

15. Specialist Equipment Guidance

Cumbria LA provision and loan of essential equipment for sensory impaired children and young people (Deaf/Hearing Impaired & Blind /Vision Impaired) which is highly specialised, and typically of high cost.

Introduction

The Equality Act 2010 covers all pupils in Scotland, England and Wales who meet the definition of disabled: DHI and BVI count as a disability as they are substantial and long term impairment.

All types of education providers have a duty to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that disabled pupils are not at a significant disadvantage. The provision of auxiliary aids and services is covered by the act and may be classed as reasonable adjustments.

Accessing essential equipment for sensory impaired children and young people which is highly specialised and typically of high cost.

Cumbria acknowledges that centrally organised and funded aids and services are an effective and efficient way of meeting the needs of sensory impaired children.

Currently the local authority holds a central budget paid from the Delegated Schools Grant (DSG) to provide SEND services centrally. This includes auxiliary aids for sensory impaired children and young people.

Some children or young people with sensory impairment will require essential equipment which **is highly specialised, and typically of high cost.**

Where children or young people are attending an educational setting which is maintained by the local authority, or delivering education on behalf of the local authority, equipment may be provided to ensure those duties are being met under the Equality Act 2010.

Although provided for the sole use of an individual pupil, the equipment remains the property of the Cumbria Children and Family Services - SEND TST.

If and when the equipment is no longer required, the child or young person leaves the educational setting, moves out of Cumbria, or the equipment is no longer suitable, it must be returned to Cumbria Children and Family services - SEND TST. It can then be made available to reallocate to another pupil with similar needs.

In some cases the provision of equipment may also include servicing, maintenance, repair and modification if necessary.

A loan agreement will be agreed with the educational setting outlining responsibilities towards the equipment and its use. This would be agreed before the LA purchased and loaned any equipment for use by the child or young person.

Assessments for specialist equipment (essential equipment which is highly specialist and typically of high cost) for use in educational settings

Assessments for equipment for children and young people with a sensory impairment would be carried out by a Specialist Advisory Teacher DHI/ BVI. Evidence will be provided to confirm the reasons why the child or young person will require the equipment in order to access education and the intended outcomes of using the equipment.

For some pupils the use of specialist equipment will be written in to an EHCP. For some pupils specialist equipment will be provided but not written in to an EHCP. For some pupils specialist equipment will be written into an EHCP.