



CUMMERSDALE SCHOOL

ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

2024 – 2027

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¹The Governing Body are free to delegate approval of this document to a Committee of the Governing Body, an individual Governor or the Head Teacher

²This document should be reviewed every 3 years

REVIEW SHEET

The information in the table below details earlier versions of this document with a brief description of each review and how to distinguish amendments made since the previous version date (if any).

Version Number	Version Description	Date of Revision
1	Original	March 2012
2	Front Cover ONLY updated to take account of revised Statutory Policy Guidance issued by the DfE	January 2013
3	Reformatted only	February 2014
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1. INTRODUCTION

The Equality Act 2010 replaced all previous equality legislation such as the Race Relations Act, Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) and Sex Discrimination Act.

The Equality Act 2010 provides a single, consolidated source of discrimination law, covering all the types of discrimination that are unlawful. It simplifies the law by removing anomalies and inconsistencies that had developed over time in the existing legislation, and it extends the protection from discrimination in certain areas.

The law on disability discrimination is different from the rest of the Act in a number of ways. The overriding principle of equalities legislation is generally one of equal treatment. However the provisions in relation to disability are different in that you may, and often must, treat a disabled person more favourably than a non-disabled person.

There are some minor differences around disability in the new Act when compared with the previous legislation.

- The Equality Act does not list the types of day to day activities which a disabled person must be unable to carry out to meet the definition
- Failure to make a reasonable adjustment can no longer be justified. The fact that it must be 'reasonable' provides the necessary test.
- Direct discrimination against a disabled person can no longer be justified (bringing it into line with the definition of direct discrimination generally).
- From September 2012 schools and local authorities are under a duty to supply auxiliary aids and services as reasonable adjustments where these are not being supplied through a statement of SEND.

As in previous legislation a school/setting must not discriminate against a pupil because of something that is a consequence of their disability.

It is unlawful for a school/setting to treat a disabled pupil unfavourably. Such treatment could amount to:

- Direct discrimination
- Indirect discrimination
- Discrimination arising from a disability
- Harassment

Direct discrimination can never be justified but a school/setting could justify indirect discrimination against a disabled pupil, and discrimination arising from a disability if the discrimination is the result of action that is a 'proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim'.

2. DEFINITION OF DISABILITY

Equality Act 2010: a person has a disability if:

- they have a physical or mental impairment;
- the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to perform normal day-to-day activities.

For the purposes of the Act, these words have the following meanings:

- 'substantial' means more than minor or trivial;
- 'long-term' means that the effect of the impairment has lasted or is likely to last for at least twelve months (there are special rules covering recurring or fluctuating conditions);
- 'normal day-to-day activities' include everyday things like eating, washing, walking and going shopping.

People who have had a disability in the past that meets this definition are also protected by the Act.

Progressive conditions considered to be a disability

There are additional provisions relating to people with progressive conditions. People with HIV, cancer or multiple sclerosis are protected by the Act from the point of diagnosis. People with some visual impairment are automatically deemed to be disabled.

Conditions that are specifically excluded

Some conditions are specifically excluded from being covered by the disability definition, such as a tendency to set fires or addictions to non-prescribed substances.

It should be noted that this definition is *not just regarding physical difficulties* but also covers a wide range of:

- Sensory difficulties
- Learning difficulties
- Impairment resulting from, or consisting of, a mental illness

In addition there is a range of 'hidden impairments' such as

- Dyslexia
- Speech and Language Impairments
- Autism
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

Impairment does not itself mean that a pupil is disabled but rather it is the effect on the pupil's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities in one or more of the following areas that has to be considered:

- Mobility
- Manual dexterity
- Physical coordination
- Continence
- Ability to lift, carry or otherwise move everyday objects
- Speech, hearing or eyesight
- Memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand
- Perception of risk of physical danger

3. REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS

We have a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils:

- When something we do places a disabled pupil at a substantial disadvantage to other pupils, we must take reasonable steps to avoid that disadvantage;
- We will be expected to provide an auxiliary aid or service for a disabled pupil when it would be reasonable to do so, and where such an aid would alleviate any substantial disadvantage the pupil faces in comparison to his non-disabled peers.

A failure to make a reasonable adjustment can no longer be justified. The test is whether the adjustment is reasonable, and if it is then there can be no justification for why it is not made. We will not be expected to make adjustments that are not reasonable.

There is as yet no clarity on what may be 'reasonable' although the Code of Practice will include factors that should be taken into account. It will be for us to decide the reasonableness of adjustments based on the individual circumstances of each case. Factors to consider may include the financial or other resources available, the effectiveness of the adjustment, its effect on other pupils, health and safety requirements, and whether aids have been made available through the SEND route.

The reasonable adjustments duty is intended to complement the accessibility planning duties, and the existing SEND statement provisions, under which Local Authorities have to provide auxiliary aids and services where a statement details that provision. When a disabled pupil does not have a statement of

SEND (or the statement does not provide the necessary aid) then the duty to consider reasonable adjustments and provide such auxiliary aids will fall to the school/setting.

As in the previous legislation we are not under a duty to make alterations to the physical environment though we should be planning to do so as part of our Accessibility planning.

4. AIMS OF THE ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

The planning duties on schools/settings and Local Authorities are the same as the duties in the previous DDA. Schools/settings are required to have an Accessibility Plan detailing how they will improve access to the physical environment, increase access to the curriculum for disabled pupils, and how they will improve the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils. The LA is required to have an Access Strategy.

In Cummersdale School/Setting, we have a commitment to equal opportunities for all members of the school/setting community and our Accessibility Plan outlines our intention to remove barriers for disabled pupils and to:

- increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the different areas of the national curriculum, increase access to extra-curricular activities and the wider school/setting curriculum;
- improve the physical environment of schools/settings to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided; and
- improve the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils.

Furthermore, under our equality duties, we intend to improve the physical environment of the school/setting to enable any disabled person (pupil, parent/carer, employees or visitor) to access facilities and services and improve the availability of accessible information to any disabled person.

This Accessibility Plan will, therefore, **begin the process of addressing the needs of disabled people** through specific targets.

It is a requirement that the school's/setting's accessibility plan is resourced, implemented and reviewed and revised as necessary. Attached is a set of action plans showing how the school/setting will address the priorities identified in the plan

Compliance with the disability duty under the Equality Act is consistent with the school's/setting's aims and Single Equality Scheme, and the operation of the school's/settings SEND policy.

The Action Plan for physical accessibility relates in part, to the Asset Management Plan (access section) of the School, which is undertaken regularly by the Local Authority. It may not be feasible to undertake some of the works during the life of this Accessibility Plan and therefore some items will roll forward into subsequent plans. The Plan will need to be revisited prior to the end of each first three-year plan period in order to inform the development of the new Plan for the following period.

We strive to ensure that the culture and ethos of the school/setting are such that, whatever the abilities and needs of members of the school/setting community, everyone is equally valued and treats one another with respect. Pupils should be provided with the opportunity to experience, understand and value diversity.

5. KEY OBJECTIVES

The key objectives of our Accessibility Plan are as follows:

- To reduce and eliminate barriers to access to the curriculum and to full participation in the school/setting community for pupils, and prospective pupils, with a disability.
- We are committed to providing a fully accessible environment which values and includes all pupils, staff, parents and visitors regardless of their education, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional and cultural needs. We are committed to challenging negative attitudes about disability and accessibility and to developing a culture of awareness, tolerance and inclusion.

- We are committed to providing all pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum, differentiated and adjusted to meet the needs of individual pupils and their preferred learning styles; and we endorse the key principles in the National Curriculum Framework ([Click here to access](#)) which underpin the development of a more inclusive curriculum:
 - setting suitable learning challenges;
 - responding to a pupil's diverse learning needs;
 - overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils.

6. CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION

- *Cummersdale School is the outskirts of Carlisle in the Village of Cummersdale;*
- *It is a traditional village school with just four classes.*
- *It is a LA Community School*
- *It has 101 pupils on roll and is full in all year groups*
- *The majority of pupils are White British (96%)*
- *The school is a traditional sandstone building (1884) which has been extended. It has a MUGA which is hired out to the community and pleasant school grounds.*
- *Due to the age and design of the building, modifications are difficult and significant discussions would need to take place with the parents of a child with physical disabilities as to the limitations of making school appropriate for wheelchair use.*
- *A new school building is planned as part of the St Cuthbert's Garden Village (Phase 1 to be completed by 2026)*
- *The school has good links with the local secondary school, other schools in RSC, Family Action and the Cummersdale community.*
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7. DEVELOPMENT

7.1 The Purpose and Direction of the School's Plan: Vision and Values

Our School/Setting:

- *has high ambitions for its disabled pupils and expects them to participate and achieve in every aspect of school life;*
- *is committed to identifying and then removing barriers to disabled students in all aspects of school life;*
- *values the individual and the contribution they make to all aspects of school life;*
- *will strive to ensure that its disabled pupils have access to all areas of the curriculum and teaching resources so as to develop fully in their education;*
- *acknowledges a commitment to embrace the key requirements set out in the National Curriculum Inclusion Statement;*
- *will continue to focus on removing barriers in every area of the life of the school;*
- *is committed to embracing equal opportunities for all members of the school community.*

7.2 Information from Pupil Data and School Audit

Key starting point should be assessments of:

- The nature of the school/setting population for whom the school/setting is planning;
- The nature of the school/setting, including a consideration of the impact of the school's existing plans and priorities.

Pupil information will include a range of data:

- Pupils already in school and moving through it.
- The nature of the future intake (advance information from pre-school/primary school etc.).

All staff have a high level of awareness regarding equalities legislation and work closely with the school SENCo to understand how best to support the needs of children with disabilities.

All pupils participate in the daily life of school including PE, sports, extra curricular activities and school trips.

Policies are regularly updated to support the welfare of those with disabilities. E.g: supporting medical conditions, timetables, curriculum, off site visits.

Disabled pupils are given extra support in End of Key Stage Assessments. We liaise with external agencies over how best to access learning for their needs.

In order to ensure that our data is up to date and accurate we will:

- *liaise with the Local Authority so as to identify and therefore plan a response to students with a disability well before they arrive;*
- *improve the information dissemination from our Learning Support facility;*
- *implement a system that allows parents to inform us if they themselves have a disability;*
- *identify early on in their school career any obstacles to the effective learning of disabled students;*
- *use all available data to inform the planning of individual student learning patterns;*
- *use information supplied via previous LA Asset Management/Accessibility Audits to assist us to develop an action plan to reduce obstacles for the school/setting community.*

7.3 Views of those Consulted during the development of the Plan

The plan should be informed by:

- The views and aspirations of disabled pupils themselves;
- The views and aspirations of the families of disabled pupils;
- The views and aspirations of other disabled people or voluntary organisations;
- The priorities of the local authority;

We will:

- ensure the development of the plan involves coordination with the Local Authority in line with the LA Accessibility Strategy and ensure that we provide the best choices for students wanting to enrol here;
- consult the relevant sub-committee of the full governing body;
- consult staff including specifically SENCo, safety committee;
- set up a structure to allow the views of students, both able and disabled to be taken into account;
- involve outside agencies who already exist to assist disabled students in their education and future careers;
- ensure the views of ALL those consulted are taken into consideration and the plan modified where reasonable to meet the needs of stakeholders;

8. SCOPE OF THE PLAN

8.1 Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school/setting curriculum

- to investigate how the access to those areas of the curriculum that are normally difficult for disabled students to access can be improved;
- to further investigate what support or alternative approaches can be adopted to increase the choice/participation of disabled students;
- to investigate alternative provision/routes and collaboration that will assist disabled students to learn including liaison with the LA Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Statementing and Provision Team.

We plan to increase access to the **curriculum** for pupils with a disability, expanding the curriculum as necessary to ensure that pupils with a disability are as, equally, prepared for life as are the able-bodied pupils. This covers teaching and learning and the wider curriculum of the school/setting such as

participation in after-school clubs, leisure and cultural activities or off-site visits. It also covers the provision of specialist **aids and equipment**, which may assist these pupils in accessing the curriculum. The school/setting will continue to seek and follow the advice of LA services, such as specialist teacher advisers and SEND inspectors/advisers, and of appropriate health professionals from the local NHS Trusts.

Cummersdale School will improve access to the curriculum through such things as devising and implementing appropriate staff training and development. The HT and middle leadership team will help planning process and who and how this part of the plan will be monitored and evaluated by teachers, school managers and governors.

This strand of the planning duty will help to improve access to a full, broad and balanced curriculum. It covers a range of elements including ensuring that teaching and learning is accessible through school and classroom organisation and support, especially deployment of staff, timetabling, curriculum options and staff information and training.

Cummersdale School will be expected to plan to improve progressively access to the curriculum for all disabled pupils although many adjustments to access will be dependent on individual needs and may be provided through the SEND framework. The accessibility strategies and plans will help to ensure that schools/settings are planning and preparing to respond to the particular needs of individual pupils.

Governors should identify action in the school/setting access plan to enhance teaching and learning opportunities for all those in the school/setting community with disabilities. These may include:

- *consideration of whole-school/setting ways of increasing participation in activities such as after-school clubs, leisure and cultural activities, as well as off-site visits, particularly for difficult-to-include pupil groups, such as those with physical or behavioural challenges;*
- *how threats to participation have been analysed using risk assessment proforma and action taken to reduce those identified risks;*
- *identifying how classroom support arrangements, such as deployment of teaching assistants, provision of ICT, contribute to, and enhance learning opportunities;*
- *deciding how the implementation of specific strategies such as flexible or shared timetabling, nurture groups, counselling provision, access to therapy, first day absence response, have enhanced attendance and participation;*
- *consideration of how classroom/group organisation has been targeted to ensure that all pupils achieved increased levels of school success;*
- *description of action to increase curriculum choice and/or flexibility has enhanced the access to appropriate qualifications/attainments;*
- *consideration of the school response to pupils through the application of the SEND Code of Practice has improved pupil attainment and how effective communication regarding specific pupil needs has been achieved and is monitored;*
- *consideration of how liaison, increased communication and relationships with external agencies has supported and enhanced pupils' access to the curriculum and how this is monitored and improvements targeted;*
- *identifying how staff training needs in order to effectively meet the diverse abilities and disabilities of all pupils, including prospective pupils who may require manual handling, signing, personal hygiene support etc. has been identified and supported;*
- *identifying pupil peer support mechanisms and the ways that the school/setting has ensured pupils have a voice in decisions that affect them;*
- *taking action to ensure that disabled members of the school/setting community are seen in a positive light through publications promoting disability and providing positive role models of adults with disabilities to encourage success and achievement;*
- *ensuring that action has been undertaken to ensure that parents and carers see themselves as partners in their children's education and are increasingly willing to actively support their children's education;*

- *enhancing the positive culture and ethos of the school by undertaking quality marks or other additional intervention to improve the school's ability to include those with disabilities.*

8.2 Improving the physical environment of the school/setting to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services

- in consultation with the LA (where necessary and appropriate) investigate various improvements to the site;
- improve accessibility points to different curriculum areas;
- investigate ways of making the site more accessible to both disabled parents and adult users.

The school/setting will take account of the needs of pupils and visitors with physical difficulties and sensory impairments when planning and undertaking future improvements and refurbishments of the site and premises, such as improved access, lighting, acoustic treatment and colour schemes, and more accessible facilities and fittings. This is required regardless of whether the school/setting has pupils or visitors with disabilities and is preparation for a situation when they do.

Cummersdale School will take account of the needs of pupils and visitors with physical difficulties and sensory impairments when planning and undertaking any future improvements. These may include improved access, lighting, acoustics and colour schemes.

The physical environment includes things such as steps, stairways, kerbs, exterior surfaces and paving, parking areas, building entrances and exits (including emergency escape routes), internal and external doors, gates, toilets and washing facilities, lighting, ventilation, lifts, floor coverings, signs and furniture. Aids to physical access include ramps, handrails, lifts, widened doorways, electromagnetic doors, adapted toilets and washing facilities, adjustable lighting, blinds, induction loops and way-finding systems.

Cummersdale School uses physical aids to access education cover things such as ICT equipment (Dragon Dictate), enlarged computer screens and keyboards, specialist desks and chairs and portable aids such as wobble cushions. Specialist pens and pencils and coloured visors are also used.

In maintained schools the provision of a special piece of equipment or extra assistance will generally be made through the SEND framework and to a lesser extent through the planning duty which applies to all schools. The distinction between auxiliary aids and services provided through the SEND route and those provided under the planning duty is that the SEND duties relate to the individual, whereas the planning duty relates to the provision of aids or services in terms of the population (and future population) of the school/setting. For example, a pupil with visual impairment might have low vision aids provided through the statement of SEND but the school/setting might as a general measure provide blinds and adjustable lighting and colour distinction through the planning duty.

The Governing body will want to consider and record reflection upon all areas of the physical environment such as:

- *Changes to improve access to doors, stairs, toilet, changing facilities, and consideration of the impact of signs, colour schemes and colour contrast, lighting, heating etc.*
- *Changes outside of the school/setting building e.g. provision of disabled parking etc.*
- *Management and organisation issues such as maintenance of lights, fire alarms appropriate to those with hearing impairments etc.*
- *Increased access to and maintenance of, auxiliary aids, ICT apparatus such as computer hardware/software.*
- *Improvement to the acoustic environment that might include installation of soundfields/hearing loop systems.*
- *Improvements of storage implications for wheelchairs and other mobility devises.*
- *Application and progress on capital funding for major access works funded by the Schools Access Initiative through the Local Authority, and details on school funds delegation to support targets such as provision of suitable floor coverings, furniture and layout of the playgrounds.*

8.3 Improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information that is provided in writing for pupils who are disabled

We will strive to:

- produce all school/setting literature at the correct font size to help visually impaired students;
- investigate alternative ways of providing access to information, software and activities;
- investigate ways of communicating effectively with disabled parents and carers and other disabled adult users of the site.

The school/setting plans to improve the delivery of **written information** to pupils, staff, parents and visitors with disabilities. Examples might include handouts, timetables, textbooks and information about the school/setting and school events. The information should be made available in various preferred formats within a reasonable time frame. The school/setting will make itself aware of local services, including those provided through the LA, for providing information in alternative formats when required or requested.

The school Headteacher in liaison with the SENCo will feedback to the governing body progress made against the aims and objectives of the accessibility plan.

This part of the duty covers planning to make information normally provided by the school in writing to its pupils – such as handouts, timetables, textbooks, information about school events – available to disabled pupils. This will include alternative formats such as Braille, audio tape and large print and also the provision of information orally, through lip speaking or sign language, through a recognised symbol system or ICT. This information should also be made available within a reasonable time frame and take account of the pupils' disabilities and pupils' and parents' preferred formats.

- Informing readers that school/setting published material is available in a selection of formats e.g. Braille, Makaton, audio tapes and identifying how they can access this provision if requested.
- Considering how to increase information accessibility for those who have English as an additional language or other communication impairments, at school/setting meetings etc.
- Identifying how they have considered the readability of information including that provided by the school/setting website, and how it is monitored to ensure accessibility to a wide range of diverse needs and abilities.
- Identifying how textbooks and other pupil information are selected and provided to meet a diversity of pupil needs.
- Ensuring the monitoring of effectiveness of adult support to enhance the opportunities for pupils/parents who have difficulties in accessing information.

8.4 Financial Planning and Control

The Head teacher with Senior Management Team, together with the Finance Committee will review the financial implications of the School/Setting Accessibility Plan as part of the normal budget review process. The objective is that over time School/Setting Accessibility Plan actions will be integrated into the School/Setting Development Plan.

We will finance the plan by identifying costs and incorporating them into current and future budget commitments.

9. IMPLEMENTATION

9.1 Management, Coordination and Implementation

The Headteacher/H&S Co-ordinator will undertake a disability audit using a cross section of staff, pupils and parents (refer to Section 7.3). Many aspects will be covered in the H&S Termly Monitoring.

As a result of the audit, we shall:

- produce action plans, with definite time scales for the implementation of the actions implicit in the plan;

- plans to provides workshops so staff can understand and buy into the Accessibility Plan and not see it as a bolt on;
- present the plan to the governing body for their approval;
- modify the plan based on the views of stakeholders;
- review the plan and the associated action plans to see if milestones are being met. This plan will be reviewed and adjusted as necessary every three years.

9.2 Monitoring

We recognise that monitoring is essential to ensure that pupils with disabilities are not being disadvantaged, and that monitoring leads to action planning.

- *Increased levels of achievement for pupils with disabilities*
- *pupil responses; parental questionnaires*
- *Ofsted inspections that identify higher levels of educational inclusion.*

9.3 The role of the LA in increasing accessibility

- provided training and awareness opportunities on issues regarding inclusion to staff, governors and parents and how this has been used in school to promote inclusion e.g. uptake of Dyslexia Friendly status, Inclusion Quality Mark, attendance on courses, use and adaptation of LA provided information, etc.;
- promoted collaboration through the provision of information aimed at sharing good practice;
- encouraged liaison between special and mainstream schools to share expertise and pupil placement;
- ensured that schools/settings are aware of support services that provide advice to schools/settings and staff;
- provided specialist help to identify ways forward in increasing the inclusion of all pupils;
- linked building adaptations to refurbishment and capital building works;
- informed schools/settings how information can be provided in a number of different formats.

9.4 Accessing the School's Plan

This will be done through:

- presentation in a section on the school website open to all visitors to the site;

We will ensure that the plan is available in different formats where requested.

The school/setting will achieve successful implementation of the accessibility plan with continued support in the areas of:

- providing training and awareness opportunities to staff, Governors and parents/carers on issues regarding equality and inclusion;
- providing targeted training for particular groups of pupils/staff;
- promoting collaboration through the provision of information and the sharing of good practice;
- encouraging liaison between other local schools/settings including special schools;
- seeking support/advice from outside the school/setting, from services, other agencies and organisations;
- ensuring that the school/setting is aware of all support services that provide advice to schools/settings and staff.

10. RELATED POLICIES

The Accessibility Plan should be read in conjunction with the following policies, strategies and documents:

- Curriculum Policies
- Single Equality Scheme/Objectives
- Staff Training and Development Plan

- Governor Training Plan
- Health & Safety Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy, Local Offer Response & Information Report
- Off-Site Visits Procedures
- Whole School Behaviour Policy & procedures
- School Development Plan
- Asset Management Plan
- Complaints Procedures

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CUMMERSDALE SCHOOL

ACCESSIBILITY PLAN 2024 – 2027

IMPROVING ACCESS TO THE CURRICULUM

Target	Strategy	Outcome	Timeframe	Achievement	Date Complete
Training for staff in the identification of and teaching children with ASD and other specific learning difficulties.	All staff attend appropriate training. Outreach provision from external agencies.	All staff are familiar with the criteria for identifying specific needs and how best to support these children in the classroom.	Ongoing	Children with ASD are successfully included in all aspects of school life.	
All out-of-school and extra-curricular activities are planned to ensure the participation of the whole range of pupils	Review all out-of-school and extra-curricular provision to ensure compliance with legislation	All out-of-school and extra-curricular activities will be conducted in an inclusive environment with providers that comply with all current and future legislative requirements	Ongoing	Increase in access to all school activities for all disabled pupils	
Classrooms are optimally organised to promote the participation and independence of all pupils	Review and implement a preferred layout of furniture and equipment to support the learning process in individual class bases	Lessons start on time without the need to make adjustments to accommodate the needs of individual pupils	Ongoing	Increase in access to the National Curriculum	
Training for Awareness Raising of Disability Issues	Provide training for governors, staff, pupils and parents. Discuss perception of issues with staff to determine the current status of school.	Whole school community aware of issues relating to Access	Ongoing	Society will benefit by a more inclusive school and social environment	
Review TA deployment	In review meetings with teaching assistants establish when they are available to support children each day that may be different to their current working hours.	Adult support is available during key times that individual children may need support i.e. lunchtimes, PE lessons, extra-curricular activities.	Reviewed Annually	Children who need individual adult support to participate in some activities have access to this support.	

