

Guidance for Accessibility to Inclusive learning environments

Inclusive Education Service

The following guidance advises areas in schools and settings where adaptations might need to be made;

Access to site

- Disabled parking spaces(s) signposted at car park entrance
- Dropped kerb to pavement with appropriate textured paving
- High contrast signage to the entrance.
- Adequate lighting along pathway
- Walkways should be evenly paved and in good condition
- Clear of overhanging trees or windows opening onto the pathways where possible.
- All stepped areas accessible by ramp with tactile surface at top and bottom where possible.
- Appropriate handrails starting before the first step and finishing after the last.
- Edges of steps/stairs highlighted

Entrance and Reception

- Height of entrance bell clearly visible and contrasting with surrounding areas
- Entrance mats etc. flush with floor no tripping hazard
- Area well-lit and clear signage
- Provide a Lighting Transition Zone out of the main traffic area where a visually impaired person can adjust to the different light levels when entering a building
- Clear of obstacles or clutter
- Glazing should be clearly marked by banding or frosting to indicate its presence

Corridors / building interior

- Plain no glare, non-slippery flooring

- Adequate lighting, not pooling. Ensure there are no dark areas or problematic glare or direct sunlight
- Corridors and walkways should be free of clutter, both floors and walls
- Doors painted in a colour that contrasts with their frame and surroundings
- Door furniture in a different colour to the door
- Clear and tactile signage to classrooms fitted to the outside wall, not the door
- Displays at eye level, tactile if possible
- Raised areas/ steps, which protrude into an open space creating a tripping hazard, require highlighting both the tread and riser need to be clearly indicated

Classrooms

- Cloakroom - coat hooks a good size and contrasting colour
- Natural light needs to be controllable and adjustable i.e. vertical blinds
- Diffusers should be fitted to all artificial lighting and cleaned regularly. Any faltering/flickering light bulbs should be replaced as soon as possible
- Light switches, plug sockets and door handles need to be highlighted to be easily identifiable from a pale background
- Walls painted in a matt finish and with furniture that clearly contrasts with walls and floors
- Clearly defined and labelled equipment, shelves and storage to encourage independence
- White/blackboard cleaned regularly
- Clear of unused furniture and clutter.

Toilets

- Clear and tactile signage
- Access to a disabled toilet and/or hygiene suite*

Outside areas

- External posts highlighted with a band of contrasting colour
- Railings and boundary fences kept in good condition and painted in a bright colour
- Paint signs and directional markings on walls
- All steps should have a tactile surface of raised ribs set parallel to the top step nosings
- Are pathways (and edges), playground equipment and sports field markings clearly defined?

*Disabled toilet needs to comply with Part M building regs. Any consideration of a hygiene room needs further discussion with the strategic planning and the sensory, physical and medical team. Please see contact details below.

The checklist was adapted from Doncaster Council (source is <http://doncaster.gov.uk/services/schools/checklist-for-school-accessibility>). North Yorkshire County Council adapted it for own use and recommend that schools and settings use it to ensure the environment is inclusive for all learners.

If you have a query, please do not hesitate to contact the Inclusive Education Service (InclusiveEducation@northyorks.gov.uk) or strategic planning (Julia.Temple@northyorks.gov.uk).

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