

Cumbria Children's Services
5 December 2006

ACCESSIBILITY STRATEGY

Accessibility Strategy

CUMBRIA COUNTY COUNCIL: ACCESSIBILITY STRATEGY

1.0 RECENT CHANGES IN LEGISLATION

- 1.1.1 The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA), as amended by the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001, placed, from September 2002, a duty on Local Education Authorities and Schools to plan to increase access to education by disabled pupils over time. The planning duty came into force in September 2002, strategies and plans were expected to be in place from April 2003.

The DDA Amendment Act 2005 requires schools to have due regard to the following in the operation of their organisation:

- Promote equality of opportunity between disabled and non-disabled persons;
- Eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the act;
- Eliminate harassment of disabled persons that is related to their impairments;
- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people;
- Encourage participation by disabled people in public life;
- Take steps to take account of disabled persons, even when that involves treating the disabled person more favourably than their non-disabled peers.

Each school and local authority (LA) is required to have a disability equity scheme, a scheme which describes how these duties will be implemented.

- 1.2 The duty, which is placed on LA's, is for it to plan strategically to increase, over time, the accessibility of all its maintained schools. The duty, which is placed on school governing bodies, is to plan to increase the accessibility of their individual schools.
- 1.3 The Accessibility Strategy [produced by LA's] and the Accessibility Plans [produced by Schools] cover three key areas:
- 1 Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum;
 - 2 Improving the physical environment of schools for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of the education and associated services provided or offered by schools;
 - 3 Improving the delivery to disabled pupils of written information, which is already provided, to pupils who are not disabled.
- 1.4 Accessibility Strategies and Plans must be in writing, must be kept under review and must be revised as necessary.

2.0 CUMBRIA'S PREVIOUS APPROACH

- 2.1 Cumbria County Council was quick to embrace the spirit of The 1981 Education Act. The County Council has been gradually creating a network of strategically resourced mainstream schools capable of including children with a wide range of special educational needs. At the same time, lower cost adaptations have been carried out to a wide range of other mainstream schools, normally in response to the needs of specific individual pupils. These schools are now capable of dealing with a range of disabilities. Part of this process saw the number of special schools in the county reduce to five. **Cumbria's accessibility strategy should be read alongside "Inclusive Cumbria" the LA strategy to promote inclusive education.**
- 2.2 In considering physical access to buildings, the emphasis has been on ensuring adequate access to all specialist curriculum areas rather than access to all areas of the buildings. Schools may, in addition, be required to adapt their timetables to ensure access to non-specialist lessons. In strategic schools there has, additionally, been an emphasis on SEN strategic school bases and on assisted toilet/changing facilities.
- 2.3 In one school, adaptations have been carried out to provide a strategically resourced school for deaf pupils. With recent advances in technology most deaf pupils can now be accommodated in their catchment schools. The County Council is developing a network of mainstream schools capable of including pupils with significant autistic spectrum disorders, whose needs are incompatible with being managed in their catchment schools.
- 2.4 The extension, remodelling and refurbishment of each of the county's five maintained special schools has resulted in significant improvements in terms of access to buildings, assisted and unassisted toilet and changing areas, physiotherapy facilities and space for visiting specialists such as speech therapists.
- Specialist Advisory Teachers and Educational Psychologists support the inclusion of pupils in all schools. A quiet, acoustically favourable space to talk and work is a key to the effectiveness of their engagement with these pupils.
- 2.5 Inevitably, progress has been restricted by the availability of resources. However, millions of pounds have been spent on adapting buildings and much has been achieved. Developments in several Cumbrian schools are cited as examples of good practice in DfES Building Bulletin 94 "Inclusive School Design"
- 2.6 In encouraging and facilitating increased levels of access to the curriculum, the County Council's Special Educational Needs Service has provided resources through statements of special educational need. Other support services provide advice and support to enable schools to provide the necessary support to all students to enable access to the curriculum. The County Council works in partnership with health services to ensure that there is available the necessary pattern of therapeutic support to enable pupils to access the curriculum. It is also providing training, guidance and models of good practice to enable schools to meet the needs of pupils more effectively.

3.0 WEAKNESSES IN THE PREVIOUS APPROACH

- 3.1 Access has too often been seen as a stand-alone issue rather than automatically being included within all decision-making processes. For this reason, issues such as colour contrast, the impact of lighting levels on pupils with visual impairment and the impact of background noise on pupils with hearing impairment or who are deaf have often not been taken into account when maintenance work has been carried out [internal decoration, replacement of light fittings, replacement of convector heaters etc] or even in the design of some capital development projects and school organisation planning. Similarly, some schools have moved the only specialist space of a particular type from a ground floor location, where it was easily accessible, to a first floor location where it was not. Schools are expected to fulfil their anticipatory duties to plan to make any new build, or refurbished areas, accessible to all wherever this is possible.
- 3.2 There are many examples throughout the county of schools making major organisational changes in order to accommodate the needs of individual pupils. There are also some examples of situations where more modest reorganisations have not been adopted. For example, in some instances an individual pupil has not been taught with his/her peers, simply because a particular year group traditionally occupies a first floor classroom. Schools now have a duty to take reasonable steps to prevent disabled pupils being substantially disadvantaged under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. Examples of what reasonable steps a school should take can be found within the Disability Discrimination Act Code of Practice Document and also "Implementing the Disability Discrimination Act in Schools and Early Years Settings" DfES 2006.

4.0 ADVICE ABOUT NON-CAPITAL CURRICULUM ACCESS ISSUES

- 4.1 Support for access is not solely about physical adaptations or additional support for individuals. There are other barriers to inclusion that need to be addressed. In supporting schools in developing their capacity to be more inclusive, we also need to address barriers to inclusion that exist in values, cultures, policies and practice. We need to encourage parents and schools to consider what is possible and what can be done to achieve this. Above all, we always need to ensure that access to buildings and the curriculum leads to progress in learning and increased educational standards and opportunities. Access is not only about being physically present in a building. Access is about benefiting from appropriate learning opportunities.
- 4.2 The wave model can be used to describe the curriculum management and provision that schools make for all learners. It begins with **wave 1** which describes Quality first Teaching (QFT). QFT is provision that might routinely be made for all learners, as distinct from provision at **waves 2 and 3**, which in SEN terminology, is additional to and different from that which is made through class based inclusive teaching or QFT. QFT could be stretching the learning objectives for the most able pupils, using visual teaching methods (real objects, pictures, concept maps, visual timetables) and the like to support EAL pupils or children with language or autistic spectrum disorders, all of which would be regarded as aspects of inclusive QFT. From the examples given, you can see

that inclusive class based teaching should for all learners, regardless of their additional need. On the other hand, providing a social skills group for the child with autism or working with a child on a 1:1 basis would be regarded as provision that is additional to that which is made for the generality of children. Again, in the examples given the child with autism is accessing wave 1 provision through the visual teaching methods whilst also benefiting from personalised 1:1 **wave 3** provision. **Wave 2** provision describes those additional interventions, which are usually time limited to enable children to 'catch up' with their peers, because there is a gap in their learning. Schools can sometimes wrongly identify pupils for such provision, which then is not effective.

- 4.3 The support from both the LA and the national strategies has been delivered through guidance materials and resources to exemplify and secure understanding of the approach described above, usually through the CPD programme and including the LIN. Support and development for schools is also achieved through consultant and LA services work.
- 4.4 In order to provide the necessary support for schools to ensure that their curriculum and school is accessible, the County Council provides the following: -
- 1 Whole-school training opportunities in a variety of aspects of inclusion;
 - 2 Guidance materials to support the development of inclusion;
 - 3 Advice and support from specialist staff within Children's Services.

5.0 PROPOSED APPROACHES

- 5.1 In many respects, the County Council's proposals are a continuation of what has been happening previously. They also formalise the process of determining priorities. They include both targets and an evaluation process.
- 5.2 The County Council is seeking a coordinated/joined-up approach to accessibility. The main areas of potential improvement are dealt with separately in the following paragraphs. In practice, they would all be considered at the same time.
- 5.3 **Physical alterations to buildings and the provision of specialist equipment**
- 5.4 Schools are expected to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate disabled pupils.
Information and guidance on what constitutes reasonable adjustments by schools can be obtained via the County Council Intranet & DDA guidance on the Teachernet website <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/sen/schools/accessibility/dda>
- 5.4 The County Council will continue with its current policy of expanding the network of strategically resourced schools to make good the gaps in provision for pupils with SEN. At the same time, some funds will be set aside to carry out ad hoc, relatively low cost, alterations to cater for the needs of those pupils who could be accommodated relatively easily in their catchment or preferred school.
- 5.5 The LA has a notional limit of £10,000 per school to invest in ad hoc adaptations. This does remain flexible and a higher level of investment may be considered if:

- a) There are no other accessible schools within reasonable travelling distance;
- b) The LA is aware of other children who would require the adaptations who will attend the school in the near future.

5.6 Economies of scale are likely to be possible, and a wide network of strategically resourced schools achieved more quickly, where adaptations to a school will allow a range of disabilities to be addressed in the same location – for example, physical/medical difficulties and severe learning difficulties. This approach is also sensible in some other respects – for example, many pupils with severe learning difficulties have additional physical needs. There is, however, recognition on the part of the County Council that some buildings are much more difficult and expensive to adapt than others, that there is a need to make maximum progress and that, particularly with severe learning difficulties and with autism, the willingness and enthusiasm of individual schools is one necessary pre-requisite to successful inclusion. The County Council will, therefore, aim wherever possible to make provision for as wide a variety of disabilities as possible in each strategically resourced school but will not make this a pre condition in the negotiations with groups of schools in any particular area. The County Council recognises that for some particular difficulties this is not always the best approach to support the child's needs. In particular with autism it is recognised that the provision of specialist staff in this particular area will be part of any autism facility's training and development plan. In other words, the County Council will continue to be pragmatic.

5.7 **Pupils with Physical/medical difficulties.**

5.8 Changing Needs

There has, over past years, been no particular pattern to the need for facilities for pupils with physical medical problems and it is not envisaged that this situation will change. Over time, needs arise in all geographical areas in a fairly unpredictable manner. What is important therefore is that, wherever a child with physical/medical problems lives, there is, if the nature of the disability means that he/she cannot be accommodated in the catchment school, a suitable mainstream school within reasonable travelling distance.

5.9 Current Levels of Provision

Details of schools currently capable of dealing with a wide range of physical/medical difficulties are set out in Appendix A. This Appendix also provides details of those schools, which have buildings, which are capable of dealing with a narrower range of disability.

5.10 Main Gaps in Provision/Determining Priorities

If the schools included in Appendices A and B were to be plotted on a map, it quickly becomes clear that some parts of the County are much better served than others. The County Council's view is that distance/travel time to the nearest adapted mainstream school should be the principal factor in determining priorities. The Local Authority will also examine the way the school building and

maintenance budget has been delegated. The cost of maintenance of equipment supplied, such as lifts, hoists, etc is expensive. We will examine if there is a way to target the resources for maintenance in such a way that prioritises schools where this type of maintenance is a requirement.

5.11 Pupils with a sensory impairment

5.12 **Changing Needs**

The County Council has, in the past, provided very specialist facilities in a small number of schools. Recent improvements in equipment and technology mean, however, that most pupils can now be accommodated in their catchment or preferred schools. The focus therefore needs to shift towards ensuring that all schools have buildings which take account of the needs of pupils with sensory impairment and that a centrally controlled/coordinated pool of equipment and specialist advice and support is available to support individual pupils in these schools.

5.13 Current Levels of Provision

In one school adaptations have been carried out to provide a strategically resourced school for pupils with a hearing impairment. This is Bransty Primary School, Whitehaven. The changing arrangements for supporting deaf children and the evolving profile of incidence in Cumbria means that we may need to reconsider the most effective way of supporting these students in the future, but at the present time Bransty School has sufficient numbers within a reasonable travelling distance requiring such provision to necessitate its continuation.

5.14 Progress and Priorities

We will continue to ensure that, in implementing delegated maintenance programmes, schools improve colour contrasts, signage and lighting and the acoustical properties of all rooms, hallways and public spaces, as a matter of course;

- 1 We have addressed with some support from central funds, sensory issues in strategic schools;
- 2 We have used a limited amount of the Schools Access Initiative Budget to provide and maintain a central bank of up-to-date hearing aids and other related equipment;
- 3 We have used a limited amount of the Schools Access Initiative Budget to provide and maintain a central bank of up-to-date equipment to support pupils who are blind or visually impaired.

5.15 Targets

- 1 All schools to have good colour contrast throughout by end of 2007/08;
- 2 Strategically Resourced Schools for Children with a hearing impairment to have an assessment of their acoustic standards by the end of the academic year 2006/7

- 3 An action plan will be drawn up where necessary to address any shortfalls in acoustic standards in strategically resourced schools by the end of the academic year 2006/7.

5.16 Pupils with severe complex or profound learning

5.17 Changing Needs

Unlike with physical/medical problems, the incidence of severe learning difficulties is not evenly spread across the County

5.18 Current Levels of Provision

At present pupils with severe, complex or profound learning difficulties may be supported in, either unadapted mainstream schools, strategically resourced schools or special schools. Not all children with severe, complex or profound learning difficulties have needs that require adaptations to buildings. All however, will require support and/or adaptations to access the curriculum and wider social opportunities available in school.

Current strategic mainstream schools are listed in Appendices A and B.

5.19 Main Gaps in Provision/Determining Priorities

The pattern of strategic provision provided through strategically resourced schools and special schools is shown on the attached map at Appendix A. The County Council's priorities are:

- 1 To develop capacity and confidence in mainstream schools to enable them to better meet the needs of pupils with severe complex or profound needs.
- 2 To seek to ensure within neighbourhood communities that there are resources, expertise and facilities that will enable needs to be met.

Targets

A strategic review on the development of special schools has been undertaken. An integrated strategic approach for meeting the needs of pupils with severe and complex learning difficulties has been planned and is being implemented. (Ref "Meeting the Needs of all Pupils with Severe or Profound Learning Difficulties" January 2005.)

5.20 Pupils with autism

5.20 Changing Needs

There has, over the past few years, been a significant increase in the number of pupils diagnosed with an Autistic Spectrum Disorder. As with other disabilities, severity of both a child's autism and their learning disability varies and many children with an autistic spectrum disorder are able to attend their catchment schools with some others being catered for in strategically resourced schools,

which take pupils with severe autism and/or learning needs. Some children with Autistic Spectrum Disorders also have severe learning difficulties and their needs are sometimes met in our special schools. Increasingly, however, there is a need for a network of schools with both physical facilities and staff with expertise capable of teaching children with more profound autistic spectrum disorder.

5.21 Current Levels of Provision

At the present time, specialist autistic units exist at All Saints Primary School in Cockermouth, at Cockermouth Secondary School, Vickerstown Primary School Barrow, Bram Longstaff Nursery and Settlebeck High School, Sedbergh. All Saints and Cockermouth Secondary ASD facilities have been refurbished in a major capital build programme in 05/06. Cockermouth Secondary School has also extended its capacity as part of that programme.

5.22 Main Gaps in Provision/Determining Priorities

There is, in the short to medium term, a need to provide facilities in the Barrow area at secondary level, in the Kendal area at primary level and at both primary and secondary level in the Carlisle area. There is also a need to ensure that developments occur in partnership with Social Care and health services so that the care and support needs are addressed in coordination with educational needs. In the rather longer term, it is likely that this initial network will need to be expanded.

5.24 Timetable for determining the location of provision. The priorities and targets for greater inclusion of pupils with various sorts of disability and/or special educational need are set out below. As indicated above, more than one priority may be addressed in a single location.

1	Primary	ASD	Carlisle	Dec 2006
2	Secondary	ASD	Carlisle	Dec 2006
3	Secondary	SLD	Carlisle	Sept 2007
4	Secondary	ASD/SLD	Barrow	Sept 2007
5	Primary	ASD/SLD	North Copeland	Sept 2007
6	Secondary	ASD/SLD	North Copeland	Sept 2008
7	Secondary	Ph med/SLD/ASD	Upper Eden Valley	Sept 2008
8	Secondary	SLD/Ph med	Wigton	Sept 2009
9	Primary	ASD	South Lakes	Sept 2009

The LA has learned, via our evaluation of the previous strategy that:

- The priorities for developing strategically resourced schools need to be informed by an audit of local need;
- The rate of progress is dependent on the availability of resources and the extend of the development necessary in each identified school and...
- The enthusiasm and willingness of the individual schools identified.

6.0 ORGANISATIONAL CHANGES AT SCHOOL LEVEL

- 6.1 Not all improvements to access to buildings need to be achieved through physical alterations. There is an expectation/requirement, within the Disability Discrimination Act, that barriers to access will be removed for example: by rearranging room spaces; by changing layouts; by reallocating room usage. It will not be reasonable for a primary school to argue that, because a particular year group is usually based in an inaccessible room, a disabled pupil in that year group cannot be educated with his/her peers – there is an expectation that, under these circumstances, the school will move class bases around. Similarly, it will be unreasonable for a secondary school not to timetable a science group containing a pupil with mobility problems into the only ground floor laboratory.
- 6.2 Useful information and guidance on Accessibility is available from the Teachernet website <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/sen/schools/accessibility>

7.0 INCREASING PARTICIPATION IN THE CURRICULUM

- 7.1 This area covers participation, not just in the National Curriculum, or even the whole curriculum, but also the wider curriculum of the school including participation in extra curricular activities such as: after school clubs; leisure, sporting and cultural activities; educational and residential visits.
- 7.2 The following documents are useful tools for schools to use in making the curriculum accessible to disabled pupils:
- 1 National Curriculum 2000 – the statement “Inclusion - Providing effective learning opportunities for all children” suggests ways in which to arrange teaching and learning for disabled pupils;
 - 2 The QCA’s guidelines on “planning, teaching and assessing the curriculum for pupils with learning difficulties”;
 - 3 The DfES publication “Supporting the Target Setting Process” which provides guidance on effective target setting for pupils with SEN and includes performance descriptors for lower attaining pupils;
 - 4 CSIE Index for Inclusion (received by all schools);
 - 5 Cumbria County Council Inclusion Chartermark (received by all schools);
 - 6 Implementing the Disability Discrimination Act in Schools and Early Years Settings (DfES 2006).

7.3 What does the County Council offer here?

- Staff training
- Working together
- Sharing best practice

The County Council supports schools in making the curriculum accessible for pupils with disabilities by:

- 1 Working with schools to ensure that their needs are appropriately assessed and that details of appropriate planning and provision are provided;

- 2 Working with health services to secure access to an appropriate range of expertise from therapists;
- 3 Resourcing and supporting a Parent Partnership Service and network of independent parental supporters to advise parents of their rights and responsibilities;
- 4 Ensuring that there is a sufficient level of appropriately qualified specialist staff available within the county;
- 5 Maintaining a register of Approved Specialist Teachers working in schools.

7.4 In moving this area forward, the following targets have been/will be adopted:

- 1 In order to improve early multi-disciplinary identification a network of preschool panels has been established to coordinate early identification and assessment.
- 2 In order to improve the coordination of service development, strengthening the representation from SEN Services in the current review of school organisation.
- 3 In order to identify school's training and support needs, an audit of need will be carried out as part of the Area Inclusion Audits.
- 4 Following these audits of need to disseminate to schools a training plan to address the needs identified.

8.0 THE DELIVERY OF INFORMATION

8.1 Part of the planning duty relates to arrangements for ensuring that written information normally provided by a school to its pupils and parents is available for disabled pupils in appropriate formats such as large print, audiotapes or pictorial representation. In preparing information, schools are expected to take account of both pupils' and parents' preferred formats and to make these available within a reasonable timeframe.

8.2 In support of this requirement the County Council has taken the following steps to improve the delivery of information to disabled pupils, parents or carers by presenting information in alternative formats such as: -

- Braille Large print (Arial N12 as a minimum standard)
- Audiotape
- Sign language
- The use of a recognised symbol system, such as Rebus
- Through ICT and other communication systems.
- British Sign Language on Video

The way information is presented will take into account pupils' or parents/carers disabilities and the preferred formats of the pupils and/or parents and carers whenever possible.

8.3 The County Council's targets here are:

- 1 To amend standard letters and practice to ensure that parents/carers and young people are given the opportunity to express the desire for alternative formats – December 2006.

- 2 To review with all parents/carers and young people who are currently supported through a statement of special educational need if they would wish to receive information in a different format – December 2007.

9.0 TRAINING AND ADVICE

- 9.1 DfES guidance on the new school-based accessibility planning responsibilities has been with schools for some considerable time. Advice on what sort of approach/es schools might take in firming up on their accessibility plans has been issued separately by the County Council, and is available on the Internet.
- 9.2 A series of seminars on Disability Discrimination Act issues have been delivered by the LA and all schools and governors were invited to attend.
- 9.3 All training for Inclusion and Special Educational Needs provided by the County Council is co-ordinated via the LIN programme.
- 9.4 Guidance on School Access Planning has been sent to all schools and is available on the County Council Intranet.
- 9.5 General advice and support for schools on access and SEN issues is available from the Senior Education Officer (Special Education Needs) at the local area education offices.

Kathy Linfoot-Smith
Newbeck Centre
Wigton Road
Carlisle
01228 606840

David Henderson
Union Hall
Scotch Street
Whitehaven
01946 852715

Alan Holmes
Nan Tait Centre
Abbey Road
Barrow in Furness
01229 894430

10.0 CONSULTATION/PUBLICATION

- 10.1 Consultation on the County Council's Accessibility Strategy has taken place with:
 - 1 The heads/governors of all maintained schools;
 - 2 Diocesan authorities;
 - 3 Sure Start;
 - 4 The School Organisation Committee;
 - 5 The Asset Management Group;
 - 6 The Social Care Department for Children with a Disability;
 - 7 Directorate Equalities Group;
 - 8 The parents and voluntary/support groups through the Parent Partnership Service;
 - 9 Specialist Education Needs Services within Children's Services
- 10.2 The strategy is available electronically on the Cumbria County Council website with hard copies being available at all education offices and public libraries. Copies in alternative accessible formats can be obtained by contacting Lisa Mattock, 5 Portland Square, Carlisle, CA1 1PU, 01228 601195.

11.0 EVALUATION

- 11.1 The strategy will be kept under review and will be the subject of an annual report to the relevant scrutiny panel.
- 11.2 In order to assist in the review process the following local performance indicators are proposed to be included in the County Council Performance Plan:
- 1 Number of pupils who are not able to attend the school of parental preference because of difficulties in access.
 - 2 Number of strategically resourced mainstream schools.
 - 3 Number of non-strategic schools able to deal with a more limited range of disability.
 - 4 Number of parents expressing concern about the impact of the strategy.

In addition to this in reporting to the Scrutiny Panel, the County Council will report on:

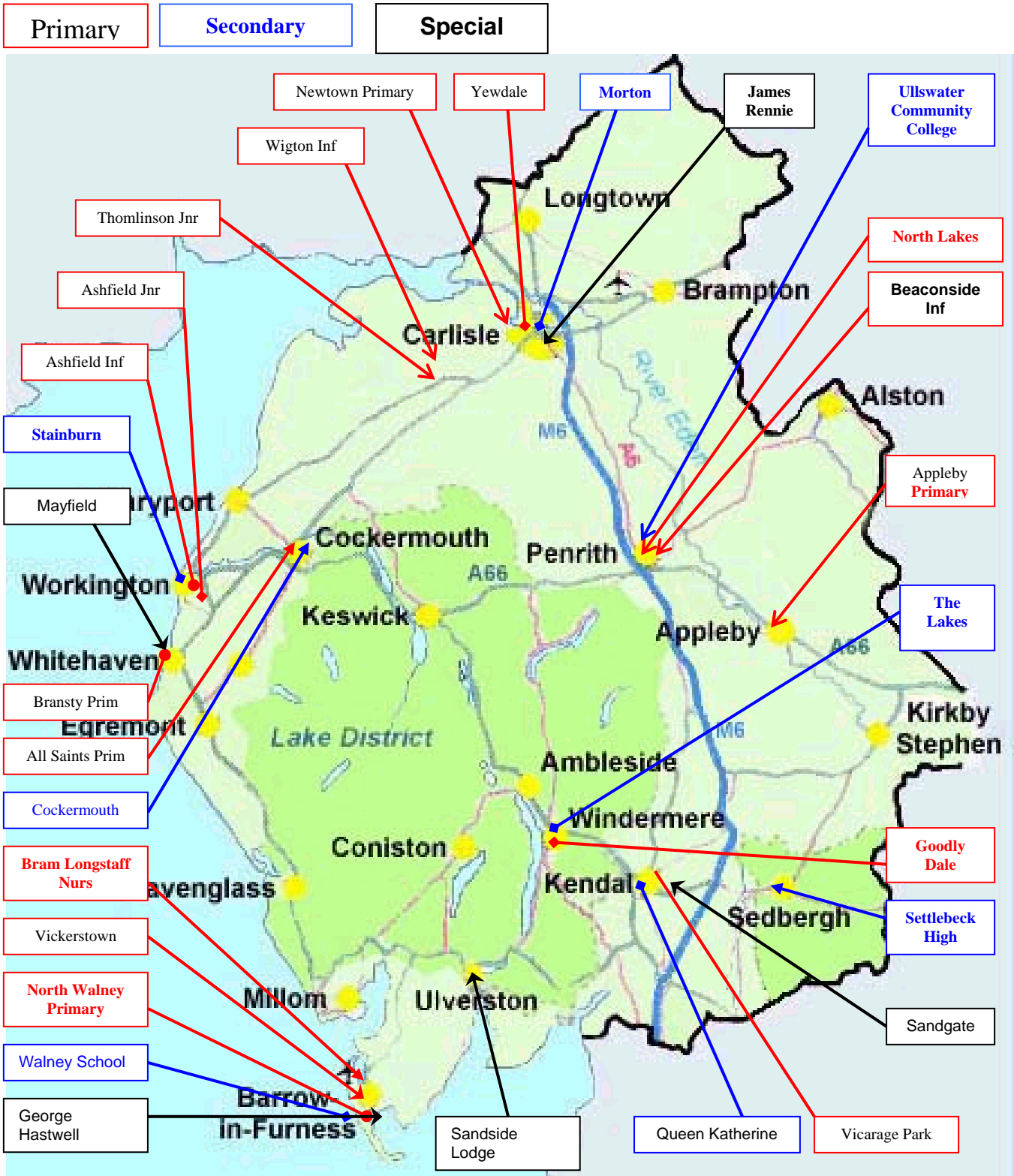
The number of pupils with a disability who are:

- 1 Placed in the mainstream school of their parental preference;
- 2 Placed in a mainstream school (not parental preference);
- 3 Placed in a strategically resourced school;
- 4 Placed in a special school.

The number of pupils with a disability who:

- 1 Travel for less than 45 mins to school;
- 2 Travel over 45 mins to school.

STRATEGIC FACILITIES & SPECIAL SCHOOLS IN CUMBRIA 2004



—●	Hearing Impaired	—>	Profound, Severe Learning & Physical / Medical	—>	Autism, Severe Learning & Physical/Medical
—◆	Physical / Medical	—>	Autism	—>	Autism, Severe Learning & Physical / Medical

STRATEGIC MAINSTREAM SCHOOLS CAPABLE OF DEALING WITH A WIDE RANGE OF PHYSICAL/MEDICAL DIFFICULTIES

SECONDARY

Lakes School, Windermere
Morton School, Carlisle
Queen Katherine School, Kendal
Stainburn School, Workington
Ullswater Community College, Penrith
Walney School, Barrow
Workington 6th Form Centre

PRIMARY

Appleby Primary School
Ashfield Junior School, Workington
Beaconside Infant School, Penrith
Goodly Dale Primary School, Windermere
Newtown Primary School, Carlisle
North Lakes Junior School, Penrith
Thomlinson Junior School, Wigton
Vicarage Park Primary School, Kendal
Vickerstown Primary School, Barrow
Wigton Infant School
Yewdale Primary School, Carlisle

Schools not currently designated as strategic but with reasonable levels of physical access to curriculum areas and with a disabled [and in many cases an assisted disabled] toilet.

SECONDARY

Dallam School, Milnthorpe
Ehenside School, Cleator Moor
St Bernards Catholic High School, Barrow
St Benedicts Catholic High School, Whitehaven
Victoria High School, Ulverston
Wyndham School, Egremont

Also:

William Howard

PRIMARY

All Saints Primary School, Cockermouth
Ashfield Infant School, Workington
Beaconside Junior School, Penrith
Croftlands Infant School, Ulverston
Derwent Vale Primary School, Gt Clifton
Kells Infant School, Whitehaven
Levens Primary School
Low Furness Primary School, Gt Urswick
Monkway Junior School, Whitehaven
Montreal Primary School, Cleator Moor
Norman Street Primary School, Carlisle
Richmond Hill Primary School, Aspatria
St Gregory and St Patricks Primary School
Stramongate Primary School, Kendal
Upperby Primary School, Carlisle

Also, the following schools have been supported in improving access:

Broughton Primary
Burton Morewood
Croftlands Jnr
Distington
Ellenborough & Ewanrigg
Ewanrigg Jnr
Fir Ends
Frizington
Haverigg
High Hesket
Hindpool Nursery
Holme, Carnforth
Kirkbride
Lanercost
Levens
Nenthead
Newbarns
Newtown
Pennine Way
Rockcliffe
Seascale
Sedbergh
Shankhill
Stoneraise
Storth CE Primary School
Thursby
Victoria Infant, Workington
Wiggonby

This list does not include all schools as some have used their own funds to improve accessibility.

STRATEGIC MAINSTREAM SCHOOLS DEALING WITH PUPILS WITH SEVERE LEARNING DIFFICULTIES

SECONDARY

Ullswater Community College, Penrith

PRIMARY

Appleby Primary School
Beaconside Infant School, Penrith
Newtown Primary School, Carlisle
North Lakes Junior School, Penrith
Thomlinson Junior School, Wigton
Vicarage Park Primary School, Kendal
Vickerstown Primary School, Barrow
Wigton Infant School

Ann Henderson

Principal Education Officer Special Educational Needs, Access and Inclusion

5th December 2006

CUMBRIA COUNTY COUNCIL
Children's Services
September 2006

Review of Accessibility Strategy

Review of Accessibility Strategy

Prepared by:
Ann Henderson, Principal Education Officer SEN & Inclusion

Review of Accessibility Strategy

The Strategy has been operational for 2 ½ years. It is essentially a continuation of how we have operated for many years.

What Have We Learned

A number of lessons have been learned from the operation of the Strategy over the 2 ½ -year period.

- 1) Detailed Inclusion Audits did not really produce further data & information which was not already available within the LA. They are time consuming and expensive. In future, audits of need will be conducted internally every 3 years for the whole county by areas in order to prioritise the area needs to be included in the next Accessibility Strategy – schools and partners will be consulted via each draft Strategy.
- 2) The LA need to refocus support for schools to make the curriculum accessible to **all** pupils. This support needs to focus on whole school support for all pupils rather than support related to individual children. The LA work on-going to provide strategic direction to schools in relation to the DfES National Strategy materials relating to inclusion will assist here.
- 3) There was a conflict between setting priorities in the previous strategy based purely on location and the priorities identified via each inclusion audit which examine the needs of children in a locality, because the incidence of need is not evenly spread across the county.
- 4) Whilst setting a schedule of development of strategically resourced mainstream schools in priority order is essential, the timescales for development are dependent on:
 - The level of adaptation required with each new project;
 - The resources available within each financial year;
 - The need for essential maintenance and improvement work in existing strategically resourced schools.
- 5) The timescales of the original schedule set were too ambitious and consequently not achieved.
- 6) The capacity of:
 - The SEN Service in selecting and negotiating with schools and their communities;
 - Property and Transport Services Unit in undertaking formal consultation and redesignation of the school with the DFES;
 - Project management in partnership with SEN/PTSU;
 - The available budget is such that in any 12 month period, between 2 and 4 new developments can be undertaken. This will depend on the size and scope of the projects and includes any essential development work in existing strategically resourced schools.
- 7) Alongside the major building work, communication between services involved in a timely manner with at least 6 months notice is vital to ensure minor adaptations are completed prior to the admission of a pupil.

What Have We Achieved

- 1) A co-ordinated approach to providing support and training for schools delivered in partnership by SEN & School Improvement Service which focuses on the DFES support materials for Inclusion and the whole school management of SEN/Inclusion/Access instead of the individual child:
 - I. Target setting and Assessment for children who are not achieving national norms (schools and support services)
 - II. Annual Review/Transition Planning training (schools and support services)
 - III. Whole school management of Inclusion “Leading on Inclusion” training – (schools)
 - IV. Disability Discrimination Act and Accessibility Planning training and guidance (schools & Governor’s)
 - V. SENIMS – SEN in Mainstream Schools training (schools and services)

- 2) We have continued to provide minor adaptations to individual schools to increase their accessibility as required on an ad-hoc basis. We have encouraged schools and other professionals to provide SENS with early notification of adaptation requirements so they are completed in a timely manner prior to a child's admission. The schools highlighted in bold are the schools we have further adapted in the last two and a half years

STRATEGIC MAINSTREAM SCHOOLS CAPABLE OF DEALING WITH A WIDE RANGE OF PHYSICAL/MEDICAL DIFFICULTIES

SECONDARY

Lakes School, Windermere
Morton School, Carlisle
Queen Katherine School, Kendal
Stainburn School, Workington
Ullswater Community College, Penrith
Walney School, Barrow
Workington 6th Form Centre

PRIMARY

Appleby Primary School
Ashfield Junior School, Workington
Beaconside Infant School, Penrith
Goodly Dale Primary School, Windermere
Newtown Primary School, Carlisle
North Lakes Juniors School, Penrith
Thomlinson Junior School, Wigton
Vicarage Park Primary School, Kendal
Vickerstown Primary School, Barrow
Wigton Infant School
Yewdale Primary School, Carlisle

SCHOOLS NOT CURRENTLY DESIGNATED AS STRATEGIC BUT WITH REASONABLE LEVELS OF PHYSICAL ACCESS TO CURRICULUM AREAS AND WITH A DISABLED [AND IN MANY CASES AN ASSISTED DISABLED] TOILET

SECONDARY

Dallam School, Milnthorpe
Edenside School, Cleator Moor
St Bernards Catholic High School, Barrow
St Benedicts Catholic High School, Whitehaven
Victoria High School, Ulverston
Wyndham School, Egremont

Also:

William Howard

PRIMARY

All Saints Primary School, Cockermouth
Ashfield Infant School, Workington
Beaconside Junior School, Penrith
Croftlands Infant School, Ulverston
Derwent Vale Primary School, Gt Clifton
Kells Infant School, Whitehaven
Levens Primary School
Low Furness Primary School, Gt Urswick
Monkway Junior School, Whitehaven
Montreal Primary School, Cleator Moor
Norman Street Primary School, Carlisle
Richmond Hill Primary School, Aspatria
St Gregory and St Patricks Primary School
Stramongate Primary School, Kendal
Upperby Primary School, Carlisle
Victoria Junior School, Workington

Also:

Broughton Primary, assisted change
Burton Morewood, disabled WC, internal ramps
Croftlands Jnr – ramps, assisted change
Distington – ramps from AI*
Ellenborough & Ewanrigg – assisted change & ramps
Ewanrigg Jnr – some ramps & assisted change
Fir Ends – ramps and disabled WC from AI*
Frizington – assisted change from AI*
Haverigg – ramps and assisted change
High Hesket – disabled WC, sound field in hall & class
Hindpool Nursery - ramps
Holme, Carnforth – ramps
Kirkbride – ramp to front and disabled WC
Lanercost – internal ramp & disabled WC from AI*
Levens – some ramping and disabled WC
Nenthead – ramps from AI*
Newbarns – lift from AI*
Newtown – assisted change
Pennine Way - ramps
Rockcliffe – assisted change
Seascale – ramps and assisted change
Sedbergh – ramp & disabled WC
Shankhill – ramps and disabled WC

Stonerise – lift and disabled WC from AI*
Thursby – ramps
**Victoria Infant, Workington, ramps & assisted
change**
Wiggonby – ramp and disabled WC

- 3) Since the strategy was implemented in April 2004 we have:
- Developed strategic provision at Newtown Primary School for children with SLD;
 - Refurbished, re-developed and extended the strategically resourced school at Cockermouth Secondary School for ASD;
 - Refurbished and re-developed the Primary ASD provision at All Saints School, Cockermouth;
 - Identified Primary and Secondary volunteer schools in the Carlisle area for ASD provision;
 - Carried out initial consultation with the schools and governing bodies;
 - Visited ASD “Beacon” provision with school staff in another LA;
 - Begun the formal consultation and project planning process with these schools;
 - Set realistic and agreed priorities to take forward into the next strategy.
- 4) SENS ensure parents with disabilities/difficulties with the written word are offered support from either the Parent Partnership Service or their named officer in SENS to both contribute to the assessment process and understand the written reports concerning their child. Braille, signing support or other adapted versions of written communication is available where necessary.
- 5) The internet contains fact sheets in a simple, user friendly format for:
- I. Parents;
 - II. Children; and
 - III. Professionals
- about the services to support children and young people with SEN at school.
- 6) There were no children and young people who were unable to attend their preferred choice of school due to lack of physical access in 2005/6.
- 7) There are no pupils in Cumbria with SEN who have to travel for longer than 45 minutes to reach the nearest specialist school required because of their special educational needs.
- 8) There are 11 children in Cumbria who travel between 20-30 miles to their nearest specialist school. There is one pupil, educated in her mainstream school in Barrow, who makes a weekly trip to a more specialist environment in Whitehaven. The child’s rail journey is incorporated into her learning programme.
- 9) There are 148 pupils in 'resourced provision in maintained mainstream schools' and 43 pupils in 'SEN units in maintained mainstream schools' in 2006. The number of pupils attending special schools in 2006 is 441.

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