

Botanic Primary School

Accessibility Plan

2024-26

SCHOOL ACCESSIBILITY PLAN TEMPLATE

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INTRODUCTION

The Special Educational Needs and Disability (Northern Ireland) 2005 (SENDO) extended the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) to cover education.

A re-evaluation of SEN provision is still in progress and this strategy may require amendment once a new Code of Practice is revealed and comes into effect. A new Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (Northern Ireland) [SENDA] came into effect in 2016 and was followed by new SEND regulations and a new Code of Practice is to follow.

Under the terms of SENDO, from 1 September 2005 the Board of Governors has three key duties to pupils who may be disabled:

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

This plan sets out the proposals of the Board of Governors of the school to increase access to education for pupils who may be disabled in the three areas required by the SENDA:

- Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum;
- Improving the environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services;
- Improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is provided in writing for pupils who are not disabled.

It is a requirement that the school's accessibility plan is resourced, implemented and reviewed and revised as necessary.

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MISSION

The school's Mission Statement clearly demonstrates the importance the school places on offering an inclusive education for all pupils:

We aim to provide an environment where:

Each child is developing to their full potential intellectually, creatively, emotionally, socially, morally and spiritually in a secure, happy and caring atmosphere.

Each person is valued and respected and encouraged to value and respect all others.

We will develop a sense of belonging in, and responsibility for, our school and the wider community.

VISION

Botanic Primary School is committed to providing the best education possible for all our children, regardless of background, status or ability.

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PRINCIPLES

The school has developed its accessibility plan based on a number of principles:

At Botanic PS we are committed to working together to achieve the best possible education for our children. It is the responsibility of all teaching and non-teaching staff to ensure that the needs of each child are met as far as possible.

1. We celebrate diversity as a resource and an opportunity for enrichment of all.
2. All teaching staff and ancillary staff will take part in training with regard to the new legislation when practical and are committed to the principle of education for all.

STRATEGY

Resources

The greatest resource in any school is the commitment and enthusiasm of its staff. With this in mind, Botanic Primary School seeks to increase the knowledge and skill base of the teaching staff and classroom assistants through attendance at training courses and dissemination of knowledge from training courses.

Partnership

We seek to increase the knowledge and skill of our staff through partnership with Education Authority (eg in identifying by audit areas of staff weakness). We welcome Education Authority support in our efforts to make Botanic Primary School fully inclusive.

We seek to develop our links with other schools to enhance and broaden the experience of our pupils and staff.

We are committed to working with parents of pupils who may be regarded as disabled and seek to involve pupils in decisions about their education.

Reactive

Ground Floor Strategy

Botanic Primary School is built on a split-level site which provides challenges. There is access to the upper levels by stair-lifts. The library and ICT room are on an upstairs corridor which only one class has ready access to without using stairs.

The principal, vice principal and Board of Governors have been involved in extensive discussions with EANI and others with regard to classroom size, playground size and resourcing. This should lead to significant alterations to the school and its grounds within 3 years.

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AUDIT

The school used the **School Accessibility Audit Mapping** tool in November 2005 in order to establish a benchmark position for accessibility within the school at that date, and to identify areas for development. This was updated by the SENCO in 2014, 2017 and 2020 as well as a revision in 2022.

The **School Accessibility Audit Mapping** tool was used in 2005 on a whole school basis with board of governors, senior managers, teaching and non-teaching staff, parents and pupils to increase the validity and reliability of the score achieved.

In order to ensure equity, all school policies and plans were screened in light of SENDO legislation and amended where required.

An SEN Audit is conducted by staff in the first term each year, led by the SENCO.

We are awaiting a new Code of Practice following the lengthy SEN review (begun in 2011) and will revise this plan when the review is completed and new Code of Practice agreed.

ISSUES IDENTIFIED

The Curriculum, Teaching and Learning

School-based exams are not provided with enlarged text routinely. Where it is necessary to do so we will ensure that enlarged text is provided. Most exams are now delivered on computer in the ICT suite. NNRIT tests are delivered with assistance from the interactive whiteboard.

Although extra time is not routinely given during lessons and exams for pupils with disabilities to complete their work, there is differentiation in lessons eg by the quantity of adult assistance or the length of the work undertaken. School end of year assessment is by computer test. The Literacy component is open-ended, allowing extra time for those who require it. A Mental Arithmetic part of the Maths assessment is time-bound but the main section is not. The SENCO oversees these tests and uses his judgement to ensure that pupils with disabilities are catered for properly.

The principal and SENCO met AQE representatives on 24/5/17 to ensure that we have full awareness of the access arrangements and criteria for children with SEN and disabilities regarding transfer tests organized by AQE. The SENCO will endeavour to keep abreast of changes to Transfer test arrangements and Accessibility arrangements and will liaise with parents who approach the school with queries regarding these.

✓ All the then teaching staff took part in SEN CPD for Dyslexia (2013/14).

✓ All the then staff attended SEN CPD awareness and training for dyslexia in 2013/14 or regarding Working Memory 2016/17. Working Memory training was delivered by SENCO in October 2022.

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√Teachers and CAs engaged in a rolling programme of training for ASD awareness.

√There is a flexible response to CA training opportunities for SEBD, ASD or other issues.

√Teaching staff received training in the use of Read Write in 2017/18.

There has been significant turn-over in teaching and non-teaching staff since 2020, increasing the importance of the audit conducted each August to help identify areas for development.

Physical Access

Botanic Primary School is an old building and has not been renovated fully to bring it up to Disability Access standard. The BoG has discussed with BELB and Education Authority accessibility issues since 2007. Facilities were brought into place between 2007-2010 as a result. The school is not scheduled definitely for rebuilding but since 2020 the principal, vice principal and Board of Governors have engaged in extensive discussions about developing the school building. This has led to plans being drawn up to increase teaching room size, give closer toilet access to all pupils and provide storage close to classrooms.

√ The school is fully accessible on all floors and all levels via a stair-lift. Not all entrances and exits from the school have ramped access. This is impossible given the slope of the school. The front entrance and the Nursery side entrance are accessible. There is no lift installed.

Braille direction and classroom signs have not been placed in school on the advice of the Visual Impairment Service at Education Authority for Northern Ireland which assures us this that there is no need for these currently.

√ The school has a portable hearing induction loop.

√ The school has two designated disable refuge points.

A part-time teacher registered as physically disabled is to use the emergency procedure as her class.

Although there is no specialized quiet room, a room has been identified which may be used as a calming location or as a medical/isolation room if needed. It is also used as a 1:1 teaching room. Nursery has a Quiet Room attached.

Wheelchair users cannot move freely without experiencing barriers due to the split-level site but can access all corridors using the evac-chair or the stair-lift. All corridors are currently traversable. Wheelchair users access the Assembly Hall for performances via the secure front door.

The library is fully accessible although there is soft furnishing which could inhibit access to some disabled users.

√ Stairs are bordered with blue strips. The bottom strip is marked with a yellow strip.

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√ An accessible toilet is located in the school. This accessibility toilet has been provided with changing facilities and in line with advice from Mitchell House. Nursery toilet area also has been provided with changing facilities and a cupboard for storage is planned.

Auxiliary Aids and Services

√ The school has an inventory of aids and services which may be available to disabled pupils.

The school has provided ICT training for pupils with dyslexia in P7 using Read Write software following training provided by the Literacy Service. Resources for children with dyslexia, Autism and Asperger's Syndrome have been acquired at school expense. The school is committed to providing whatever training is needed for children with disabilities as far as possible within our budget and in consultation with EANI.

√ The school has a select list of organizations who can provide services for disabled pupils.

Specialised ICT equipment has been purchased in the form of 5 chrome books located in the SEN room with user-friendly logins for all the children supported by the SENCO. These replace the three laptop computers provided by BELB in 2015 for children with SEN to use. The chrome books may be used to access Read Write as well word processing and research. We are aware of the support available within the EANI and are committed to providing whatever resources are necessary as far as possible within our budget and in consultation with EANI.

√ Locked cabinets are now available for medication and changing equipment. This includes female sanitary products in line with EANI advice.

√ Specialist changing facilities equipment has been purchased.

Information and Communication

The school uses Seesaw to send information to parents and receive information from them.

√ School email is checked on a daily basis.

One area of ongoing concern exists regarding some parents who do not provide up to date telephone numbers or complete the Pupil Information forms when their children join the school. This means that Botanic PS may not have all the information required to support children.

It can be seen from the above that most of the areas of concern are linked to physical access to wheelchair users, although there have been considerable improvements in the last 10 years. Staff training and awareness is good but we need to anticipate future

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changes in staff so training will be on-going. Staff training must therefore continue to feature in the Accessibility Strategy.

A previous Accessibility Strategy referred to investigation of wheelchair access to the Assembly Hall. This led to a decision that we will continue to use access from the adapted front door.

SENCO training to create and review Personalised Learning Plans (PLPs) occurred in late 2022/2023 academic year. Sims itself is under review; combined with industrial action Botanic PS did not introduce PLPs for Stage 3 children in 2023/24.

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ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

PRIORITIES

The following priorities have been established by the Board of Governors for the accessibility plan:

Enlarging the size of classrooms

Enlarging the playground to ensure greater pupil freedom to enjoy play facilities

Ensuring training of staff in areas of greatest need for the class they work with

THE CURRICULUM and TRAINING

The following priorities have been established by the Board of Governors for the curricular aspects of the accessibility plan:

- 1 Flexible administration of end of year school tests to continue
- 2 Increased disability awareness via links with other schools continue to be investigated
- 3 Teachers continue to organize classrooms optimally for teaching pupils with disabilities
- 4 Differentiation for pupils with dyslexia in spelling strategies and or resources used
- 5 Staff will be encouraged to attend training to improve curriculum access for disabled pupils
- 6 School budget is used to increase support available for pupils with SEN and or disabilities if practical.

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PHYSICAL ACCESS

See School Improvement Plan

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

The following priorities have been established by the Board of Governors for the information and communication aspects of accessibility plan:

Vice Principal or Newcomer teacher meets all Newcomer or other new children with their parents to find out about any disabilities, medical or learning needs through interview, observation and parents completing questionnaires.

Office staff to ensure that teachers know which pupils have information missing.
Class teachers to ensure that parents are given the forms to complete during Parent Teacher meetings.

SENCO to ensure that SEN Register and Disability aspect of Sims is updated.

STAFF TRAINING

To ensure the main priorities of the accessibility plan and the three main propriety areas are achieved, the school has agreed a staff training programme as follows:

- 1 Opportunities for training and staff development will be considered in line with the school's Staff Development Policy, the School Development Plan and the Accessibility Plan.
- 2 The SENCO will keep track of non-teaching staff training and will signpost courses as appropriate.
- 3 The SENCO will advise teachers of training opportunities and these will be recorded by the principal

EANI moved to largely on-line training as a result of the impact of coronavirus. The SENCO ensures that all new staff have access to the CYPSS training programme by providing a c2k email address and the password for booking courses. This is achieved through liaison with ICT assistant and secretarial staff.

The EANI introduced a requirement to conduct SEND Mapping each year. This is used to identify training priorities for teaching and non-teaching staff.

The SENCO updated the school SEND Policy in August 2023.

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TARGET SETTING

		2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
THE CURRICULUM	The Curriculum, Teaching and Learning	Optimal classroom organization	As previous year	As previous year
		A Busy Day programme available for ASD pupils	As previous year	As previous year
		Homeworks may be completed on computer and emailed to school	On-going	On-going
		Class sets of ipads available for class use including in Newcomer classroom.	Rolling programme of replacing older ipads including in Newcomer classroom.	On-going
		SENCO use of 5 chrome books.	Chrome books available in classrooms to some children.	On-going
		Read Write available in computer suite	On-going but available to other classes	On-going but available to other classes
		Read Write available on Chrome Books	On-going	On-going
		Read Write skills taught to P7 children with dyslexia	On-going	On-going
		30 coloured keyboards for ICT suite featuring UC and LC letters introduced 23/24	Continued use	Continued use

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	Educational Trips and Visits	<p>Inclusive day-time trips/musical events/plays</p> <p>Risk Assessments conducted prior to trips and pupils with disabilities have taken part successfully on day trips and residential</p> <p>All children from P6/7 are encouraged to take part in overnight residential</p>	<p>Continue</p> <p>Risk Assessments conducted prior to trips and pupils with disabilities have taken part successfully on day trips and residential</p> <p>All children from P6/7 are encouraged to take part in overnight residential</p>	<p>Continue</p> <p>Risk Assessments conducted prior to trips and pupils with disabilities have taken part successfully on day trips and residential</p> <p>All children from P6/7 are encouraged to take part in overnight residential</p>
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		2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
PHYSICAL ACCESS	Physical Environment	<p>Interactive information board at reception</p> <p>Wheelchair access through front door for front corridor. Stairlift access to upper floors. Stairlift access to lower floor.</p>	<p>Updates daily by P7 ICT prefects</p> <p>Wheelchair access through front door for front corridor. Stairlift access to upper floors. Stairlift access to lower floor.</p>	<p>Information board continues in daily use</p> <p>Wheelchair access through front door for front corridor. Stairlift access to upper floors. Stairlift access to lower floor.</p>
	Auxiliary Aids and Services	<p>Privacy boards or workstations</p> <p>Move n Sit cushions</p> <p>Lap-pads or shoulder weights</p> <p>Other fidget/stress toys as required</p> <p>Stabilo pencils; also pens for P7 pupils with a pen licence</p>	<p>Privacy boards or workstations</p> <p>Move n Sit cushions</p> <p>Lap-pads or shoulder weights acquired as necessary</p> <p>Other fidget/stress toys as required</p> <p>Stabilo pencils; pens for P7 pupils with a pen licence</p>	<p>Privacy boards or workstations</p> <p>Move n Sit cushions</p> <p>Lap-pads or shoulder weights acquired as necessary</p> <p>Other fidget/stress toys as required</p> <p>Stabilo pencils; pens for P7 pupils with a pen licence</p>

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		2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION	Information and Communication	<p>School email to be checked daily</p> <p>Homework Diaries for all classes continue</p> <p>Information to parents via Seesaw Family access to Seesaw Teachers check for parent communication daily and respond</p> <p>Organisation folders for children with dyslexia as required</p> <p>SLT use of Sims to record behaviour incidents</p>	<p>School email to be checked daily</p> <p>Homework Diaries</p> <p>Information to parents via Seesaw Family access to Seesaw Teachers check for parent communication daily and respond</p> <p>Organisation folders for pupils with dyslexia as required</p> <p>Class teachers use Sims to record incidents</p>	<p>School email to be checked daily</p> <p>Homework Diaries Information to parents via Seesaw Family access to Seesaw Teachers check for parent communication daily and respond</p> <p>Organisation folders for pupils with dyslexia as required Continues</p>
	Culture and Ethos	<p>School Council reformed following end to social distancing</p> <p>Pupil Voice included on all IEPs Pupils present at Annual Reviews where possible</p> <p>Use of PASS to gauge pupil opinion</p>	<p>School Council continues</p> <p>Pupil Voice included on all IEPs Pupils present at Annual Reviews where possible</p> <p>Use of PASS to gauge pupil opinion</p>	<p>School Council continues</p> <p>Pupil Voice included on all IEPs Pupils present at Annual Reviews where possible</p> <p>Use of PASS to gauge pupil opinion</p>

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		2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
STAFF TRAINING				Continues
		<p>All teaching and CA staff have immediate access to CYPSS training programme by email registration. This includes temporary staff</p> <p>SENCO retraining on new version of Sims anticipated.</p> <p>SENCO conducted audit with staff August 23</p> <p>On-going SEND training disseminated to staff via staff meetings</p> <p>Training for CAs as appropriate</p> <p>SENCO training for new Code of Practice if CoP finally introduced</p>	<p>Continues</p> <p>Introduction of PLPs to Stage 3 children subject to training in replacement for Sims and workload review.</p> <p>Repeated</p> <p>On-going SEND training disseminated via staff meetings</p> <p>Training for CAs continues</p> <p>Teaching/Non-teaching staff training in new CoP</p>	<p>PLPs for Stage 3 continues; training for teachers in PLP writing, possibly in phases.</p> <p>Repeated</p> <p>On-going SEN training disseminated via staff meetings</p> <p>Training for CAs continues</p>

