupils with additional support needs in providing access to the rich curricula and social opportunities of a mainstream school environment e.g.

- Dyslexia Guidelines for Schools
- Dyscalculia Guidelines for Schools
- The Autism Toolbox (online resource for Scottish Schools)
- The Education of Children and Young People Looked After by EDC
- Administration of Medicines in Schools
- Practice Guidance (Getting it Right for Every Child)

The team around the child will be guided by East Dunbartonshire Council Staged Intervention in terms of pathways to support from relevant agencies.

All policies and guidance relating to meeting the needs of pupils with additional support needs can be found on the Additional Support Needs website:

<https://www.eastdunbarton.gov.uk/residents/schools-and-learning/additional-support-needs>

3.3 The Curriculum

Scottish Government guidance on improving access to education for disabled pupils (Planning improvements for disabled pupils' access to education, Guidance for education authorities, independent and grant-aided schools, 2014) uses the terms 'disabled pupils' or 'disabled learners' to support what is known as the 'social model of disability'. This usage acknowledges that while individuals have medical conditions, impairments and difficulties, society can do much to lessen their impact. In this model disability is seen as resulting from the interaction between people and their environments rather than as being solely the property of the individual which the term 'pupils with a disability' implies.

An inclusive ethos and a willingness to consider alternative methods of teaching and learning are important. Innovative changes in ways of delivering the curriculum to pupils should be considered through the accessibility strategy to take account of the different ways in which pupils learn.

An example of practice

All schools in EDC have committed to a block of professional learning with a focus on supporting implementation of the Council's model of staged intervention in session 2016-17. The revised model places emphasis on differentiation and the need to embrace and nurture alternative methods of teaching and learning in meeting the needs of all pupils.

Particular attention requires to be given to directly consulting with pupils and parents/carers who have significant communication difficulties.

An example of practice

Supporting schools and nurseries in developing Augmentative Alternative Communication strategies (AAC).

This involves Educational Psychologists working in partnership with Speech and Language Therapy to look at supporting whole organisation change to ensure techniques which augment language development are carried out by all staff and are embedded in practice.

Practitioners can practise the approach in their daily activities and learn from each other effective models of delivery of strategies. This empowers staff to feel confident in applying their learning across the nursery/school context and devise new approaches based on their theoretical understanding of language development.

An initial pilot has been evaluated and recommendations included extending support in developing Language and Communication Friendly Environments (LCFE) to primary and secondary schools in East Dunbartonshire Council on a phased basis from session 2015-2016.

3.3a Reasonable Adjustments

The Equality Act 2010 requires schools to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that disabled pupils are not at a substantial disadvantage. Reasonable adjustments meet the statutory requirement when they act to prevent disabled pupils being placed at a substantial disadvantage, and when they enable pupils to participate in education and associated services.

When deciding if a reasonable adjustment is necessary, schools need to consider potential impact on disabled pupils in terms of time and effort, inconvenience, indignity and discomfort, loss of opportunity and diminished progress.

Reasonable adjustments include a duty to provide auxiliary aids and services for disabled pupils. Many of the reasonable adjustments that schools are already making for disabled pupils include the use of some auxiliary aids, such as coloured overlays for dyslexic pupils, pen grips, adapted PE equipment, adapted keyboards and computer software. Many reasonable adjustments are inexpensive and will often involve a change in practice rather than the provision of expensive pieces of equipment.

The reasonable adjustments duty is triggered only where there is a need to avoid 'substantial disadvantage'. Substantial is defined as being anything more than minor or trivial. Whether or not a disabled pupil is at a substantial disadvantage or not will depend on the individual situation and an assessment will be carried out by the team around the child.

Reasonable adjustments will be made by schools themselves and should ensure that pupils with particular needs are not disadvantaged in any area. Adjustments can be large or small, but even small adjustments can often make a big difference to pupils' ability to access the curriculum. Plans to increase accessibility and to ease pupils' stress at times of examination should take account of SQA guidance and reasonable adjustments should be made to give access as widely as possible to National Examinations.

An example of practice

A visually impaired pupil in an EDC school will need adapted papers for all formal assessments. All subject teachers working with the pupil are aware of this and will make practice papers available to support staff at least two weeks ahead of use so that font, background, diagrams and tables can be appropriately modified in line with the adaptations allowed by Scottish Qualifications Authority. Trained and experienced support for learning assistants are made available on the day of examinations. Where papers can be opened early for modification, this will happen in time for the pupil to access the paper with all the other students taking the examination.

See link for further guidance on reasonable adjustments:

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

3.3b Facilitating Accessibility

The authority will implement strategies for removing barriers to facilitate full participation including provision of appropriate equipment e.g. furniture, standing frames, hoists, changing facilities, ICT resources, etc.

An example

Improvements in Accessing Specialist Aids

East Dunbartonshire Education recently secured a contract with EQUIPU to ensure the provision, maintenance, delivery and installation of specialist equipment to support the needs of physically disabled pupils in our schools and educational establishments.

Access to technology and appropriate software and other arrangements may be required to enable pupils to demonstrate what they can do. The Micro-Technology Team provide specialist assessment, advice and consultation about equipment needs and work closely with school staff, parents, pupils and partner agencies.

An example of practice

East Dunbartonshire Council's ASN training calendar provides opportunities for school staff to receive training in modifying printed materials to meet the needs of children with a visual impairment. The VI teacher works closely with micro-technology teachers and IT analysts to train pupils and staff in the use of specialist ICT and other equipment, such as low vision aids, so that pupils can access printed material independently.

There is a need to consider the curriculum in its widest sense, bearing in mind that for some pupils, the curriculum will not consist of mainly literacy and numeracy, but of basic life skills and/or social development. While access to the formal curriculum will be a priority, increasingly, a greater level of accessibility is required to enable learning outside the classroom. Access to wider educational experiences and school trips can provide challenges. Efforts will be made to remove any barriers to

access to extra-curricular activities including school trips. Careful consideration is required in each case to ensure that no child is discriminated against while no child's safety is put at risk. This may require head teachers to make difficult decisions in the interests of all the pupils they support. Guidance has been produced by the Council's outdoor education service to help plan educational excursions and off-site activities.

http://www.lennoxtown.e-dunbarton.sch.uk/files/3_17.pdf

3.4 Transport

There are occasions when pupils with disabilities will require specific transport arrangements to enable access to school facilities. Schools will be expected to make reasonable adjustments to facilitate arrangements. Guidance to ensure appropriate and timely planning of transport for pupils with additional support needs was updated and circulated to all schools and establishments in 2014 and includes the requirement for the team around the child to identify and develop a transport plan and/or risk assessment if deemed appropriate.

3.5 Integrating Services and Approaches

EDC Integrated Children Services in partnership with NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde specialist support services provide regular training for mainstream staff and support pupils with a range of needs including, autism, learning difficulties, sensory impairments and developmental disorders. Increasingly, training is delivered by and to multi-agency staff, taking a holistic view of the needs of the child. There will be continued development of integrated approaches within children's services to delivering improved access to the curriculum.

An example

Staff training on supporting pupils with autism and social communication difficulties

The Primary Autism Support and Advice Group and Nursery Autism Support and Advice Group (PASAG/NASAG), include a range of professionals (i.e. Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Nursery Support Staff, Language and Communication specialist teaching staff and Educational Psychologists). They work together to deliver a series of twilight sessions which outline theories of autism/ social communication based difficulties then focus on demonstrating specific strategies and classroom approaches to support pupils. Participants identify strategies they plan to take forward in the classroom or nursery and evaluate the impact in follow up work shop sessions.

Participants have evaluated the training positively and there is high attendance. Participants have also been able to identify direct impact on classroom or nursery management and pupil development.

3.6 Professional Learning

The current ASN calendar of training and professional learning for all school staff will help further develop and sustain capacity building in our schools. Overcoming barriers to curriculum access is embedded within this framework and includes:

- ASN policy details clearly responsibilities within schools in line with Staged Intervention (revised 2016);

- Professional Learning programme developed to support managers and staff to implement a locality model of provision and build capacity; this will include ASN/ASD Champions identified in individual schools and;
- ASN Locality Support Teams established to provide advice and support to schools

See Appendix 1 for a range of provision and resources available to support curriculum accessibility in East Dunbartonshire.

3.3 Key Priorities for Action

- further develop the range of consultation approaches with pupils, parents and the wider community;
- review and evaluate systems and processes which monitor and manage the use of technology aids and equipment for children with a disability;
- expand the capacity of specialist teaching services to research and promote the transferability of techniques, equipment and aids to the wider school population;
- multi agency teams will continue to deliver staff development programmes to mainstream staff and strengthen opportunities for curriculum access for pupils with communication barriers;
- continue to provide staff development on revised staged intervention in line with the CYP Act (2014).

Section 4

Improving Access to the Physical Environment of Schools

4.1 Introduction

This duty covers improvements to the physical environment of schools and also to physical aids which may be required to ensure access to appropriate education, including accessibility of transport and outdoor activities. Aspects such as classrooms, school environs and surroundings are required to be taken into account.

4.2 Physical Accessibility of East Dunbartonshire School Estate

Seventy-five percent of the EDC Secondary School Estate has been built under Public Private Partnership (PPP) arrangements and are all fully accessible. In the past seven years the building programme has led to the development of six new secondary schools and one primary. In the same period, any physical adaptations to schools have been dealt with as and when needs arose and have included for example:

- installation of disabled toilets;
- external ramps and handrails;
- audio loops and sound field systems;
- sensory area for pupils with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD);
- accessible parking bays created;
- internal lift provided to upper floors and raised areas e.g. school stage;
- secure fencing and gate provisions for ASD pupils;
- replacement of lighting for visually impaired pupils etc.

4.3 Planned Improvements to East Dunbartonshire School Estate

Four further primary schools are due for completion between 2016 and 2018. In addition, consultations are ongoing regarding the school estate with consideration of upgraded facilities and/or new builds in other areas through public consultations. All new builds will meet the specification for accessibility for pupils, parents, staff and visitors.

Through the construction of new schools and investment in the existing school estate the Council will seek to address physical barriers to accessibility across the estate. It is recognized that the cost to refurbish or remodel existing facilities to meet current building standards in relation to accessibility is prohibitive. However where there is a known requirement to make alterations to the estate to accommodate pupils with specific requirements this work will be assessed and prioritized accordingly.

Early intervention is a priority and has helped identify and provide for young pupils who may have as yet undiagnosed disabilities at an early stage. However, information is currently held on a number of different databases and by various bodies. Further development will include improvements in procedures and protocols to support more efficient and effective methods of communication and information sharing for all pupils, at every stage of education.

The following examples link to access to curriculum or communication and will be considered on a case-by-case basis in supporting individual pupil need:

- ICT provision where current provision does not support access and impact upon ICT networks and schools building infrastructure;
- compatibility of technological equipment – e.g. infra-red IT systems and infra- red listening devices for pupils with a hearing impairment;
- classrooms where specific equipment/adaptations may be required e.g. Science, Home Economics, Technical subjects
- access to sports facilities: both on site and off site;
- accommodations for pupils who can only access part of mainstream provision;
- appropriate space for group activities

Table 1

In considering physical access operating on four distinct levels the following table illustrates the type of provision that may be required to support individual pupil need.

Level 1	Example of Impact
Pupil has ability to access whole school without any mobility difficulty.	Access to curriculum e.g. special workstation, computers or adaptations for using equipment.
Level 2	Example of Impact
Pupil has physical or sensory disability e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mobility – wheelchair, walking aids • hearing impairment • visual impairment • spatial recognition/memory leading to disorientation/ lack of perception of risk or damage 	Physical access changes required throughout school. Audio loops, acoustics (physical changes) sound field systems. Quiet withdrawal space. Intercoms and sound based alarms require alternatives. Physical changes to building to identify: wayfinding, alarms, area recognition. Changes to physical environment to promote mainstream inclusion, e.g. colour, physical shapes and light and sound.
Level 3	Example of Impact
Complex and physical educational need with some ability to access mainstream curriculum	Physical access changes as per level 2 Specific areas for specialist facilities such as intimate care, curriculum support and visiting specialist support.
Level 4	Example of Impact
Pupils with complex and physical educational needs that inhibit mainstream education.	Specialist buildings providing both education and residential facility.

Table 2

Key individuals (as appropriate) with responsibility for identifying and responding to individual needs as children progress from Pre-School to Secondary and Secondary....

Stage	Source
Pre School	Health Visitor, Early Years Community Assessment Team (EYCAT), Health, Social Work Disability Team, Headteacher/Early Years Manager, Psychological Service.
Primary School	Head Teacher, Cluster Support Group (CSG), Girfec Liaison Group (GLG), Health, Psychological Service, Social Work Disability Team.
Secondary School	DHT/Guidance, Cluster Support Group (CSG), Girfec Liaison Group (GLG), Health, Psychological Service, Social Work Disability Team.
Transition to Post School Destination	DHT/Guidance, Cluster Support Group (CSG), Girfec Liaison Group (GLG), Health, Psychological Service, Social Work Disability Team.
<p>Information on pupils transferring into the authority would be obtained from the previous Named Person, parent/carer in the first instance and all relevant agencies would then be invited to a team around the child (TAC) meeting to support transition planning e.g. psychological service, social work disability team, health, etc.</p>	

4.4 Current initiatives influencing strategy include:

- Review of the school estate. Looking at the educational provision, occupancy rates and the condition and suitability of buildings in relation to their purpose and need for provision in the area. In some cases this may lead to public consultation on amalgamation, closure, adaptation and/or new build;
- Year on year allocation of funding to provide for minor adaptations to school facilities e.g. handrails, disabled toilets, ramps;
- A centrally held budget to provide specific equipment for individual pupils to enhance their access to subject areas and to the curriculum.

Table 3

Strategy for Addressing Physical Accessibility	
<p>Short Term (1 Year)</p>	<p>Information Gathering</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to identify pupils by catchment area. Prepare list of pupils in form of school roll and stage. • Refresh Accessibility surveys of schools with emphasis on known priorities, e.g. pupils with disabilities progressing from Nursery, to Primary and Primary to Secondary. • Establish a central database of ancillary equipment with storage and servicing facilities shared with Health (EQUIPU). • Priorities identified as part of benchmark survey of schools. • Identify costs of building and curriculum compliance. • Ensure all Head Teachers are aware that they must have a Fire Evacuation Strategy for their schools incorporating procedures for evacuating disabled pupils to a place of safety. <p>Resource Allocation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work within current capital funds already allocated to development of facilities for pupils with disabilities in schools. • Maintain and improve current databases for ease of access and gathering of information. • Consider one off requests for funding to schools to ensure disabled pupils' access to trips and after-school activities. <p>Prioritise works to properties based on the following:</p> <p>Mainstream schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nurseries - known need based upon current pupils and information from external services. • Primary schools - known need based upon current pupils and pre- school (3 - 5 years). • Secondary schools - known need based upon current secondary pupils and primary pupils at P6 and P7. • Respond to current specific needs through a short-term programme of adaptations within capital resources. <p>Specialist provision for pupils who require significant additional support to access mainstream education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respond to current specific needs through a short-term programme of adaptations within capital resources. • Schools/Inclusion Officer to identify current building access problems prioritised by need - e.g. <p>No facilities Some facilities but major shortcomings Some facilities but minor shortcomings Improvement on current facilities that already meet need</p> <p>Programming of Developments</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop programme based upon priorities and resources available and integrate with known initiatives e.g. Corporate Asset Management Planning and the refresh of the School Estates Management Plan.
Medium Term (2 – 5 Years)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement development programme subject to available funding. • Set aside funding for meeting immediate need, e.g. Pupil transferring from another authority mid-way through a school session. • Respond to current specific need as prioritised by the Inclusion Officer (as short term above). • Review programme on an annual basis and revise where appropriate. Consider schools that are not currently programmed during the last year of programme. • Re-audit on a 5 year annual cycle to gather detailed information from individual schools. Brief audit completed every 3 years from information available through ASN team members.
Long Term (3 – 10 Years)	<p>It should be recognised that it may not be possible on cost grounds to implement changes to buildings if no need is evident. Gradually as budgets allow, all buildings will become more accessible through revisiting the programme of development to identify shortcomings in current provision and, where necessary, address shortcomings in the long term strategy on the basis of the resultant data from the detailed re-audit process.</p>

4.5 Key Priorities for Action

- Ensure best value by monitoring expenditure associated with accessibility
- Continue to audit premises and grounds to ensure adaptations are needs-driven and, where funding is available, undertake adaptations on an anticipatory basis
- Develop communication pathways to ensure pupil need and destination forecasts allow a broader range of opportunity for pupils to attend their local school
- Continue to consult with representatives from the Scottish Disability Equality Forum

Section 5

Improving Communication and the Provision of School Information

5.1 Introduction

This duty covers the ways in which schools improve communication with pupils with a disability and, in particular, improves the communication to pupils with a disability.

The term ‘information’ refers to all information that is regularly issued through schools including handouts, timetables, textbooks, newsletters and information about school events and may include information which is available electronically through the local authority website, and through links to other sources on the Internet.

It is important that information considers pupils’ disabilities and the requests of parents/carers or pupils for a preferred format which takes account of home language spoken, cultural factors, reading difficulties etc. Schools have made good progress in providing information in alternative formats and the advent of websites; internet and emails services have increased the range of opportunities for communication with all parents/carers, young people and children. Though access to computer in the home is increasing, not all homes will have a computer. Good liaison is essential to ensure no-one is disadvantaged by lack of appropriate computer access, and alternatives should always be available.

If requested, information can be made available in Braille, audio tape, digital or a range of other languages by contacting the Council’s Communications team (Appendix 3).

Transitions can be daunting for any child. For those with a disability there are extra challenges they may encounter. It is important that the team around the child develops a transition plan that helps overcome these potential challenges and ensures a successful transition.

A good transition plan will:

- be prepared well in advance of the child starting, to give time for the support arrangements to be put in place;
- clearly identify the member of staff responsible for preparing the plan and coordinating its implementation;
- involve the child and their parents and address any concerns;
- be based on a thorough analysis of the child’s needs and strengths including information from specialist assessments where necessary;
- set out what needs to be done to meet the child’s needs including:
 - what should be provided
 - who in the school is responsible for each identified action
 - timescale for delivery

Ongoing consultation will be required to ensure that staff are aware of what is appropriate and helpful. Parents should be encouraged to approach school management if there are aspects of accessibility they have concerns about so that strategies can be considered and put in place.

Parents/carers should be encouraged to be routinely involved in reviewing provision for their child.

Pupils will be involved in determining their own provision if they are able to do so, and should be given support and training in how to cope with meetings and procedures. If they are unhappy or unable to

contribute to a meeting they should be consulted outwith the meeting, so that their views can be presented by others and feedback provided to them, but they must nonetheless be asked, if they wish to take part. If they choose to stay outwith the meeting, the main outcomes and decisions should be communicated to them later and their views should be taken into account.

The developing and widening use of ICT is significantly transforming the lives of everybody but especially those children and young people who are unable to communicate using traditional methods. The use of Touch Talkers and other aids to facilitate communication including low technology systems such as talking mats, PECS and Maketon should be acceptable practice in the mainstream classroom.

5.2. Examples of good practice:

Locality based Sensory Service and micro-technology teachers work collaboratively in order to provide advice and guidance to schools and families on alternative formats for the presentation of information and the use of technology to support pupils with sensory impairments. Examples include schools which have a child with a visual impairment receiving training in modifying printed materials into a format to meet the needs of individual children and for parents who might also have a visual impairment. ICT resources for this purpose are provided.

Children and young people with a visual impairment are trained in the use of specialist ICT and other equipment, such as low vision aids, so that they can access printed material independently.

EDC Sensory Service will be involved in the consultation and planning of new builds where consideration will be given to the installation of loop and soundfield systems, colour schemes, lighting and signage. Plans of school layout can be made available to pupils to facilitate their access to the whole school, and to help parents/carers to prepare their children for a new school.

The Central ASN team liaise with partners in schools and Health Services to ensure there is a consistent and equitable method of securing Alternative and Augmentative Communication (AAC) aids and recognize the need for ongoing training and awareness opportunities for school staff.

Assistive technology (such as; touch screen computers, interactive whiteboards, text-to-speech software) is employed to promote independent learning whilst facilitating access to printed matter for pupils with dyslexia or other reading and writing difficulties.

Health and Psychological Service work collaboratively in the planning and implementation of a training programme to support pupils with autism/social communication difficulties. A range of professionals (Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Nursery Support Staff, Language and Communication specialist teaching staff and Educational Psychologists) work together to deliver a series of twilight sessions to teaching and support staff. The programme outlines theories of autism/social communication based difficulties and demonstrate specific strategies and classroom approaches to support pupils.

5.3 Key Priorities for Action

- Promote and develop coping skills, resilience and mental wellbeing of children from an early age, including the use of nurturing principles and other innovative approaches in schools
- Continue to promote and support the development of Language and Communication Friendly Environments in all early years, primary, secondary, and special school.

Conclusion

This Accessibility Strategy is being developed in collaboration with other professional colleagues where partnership planning and delivery are essential.

The strategy is strongly linked, co-dependent on and an extension of, other East Dunbartonshire planning frameworks including:

- *Integrated Children's Services Plan*
- *Education Department Service Plan*
- *ASN Strategic Plan*
- *School Improvement Plans*
- *Equality Outcomes Plan*

Coordinating work between different council services and with schools is a task that demands good communication; delivery of the accessibility action plan rests with a range of different groups and individuals.

The accessibility strategy will be reflected in schools and establishments strategic plans in session 2016-17. School handbooks will be amended to include reference to the accessibility strategy and increased information for parents about the strategy will be made available. Additional continuing professional development opportunities will be available to all school staff through East Dunbartonshire Council CPD website and will provide training on specific disabilities, disability legislation and wider accessibility issues.

Support and advice on implementation will be provided by the ASN team who will be responsible for monitoring and evaluating implementation and development of the plan.

Effectiveness will be measured using a variety of means including:

- monitoring the effectiveness of transition for children with physical and sensory disabilities;
- monitoring attainment and achievement of disabled pupils including the development of wellbeing and confidence;
- evaluation of strategic plans, including service plans and team plans;
- feedback from parents/carers, and voluntary organisations;
- feedback from children and young people

Much good work is continuing with staff, children and their parents to support and sustain pupils with more complex difficulties in mainstream placements where appropriate. The planning and implementation of this strategy will further facilitate this process. Longer-term planning and linking with new-build projects will allow for a considerable increase in the number of barrier-free schools and enable a greater range of pupils with disabilities to benefit more from access to mainstream schools

The plan will be available on East Dunbartonshire Council's Website and hard copies will be sent to all East Dunbartonshire schools and other interested stakeholders.

EDC Education Accessibility Action Plan 2017-2020

Access to the Physical Environment						
Action		Responsible Officer/Service	Resources	Budget	To be completed by	Performance Indicators/Milestones
1	Continue to audit the incidence of disability across EDC in partnership with health and other relevant agencies so that, where possible, adaptations and support can be planned before pupils enter schools/early years centres	ASN Service Manager ASN Central Team	Meetings between Education and Assets team within the council and with relevant agencies e.g.- Health professionals Specialist equipment	Capital assets Education	Ongoing	Compliance with legislation (ASfL Equalities CYP Act) HGIOS 4 The ability to accommodate unplanned adjustments within the planning framework Adaptations to buildings are planned and within budget Adaptations are completed timeously
2	Develop and improve information referral and tracking systems in partnership with others (e.g. partner agencies/services, parents, pupils) to promote integrated approaches to planning support for individuals	ASN Central Team	Planned regular meetings with relevant agencies/individuals ASN Database for Education services	Education	Ongoing Annual audit	Pupil needs continue to be identified from an early age Parents and pupils (age/stage appropriate) are included and involved in planning for transition Referral process agreed across agencies Electronic data base developed and maintained to support transition planning throughout child's education Early Years Community Assessment Team (EYCAT) have the necessary information to make informed recommendations regarding placement of disabled children

3	Involve specialist teachers and services in the consultation and planning of new builds	ASN Service Manager ASN Central Team Assets Manager	Relevant specialist staff		Ongoing	Fulfilment of statutory duties
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EDC Education Accessibility Action Plan 2017-2020

Access to the Curriculum						
Action	Responsible Officer/ Service	Resources	Budget	To be completed by	Performance indicators/milestones	
1	Raise awareness of Equality legislation, ASfL legislation , National Improvement Framework and CYP Act	Education Service ASN Service Manager QIO (ASN) Headteacher	Education Officers ASN Central Team Collegiate calendars	CPD budget	Ongoing	Increased awareness of Equality legislation, ASfL legislation , National Improvement Framework and CYP Act
2	a)Build capacity in all staff to support schools and centres in improving access to the curriculum for pupils with disabilities/ASN b)Schools to consider attainment data in respect of pupils who have a disability	Education Service ASN Central Team Headteacher	Collegiate calendars Education Officers ASN Central Team Psychological Service School Leaders Health Boards Voluntary Agencies	CPD budget	Ongoing	Specialist advice and support is available for particular needs but all schools deliver quality practice where teachers are able to differentiate to include all children in their lessons Quality Improvement programmes will ensure inclusive teaching and learning develops through effective personalised support Annual review carried out by individual schools of the role and impact additional support staff including intervention from locality support teams, support for learning teachers and assistants Targeted training needs will be identified through Quality Improvement programmes at

			EDC IT Services School Support teachers Autism Advisers SEEMIS SQA data			Local Authority, Individual Service and School levels Accessibility Strategy reflected in school improvement plans Attainment & achievement data will be carefully analysed for particular groups of pupils
3	a)Ensure access for all to school trips, extra-curricular activities and all internal curricular activities including assemblies, drama productions, etc. b)Offer CPD for teachers/school managers to develop capacity to provide appropriate extra-curricular options for pupils who have a disability	Headteacher /Manager TAC ASN Central Team	Personalised Support - relevant individuals could include: Psychological Service, CLD Assets Health and Safety, ASN Team Health and Safety Officer Active Schools Coordinator	School budget CPD budget	Ongoing Annually linked to PRD	All pupils included in the range of activities/trips offered by the school

4	<p>a)Ensure computers (and associated furniture) are accessible or can easily be modified to be accessible to pupils with disabilities</p> <p>b)Raise awareness amongst teaching staff of specialist advice/support in the use and availability of accessible software and websites to support pupils with a disability</p> <p>c) Schools to ensure awareness of SQA ‘reasonable adjustments’ for assessment situations</p>	Headteacher /Manager	<p>ASN Team</p> <p>IT Services</p> <p>CALL Scotland</p> <p>ICT training in technology/ programmes to support pupils with ASN/disability generally and specific training to support individual pupil need</p> <p>TAC to identify adaptations to curricular materials, use of technology/ digital exams/AAA arrangements as required</p>	CPD budget	2017- 20	<p>Increased staff awareness of procedures for identifying and assessing pupil ICT needs</p> <p>Personalised support will ensure identification and assessment needs of pupils who require access to ICT</p> <p>Increased use of IT to support national assessment/examination process</p> <p>Clear procedures in place between IT and Education Services ensure access/installation of specialised items of hardware and software on managed/networked computers to meet individual pupil need</p>
5	Equitable and efficient allocation of additional support for learning (ASfL) staff (teachers and support for learning assistants) on the basis of need	ASN Central Team	Annual audit of support for learning assistants/support for learning teachers and pupil need in individual schools	Education	Annually	Staffing allocated equitably within available resources

EDC Education Accessibility Action Plan 2017-2020

Communication and the delivery of school information					
Action	Responsible Officer/ Service	Resources	Budget	To be completed by	Performance Indicators/Milestones
1 Children and young people have access to alternative means of communication	Headteacher /Manager	Headteacher School Support staff S< Psychological Services	Education Health and Social Care Partnership	Ongoing	The need for AAC is identified and implemented as required
2 a)Identify pupils and parents preferred methods of communication b)Ensure awareness of translation and interpretation and how to access	Headteacher Health and Social Care Partnership	Headteacher S< Psychological Services	Education Health and Social Care Partnership	Ongoing	Compliance with Equality Act (2010)
3 Schools to ensure presentation of material in appropriate fonts, language etc.	Headteacher		School budget	Ongoing	Compliance with Equality Act (2010)
4 a)Identify the preferred points and means of communication for service users affected by disability b) Ensure compliance with Standard for Disability Information and Advice Provision on school website	Headteacher Education Service	Education Service	CPD budget	Ongoing	Increased awareness of Equality legislation, ASfL legislation and CYP Act 2014

5	Complaints procedure to be widely published/distributed so that it is known and accessible to all service users and used by all staff when dealing with complaints	Education Service Headteacher	Education Service	Education	Ongoing	Leaflets distributed to all schools
6	<p>Establish arrangements to enable the voice of children, young people, parents and carers to routinely inform Accessibility Strategy Planning</p> <p>(a) Collect pupil's views during the period of this Accessibility Strategy to inform the next one.</p> <p>(b) Collect parent/carer's views during the period of this Accessibility Strategy to inform the next one.</p>	Headteacher ASN Central Team	<p>Evaluation Survey</p> <p>Focus groups</p> <p>Other relevant sources</p>	Education	Ongoing	Pupil, parent/carer voice will be heard and inform the Accessibility strategy via EDC quality assurance programme.

January 2018

Appendix 1

Provision and resources available to support curriculum accessibility in EDC include:

- **Pupil Support Groups (PSG)**
PSG are multi-disciplinary groups who meet regularly in all schools, the model in early years is referred to as **Support for All**. Transition planning is a key function of these groups.
- **Cluster Support Groups (CSG)**. CSG meet monthly to provide strategies and consultation and an early opportunity for multi-service and inter-agency discussion in relation to either individual children or young people, or groups of children and young people aged from 5 to 18 years who have been assessed by a single agency as requiring a level of support which exceeds what they can provide on their own.
- **Early Years Community Assessment Team (EYCAT)**. EYCAT has representation from health, education, early years and social work. The Early Years Inclusion Service (EYIS) is part of this service and provides outreach support for children and families from birth to three years. The group meets monthly to consider referrals, make recommendations and address development priorities to ensure continuous improvement of this service for children from birth to 5 years.
- **GIRFEC Liaison Group (GLG)**. The GLG is a community team with representation from senior officers within health, education, early years and social work. The group meets monthly to consider referrals, make recommendations and address development priorities to ensure continuous improvement of this service for children from 5 to 18 years.
- **Children's Disability Team**
The Children with Disabilities Team can contribute to multi-agency assessment and care planning for children with complex disabilities when the eligibility criteria is met.
- **Primary Wellbeing Support Service (PWSS)**. A model of service based on nurture principles, the PWSS offers consultation, staff development, assessment and where necessary, individual support for primary aged pupils (see outreach services below). In some cases a placement may be necessary for individual support at the Wellbeing Support Base.
- **Secondary Wellbeing Support Service (SWSS)**. A model of service based on nurture principles, the SWSS offers consultation, staff development, assessment and where necessary, individual support for secondary aged pupils (see outreach services below). In some cases a placement may be necessary for individual support at the Wellbeing Support Base.
- **Wellbeing Support Base (Secondary x 8)**
Wellbeing Support bases offer a targeted approach in helping to improve the behaviour and learning outcomes of children with attachment and behaviour difficulties. The nurturing approach and supports delivered by staff are designed to promote the successful inclusion of pupils in a variety of educational environments including mainstream classrooms, playground and other learning and social settings.
- **Language & Communication Resource (Pre-School and Early Primary)**
- **Language & Communication Resource (Primary)**
- **Language & Communication Resource (Secondary x3)**
Language & Communication environments enable the attendance and integration, wherever possible, into a mainstream school's curriculum and social programme.
- **Outreach Support Services (Language & Communication, Wellbeing Support, Sensory Service, Micro Technology)**. This service aims to support and develop the capacity and confidence of

teachers and support staff in order to promote the participation and learning of pupils with additional support needs.

- **Partner agencies and voluntary sector**
- **Alternative assessment arrangements**
- **Hospital teaching and home tutoring** (funded on basis of needs) for pupils too ill to access mainstream education
- **Active Schools co-ordinators** support inclusion in our schools and wider community
- **Specialist transport with trained escorts** for disabled pupils and/or those with additional support needs.

Appendix 2

ASN Provision in East Dunbartonshire Council

Service	Manager	Contact
ASN Central Team	Jackie Swan ASN Service Manager	Jackie.swan@eastdunbarton.gov.uk 0141 578 8681 Julie.murray@eastdunbarton.gov.uk 0141 578 8920 Elisabeth.Faulks@eastdunbarton.gov.uk 0141 578 8716
EYCAT - Early Years Community Assessment Team	Jackie Swan ASN Service Manager Elisabeth Faulks EYCAT Co-ordinator	Jackie.swan@eastdunbarton.gov.uk 0141 578 8681
Social Work Children's Disabilities Team	Sarah Breslin Children's Disabilities Manager	Sarah.Breslin@eastdunbarton.gov.uk 0141 578 3213
Primary Wellbeing Support Service Oxgang Primary School Lammermoor Road Kirkintilloch Glasgow G66 2AB	Gaynor Hale Team Leader (Acting)	Lorna.Sweeney@eastdunbarton.gov.uk 0141 578 8740
Secondary Wellbeing Support Service 15 Donaldson Street Kirkintilloch Glasgow G66 1XD	Annabel Campbell Team Leader	Jan.Pollock@eastdunbarton.gov.uk 0141 578 8937
Twechar LCR Pre-School and Early Primary Language & Communication Resource Main Street Twechar G65 9TA	Marion Macissac Headteacher office@twechar.e- dunbarton.sch.uk 0141 955 2331	Jackie.swan@eastdunbarton.gov.uk 0141 578 8681
Castlehill LCR Primary Language & Communication Resource Castlhill Primary School Rosslyn Road Bearsden Glasgow G61 4DL	Suzanne Kenny Headteacher office@castlehill.e- dunbarton.sch.uk 0141 955 2215	Jackie.swan@eastdunbarton.gov.uk 0141 955 8681

St Ninians Language & Communication Resource (Secondary) St Ninians High School Bellfield Road Kirkintilloch Glasgow G66 1DT	Paul McLaughlin Headteacher office@st-ninians.e-dunbarton.sch.uk 0141 955 2386	Jackie.swan@eastdunbarton.gov.uk 0141 955 8681
Bishopbriggs Language & Communication Resource (Secondary) Bishopbriggs Academy Wester Cleddans Road Bishopbriggs Glasgow G64 1HZ	Gordon Mouldsdales Headteacher office@bishopbriggs.e-dunbarton.sch.uk 0141 955 2351	Jackie.swan@eastdunbarton.gov.uk 0141 955 8681
Bearsden Academy Language & Communication Resource (Secondary) Bearsden Academy Stockiemuir Road Bearsden Glasgow G61 3SF	George Cooper Headteacher office@bearsdenacademy.edunbarton.sch.uk 0141 955 2344	Jackie.swan@eastdunbarton.gov.uk 0141 955 8681
Outreach Support Services: Micro Technology Language & Communication Sensory Service Supporting Families	Jackie Swan ASN Team Manager Sheena Fraser Early Years Service Manager	Jackie.swan@eastdunbarton.gov.uk 0141 955 8681 Sheena.fraser@eastdunbarton.gov.uk 0141 578 8697
Hospital Teaching and Home Tutoring	Julie Murray Elisabeth Faulks Inclusion Support Officers	Julie.Murray@eastdunbarton.gov.uk 0141 578 8565 Elisabeth.Faulks@eastdunbarton.gov.uk 0141 578 8681
Transport for pupils with a disability and/or additional support needs	Business Support	Shared Services Manager 0141 578 3221

Appendix 3

Access and Inclusion Advisory Group (AIAG) which comprises core members and advisory members:

Core

- | | |
|-------------------|-------------|
| ○ Andrea Blair | Health |
| ○ Lorna Hood | Health |
| ○ Sarah Breslin | Social Work |
| ○ Carol Bowie | Education |
| ○ Jackie Swan | Education |
| ○ Maureen MacLeod | Education |
| ○ Lorraine More | ICT |
| ○ Gavin Haire | ICT |

Advisory

- | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| ○ LSC Primary | Nicola Hynes |
| ○ PT SfL Secondary | Fiona Curran |
| ○ PT SfL Secondary | Gillian Gold |
| ○ PT LCR Primary | Shauna Cuthbertson |
| ○ Nursery Mainstream | Leona Stewart |
| ○ Nursery Special | Leigh Bruce |
| ○ DHT Merkland | Amanda Braid |
| ○ L& C Teacher Merkland | Gillian Morrison |
| ○ HT Gartconner | Anna Marie McIntosh |
| ○ DHT Turnbull | Colette Bray |
| ○ Early Years Manager | Sheena Fraser |
| ○ Principal EP | Gillian Dury |
| ○ Asset Management | Allan Bauers |
| ○ PSIP | Simon Mair |
| ○ EO | Jan Pollok |
| ○ Occupational Therapy | Tahnee Conn |
| ○ School nurse | Mari Hall (Campsie View) |
| ○ S< (Team Lead) | Michelle Paton |

This document can be provided in large print, Braille or on CD and can be translated into other community languages. Please contact the Council's Communication Team at:

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