
Report to: Clackmannanshire Council

Date of Meeting: 21st March 2024

Subject: Education Accessibility Strategy 2024-2027

Report by: Quality Improvement Officer: Additional Support for Learning (ASL)

1.0 Purpose

To present the Clackmannanshire Education Service Accessibility Strategy, which sets out how the service plans to improve access for all children and young people with disabilities.

2.0 Recommendations

The Council is recommended to approve the Education Accessibility Strategy and associated action plan (Appendix 1) and provide comment, and challenge as appropriate.

3.0 Considerations

3.1 The proposed Education Accessibility Strategy follows on from the previous strategy. It is in relation to duties under the Education (Disability Strategies and Pupils' Educational Records) (Scotland) Act 2002.

3.2 There is a legal requirement under the Act for education authorities to prepare and implement an accessibility strategy for all the schools and ELCs for which they are responsible.

3.3 Accessibility strategies must set out how improvements will be made to:

- access to the curriculum
- access to the physical environment
- information for and communication with disabled pupils.

3.4 Local authorities do not have a duty to adapt the physical accessibility of their schools or ELCs for individual pupils. Instead, they must plan to improve disabled access in general by having an Accessibility Strategy. Schools and nurseries run by a local authority should take account of their local authority's Accessibility Strategy and incorporate relevant parts into their own development plans.

- 3.5 Accessibility Strategies must be reviewed at least every three years, and copies must be available on request. A local authority does not have to adapt all their schools and nurseries at the same time, but they should have a plan to look at all their schools and nurseries and decide an order of priority for adapting them.
- 3.6 A three year action plan from 2024 to 2027 is included as part of the strategy, which outlines: how we plan to address the key areas, the outcomes we are aiming to achieve and the evidence we will gather. The plan will be reviewed annually and reported on to the Chief Education Officer.
- 3.7 This Strategy was developed based on the knowledge of the range of needs of children and young people within Clackmannanshire. There is ongoing consultation to co-design the new Lochies with children, parent/carers and partners.
- 3.8 Due to the number of consultations currently underway, it has been agreed that the consultation on this document will take place early March 2024. The consultation process will make use of Citizen Space and google forms, which will inform the Strategy further. If appropriate, amendments will be made in response to pertinent responses from the consultation. The responses will be available once completed.
- 3.9 Implementation of this strategy should assist in reducing expenditure on specialist placements due to access issues, as settings will be more accessible for all disabled pupils with Additional Support Needs

4.0 Sustainability Implications

The strategy will be carried out within current resources. The Education Service has a statutory duty to have an Accessibility Strategy.

5.0 Resource Implications

There are no additional financial resources associated with this strategy; the work will be carried out within existing resources and funding streams currently in place.

6.0 Exempt Reports

Is this report exempt? Yes (please detail the reasons for exemption below) No **X**

7.0 Declarations

The recommendations contained within this report support or implement our Corporate Priorities and Council Policies.

(1) Our Priorities (Please double click on the check box)

- Clackmannanshire will be attractive to businesses & people and ensure fair opportunities for all X
- Our families; children and young people will have the best possible start in life X

Women and girls will be confident and aspirational, and achieve their full potential X
 Our communities will be resilient and empowered so that they can thrive and flourish X

(2) **Council Policies** (Please detail)

8.0 Equalities Impact

8.1 Have you undertaken the required equalities impact assessment to ensure that no groups are adversely affected by the recommendations?
Yes

9.0 Legality

9.1 It has been confirmed that in adopting the recommendations contained in this report, the Council is acting within its legal powers. Yes No

10.0 Appendices

10.1 Please list any appendices attached to this report. If there are no appendices, please state "none".

Appendix 1 – Draft Education Accessibility Strategy

11.0 Background Papers

11.1 Have you used other documents to compile your report? (All documents must be kept available by the author for public inspection for four years from the date of meeting at which the report is considered)

Yes **X** (please list the documents below) No

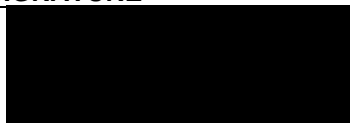
Education (Disability Strategies and Pupils' Educational Records) (Scotland) Act 2002

https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2002/12/pdfs/asp_20020012_en.pdf

Author(s)

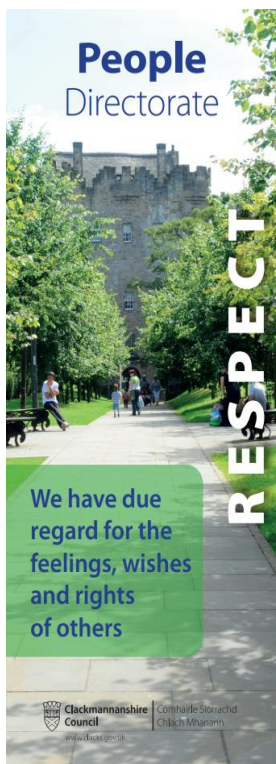
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Approved by

NAME	DESIGNATION	SIGNATURE
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Clackmannanshire Education Accessibility Strategy 2024 - 2027





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Introduction

Clackmannanshire Council is committed to the successful inclusion of all children and young people with additional support needs. We aim to deliver services that are accessible to all, with physical and communication barriers reduced. We recognise the impact that access to education can have on a child or young person's physical and mental health and wellbeing and their life chances. .

Clackmannanshire's education establishments aim to be inclusive and nurturing places where our communities are fully represented. Clackmannanshire Council's Education Accessibility Strategy is part of our approach to meeting the needs of all children and young people who might require additional support to access education. Some of our children and young people with disabilities may experience barriers from environmental factors that we can address, for example attitudes to disability and inclusion, physical barriers and communication barriers.

Under the Equality Act 2010, a person is considered disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long term negative effect on their ability to do normal daily activities. Substantial is defined as more than minor or trivial. Long term is defined as lasting for 12 months or more.

Legislative Context

Clackmannanshire Council values diversity and has policy and guidance documents in place to ensure the inclusion of children and young people with a disability and for those who have wider additional support needs (ASN).

The Standards in Scotland Schools etc Act (2000)

This Act places the expectation of the presumption of mainstream education, unless specified exemptions apply.

The Education (Disability Strategies and Pupils' Educational Records) Act 2002

This Act places a legal requirement for education authorities to have an accessibility strategy for the educational establishments they are responsible for.

The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004

This Act provides a legal framework which underpins the system for identifying and addressing the additional support needs of children and young people who face a barrier, or barriers, to learning.

Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2009

This Act introduces amendments to the 2004 Act, the most important of which is the presumption that all Looked After and/or Accommodated Children/young People (LAAC) have additional support needs unless it is determined that they do not require additional support to benefit from school education. They should also be considered for Coordinated Support Plans.

The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014

This provides the legal framework for the implementation of the National Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC) approach to promoting, supporting and safeguarding the wellbeing of children and young people and improving outcomes.

The Education (Scotland) Act 2016

This supports a range of improvements to Scottish education including: improving the attainment of pupils from poorer backgrounds: widening access to Gaelic medium education; giving children a voice in matters that affect them; and extending the rights of children with additional support needs.

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

The rights of children and young people are embedded in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and are at the heart of the Curriculum for Excellence. These rights include, amongst others, the right to an education. The Accessibility Strategy upholds the UNCRC, which is a universal treaty that covers all aspects of a child's life and sets out the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights that all children and young people are entitled to. Clackmannanshire Council is committed to embedding a rights based approach and this strategy is particularly relevant to:



- **Article 23:** a child with a disability has the right to live a full and decent life with dignity and, as far as possible, independence and to play an active part in the community.
- **Article 28:** children and young people have the right to education no matter who they are: regardless of race, gender or disability; if they're in detention, or if they're a refugee.
- **Article 29:** a child or young person's education should help their mind, body and talents be the best they can.

The key piece of legislation that informs the Accessibility Strategy is The Education (Disability Strategies and Pupils' Educational Records) Act 2002. This places a duty on Clackmannanshire Council to have a plan to:

1. improve the physical environment of schools, to enable better access to education and associated services.
2. improve access to participating in the curriculum for all children and young people who have a disability or additional support needs.
3. improve communication with children and young people who have a disability or additional support need in relation to the provision of information in appropriate alternative formats, taking account of any support need preferences expressed by them or their parents.

Summary of Progress on Previous Strategy Actions

There has been considerable progress on all three areas since the publication of the previous Strategy. The sections below provide a summary of progress for each priority.

1. Improve the physical environment of schools, to enable better access to education and associated services

We have:

- carried out suitability surveys of all schools, which include disabled access with plans established to address identified issues.
- carried out adaptations to identified establishments to ensure accessibility for children and young people with sensory impairments.
- improved access to identified establishments in response to individual needs.
- improved taxi access and disabled parking at identified establishments.
- continued the purchase of specialist equipment identified for specific children/young people to support access to establishments.
- increased the capacity of specialist provisions to meet increasingly complex needs of children/young people across Clackmannanshire.
- completed renovations, extensions and new builds of a number of schools and early learning and child care centres.
- provided moving and handling training to staff on request.
- continued the Service Level Agreement with Forth Valley NHS Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy and Speech and Language to develop support for children and young people with ASN.

- o successfully acquired LEIP Phase 3 funding for a new build Lochies Primary School.

2. Improve access to participating in the curriculum for all children and young people who have a disability or additional support need

We have:

- o implemented the roll out of one-to-one devices, Chromebooks, for all pupils P4 to S6, with plans for further roll out. There are over 7000 chrome books currently in use.
- o increased the use of accessibility features of tablets and Chromebooks to support access to the curriculum.
- o introduced a flexible learning framework as an alternative pathway for children/young people unable to access full-time education within a school environment e.g. Flexible Learning Pathway (FLIP), FLIP Plus.
- o created the post of Virtual Head Teacher who acts as a local authority champion, whose core purpose is to improve the education of care experienced children and young people and those who are furthest from engagement.
- o continued the Service Level Agreement (SLA) with CALL Scotland to support access to the curriculum through ICT, either directly with pupils or professional learning for education staff.
- o developed an ASD support worker team to support children and young people with ASD in education, home and community settings.
- o received awards e.g. Alva Academy, is the first secondary mainstream school in Scotland to achieve a National Autistic Society Autism Inclusion Award and Alva Academy also achieved a Success Looks Different Award from Children in Scotland.
- o twenty four establishments who have achieved Excellent Communication Environment Awards.
- o developed Google classrooms and the Flipclacks site to support learning.
- o developed and implemented a Readiness for Learning Approach across Clackmannanshire schools with professional learning materials for staff on Clacks Academy.
- o provided professional learning for staff on meeting children and young people's needs either through in-person training or online through Clacks Academy.
- o developed specialist spaces such as flexible learning spaces and nurture spaces within mainstream schools to meet the diverse ASN of children and young people.
- o established the GIRFEC Forum as a route to accessing multi-agency support for children and young people with ASN.
- o carried out quality assurance visits for all ASL establishments and secondary ASL departments in conjunction with external specialists to ensure good quality learning and teaching provision.
- o continued to have an ASL focus on quality assurance visits for all schools and ELCs
- o developed 'A Tiered Approach to ASL Professional Learning', which is accessible to all Clackmannanshire staff.

- contributed to ASL West Lothian and Forth Valley Regional Improvement Collaborative (RIC) and supported networking for ASL staff across the four authorities.
- provided opportunities for ASL staff within specialist provisions, outreach teams and Educational Psychology staff to participate in Social Communication Emotional Regulation and Transactional Support (SCERTs) training.
- facilitated the involvement of staff from ASL establishments in curricular focus groups led by Education Scotland.
- continued to provide annual professional learning for all staff on Staged Intervention to support the process of assessment, identification and planning of interventions to meet children and young people's needs.
- developed an initial version of an ASN tracker of achievement and attainment.
- provided support for care experienced young people through MCR Pathways and work with Columba 1400.
- continued to link with partners such as Disability Sports, to support access to physical activities for children/young people with disabilities.

3. Improve communication with children and young people who have a disability or additional support need in relation to the provision of information in appropriate alternative formats, taking account of any support need preferences expressed by them or their parents

We have:

- established the Clax Parent and Carer Group: a support group for parents and carers of children with ASN.
- established an Educational Psychology Service helpline to provide advice and guidance to both staff and parent/carers of children with ASN.
- created an A-Z of ASN supports section on Clacksweb.
- improved information regarding ASN on Clacksweb and ASD Outreach website.
- engaged with CALL Scotland to support communication of children and young people with complex needs who require Alternative and Augmentative Communication (AAC).
- adopted Makaton or British Sign Language (BSL) as a second language as part of 1 plus 2 languages in selected schools.
- developed a local authority BSL Plan.
- established parent/carers ASL engagement events e.g. ASL Fayres. ASL Post school transition event.
- provided Makaton training to staff on request.
- provided support to establishments, on request, to undertake a pupil centred planning approach.
- Continued to provide English as an Additional Language support.

Consultation

Consultation is currently underway.

New and Continuing Actions Overview

We will continue to:

- carry out adaptations across the specialist learning estate, where required.
- roll out of one-one devices across secondary schools.
- provide and enhance specialist ASL professional learning for staff.
- work collaboratively with CALL Scotland and Forth Valley Allied Health professionals to deliver quality support for children with ASN.
- promote and support alternative modes of communication.
- continue to work with partners such as Disability Sports to ensure access to appropriate physical activities for children and young people with disabilities.

We will focus on:

- improving transitions for children and young people with ASN particularly post school to adulthood.
- developing plans to construct a high quality, purpose built new Lochies Primary School alongside Clackmannanshire's Wellbeing Hub.
- improving consultation processes with children, young people and their families, ensuring information is in accessible formats.
- improving communication with parents/carers of children and young people with ASN, ensuring information is in accessible formats.
- improving mechanisms to ensure children and young people with ASN can contribute their views and have a strong pupil voice.
- improving the curricular offer for children/young people with ASN disengaging from education through establishment of Clacks Active Learning Academy.
- improving access to wellbeing and leisure through the development of the Wellbeing Hub.

Monitoring and Reviewing of the Strategy

The following action plan outlines the actions required to implement the Strategy. This Strategy will be reviewed on an annual basis and reported to the Education Service Senior Management Team



Accessibility Strategy Action Plan 2024-27

Improve the physical environment of schools, to enable better access to education and associated services			
Outcome (what we want to achieve)	Action (what will we do)	Impact (how will we know we have achieved)	Progress update
Improved specialist primary provision for children with ASN through the construction of a high quality, purpose built new Lochies School alongside Clackmannanshire’s Wellbeing Hub.	Design and build a new flexible facility that meets the current and future needs of ASN children.	<p>ASN pupils’ health and wellbeing will improve due to improved access to services and healthier learning environment.</p> <p>ASN pupils’ education will improve due to increased learning time created by a more efficient bespoke building.</p> <p>Children will be achieving outcomes within Child’s Plans.</p>	
Maximised accessibility across the wider learning estate.	<p>Utilise Scottish Government guidance to assess the suitability of the learning estate, taking accessibility into consideration as a major factor.</p> <p>Ensure that this feeds into the Learning Estate Strategy being employed by Education and Place.</p>	Children will be accessing suitable learning experiences in appropriate learning environments.	



Improve access to participating in the curriculum for all children and young people who have a disability or additional support needs			
Outcome (what we want to achieve)	Action (what will we do)	Impact (how will we know we have achieved)	Progress update
Improved transitions for children and young people with ASN particularly post school to adulthood.	Develop operational guidance for schools. Regularly gather feedback on families' experiences, which will inform supports. Organise information events for young people with ASN and their families.	Children/young people with ASN and their families will report more positively on their experiences of transitions.	



<p>Enhanced professional learning opportunities for staff to ensure they have the knowledge and skills required to support all learners.</p>	<p>Maintain and enhance the professional learning offer through the 'Tiered Approach to Professional Learning' for all education staff.</p> <p>Sign post staff to national professional learning opportunities.</p> <p>Provide opportunities for ASL staff to visit specialist provisions and to shadow peers within Clackmannanshire and the West Lothian and Forth Valley RIC.</p> <p>Facilitate networking events between ASL staff across West Lothian and Forth Valley RIC.</p>	<p>Staff will report increased confidence and skill in supporting children/young people with ASN.</p> <p>Children/young people will be accessing support required to access learning.</p>	
<p>Improved access to individual ICT devices and use of accessibility features to access the curriculum.</p>	<p>Roll out the programme of devices to schools</p> <p>Develop and deliver or sign post training for staff on use of accessibility tools</p>	<p>Children/young people will have improved access to the curriculum through using appropriate accessibility tools.</p>	



<p>Enhanced collaboration with other services to support ongoing access to the curriculum for our most complex children and young people with ASN.</p>	<p>Continue the Service Level Agreement with CALL to provide specialist support for children/young people with complex needs.</p> <p>Continue the Service Level Agreement with Allied Health Professionals.</p> <p>Provision of specialist professional learning.</p>	<p>Children and young people with complex ASN will be using appropriate communication devices.</p> <p>Staff will report increased confidence and skills in supporting the use of specialist equipment.</p> <p>Increased number of staff engaging with professional learning opportunities.</p>	
<p>Increased number of establishments achieving recognition for being inclusive establishments through Validated Self Evaluation and national awards.</p>	<p>Establishments to engage in accreditation opportunities.</p> <p>Re-launch Readiness for Learning across Clackmannanshire establishments.</p>	<p>Increased number of establishments achieving awards or improved level of award e.g. bronze, silver, gold etc.</p>	
<p>Improved curricular offer for children/young people with ASN who have disengaged from education through the establishment of Clacks Active Learning Academy.</p>	<p>Develop Clackmannanshire Active Learning Academy with partners.</p>	<p>Children and young people with ASN will be accessing a curriculum that is meaningful, motivating and related to their interests.</p>	



Improve communication with children and young people who have a disability or additional support need in relation to the provision of information in appropriate alternative formats, taking account of any support need preferences expressed by them or their parents			
Outcome (what we want to achieve)	Action (what will we do)	Impact (how will we know we have achieved)	Progress update
Improved consultation and communication with children, young people and their families ensuring information is in accessible formats	<p>Develop procedures to engage with children/young people and their families to gather their views.</p> <p>Engage Clax P and C to support the engagement of more families with children with ASN.</p>	<p>Children and young people with ASN views and opinions will be reflected in decision making at establishment and Local Authority level.</p> <p>Increased number of families engaging with Clax P and C.</p>	
Improved tools and processes for ensuring children and young people with ASN can contribute their views and have a strong pupil voice.	Develop guidance and a range of tools to support establishments to engage pupil voice.	Children and young people with ASN will be using appropriate tools to contribute their views and opinions.	
Improved understanding of alternative modes of communication amongst staff and parents / carers	Provide professional learning to staff and parents/carers on AAC.	Children/young people with ASN, their families and staff will be confident in the use of communication supports.	
Increased number of establishments who have achieved Excellent Communication Environment status.	Continue to work collaboratively with Speech and Language Therapy to develop communication environments in establishments.	Increased number of establishments achieving awards or improved level of award e.g. bronze, silver, gold etc.	



	Encourage establishments to engage in the process for Excellent Communication Environment accreditation.		
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