

Isle of Wight Council  
**CHILDREN'S SERVICES  
ACCESSIBILITY  
STRATEGY  
2014 - 2018**

## Document Information

<b>Title:</b>	<b>Children's Services Accessibility Strategy</b>
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Final</b>
<b>Current Version:</b>	<b>V5</b>
<b>Author:</b>	Andrew Briggs, Commissioning & Finance Manager for SEND Children's Services Directorate ✉ <a href="mailto:andrew.briggs@iow.gov.uk">andrew.briggs@iow.gov.uk</a> ☎ (01983) 821000 ext 6261
<b>Sponsor:</b>	Steve Crocker, Director of Children's Services Children's Services Directorate ✉ <a href="mailto:steve.crocker@iow.gov.uk">steve.crocker@iow.gov.uk</a> ☎ (01983) 821000
<b>Consultation:</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> March 2015- 20 <sup>th</sup> June 2015 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schools including parents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Via the school newsletter to parents</li> <li>○ Via the school newsletter to those with a disability</li> <li>○ Via the school newsletter to children and young people with impairments</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Chair of Governors</li> <li>• Elected members</li> <li>• Early Help Centres (Children's Centres)</li> <li>• Pre-school providers</li> <li>• Dioceses</li> <li>• Partner agencies e.g. Parents Voice IW</li> <li>• Other professionals e.g. SEND IASS (Parent Partnership), recognised trade union</li> <li>• Local charities who work with disabled young children</li> </ul>
<b>Approved by:</b>	Director of Children's Services
<b>Approval Date:</b>	May 2015
<b>Review Frequency:</b>	Refreshed every one year
<b>Next Review:</b>	December 2018

Version History		
Version	Date	Description
V1	January 2015	Approved
V2	March 2015	Approved
V3	18 May 2015	Approved at EIBMT Hampshire for full consultation
V4	June 2015	Final - Approved
V5	January 2018	Updated

## Contents

1. Document Information	2
2. Contents	3
3. Introduction	4
4. Vision and values	5
5. Information from pupil data and school audits	6
6. Views of those consulted	11
7. The main priorities in the framework strategy	12
8. Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in schools' curriculums	12
9. 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.	15
10. Improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is readily accessible to pupils who are not disabled.	15
11. Making it happen	16
12. Management, co-ordination and implementation	16
13. Accessibility of the strategy itself	17
14. Reviewing the Accessibility strategy	17
15. Appendix 1	18

## Introduction

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

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

- eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act,
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it,
- foster good relations across all characteristics - between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it. The Equality Act covers exactly the same groups of individuals that were protected by the previous legislation. However, the headings of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity are now known as 'protected characteristics'. For more information on the Councils Equality Policy Statement and Guidance please [click here](#) and for our Equality and Diversity pages [click here](#).

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

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

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

## **1A. The purpose and direction of the Isle of Wight Local Authority's strategy: vision and values**

Our vision is to enable **all children and young people** on the Isle of Wight to aspire to and achieve, giving them the basis for a successful life as active members of the community.

Learning is at the heart of delivering that vision and improving the attainment of all children is a key priority for the Isle of Wight. The council acknowledges that the attainment of pupils, including those with impairments needs to be improved. For this reason, raising attainment is a key priority for the Isle of Wight; the partnership with Hampshire Local Authority demonstrates the Council's commitment to improving the attainment of island children and young people. Outside of the family nothing else offers greater opportunities and responsibilities for making sure all children stay safe and healthy, enjoy and achieve and make a positive contribution to their communities in order that they are able to get the most out of life now and into the future. Making learning accessible to all our children in ways that will promote the best outcomes for them is the guiding principle underpinning this strategy.

We want the very best for island children, starting with early years through to their transition into adulthood. Together with our partner agencies in the Isle of Wight's Children's Trust we are working towards achieving this common aim.

There are many challenges for schools and the Local Authority, to ensure that we can deliver the very best education for all children. We need to respond to the changes ahead and to make efficient and cost-effective use of investment opportunities in the context of challenging economic circumstances and in a changing and increasingly more diverse school system of maintained schools and non-maintained academies and free schools.

Our aim is to ensure that children and young people, including those with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities are at the heart of the vision on the island. Our strategy aims to provide the very best education for all our children, delivered as locally as possible to the child's home and local community.

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

### **The Social Model of Disability**

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

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

## **Capacity building in mainstream schools**

As part of the buildings programme and the island's review of its three tier to two tier school reorganisation an extensive consultation took place with communities, schools, young people and families. It took into account the comprehensive review of provision and need for the future. A further review of provision of 11-16 and post 16 school and college places on the island took place during 2015. The decision was to keep the current provision across the island but to support new builds for some of our older schools. This has resulted in several proposed new builds for our secondary provision via the EFA (Education Funding Agency) priority school building programme.

We recognise the importance of taking into account the needs of all children and young people identified as having SEN and Disabilities, the majority of whom receive their education in a mainstream setting. As of Summer 2016, there were 16,772 children that attended school (R-2 to Year 14). Within this cohort there are currently 388 statemented children (2.3%) and 199 with an Educational Health Care Plan (1.2%) [R-2 to Year 14] and of these, 227 attend a special school, this represents 3.5% of children on the island who have a statement/EHCP with 1.4% attending a special school place.

2,396 children within this cohort received SEN Support this represents 14.3% of the cohort.

The island has a good mixture of small, medium and large primary/secondary schools with the majority of children receiving their first choice placement.

There are a further 160 post 16 High Needs places at the IW College and 3 at HTP (Work Based Learning) provider.

## **1B. Information from pupil data and school audits**

### **The nature of schools on the island**

Decisions made by the IW Council on school organisation have enabled provision to be delivered at a number of specialised centres across the island. The decision announced on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2009 provided a framework of primary and secondary education which included trusts and academies. From September 2011 the island adopted the traditional two-tier structure.

This programme of reorganisation provided the opportunity to address some significant issues and barriers to learning in a large number of schools including accessibility for students with disabilities. The process of re-organisation involved extending the age range at both primary and secondary schools to accommodate the additional year groups and the closure of all of our middle schools. Therefore a number of schools with significant access issues have been taken out of use whilst others have been adapted to ensure they meet regulations relating to accessibility of the buildings. Schools and settings themselves are responsible for ensuring the delivery of learning is fully accessible and therefore a key strand of this strategy is to ensure good advice is available to schools to assist them with this.

Every school is required to identify and address the Special Educational Needs (SEN) of the pupils that they support. Our schools on the island have prepared an SEN information report which includes their arrangements for the admission of disabled children, the steps being taken to prevent disabled children from being treated less favourably than others, the facilities provided to enable access to the school for disabled children and their accessibility plan showing how they plan to improve access progressively over time.

The SEN information reports can be found at <http://www.iwight.com/Residents/Schools-and-Learning/Schools/School-Contacts>

During the phase of the re-organisation several primary schools and one secondary school have been re-located into new buildings which are fully compliant with accessible building regulations. The building programme is ongoing with the introduction of a Secondary Free Schools and a Studio School.

### **Early Years, Childcare and school settings**

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

To ensure this happens;

- Schools are required to complete a disability audit and write an Action Plan to increase accessibility over time.
- Local Authorities are required to consult schools and write an Accessibility Strategy for improving accessibility.

The Plans and Strategies must include the following three elements:

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

The island's Early Years Advisory Team provides support and advice to registered and prospective early years education providers to ensure that all children's needs are met and that the standards are continually improving for all. As an immediate priority we will ensure prompt advice and support is provided where an individual child or young person is to be admitted to a school or early years setting. We support the inclusion of all children through the requirement for all providers to have a SENCo working within the setting. The Early Years Advisory Team also offers Early Years providers (settings within the Private Maintained, Voluntary Sector and Schools) access to training and networking events as part of their continuous professional development.

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

### Key Principles for Inclusion

- All children and young people will have access to a high quality broad, balanced and relevant curriculum that affords them the opportunity to achieve well and experience success.
- With appropriate training, strategies and support nearly all children and young people can be successfully included in mainstream provision.

- Where children and young people are in special provision, opportunities will be sought for inclusion at a later stage or for them to access some aspects of mainstream provision.
- The views of children and young people will be taken seriously and independence will be fostered.
- Consultation and working in partnership with parents and carers will be seen as a priority.
- Early Years and childcare providers, schools and the Local Authority, working in partnership with Health and Social Services will actively seek to remove barriers to learning and participation.
- Support and guidance from education, health and social service personnel will be offered to early years and childcare providers and schools to prevent difficulties arising, ensure early identification, effective intervention, monitoring and evaluation.
- All new provision will be fully inclusive.

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

The Early Years SEN Advisory Team works alongside the Workforce Development Team to ensure training opportunities are planned for and offered to Early Years Education Providers taking into account of the needs of the children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

Children with significant additional needs are offered a home based Portage service. The Portage Team are available to support the child's transition to a Registered Early Years Education Provider. If the provider feels they require additional funding to support a child with SEN above the provision of the Disability Access Fund they can apply for Early Years SEN Funding. Requests for equipment recommended by education or health care professionals can be made in the same way. All paperwork and guidance for this can be found on the Isle of Wight Council A-Z pages.

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

A request for support from the Early Years SEN Advisory Team can be made by appropriate professionals through a completed referral form that can be accessed through the Isle of Wight Council A-Z pages.

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

Every school and Registered Early Years Education Provider is also required to identify and address the Special Educational Needs (SEN) of the children they support. Schools have all prepared an SEN information report which includes their arrangements for the admission of disabled children, the steps being taken to prevent disabled children from being treated less favourably than others, the facilities provided to enable access to the school for disabled children and their accessibility plan showing how they plan to improve access progressively over time.



The SEN information reports can be found at <http://www.iwight.com/Residents/Schools-and-Learning/Schools/School-Contacts>

### **Special schools on the Isle of Wight**

It is the Local Authority's policy to integrate students with disabilities in mainstream settings where this is appropriate for their learning. However, some young people have needs that are so significant and complex that they require specialist facilities and resources. This is provided at Medina House for our primary sector and St George's for the secondary sector.

We also have four specialist provisions that provide support to pupils with an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Two of these provisions cater for our primary sector and are based at Greenmount Primary School and Broadlea Primary School; each has six full-time places. For pupils in our secondary sector, these provisions have 12 full-time equivalent places each and are based at Carisbrooke College and Sandown Bay Academy. In addition to providing pupils with specialist support, these specialist provisions provide opportunities for integration so that pupils and students can also experience a mainstream setting alongside their peer group, when appropriate and where this is in the best interests of the pupil.

The Local Authority is in discussion to develop a Resource Provision for pupils with Social Emotional and Mental Health from April 2018.

From April 2017 a Communication and Language (CAL) team was set up, in place of the language resource provisions formerly based Broadlea and Greenmount Primary Schools for children with severe speech, language and communication needs who require an intensive level of specialist support in order to access the curriculum. This service provides universal, targeted and specialist levels of support to children and their wider learning environments. This involves collaborative and multi-disciplinary assessment, bespoke packages of support around each child, training and integrated working alongside school staff, input around target setting sought from parents, school and the child, with an intensive focus on working closely with school to improve outcomes for children with severe speech, language and communication needs. The CAL team are also outreach support for children across our island primary schools.

### **Accessibility capital funding**

For a number of years the Isle of Wight have worked closely with schools to identify projects to support accessibility in all schools. However, whilst the Local Authority does not receive a separate capital allocation for accessibility works a budget has been allocated within the Children's Services Capital Programme to improve the physical access to schools.

Throughout School Reorganisation the Local Authority commissioned a large number of projects to ensure sufficient places were available and also included within the programme any urgent accessibility issues. A total of four new build Primary Schools and one Secondary School have been completed over the last 3 years and are all fully accessible. The Island is also very fortunate enough to have three secondary schools being rebuilt through the Priority Schools Building Programme which will provide fully compliant facilities for all students. These will all be completed by September 2019. In addition to these projects significant improvements have been made on general accessibility in Schools with a total of £195k of investment over the last 5 years from the Schools Access Initiative funding allocation.

The majority of these projects are pupil led requirements and are carried out as and when required. Works have addressed a number of issues of various size and complexity in schools, with allocations ranging from as little as £9K up to £45K. This funding has been allocated to ensure that students have unrestricted access to the curriculum. It has supported extensions to and refurbishment of existing buildings providing ramps, automatic doors, accessible toilets and medical facilities. Where possible accessibility works are integrated within any capital projects undertaken.

As an example most recently three sites had full compliant disabled changing facilities installed costing in the region of £20k.

Another example of the projects commissioned by the Local Authority was to install a fully accessible WC and changing facility at one of our schools. This was an urgent request and was specific to the needs of one pupil. It included the creation of the space, hoist system, changing bed, and medical storage facilities. The project cost £45k and was completed within 3 weeks of the notification to the Local Authority. This project was an excellent example of how closely we work with our Schools to address accessibility issues within a school building.

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

**Element 1** - Schools receive money for each pupil who attends based on actual pupil numbers called the Age Weighted Pupil Unit (AWPU). Some of this money may be used for general SEN provision including the cost of providing the SENCo.

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

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

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

**Element 3** – Where a school has a child who needs a high level of provision, they can request 'Top Up Funding' from the Local Authority which is in addition to Element 1 & 2 funding they receive.

## Post 16

The Education Funding Agency funds post 16 education and through close working with the Local Authority has allocated the following High Needs (Element 3) post 16 places across the island for 2017/18:

Post 16 Provider	High Needs places 16-18	High Neds places 19-25
Isle of Wight College	98	62
Carisbrooke College	4	0
Cowes Enterprise College	4	0
Medina College	5	0
Sandown Bay Academy	6	0
Ryde Academy	3	0
Christ the King College	5	0
St Catherine's School	29	0
St George's	40	0
HTP	3	0
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>197</b>	<b>62</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>259</b>	

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

In October 2013 the Local Authority invited the IW College to become a "centre of excellence" for Learners with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities (LLDD) post 16 and to set up a discrete building to include the specialist facilities required to meet their needs. The proposal was to bid for DGCF (Demographic Growth Capital Fund) funding for a discrete block for LLDD students to be built on the College campus in close proximity to the Learning Resources Centre, which houses the current LLDD department.

The Local Authority were notified at the end of 2013 of the successful bid which provided funding of £2.4m, for a building consisting of two storeys with a size of 1,180sqm based on forecast growth of 55 LLDD students by 2016/17. Numbers of young people with Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties (PMLD) are growing on the island and the new centre would ensure that students have the option of staying on the Island near their families, rather than attending a residential facility on the mainland or remaining at school.

The new resource centre (Pathways) opened in September 2015

## 1C. Views of those consulted during the development of the accessibility strategy

This accessibility strategy was developed initially in draft and was shared with a range of stakeholders. Copies of the draft strategy were made available to the groups listed below and the views collected helped to shape revisions to the strategy.

- Schools including parents
  - Via the school newsletter to parents
  - Via the school newsletter to those with a disability
  - Via the school newsletter to children and young people with impairments
- Chair of Governors
- Elected members
- Early Help Centres (Children's Centres)
- Pre-school providers
- Dioceses
- Partner agencies e.g. Parents Voice IW
- Other professionals e.g. SEND IASS (Parent Partnership), recognised trade union
- Local charities who work with disabled young children

### Consultation feedback

The following questions were asked as part of the consultation:

- Q1. Does the strategy cover all aspects of accessibility?  
 Q2. Are there any areas that need further emphasis?  
 Q3. Are there any areas that need to be corrected / modified?  
 Q4. Any other comments/suggestions/feedback

As a result of feedback from consultation based on the four questions, more emphasis has been placed on:

- Clarifying the number of places at our four specialist schools for Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and speech and language provision (1B Special schools on the Isle of Wight)
- Removing any statements that could identify a specific pupil and getting permission from the schools/parents/carers if this was difficult to achieve. (1B Accessibility capital funding)
- Explaining how the schools communicated with parents/carers/children (1C Views of those consulted)
- Adding full name against any abbreviation/acronym (2A Service Delivery & Special Schools )
- Clarifying the outreach support and services (2A Specialist Provision on the Isle of Wight)
- Providing more information on the community directory and Family Information Zone (2C Improving the delivery to disabled pupils)
- Providing further information on Post 16 High Needs provision (1B Accessibility capital funding)
- Including the Hampshire partnership document "Improving education on the Isle of Wight" (2A Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate)

## 2. The main priorities in the Framework strategy

At a strategic level, accessibility is a core principle of the Council which permeates its work. In respect of the Local Authority's duty to provide an accessibility strategy, the Children Services Directorate leads on the specific aspects set out below. It also works within the Council to meet the public sector equality duty (PSED) and the Council's key priority to raise attainment of pupils across the island.

### 2A. Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the schools' curriculums

In line with our partnership with Hampshire County Council we place equality principles at the heart of service delivery. Through the partnership with Hampshire a plan was written "Improving education on the Isle of Wight" to improve the whole education system for everyone, schools across the island are showing improvement. To view the document please click [here](#).

Our services have been redesigned and reconfigured to achieve this; as a result a focus on increasing access to the curriculum has been prioritised. Key to this are:

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

#### **Service Delivery:**

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

SEN Services includes teams such as the SEN Assessment & Review Team, Educational Psychology Service, the Sensory Support Team (Hearing Impaired/Visual Impairment & Specific Learning Difficulties), Early Years SEN Team and the Speech, Language & Communication Team. These services assist schools and settings to improve access, improve opportunities for interaction and engagement and to personalise and develop the curriculum for disabled pupils.

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

- Remove barriers to learning
- Improve access through technologies and by making reasonable adjustments
- Adopt inclusive teaching strategies and improve classroom organisation and practice.
- Promote dyslexia friendly and communication friendly approaches to learning.

Feedback from young people through the work of the SEN Reforms has raised the importance of maintaining opportunities for face to face work. This has highlighted how important it is to

engage with young people and their families directly and not just remotely or through printed information. An essential element of this strategy is the work promoting person centred planning and transition, through a programme of training and development.

The Isle of Wight is a rural county and this strategy seeks to prioritise capacity-building and to develop our schools and settings and the workforce to promote the most effective inclusive learning and accessible curriculums.

### **Training, advice and guidance:**

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

- Our Learning and Development team within the Isle of Wight Council. We are able to offer a comprehensive programme of training at all levels which ranges from introductory level training for support staff, through to professional networks for SEN co-ordinators and teaching staff and includes postgraduate level study programmes e.g. use of new technologies and the National SENCo Award. Accessibility is a key strand in the training programmes. Training is bookable through <http://www.iwight.com/Residents/Schools-and-Learning/Education-Learning-and-Development/Learning-and-Development/Course-Details-and-General-Information>
- Access to the Learning & Development Learning Resource Centre where a vast range of professional resources, teaching materials, and academic materials can be accessed by staff from schools, early years, social care and other settings working with children and young people.
- Information, advice and guidance including resources and materials is available through our Local Offer website – <http://www.iwight.com/localoffer>
- Access to an expertise directory – <http://www.iwight.com/trainingcourses/default.aspx>

### **Specialist Provision on the Isle of Wight:**

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

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

This includes:

Mainstream schools with access to outreach support and training for:

- Pupils with physical disabilities
- Complex learning difficulties
- Autism spectrum disorders
- Speech, language and communication needs
- Support for emotional, social and behavioural difficulties
- Alternative and augmentative communication

In order to improve access to the curriculum, the island's strategy includes the commissioning of outreach support services from mainstream and special schools. These services can be accessed by island schools and the following support services are available:

Outreach Services are available to island schools from:

- The Local Authority - Sensory Support Team (Hearing Impairments, Visual Impairments, Specific Learning Difficulties (Dyslexia);
- The Local Authority - Speech, Language & Communication Team
- The Local Authority - Early Years SEN Team
- Medina House School (primary)
- St George's School (secondary)
- Pupil Referral Units (primary and secondary)

Advice and support on meeting the needs of children and young people with complex physical disabilities and communication needs can be accessed by local schools from:

- The Isle of Wight NHS Healthcare Trust – Occupational Therapy Service
- The Isle of Wight NHS Healthcare Trust – Physiotherapy Service
- The Local Authority – Speech, Language & Communication Service

Special Schools:

For those pupils requiring a special school place, there are two schools making provision for children and young people with severe and complex learning difficulties. These children and young people require a highly adapted and personalised curriculum. The Island's special schools are:

- Medina House School (primary)
- St George's School (secondary)

In addition to these two schools we also use independent/non-maintained special schools such as St Catherine's School which is on the Island and specialises in language disorders and mainland institutions such as Southlands School (Autistic Spectrum Disorder), Farney Close (Behavioural Emotional and Social Difficulties), St Edward's School (Behavioural Emotional and Social Difficulties) etc.

### **Pupil Referral Units (PRUs)**

The definition of disability and the scope for protection within equality legislation includes mental as well as physical impairments, where they impact on the person's ability to carry out their day to day activities. Another aspect of the Local Authority strategy has been to develop a pupil referral unit (PRU) which provides short-term placements and outreach support for those children and young people who have complex and challenging social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. In addition, the PRU also provides short/long-term placements to a number of children and young people who are not able to attend school due to a medical condition. The PRU offers support across the age range and their skilled and experienced staff work with local schools to support re-integration and to improve access to the curriculum. See appendix 1.



Schools are able to access help and support to assist them to improve curriculum access for their students in a number of ways. In addition to the specialist settings described above, guidance, training and advice is available from the Local Authority's School Improvement Team, this includes specific support for key curriculum areas including English, mathematics and Science. An online expertise directory (<http://www.iwight.com/trainingcourses/default.aspx>) also provides schools with ready access to information about independent providers, offering a range of curriculum support.

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

As set out above, a large number of schools have improved access for their students through the targeted use of capital funding. The Local Authority has taken a strategic approach to the use of such funding to ensure that all areas across the Local Authority have benefited. Funding has also been used to address specific access issues when they have been identified as part of a larger capital project. In the past, the use of school contributions (Devolved Formula Capital) up to 25% has ensured that more projects could be supported through partnership funding with schools. This has helped to develop the Islands strategy for improving the physical environment and accessibility of schools.

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

## **2C. Improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is readily accessible to pupils who are not disabled.**

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

Recently the island launched its Local Offer (<http://www.iwight.com/localoffer>) which provides information on Education, Social Services, Health and Leisure activities. It introduces our Community Directory <http://www.iwight.com/adultsdirectory/> which is a comprehensive online database of providers, organisations, clubs, groups and services. It allows people to find, from one centralised list of diverse providers, the people and organisations that best meet their needs and will support them to live an independent life. It also links to the Family Information Zone (FIZ) which offers a free impartial information and signposting service for Children, Young People (up to 25 years) and their families with additional needs, learning difficulties or disabilities. FIZ provides families with information on activities, events, news and issues that are relevant to their needs more information is available by clicking on the link below: <https://www.iwight.com/news/FIZ-service-%E2%80%93-new-contact-details>

Every school has an assigned school nurse and speech and language therapist. They provide an initial diagnostic service for children who are referred to appropriate services as required.

Council website (<https://www.iwight.com/default.aspx>)



- The Isle of Wight Council is committed to providing a website that is accessible to the widest possible audience, regardless of technology or ability. As such we are continually working to increase the accessibility and usability of our website and in doing so adhere to best practice guidelines.
- As part of an annual review of Council websites by SOCITM ([www.socitm.net](http://www.socitm.net)) the website is independently reviewed for accessibility and where possible recommendations acted upon.
- The Isle of Wight Council has also invested in tools to aid accessibility such as increased font size, dyslexia fonts and Widgets (symbol support for website text) as tools to aid visitors with specific requirements.

### **3. Making It Happen**

#### **3A. Management, co-ordination and implementation**

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

Ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the strategy will happen in a number of ways. In common with other departments within the council, the Directorate of Children Services has a management group, which has a major role in holding services to account and to evaluating the impact of policies and practice. Further monitoring will be undertaken in reference to the Strategic Equality and Diversity Board. The board oversees strategic equality and diversity activity and provides advice and guidance through the nominated equality officer.

For the services working most closely with schools and settings, regular monitoring of impact is undertaken and this feeds into service development and planning. The LA is driving forward an approach to integrated service delivery, which seeks to co-ordinate services to best support families, including those with disabilities. The establishment of locality integrated teams now provides greater opportunity for the coherent delivery of support, advice and guidance.

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

### **3B. Accessibility of the strategy itself**

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

The strategy is available on the Isle of Wight Council's website and can be made available in other formats (e.g. large font) on request.

Date of initial EIA: 7<sup>th</sup> January 2015

### **3C. Reviewing the Accessibility strategy**

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

## Appendix 1

### **Specialist Provisions**

Primary Sector:	Greenmount Primary School (ASD/SLCN) – “Greenhaven”
	Broadlea Primary School (ASD/SLCN) – “SCIP” (Specialist Communication and Interaction Provision)
Secondary Sector:	Sandown Bay Academy (ASD) – “Cove”
	Carisbrooke College (ASD) “Einstein”

#### Key

ASD= Autistic Spectrum Disorder

SLCN = Speech, Language & Communication Needs

### **Pupil referral units:**

Primary Sector:	The Island Learning Centre
Secondary Sector:	The Island Learning Centre
Medical (all ages):	The Island Learning Centre

### **Special Schools**

Primary Sector	Medina House School (severe & complex difficulties)
Secondary Sector	St George’s School (severe & complex learning difficulties)