



ACCESSIBILITY STRATEGY  
2017-2020  
(Special Educational Needs and Disability)

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## PART 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE ACCESSIBILITY STRATEGY 2017-2020

### Introduction

Darlington Borough Council is committed to ensuring that the Council meets and, where practicable, exceeds its requirements under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act (the Act) 2010. The Council has therefore researched and developed an Accessibility Strategy for the schools for which it is responsible<sup>1</sup> therefore this strategy applies to all maintained schools, which includes maintained nursery schools and the pupil referral unit. The Pupil Referral Unit provides education for vulnerable children and young people unable to attend a mainstream school.

In researching and developing this strategy, Darlington Borough Council has met its statutory duties under:

- Equality Act 2010
- Reasonable adjustments duty (schedule 13 of the Equality Act 2010)
- Children and Families Act 2014
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) regulations 2014
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice January 2015
- Supporting children and young people at school with medical conditions (DfE September 2014)

Please see the additional guidance in Appendix 2.

### Sustainable Community Strategy ‘One Darlington: Perfectly Placed’

The local Sustainable Community Strategy ‘One Darlington: Perfectly Placed’ sets out the overall vision for Darlington up to 2026. It sets the direction for the various organisations within the One Darlington Partnership, and how by working together we can make the borough an even better place to live and work. It was first drawn up in 2008, but since then the economic environment in which we all operate has changed dramatically. The current plan aims to respond in positive and innovative ways to the impact of economic change on local businesses, public services and the wellbeing of local people. All of the outcomes that the plan aims to achieve focus on creating and maintaining a good quality of life by and for everyone in Darlington (One Darlington), and about making Darlington the best possible place to live and work (Perfectly Placed).

Our vision for children and young people within Darlington is that each and every one has the “**Best Start in Life**”. We recognise that in order to achieve this we need to provide services that meet the needs of children and young people and ensure that they are protected from harm, have their welfare safeguarded and promoted and receive help and support tailored to their individual needs.

#### **VISION**

Our vision for all children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities is that they have the right support and opportunities at the right time so that they become resilient, happy adults.

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<sup>1</sup> Four Local Authority maintained schools, 2 nursery schools and Pupil Referral Unit.

## **Draft Strategy for Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) 2019-2022**

Darlington's Draft SEND Strategy 2019-2022 for improving outcomes for children and young people with SEND 0-25 giving them the 'best start in life' outlines the vision and key priorities for supporting Darlington's children and young people with SEND and their families.

This is set within the national context and our statutory requirement to meet the needs of children and young people under the requirements of the Children and Families Act 2014 and our local context with the rising numbers of children who have a range of complex needs and the need to provide high quality and responsive services within financial constraints.

Darlington is fully committed to the children and young people with SEND and their families and strives to ensure that they receive the highest quality provision wherever possible.

### **Guiding set of principles**

This strategy was reviewed and updated following consultation in 2017. Darlington Borough Council was given some key messages which underpin this strategy which are encompassed within the following set of guiding principles.

- **Inclusion:**  
Equality and diversity should be actively promoted and celebrated within all schools to maximise inclusion. Policies and practice should develop awareness and understanding for children, young people and their parents/carers of differences and to **remove barriers and potential barriers** to participation and achievement to which all children and young people are entitled
- **Access and quality:**  
A range of high quality services should be available to children, young people and their families at the **time that they need them and in places that make sense to them**. Children and young people should be supported in the context of their own families and local communities/services unless it is not safe or appropriate to do so
- **Prevention and early intervention:**  
Intervening early, particularly in the early stages of a child's life, where appropriate Darlington Borough Council will endeavour to achieve
  - the early identification of children and young people's needs
  - early intervention to support them
  - collaboration between education, health and social care services to provide support
- **Listening, active participation and partnership:**  
Children and young people (**Pupil Voice**) and their families should be active participants in designing, planning and reviewing the services that they receive. Agencies will work in partnership with them and each other to promote self-alliance
- **Safeguarding:** agencies will work with each other and their families to ensure that children and young people are kept safe
- **Rights and Responsibilities:** agencies will work with children, young people and their families in a way which ensures their rights and responsibilities are clearly recognised and promoted

## Definition of Disability

The definition of disability is set out in the Equality Act 2010 and states that a disabled person is someone who has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect<sup>2</sup> on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities.

This definition includes children and young people with physical, sensory, intellectual or mental impairments, those with learning difficulties, autism, speech language and communication needs, severe dyslexia, diabetes and epilepsy.

Within this context we will see and value the child or young person, not his or her disability and in doing so endeavour to break down barriers by promoting informed understanding of what a child or young person can do. Importantly, we will seek to overcome barriers to learning.

The special educational needs and disability code of practice 0-25, states that 'A child or young person has special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.

A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she:

- has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or
- has a disability which prevents or hinders him or 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

## Darlington's Local Offer

The Local Offer sets out in one place the support available to families of children and young people with SEND in Darlington. To ensure the effectiveness of the local offer, the Local Authority:

- encourages educational settings to link their Accessibility Plan and SEND Information Report to the Local Offer
- reviews and updates the Local Offer regularly, responding to feedback from professionals, children and young people and their families
- makes the Local Offer available both online – external link:
- <https://livingwell.darlington.gov.uk/Categories/528> and through distribution of leaflets to a wide range of organisations in Darlington, including health services, social care, education and schools, voluntary organisations, reception areas, and private companies

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<sup>2</sup> at least a year or lifelong

## **PART 2: THE ACCESSIBILITY STRATEGY**

### **1. Scope of the Strategy**

This Accessibility Strategy sets out how the Local Authority will work with schools for which is responsible to:

- increase the extent to which disabled children and young people can participate in the schools' curriculum
- improve the physical environment of schools
- Improve delivery of information to children and young people with disabilities and/or learning difficulties

It is the Local Authority vision that this Strategy provides best practice for which all schools in the borough will benefit.

#### **1.1 Increasing participation in the school curriculum**

Schools are responsible for providing a broad and well balanced curriculum including the wider curriculum such as enrichment activities and school trips. The Local Authority will support and encourage schools to:

- provide training and awareness raising opportunities for staff, governors and parents/carers
- share good practice across schools
- set suitable learning challenges
- respond to disabled children and young people's diverse learning needs
- overcome potential and perceived barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of disabled children and young people
- ensure that schools are aware of support services that provide advice to schools and staff
- provide specialist help where possible to identify ways forward in increasing the inclusion of all disabled children and young people
- Schools should also consider the implications of accessibility for disabled parents and carers

#### **1.2 Improving the physical environment of schools**

Physical environment includes the school buildings and facilities as well as physical aids to access education. The Local Authority will support schools to identify and address, where practicable, the following:

- making reasonable adjustments to enable better physical access to the school, its' classrooms and activities
- rearranging of room space or changing the layout of classrooms to create extra physical space/opportunities to move around where needed
- the needs of children and young people with complex physical impairments who use wheelchairs to move around the school
- children and young people with less complex physical impairments who are ambulant but still require adaptations or adjustments to the school environment
- children and young people with a sensory impairment or other difficulty requiring adaptations to the school environment or the presentation of information in appropriate formats
- children and young people who for various reasons require toilet and changing facilities
- consider and plan for the needs of future disabled children and young people where practicable
- where a distinct, unusual or specific impact is likely to affect disabled children and young people, then a full Disability Impact Assessment is desirable

In the case of the Local Authority funded capital works, Darlington Borough Council will take every opportunity to explore the viability of going beyond obligations and duties in striving to eliminate all barriers faced by disabled children and young people, and to meet their needs.

### **1.3 Improving the delivery of information**

The School Information (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 details the minimum requirements for information which must be provided on school websites and reproduced as a paper copy without charge on request by parents/carers.

School websites must be reviewed annually and include:

- name, postal address and telephone number of the school and the name of the person to whom enquiries should be addressed
- admission arrangements for the school, including any selection or oversubscription criteria or guidance on how to access such information on the Local Authority website
- information as to where and how parents/carers may access the most recent school inspection report, key stage 2 and key stage 4 results and school performance tables
- Information about the school curriculum, details of any reading schemes and lists of any courses offered which lead to qualifications e.g. GCSEs
- the school's behaviour policy
- the school's policy for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities
- the school's allocation from the pupil premium grant, plans for its expenditure and details of how the previous allocation was utilised and the impact on attainment for the children and young people in respect of whom the funding was allocated
- the school's complaints procedure
- it is the school's responsibility to consult with parents/carers, and consider needs in order to meet above regulations

The Local Authority will work in partnership with schools and other agencies to provide access for children and young people with specific impairments or disabilities to a range of human, paper and electronic sources of information which may include as a minimum:

- the use of the development of appropriate formats to ensure that information is accessible by all, regardless of a child or young person's disability, for example, written material being produced in a minimum of 12 point and in a plain font such as Arial. This may not be sufficient for some visually impaired individuals and advice should be sought on the production of more accessible written material
- easy read formats which delivers information using large print with illustrations and can be supported by audio
- language is free from jargon and straightforward
- provision of specialist access equipment for children and young people with severe communication difficulties including members of the Deaf community
- handouts/timetables
- development and management of an accessible website

## 2. School Accessibility Plans

Just as Section 10 of the Equality Act requires local authorities to prepare an Accessibility Strategy, it also requires that schools' responsible bodies produce Accessibility Plans. This Strategy and Accessibility Plan template<sup>3</sup> aim to support all schools in being able to meet this duty in writing and publishing their plan.

Schools have a statutory duty to develop and implement their own Strategies (including development of Accessibility Plans)<sup>4</sup>, setting out how they are going to meet the needs of children with and young people with disabilities to enable them to access the curriculum<sup>5</sup> and to make their learning and studying environment enrichment<sup>6</sup> activities and all educational visits both on and off school sites as accessible as possible.

Accessibility Plans must be published on-line, which should include details of how they support the above objectives. The Accessibility Plan can either be a freestanding document or be part of another document (such as the school development plan), in this later case this must be clearly signposted from the school's website. The Accessibility Plan must be reviewed every three years. Further support to do so is found in Appendix 4.

## 3. External Resources

Darlington Borough Council provides guidance and support to schools through:

- development of Special Educational Need graduated response 'ranges' guidance for SENCOs and schools/services to assess and identify the needs of pupils and to put into place the appropriate support. They describe the pupil's needs and provide suggestions for the types of interventions that will be required within each of the SEND Code of Practice broad areas of need
- provision of specialist equipment according to the Local Authority policy
- the Local Asset Management Plan Agreement which is a shared agreement of schools asset management priorities between the maintained school/setting and the Local Authority
- allocation of school condition improvement funding for maintained non-VA schools which is agreed with schools on an annual basis
- commissioning of specialist SEND places in special schools, and resource bases in mainstream schools that specialise in Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Speech Language and Communication Needs and Cognition and Learning needs. We also have a specialist provision for in-reach water therapy
- provision of advisory teacher and teaching assistants outreach support to all schools that supports schools graduated response for children and young people, specifically with social, communication and language needs, including ASD, cognition and learning needs
- training through outreach services all schools have fully trained ASD Leads whose role is to embed good practice in their setting in order to meet the needs of pupils who have autism or who are identified as having social communication difficulties
- specialist teachers within a Low Incidence Needs Service that provides support for children and young people with visual and hearing impairments
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<sup>3</sup> Part 4 sets out a draft template of an Accessibility Plan that outlines the duties of Schools set out in schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

<sup>4</sup> The Department for Education (DfE) has stated that fewer than 50% of schools have Accessibility Plans. Source: National Child and Maternal Health Intelligence Network accessed 22 February 2017

<sup>5</sup> There are statutory programmes of study and attainment targets for physical education at key stages 1 to 4. Sport is included in the definition of physical education.

<sup>6</sup> Activities outside of the core curriculum including any sporting/physical activity.

- a physical needs advisor (qualified occupational therapist) provides support to schools to conduct environmental assessments, and provides moving and handling training and risk assessments in the school environment
- the Local Authority SEND partnership officer who provides ongoing training for School SEN co-ordinators including graduated response ranges
- the Darlington Life Stages Service can support disabled children and young people with a learning disability and /or physical disability aged 0-25 years. Experienced social care coordinators in the team work with children and young people and their parents/carers, as well as partner agencies to improve outcomes for children and young people who have a variety of needs
- the educational psychology service provides advice and guidance to educational establishments

#### **4. Monitoring and review**

Darlington Borough Council is responsible for keeping its Accessibility Strategy under review during the period to which it relates (2017-2020) and if necessary to revise it implementing any changes in relevant legislation. This will be achieved annually through means of:

- Monitoring the number of schools which meet the minimum standards for accessibility
- Monitoring admissions to maintained schools
- Feedback from parents/carers
- Feedback from disabled children and young people
- Monitoring outcomes from equality impact assessments

This strategy is the responsibility of the Education and Inclusion Service within the People Directorate. It will be monitored by officers within that service and monitored by the Education Senior Management Team and governed by the Children's and Adult Services Directorate Leadership Team. An Annual Report will be provided to the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee.

In its first year of monitoring the key messages arising for this Strategy are:

##### **Awareness**

- There is strong evidence of good inclusive practice and educational settings have been encouraged to develop case studies to support these

##### **Curriculum Access**

- All staff benefit from regular updated training in order to understand and act on the additional needs of children and young people with SEND
- Children and young people with SEND want to be included in trips and clubs

##### **Physical access**

- Some educational settings have older buildings with particular access issues (eg no lifts) and are working towards identifying creative solutions to maximise access for children and young people with SEND

##### **Information and advice**

- Ongoing opportunities for participation and co-production with parents and children and young people to inform developments

## **PART 3: APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 – Definitions

Appendix 2 – Legal Framework

Appendix 3 – Data

Appendix 4 – Guidance and Best Practice

## **Appendix 1 - Definitions**

### **Settings/Schools**

All maintained schools, maintained nurseries and the pupil referral unit for which Darlington Borough Council is responsible.

### **Discrimination**

Public bodies, specifically schools this instance, must not disadvantage a disabled child or young person as a direct consequence of their disability. As required by the Equality Act 2010 schools must not implement changes which apply to all children and young people but could have a significant adverse effect on disabled children and young people.

### **Children and young people**

Children and young people spoken of in this strategy are of compulsory school age and in attendance in a maintained setting, i.e. nursery school, school, or pupil referral unit, and where a nursery school provides childcare and education for 2 to 4 year olds.

### **Compulsory school age**

#### **Start of compulsory school age**

A child reaches compulsory school age on or after their fifth birthday. If a child turns five between 1 September and 31 December, they are of compulsory school age on 31 December. If a child turns five between 1 January and 31 March they are of compulsory school age on 31 March. If a child turns five between 1 April and 31 August they are of compulsory school age on 31 August.

#### **End of compulsory school age**

A child can leave school on the last Friday in June if they are 16 by the end of the summer holidays. Then, they must do one of the following until they are 18:

- stay in full-time education, for example at a college
- start an [apprenticeship](#) or [traineeship](#)
- spend 20 hours or more a week working or volunteering, while in part-time education or training

## **Appendix 2 - Legal framework**

Darlington Borough Council has met its legal obligations relating to the Accessibility Strategy under the following legislation:

- Equality Act 2010
- Reasonable adjustments duty (schedule 13 of the Equality Act 2010)
- Children and Families Act 2014
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) regulations 2014
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice January 2015
- Supporting children and young people at school with medical conditions (DfE September 2014)

A brief overview of the key points from each piece of legislation which have been considered in developing the Accessibility Strategy are given below.

### **Equality Act 2010**

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act explains that local authorities in England and Wales must prepare an accessibility strategy for the schools for which it is responsible. An Accessibility Strategy is intended to:

- Increase the extent to which disabled children and young people can participate in the school curriculum
- Improve the physical environment of schools for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled children and young people are able to take advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the schools
- Improve the delivery to disabled children and young people of information which is readily accessible to children and young people who are not disabled

Darlington Borough Council (as the local authority) must keep its accessibility strategy under review following its implementation during the period to which it relates (usually three years) and, if necessary, revise it.

The Equality Act 2010, Schedule 10, also states that a relevant inspection may extend to the performance by the responsible body of its functions in relation to the preparation, publication, review, revision and implementation of its Accessibility Strategy.

The law on disability discrimination is different from the rest of the Equality Act 2010 in that it only works in one direction, e.g. it protects disabled people but not people who are not disabled. This means that schools are allowed to treat disabled children and young people more favourably than non-disabled children and young people. The disability equality duties state that the Local Authority must:

- Promotes equality of opportunity
- Eliminates unlawful discrimination
- Eliminates disability – related harassment
- Promotes positive attitudes towards disabled people
- Encourages participation by disabled people in public life
- Take steps to meet disabled people's needs by doing things you would not normally do for non-disabled people

School governing bodies and proprietors **must** also publish information about the arrangements for the admission of disabled children/young people, the steps taken to prevent disabled children/young people being treated less favourably than others, the facilities provided to assist access of disabled children/young people, and their accessibility plans.

Where a child or young person is covered by SEN and disability legislation, reasonable adjustments and access arrangements should be considered as part of SEN planning and review. Where school governors are publishing information about their arrangements for disabled children and young people, this should be brought together with the information required under the Children and Families Act 2014.

Positive Action provisions allow schools to target measures that are designed to alleviate disadvantages experienced by, or to meet, the particular needs of pupils with particular protected characteristics.

### **Reasonable adjustments duty**

The reasonable adjustments duty is part of the Equality Act 2010 and came into force on 1 October 2010 (as part of the original Act). The Equality Duty came into force later, 5 April 2011, but is still part of the original Act.

Under the Equality Duty 2011 the duty to make reasonable adjustments in schools is as follows:

- If a school takes an action which places a disabled children and young people at a disadvantage when compared to other children and young people who do not have disabilities, then the school must take reasonable steps to try and avoid that disadvantage
- Schools will also have to consider reasonable adjustments for disabled children and young people generally – both current and future. The duty to make reasonable adjustments is an anticipatory duty so schools should not wait until a disabled children or young person arrives before making or planning to make reasonable adjustments
- Schools are not obliged to anticipate and make adjustments for all potential disabilities and need only consider general reasonable adjustments e.g. producing documents in a large font
- Schools will be required to consider the reasonableness of adjustments based on each individual case

The Equality Act does not set out what would be a reasonable adjustment or a list of factors to consider in determining what is reasonable. Schools may consider financial or other resources required for an adjustment, its effectiveness, the effect on other children and young people, health and safety requirements and whether aids should be made available from other agencies.

A reasonable adjustment should be decided by agreement between the Local Authority, the school and parents/carers.

## **Children and Families Act 2014**

There are four key principles in the Act for Local Authorities:

- to consider the views, wishes and feelings of the child, young person and their parents
- to involve the child, young person and their parents in decisions that affect them
- to give the child, young person and their parents the information and support they need to be involved in decision making
- to support the child, young person and their parents to achieve the best possible outcomes

The Local Authority is required to arrange for children or young people with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) and their parents to have information and advice about these. This should include information on health and social care and personal budgets.

Local Authorities need to develop and publish a Local Offer setting out the support and services available for local children and young people with SEND.

They should also talk to them about developing their education, health and care (EHC) plan, including the schools and colleges they can choose and how they can use personal budgets.

All parents, children and young people should have access to impartial information, advice and support about SEND which includes different options.

The Act includes the right of parents or children and young people to challenge decisions made by the Local Authority in relation to their education, health and care. The Act details how Local Authorities should identify ways of dealing with any disagreements and what further action parents or children and young people can take to resolve any disagreements.

The Local Authority has specific additional responsibilities for children and young people with SEND who are:

- looked after (in care)
- care leavers
- in need of additional social care in addition to special educational support and services
- educated away from home (in another Local Authority Area) educated at home
- in education somewhere other than at school
- in hospital
- in custody or detention
- the children of parents in the armed forces

## **SEN and Disability Code of Practice 2014**

The principles which underpin the Code of Practice are:

- the views, wishes and feelings of the child or young person, and their parents
- the importance of the child or young person, and their parents, participating as fully as possible in decisions; and being provided with the information and support necessary to enable participation in those decisions
- the need to support the child or young person, and their parents, in order to facilitate the development of the child or young person and to help them achieve the best possible educational and other outcomes, preparing them effectively for adulthood

The local offer should reflect the services that are available. The local offer must include provision in the local authority area. It must also include provision outside the local area that the local authority expects is likely to be used by children and young people with SEND or disabilities.

Parents, children and young people must be involved in the development and review of the Local Offer. This includes:

- Collaboration between education, health and social care services to provide support. Schools must use their best endeavours to offer high quality teaching which is differentiated and personalised for all children and young people and in addition high quality special educational provision - that which is additional to or different from what is provided to all – for those who need it
- A child or young person who does not have an EHC plan must be educated in mainstream setting except for specific circumstances

Local authorities are required to arrange for children and young people with SEN or disabilities and their parents to be provided with information and advice about matters relating to their SEND, including matters related to health and social care.

The SEND Code of Practice emphasises that educational settings including further education establishments must not have discriminatory admissions policies. Where a child or young person has SEN but does not have an Education, Health and Care Plan they must be educated in a mainstream setting except in specific circumstances set out in the Code of Practice.

### **Supporting Children and Young People at School with Medical Conditions (DfE September 2014)**

Local Authorities are required to provide support, advice and guidance, including suitable training for school staff, to ensure that the support specified within individual healthcare plans can be delivered effectively. They should work with schools to support children and young people with medical conditions to attend full time. Where children and young people would not receive a suitable education in a mainstream school because of their health needs then the Local Authority has a duty to make other arrangements.

The intention is to ensure that children and young people at school with medical conditions are properly supported so that they have full access to education, including school trips and physical education. Governing bodies are expected to ensure that arrangements are in place in schools to support children and young people with medical conditions and detail those requirements.

## Appendix 3 – Data

### Darlington Context

The number of children and young people under the age of 18 living in Darlington is 22,627 (2015 mid-year) which equates to 21% of the current population. Over the last five years, birth rates in Darlington have fallen from 1,357 in 2010 to 1,226 in 2014.

Children and young people from minority ethnic groups account for 6% of all children living in the area, compared with 22% in the country as a whole. The largest minority ethnic groups of children and young people in the area are Asian and mixed. The proportion of residents that identified themselves as Gypsy and Travellers in the 2011 Census was three times higher than the national average but equates to only 0.3% of the population.

The proportion of children and young people with English as an additional language in primary schools is 5% (the national average is 19%), in secondary schools it is 4% (the national average is 14%). The unemployment claimant count in Darlington for 16-64 year olds stood at 3.5% of the resident population in March 2017, compared with a Great Britain average of 2.0%. However the figure hides an underlying issue regarding youth unemployment.

The claimant count in Darlington for 18-24 year olds stood at 6.6% of the resident population in March 2017, compared with a Great Britain average of 2.9%, over double the national average and just under double that of the 16-64 year old cohort in Darlington.

[Source: Nomis Labour Market Profile]

### Prevalence of Disability in Children in Darlington

Children with long-term disability are a diverse group. Some will have highly complex needs requiring multi-agency support across health, social services and education – the most extreme example perhaps being those who are technology-dependent. Other children will require substantially less support, although nevertheless have a long-term disability.

There have been many attempts to provide accurate estimates of disability in children and young people. Some of these have provided condition based estimates based on the literature and others have utilised specific survey data. Information on self-reported (by the parent) long-standing illness or disability is provided from the General Household Survey.

Routine data are collected by local authorities on children with Statement of Special Educational Need (Statement), and Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP), but this does not reflect the spectrum of disability and is only a weak proxy measure for severity. There is ongoing work to define disability in the context of the child's participation in usual activities, using questionnaires to families and children. If this approach were to be adopted nationally (for local implementation) then meaningful comparisons could start to be made.<sup>7</sup>

The number of disabled children and young people in England is estimated to be between 288,000 and 513,000 by the Thomas Coram Research Unit (TCRU). The mean percentage of disabled children and young people in English local authorities has likewise been estimated to be between 3.0 percent and 5.4 percent. If applied to the population of Darlington this would equate to between 641 and 1,153 children or young people, experiencing some form of disability.

The health of children and young people, Office for National Statistics (ONS), 2004 calculated prevalence rates using two sources – the General Household Survey (GHS) and the Family Fund

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<sup>7</sup> Source: National Child and Maternal Health Intelligence Network accessed 22 February 2017

Trust (FFT) register of applicants. Much of the following analysis and observation is taken from this document. The resulting age-specific estimates<sup>8</sup> are as follows for Darlington.

- Age-specific estimates (population aged 0 to 19 years) with long-standing illness or mild disability - 8,998. Children aged 0 to 4 years display lower prevalence than children in the higher age groups
- Age-specific estimates (population aged 0 to 19 years) of severely disabled population – 36. The rates are higher for children in the 0 to 4 age group

**For the population aged 0 to 19 years of age (estimates), with long-standing illness or disability**

Boys aged 0-4	462
Boys aged 5-9	800
Boys aged 10-14	620
Boys aged 15-19	594

Girls aged 0-4	416
Girls aged 5-9	522
Girls aged 10-14	589
Girls age 15-19	496

**Age-specific estimates (population aged 0 to 19 years) of severely disabled population**

Boys aged 0-4	5
Boys aged 5-9	4
Boys aged 10-14	2
Boys aged 15-19	1

Girls aged 0-4	3
Girls aged 5-9	1
Girls aged 10-14	1
Girls age 15-19	1

**Prevalence rates by socio-economic background**

The prevalence rates of children and adolescents with mild disabilities were found<sup>9</sup> to be higher for those from semi-skilled manual and unskilled manual family backgrounds. The prevalence of children with mild disabilities from professional family backgrounds were lower in comparison to the other socio-economic groups. The rate of severe disability was found to be greatest amongst children from semi-skilled manual family backgrounds, whilst the lowest rates were for children from professional and managerial family background.

**Children with Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND)**

Darlington has a higher than average number of children with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) when compared with both the regional and national averages and has more pupils with EHCPs in Special Schools than in mainstream settings.

Across all ages the most common type of SEN primary need for those with SEN Support or EHCPs is Moderate Learning Difficulty (MLD), followed by Social Emotional Mental Health (SEMH) and Speech Language and Communication Needs (SLCN). The numbers identified with SEMH are higher than the national average in both the primary and secondary sectors. There is also a higher than average incidence of MLD pupils in special schools. SLCN is the most significant SEN need in the primary sector for those with SEN Support or EHCPs and is above the national average.

<sup>8</sup> Source: National Child and Maternal Health Intelligence Network accessed 22 February 2017 unpublished analysis of Family Fund Trust statistics

<sup>9</sup> Source: National Child and Maternal Health Intelligence Network 2011 accessed 22 February 2017

For those with EHCPs, Autism Spectrum Disorder is the most significant need (32% of all primary EHCPs). MLD and Specific Learning Difficulty (SPLD) are the most significant SEN need for those with SEN Support or EHCPs in the secondary sector, closely followed by SEMH.

For those with EHCPs SEMH is the most significant need (27.6% of all secondary EHCPs) and is double the national average. SEMH accounts for 28.8% of all EHCP pupils in Special Schools closely followed by ASD at 25.6%.

Special Educational Needs remains more prevalent in boys and pupils eligible for free school meals and the number of Early Years children receiving SEN support is higher than the national average, whilst the number with EHCPs is lower.

Source: The Darlington Strategic Needs Analysis of children and young people with Special Educational Needs (<https://livingwell.darlington.gov.uk/Documents/Download/137/SEN-Strategic-Analysis>)

## Appendix 4 – Guidance and Best Practice

 [SEND Code of Practice \(DfE July 2014 - updated in January 15\) PDF format 3.32MB](#)

The Special Educational Needs and Disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years

 [SEND Regulations \(DfE 2015\) \(PDF format 210KB\)](#)

Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014

 [Statutory Guidance on Supporting Children and young people at School with Medical Conditions \(PDF format 402KB\)](#)

Statutory guidance to support Children and young people with medical needs in schools

### DFE Guidance (external link)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-area-send-inspection-framework>

The framework for the inspection of local areas' effectiveness in identifying and meeting the needs of Children and young people who have special educational needs and/or disabilities

### DFE Guidance (external link)

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/what-maintained-schools-must-publish-online>

The DFE guidance for maintained schools for **publication of the Accessibility Plan in compliance with [paragraph 3 of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010](#)**. This can be provided as part of the SEND information report on school's policy for children and young people with SEND.

### DFE Guidance (external link)

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/what-academies-free-schools-and-colleges-should-publish-online>

The DFE guidance for Academies and free schools to carry out Accessibility Planning for disabled children and young people under the [Equalities Act 2010](#). **The Accessibility Plan can either be a freestanding document or part of another document (such as school development plan).**

### DFE Guidance (external link)

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/410294/Advice\\_on\\_standards\\_for\\_school\\_premises.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/410294/Advice_on_standards_for_school_premises.pdf)

The DFE guidance helps schools and local authorities understand their obligations and duties in relation to:

- the [School Premises Regulations 2012](#)
- part 5 of the revised [Education \(Independent School Standards\) \(England\) Regulations 2010](#), which came into force on 1 January 2013

### Health and Wellbeing Strategy – external link

<https://www.darlington.gov.uk/media/2636/darlington-health-and-wellbeing-plan-as-adopted-by-health-and-wellbeing-board-october-2017.pdf>

Darlington Borough Council's Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2017-2022

**Children and Young People's Plan – external link**

<https://www.darlington.gov.uk/education-and-learning/cypp/>

Darlington Borough Council's Children and Young People's Plan 2017-2022

**Advice on school premises**

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/410294/Advice\\_on\\_standards\\_for\\_school\\_premises.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/410294/Advice_on_standards_for_school_premises.pdf)

DFE Guidance:

Advice on standards for school premises. For local authorities, proprietors, school leaders, school staff and governing bodies

**Public Sector Equality Duty and Human Rights Regulations**

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice-and-guidance/public-sector-equality-duty>

Background to what the Public Sector Equality Duty is, how it came about and why we need it. A PowerPoint presentation is also available to download covering the same.

**School Premises Regulations 2012**, which came into force on 31 October 2012, and Part 5 of the revised Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, which came into force on 1 January 2013.

## **PART 4: EXAMPLE ACCESSIBILITY PLAN TEMPLATE (FOR SETTINGS)**

An Accessibility Plan must show how school access is to be improved for pupils/students, staff and visitors with disabilities in a given timeframe. It must anticipate the need to make reasonable adjustments where ever practicable. This will be provided to schools as a separate document.

### **Example Accessibility Plan (including action plan template)**

#### **Purpose of Plan**

The purpose of this plan is to show how our educational setting intends, over time, to increase accessibility to the physical environment, the curriculum and written information so that all pupils/students with a disability can take full advantage of their education and associated opportunities.

#### **Definition of disability**

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

#### **Key Aims**

To increase and eventually ensure for pupils/students with a disability that they have:

- total access to our setting's environment, curriculum and information and
- full participation in the school community

## Principles

- Compliance with the Equality Act is consistent with the Local Authority's aims and equality and diversity policy and SEN information report
- Our staff recognise their duty under the Equality Act:
  - Not to discriminate against disabled pupils in their admissions and exclusions, and provision of education and associated services
  - Not to treat disabled pupils less favourably
  - To take reasonable steps to avoid putting disabled pupils at a substantial disadvantage
  - To publish an Accessibility Plan
- In performing their duties governors have regard to the Equality Act 2010
- Our school
  - recognises and values the young person's knowledge/parents' knowledge of their child's disability
  - recognises the effect their disability has on his/her ability to carry out activities
  - respects the parents' and child's right to confidentiality
- The school provides all pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum that is differentiated, personalised and age appropriate.
- This Accessibility Plan and SEN Information Report will be linked to the Darlington Local Offer and be available as part of the school Local Offer

**Name and address of school:**

**Head Teacher:**

**Our Actions**

**As a school our priorities are, as set out according to the requirements of the Equality Act 2010:**

**Increasing Access for disabled pupils to the school curriculum**

*This includes teaching and learning and the wider curriculum of the school such as participation in after school clubs, leisure and cultural activities or school visits.*

- **Improving access to the physical environment of the school**

*This includes improvements to the physical environment of the school and physical aids to access education.*

- **Improving the delivery of written information to disabled pupils**

*This will include planning to make written information that is normally provided by the school to its pupils available to disabled pupils. Examples might include handouts, timetables, textbooks and information about school events. The information should take account of pupils' disabilities and pupils' and parents preferred formats and be made available within a reasonable time frame.*

**Financial Planning and control**

The Head Teacher, Senior Leadership Team and the finance committee will review the financial implications of the Accessibility Plan as part of the normal budget review process.

**Accessibility Action Plan Template – add rows as necessary**

Aspire to improve to do more than the minimum, additional best practice

**Compliance with the Equality Act**

<b>Accessibility Outcome</b>	<b>Action to ensure Outcome</b>	<b>Who responsible</b>	<b>Long, medium or short-term</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Notes</b>

**Access to the physical environment - statutory**

<b>Accessibility Outcome</b>	<b>Action to ensure Outcome</b>	<b>Who responsible</b>	<b>Long, medium or short-term</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Notes</b>

**Ensuring inclusion in the school community**

<b>Accessibility Outcome</b>	<b>Action to ensure Outcome</b>	<b>Who responsible</b>	<b>Long, medium or short-term</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Notes</b>

**Access to the curriculum - statutory**

<b>Accessibility Outcome</b>	<b>Action to ensure Outcome</b>	<b>Who responsible</b>	<b>Long, medium or short-term</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Notes</b>

**Access to information advice and guidance - statutory**

<b>Accessibility Outcome</b>	<b>Action to ensure Outcome</b>	<b>Who responsible</b>	<b>Long, medium or short-term</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Notes</b>