

Are schools' accessibility plans working?

A report

Accessibility Plan



**easy
read**



drill

Disability Research on
Independent Living & Learning

Contents



3 Introduction



5 Information about accessibility plans



6 Do accessibility plans make a difference?



7 Choosing a mainstream school



8 Access



9 Teaching and learning



10 Being involved in the school community



12 What should happen?



14 For more information

Introduction



This report has been written by the **Alliance for Inclusive Education (ALLFIE)** and funded by Disability Research on Independent Living and Learning (**DRILL**).



The **Alliance for Inclusive Education (ALLFIE)** wants Disabled learners to be fully included in **mainstream schools** with the support they need.



A **mainstream school** is a school for Disabled and Non-Disabled children.



DRILL is run by Disabled people. They look into ways to live independently.



This report is about the plans that mainstream schools make to include Disabled pupils and parents.



These plans are called **accessibility plans**.



We want to know if accessibility plans are making a difference to Disabled pupils and parents.



We asked people what they thought

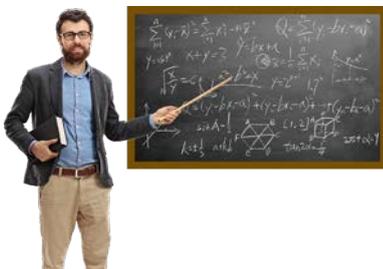
We asked many people what they thought, including:



- Disabled children



- Their parents



- People who work in schools



This report is based on what they said.

Information about accessibility plans



We asked Disabled young people and their parents about the accessibility plans at their mainstream schools.



They told us:

- Most people had been given little or no information about accessibility plans



- It is often hard to get a school to show you their accessibility plan



- Only a very few parents had been asked to help write the accessibility plan



- Many parents did not realise that schools have to provide lifts, ramps or other things that help a Disabled pupil take part like anyone else

Do accessibility plans make a difference?



We asked Disabled young people and their parents if accessibility plans had made a difference.



They told us:

- Most mainstream schools don't do any of the things that are written in the accessibility plans



- Disabled young people feel let down by the bad attitudes of staff



- Schools generally don't provide information in Easy Read, Braille, or Sign Language



- The Government is not checking that schools are doing the things in their accessibility plans

Choosing a mainstream school



We asked what it was like when a Disabled child chooses to go to a mainstream school.



People told us:

- They didn't get much information about how a Disabled child would be included in the school



- Staff often had a bad attitude towards Disabled pupils. Staff were trying to put Disabled children off coming to their school



- Many parents felt they could only choose between a special school or teaching their child at home



- Fewer Disabled children are going to mainstream schools. The Government is building more special schools

Access



We asked people if their schools were accessible.



People told us that schools were often not very accessible.

Problems include:



- It's too noisy



- The lighting is bad for some children



- The doors are too heavy



- There aren't enough ramps



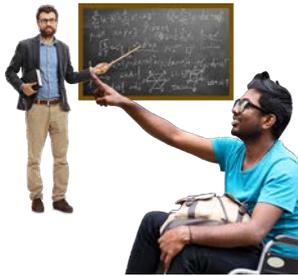
- The lifts don't work



- If the lifts don't work, a school would put all the Disabled children, of all ages, into one classroom and give them a worksheet to do.

They would get no teaching.

Teaching and learning



We asked people whether Disabled children were being taught properly.

People said that:



- Disabled children were not being given a fair chance to learn



- Disabled children were not being given a chance to show what they can do



- British Sign Language should be taught in schools



- Many Disabled children are stopped from going to school because the school cannot cope with the way that they behave



- The accessibility plan should help the school give the right support to Disabled students, so that they can make the most of being at school

Being involved in the school community



We asked if Disabled students were being involved in the life of the school.



People told us that Disabled young people have difficulty in taking part because:



- Other people have a bad attitude towards Disabled people



- It is difficult for Disabled young people to travel



- There are not enough staff who are trained to work with Disabled young people



- Social events are often not accessible



- Some Disabled children have lunch and breaks by themselves to keep away from getting bullied



- Some children don't go on school trips because the school does not have enough support for them

What should happen?



After talking to many young Disabled people and their parents, we think that:



- Local councils should tell schools not to treat Disabled students in a bad way



- Disabled young people and their parents should be able to take schools to court if they are being treated unfairly



- The Government should check that schools' accessibility plans are working



- Schools should involve Disabled young people and their parents in writing new accessibility plans



- The people who check on schools should also check that accessibility plans are working properly



- Teachers, and head teachers should have training in how to work with Disabled young people



- Teachers should look at new ways of teaching that work well for Disabled pupils



- Schools should make sure that there are plenty of ways for Disabled and Non-Disabled pupils to get on well together

For more information



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