



**BATTLEDOWN CENTRE FOR CHILDREN & FAMILIES**  
*A Specialist Early Years Centre*

## **ACCESSIBILITY POLICY AND PLAN**

**This policy covers all aspects of school's work including Special School, Extended Services (inc Daycare) and Child Development Centre**

**SEPTEMBER 2011**

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Date of Policy - September 2011

Date of Review - September 2014

### **Section 1**

**Member of staff responsible:** Headteacher - Jane Cummins

**This plan was formulated by a Consultative Group consisting of:**

**Staff** - Helen Dodwell, Jane Cummins, Mandy Owen, Karen Cooke, Sue Dunne & Jane Davis

**Governors** - Jane Cummins, Jenny Bilas, Helen Morgan

### **Section 2 - Introduction**

#### **Battledown Centre for Children and Families- Vision Statement**

At Battledown we are committed to providing high quality, innovative, reflective assessment, early intervention, inclusion and care for young children with special needs and disabilities working in partnership with their families.

#### **Philosophy of this Policy and Plan**

Battledown Centre for Children and Families strives to ensure that the culture and ethos of the school are such that, whatever the abilities and needs of members of the school community, everyone is equally valued and treats one another with respect. Pupils are provided with the opportunity to experience, understand and value diversity.

#### **What do we understand by 'disability'?**

"A person suffers a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day to day activities"

In our school people with disabilities include -

- Arthritis
- Asthma
- Ataxia, Oculomotor Apraxia And Cerebella Hypoplasia
- Autism
- Charge Syndrome
- Diabetes
- Down's Syndrome
- Epilepsy
- Global Developmental Delay
- Hearing Impairment
- Hydrocephalus
- Optic Nerve Hypoplasia
- Monoplegia
- Muscular Dystrophy
- Myotonic Dystrophy
- Rett's Syndrome
- Smith-Magenis Syndrome
- Visual Impairment

(as of September 2011)

Because of the nature of Battledown Centre for Children and Families most pupils have been or are likely to be deemed disabled under this definition. The school aims to include all pupils in the full life of the school through the implementation of all its policies.

#### **Statutory responsibilities**

The Governing Body acknowledges its duties under the Disability Discrimination Act (1995) as amended by SENDA (2001) "not to discriminate against disabled pupils in their admissions and exclusions, education and associated services".

Schools and LAs must:

- not treat disabled pupils less favourably; and
- take reasonable steps to avoid putting disabled pupils at a substantial disadvantage.

LAs and school governors have the duty to publish Accessibility Strategies and Plans.

#### **Scope of the plan**

This policy covers the three main strands of the planning duty:

- Improving the physical environment
- Participation in the school curriculum
- Information to pupils with disabilities

#### **1. Improving the physical environment of the school for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and associated services.**

There is a duty to improve the physical environment in order to better meet the needs of disabled pupils and to provide physical aids to support access to education. Battledown Centre for Children and Families has a number of

specialist curriculum facilities designed to meet the needs of pupils with learning, physical and sensory difficulties. It is a safe and secure environment in which pupils can maximise their independence. Although all areas are accessible to pupils with disabilities it is recognised that many improvements in design have taken place since the building was built in 1902.

As a special school the school does not have access to national funding designated to improve accessibility. However the Governing Body are committed to ensure that all renovations funded centrally or through the delegated budget take into account the needs of those with learning, physical and sensory disabilities. Consultants are instructed to this effect when planning any work. Staff working with specific groups of children or with particular expertise are consulted at the design stage of any renovations.

A wide range of specialist equipment to support the needs of disabled pupils is routinely available in the school. This includes specialist switches, touch screens, augmentative communication aids, hoists and other personal care equipment, supported seating, rise and fall computer tables. Low vision aids and equipment to support pupils with visual and/or auditory impairment are readily available through the specialist teaching services. Where a need is identified by the Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy or Speech and Language Therapy service related to a specific individual then application is made to the LA for additional support. The school provides the first £300 of any cost for these items with the LA meeting the residual cost. Wheelchairs and specialist equipment for home are provided through the NHS or Social Services.

**Actions**

*To improve access into the building both to ensure safety of children and families with complex physical needs.*

**2. Increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school's curriculum.**

There is a duty to ensure that full access to a broad and balanced curriculum is provided through play, development, teaching and learning strategies, school and classroom organisation, deployment and training of staff, timetabling and the selection of any options.

Battledown Centre for Children and Families is organised to provide access to a broad, balanced and relevant Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum to all its pupils. This is achieved through specially adapted programmes of work, specialist teaching and learning methodologies. A substantial commitment to professional development for staff at all levels and careful deployment of staff to meet the individual needs of pupils.

Pupils with very high levels of disability may follow individual adapted programmes but care is taken to ensure that this is a response to individual needs rather than organisational expediency.

**Actions**

*The school will continue to monitor access to all the activities provided for pupils as identified in the School Development & Improvement Planning process. (For example the adaptation of the assessment materials to meet the needs of children functioning at early developmental levels).*

**3. Improving the delivery of information to pupils with additional needs disabilities. There is a duty to provide information, normally provided by the school in writing to its pupils, to disabled pupils.**

Battledown Centre for Children and Families operates within a total communication context. Every effort is made through the use of signs and symbols to ensure that all pupils understand what is required of them and can understand the curriculum as it is presented.

All classes can use symbol timetables as a matter of course and present learning materials using symbols. Full use is made of augmentative communication strategies as appropriate to individual pupils. General notices to pupils and displays are always presented using symbols.

### **Actions**

*The school will continue to develop Total Communication strategies and where appropriate make use of alternative formats and specialist equipment.*

### **Monitoring**

The school recognises that monitoring is essential to ensure that no pupils are being disadvantaged. As part of its School Development & Improvement Planning processes information is collected and analysed in relation to:

- Admissions
- Attainment
- Progress
- Attendance
- Exclusions
- Number of pupils participating in extended services (inc summer playscheme)
- Outdoor Education
- Parents' & Carers' involvement in the life of the school (representation on BFG, attendance at parents' evenings, visits to the classroom, school events, Family Learning etc).
- Outreach
- Response to teaching styles
- Setting/ grouping/ organisation for pupils
- Staff deployment
- Total Communication practice

The school also monitors information about selection and recruitment of staff and Governing Body representation.

Battledown Centre for Children and Families Access Plan - September 2011

	Targets	Strategies	Outcomes	Timeframe	Led by	Actioned by
Short Term	To raise staff awareness of disability issues especially autism and sensory impairments	Training through CPD and INSET	Staff are aware of issues and implications of disability in school.	Autumn 2011, Spring / Summer 2012	Leadership Team - Change Team Leaders	Helen Dodwell, Nikki Teague & Mary King-Stokes
Short Term	To have clear signage at entrances	Part of redevelopment of porch/lobby areas	All public areas of school clearly signed and labelled.	September 2012	Business Manager	Admin Team
Short Term	To have safe access for children using playground.	Access to swing for older children with limited mobility	All children able to safely access all aspects of play equipment available on playground.	Summer 2012	Leadership Team - Mary King-Stokes	Mary King-Stokes
Short Term	To have safe access for children and families to school front entrance.	Seek advice from Property services	All children able to safely access all aspects of play equipment available on playground.	Spring / Summer 2012	Business Manager	Admin Team
Short Term	To minimise distraction through door windows in teaching areas.	Source and fit mirror glass/covering on classroom doors.	Children will be measurably less distracted in teaching areas	Summer 2012	Business Manager	Admin Team
Short Term	To improve access to Total Communication environments at home and other settings.	Total Communication Induction Courses for parents and settings	Parents and settings report increased use of signing and symbols	Autumn 2011/ Summer 2012	TC Co-ordinator - Jo Tombs	TC Co-ordinator - Jo Tombs
Medium term	To incorporate appropriate - 1. colour schemes 2. floorings when refurbishing to benefit 1. children with visual impairments 2. children with mobility difficulties.	Seek advice from Property services and ATS team on appropriate colour schemes and floorings	Teaching areas are made more accessible to visually impaired and mobility impaired children and building users.	Autumn 2012 and ongoing	Business Manager, Leadership Team and Governors	Business Manager
Medium term	To monitor access to all the activities provided for pupils as identified in the School Development & Improvement Planning process.	Ensure adaptation of the curriculum/assessment materials to meet the needs of children functioning at early developmental levels	Teaching and assessments are appropriate for the whole school community	Autumn 2012 and ongoing	T&L Manager - Curriculum - Nikki Teague	All Teachers
Medium term	To improve access to beach area (courtyard) and wild garden	Seek advice from Property services and OT on access solutions	Teaching areas are made more accessible to mobility impaired children and building users.	Autumn 2012/Spring 2013	Business Manager	Admin Team
Medium term	To improve access to website	Install 'Point' software to incorporate Total Communication symbols	Website utilises and promotes symbols	Autumn 2012/Spring 2013	CiCC - Jane Davis, TC Co-ordinator - Jo Tombs	CiCC - Jane Davis
Long Term	To ensure school plans improve access to designated areas over successive financial years. The school will prioritise action according to ongoing audits.	Planned use of delegated resources in line with SD&IP and AMP Ongoing audit of building accessibility and suitability Possible areas for consideration access to Family Room, Red Room, Harp Hill Clinic, doors throughout building	Access reviewed regularly and plans developed to improve accessibility of building and practice.	2011 to 2014	Business Manager, Leadership Team and Governors	Leadership Team, Governors Finance & Premises Committee



## Appendices

### Publications for guidance

Accessible Schools: Planning to increase access to schools for disabled pupils	Issued to all schools in June 2002
Schools Disability Code of Practice	DRC
SEN Code of Practice	DCSF
The Early Years Foundation Stage Effective Practice: Inclusive Practice	DCSF
Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Guidance	DCSF
Designing for Pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities in Schools BUILDING BULLETIN 77 (Revised and updated 2005) Complaints Procedure 2010	DCSF  Battledown Centre for Children & Families

### Useful telephone numbers:

Disability Rights Commission	0207 828 7022
DfE Publications	0845 602 2260
Ofsted Publications	020 7510 0180
QCA	021 8867 3333

## Governors & Staff Briefing on the SEN and Disability Act, 2002 (SENDA)

- From September 2002 the Disability Discrimination Act, 1995 has been extended to schools and LEAs.
- It outlaws discrimination by schools and LEAs against either current or prospective disabled pupils in their access to education.

### Definition of Disability

- A person has a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that has substantial and long-term adverse affect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.
- This covers physical disabilities, sensory impairments and learning disabilities.
- Pupils often have SEN but the act also covers children with conditions such as severe asthma, diabetes, and arthritis.

### Statutory Responsibilities

- One of the new duties is to plan to increase, over time, the accessibility of schools.
- Schools are required to produce written accessibility plans.
- Plans must be in place by April 2003 and must run for a minimum of 3 years.
- There is a duty to implement, review and revise plans during this period.
- Governing bodies are ultimately liable for the actions of all employees and any agents acting on the school's behalf.
- Schools must not treat disabled pupils less favourably than non-disabled pupils in:  
Admissions, Education and other services, Exclusion
- There is a duty of "reasonable adjustment" to take reasonable steps to ensure disabled pupils are not put at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to pupils who are not disabled. (This excludes provision of auxiliary aids and services and changes to the physical environment, which are covered by the SEN framework.)

### Requirement to Plan For

- Increasing access for disabled pupils to the school curriculum.
- Improving the access to the physical environment of schools.
- Improving the delivery of written information to disabled pupils.

### Publishing Plans

- Schools have a duty to publish information about their accessibility plans in their governors' annual report to parents.

### Monitoring

- OFSTED will monitor plans.

### Appeals

- Pupils and parents will have the right of appeal to SEN and Disability Tribunals.

"Inaccessible information can disable a person just as much as a badly designed building or a flight of stairs. You can have the most accessible building or up-to-date equipment in the world but if the people in that building are afraid of people with disabilities, and don't know how to meet individual needs or how to access or use equipment, then you might as well not have made those changes in the first place". (Kelley, 2000)

### Points to consider

- The physical environment - building, signs, decoration.
- Policies
- Written and published material
- Practice and training
- Access for Parents and other users of the building.

Jane Cummins September 2012