



## Education and Inclusion Services Directorate

### Agenda Item No. 8.10

## SCHOOLS' THREE-YEAR ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

### 1. Introduction

Rhondda Cynon Taf Bountyn Borough Council values all learners equally and aims to ensure that appropriate provision is made to meet the diverse needs of all its children and young people.

The Council is committed to meeting the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 which has brought together previous anti-discrimination laws within one legislation and introduced The Public Sector Equality Duty that requires schools to remove barriers that can disadvantage disabled learners.

**Schedule 10** of the Equality Act places a statutory duty upon the local authority / responsible body for schools / educational settings to prepare an Accessibility Strategy and Accessibility Plan respectively to ensure that school and school activities are accessible for disabled learners.

### **Disability Discrimination and Reasonable Adjustments**

Under Section 6 of the Equality Act, a person is disabled if they have:

a **physical or mental** impairment, and

the impairment has a **substantial and long-term** adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Disability discrimination happens when a disabled person is treated less favourably than someone who is not disabled, for a reason related to their impairment or health condition, and this is unlawful.

Schools have a duty to provide reasonable adjustments which will enable disabled pupils to participate fully in their education at school and school facilities and other activities alongside non-disabled peers.

### 2. Accessibility Plan

It is a statutory requirement for every school to prepare, implement, review and update a written **three-year Accessibility Plan** which identifies how specific improvement priorities and actions will improve accessibility to education for disabled learners against the three planning duties for existing and prospective disabled pupils. The plan should also include detail on how the accessibility improvement priorities and targets were identified, the approach taken in respect of engagement and self-evaluation, together with clear actions detailed in the plan regarding how the accessibility improvement priorities and targets will be met. Governing bodies must comply with the requirements of the Act and ensure that the Plan is closely reviewed, with annual updates on progress provided to the Governing Body and to parents/carers in the Annual Report.

Accessibility Plans must reflect the three statutory planning duties and identify how the school will:

- increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum;
- improve the physical environment of schools to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services;

and

- improve communication with disabled pupils along with communicating to them information that is provided in writing for pupils who are not disabled, in appropriate alternative formats and taking account of any preferences expressed by them or their parents.

### **3. What are the duties for Governing Bodies?**

School governing bodies **must**:

- Ensure that the school publishes its three-year Accessibility Plan
- Make appropriate arrangements to monitor the plan's progress and effectiveness on at least an annual basis and issue a new plan on a rolling three-year basis
- Publish information about the plan in the governors' annual report to parents
- work in partnership with school leaders to complete the Accessibility Audit Tool for school and pre-school settings to inform the Accessibility Plan
- Undertake regular training in disability equality issues and inclusion

### **Summary**

In summary, it is a statutory requirement for all schools to publish a three-year Accessibility Plan. Governing Bodies have a key role in ensuring that their schools undertake their statutory duties in relation to accessibility in line with the requirements of the Equality Act.

### **4. Further Advice and Guidance**

The Authority has provided a model School Accessibility Plan and guidance in the link below that governors and school leaders may adopt or adapt when complying with the above statutory requirements.

Related documents / guidance can be accessed via the following links:

RCTCBC Accessibility Plans: Guidance and Model Plan for Schools

[planning-to-increase-access-to-schools-for-disabled-pupils.pdf \(gov.wales\)](#)