



From mountain to sea

Accessibility Strategy



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1 Background

Aberdeenshire Council, along with the Scottish Government, is committed to ensuring that all our children and young people are safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible, included. To support this, all of our children and young people should have access to positive learning environments and opportunities to develop their knowledge, skills, ambition, confidence and self-esteem to their fullest potential. Aberdeenshire Council are guided by Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) principles.

This document sets out the Accessibility Strategy for schools managed by Aberdeenshire Council Education and Children's Services. It outlines the present and future developments to enhance and improve access to a quality education to all pupils.

This strategy recognises the rights of pupils with disabilities to appropriate education through improved access to information, curriculum and environment to ensure they are included, engaged and involved.

There is an ongoing duty incumbent on all to promote equality of opportunity and awareness of disabilities and additional support needs. Everyone should strive to create inclusive environments in which the needs of all pupils can be met and in which children and young people can flourish in a safe and nurturing environment. Inclusion is a national and a council priority.

1.1 Legislative Framework

The Accessibility Strategy is in place so that the planning and implementation processes of the local authority and education department meet the requirements of sections 1 to 3 of the **Education (Disability Strategies and Pupils' Educational Records) (Scotland) Act 2002**. The Act also requires that there are mechanisms in place for long-term strategic planning to improve access in schools for all pupils with disabilities.

The Accessibility Strategy will:

- improve access to education in mainstream schooling for present and prospective pupils with disabilities;
- improve visitor access to school buildings;
- Improve communication and consultation with and involvement of people with disabilities in the planning process
- Streamline departmental lines of communication with respect to issues relating to accessibility, disability and inclusion
- outline the planning, targets and expected outcomes over the next three years with regard to accessibility for pupils and staff across its education establishments
- assist with the authority's obligations to provide equality of employment to disabled staff under the Equality Act 2010 where schools' premises are used to provide services related to education

- assist with the education authorities obligation in meeting its general and specific duties under the Public Sector Duty of the Equality Act 2010

Under the Education (Disability Strategies and Pupils' Educational Records) (Scotland) Act 2002, all local authorities must have plans in place for their pupils with disabilities to meet their duties under the legislation. The two key duties of this legislation are:

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

The Equality Act 2010 built on previous requirements by imposing on public bodies in carrying out their functions, a positive duty to eliminate discrimination and harassment, and, therefore, to promote equality of opportunity for disabled people. In other words, it requires public bodies to move away from risk-avoidance activities to establishing practices which actively promote and support the diverse needs of disabled people. It requires information-gathering on the effect of policies and practices on educational opportunities and attainment levels of disabled pupils. It also requires service providers to make reasonable adjustments to make our service accessible to disabled people. These can be simple changes such as making sure that all lessons take place on ground floor classrooms for a class where one of the pupils uses a wheelchair and the school does not have a lift.

The general public sector equality duty requires public authorities, in the exercise of their functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The legislation covers people with different types of disabilities. A person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

It includes the following broad groups of disabilities:

- Communication Difficulties,
- Hearing Impairments
- Specific Learning Difficulties, such as dyslexia
- Visual Impairments
- Specific Language Impairments
- Physical Difficulties / Motor Impairments
- Neurodevelopmental disorders, such as Autistic Spectrum Condition

It is important to note that the day-to-day activities affected by disability may include:

- Mobility
- Manual Dexterity
- Physical Coordination
- Continence
- Ability to lift, carry or otherwise move everyday objects
- Speech, Hearing or Eyesight
- Memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand
- Perception of Risk of physical danger
- Social interactions
- Participation in social activities

Schools and education authorities have had a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils since 2002 (originally under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (the DDA) and, from October 2010, under the Equality Act 2010). From 1 September 2012 the reasonable adjustments duty for schools and education authorities includes a duty to provide auxiliary aids and services for disabled pupils. The duty is “to take such steps as it is reasonable to have to take to avoid the substantial disadvantage to a disabled person caused by a provision, criterion or practice applied by or on behalf of a school or by the absence of an auxiliary aid or service”. A school’s duty to make reasonable adjustments is an anticipatory one owed to disabled pupils generally, and therefore schools need to think in advance about what disabled pupils might require and what adjustments might need to be made for them.

The duty to make reasonable adjustments in relation to provisions, criteria and practices is not a new duty for schools. The new element of the duty for schools is the provision of auxiliary aids and services for disabled pupils. This duty sits alongside the duty applied through the Education (Disability Strategies and Pupils’ Educational Records) (Scotland) Act 2002 (‘the 2002 Act’) which requires responsible bodies to prepare and implement accessibility strategies to improve, year-on-year, access to education for disabled pupils.

Complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty may involve treating some people more favourably than others, as far as this is allowed by law. For example, it may involve making use of an exception or the positive action provisions in order to provide a service in a way which is appropriate for people who share a protected characteristic.

The Equality Duty also explicitly recognises that the needs of disabled people may be different from those of non-disabled people. Public bodies should therefore take account of disabled people’s impairments when making decisions about policies or services. This might mean making reasonable adjustments or treating disabled people differently to non-disabled people in order to meet their needs.

In addition, the Scottish Government introduced a set of specific equality duties in May 2012; the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012, requiring public bodies to report on equality progress and activities.

1.2 The Accessibility Strategy

The Equality Act 2010 reinforced and increased previous duties on all schools and Local Authorities to plan to increase over time the accessibility of schools with regard to disabled pupils and to implement their plans. Aberdeenshire Council's Accessibility Strategy focuses on three main areas which have been reviewed;

- Access to the curriculum
- Access to the physical environment, to enable better access to education and associated services provided; and
- Improving access to communication and the delivery of school information. In particular, relating to the provision of information in appropriate alternative formats and taking account of any preferences expressed by the pupil or their parents, that would be provided in writing to pupils who do not have a disability

1.2.1 Who the Strategy covers

This Accessibility Strategy covers pupils with a disability who require special arrangements to allow access to the curriculum, the physical environment or information. It is recognised that not all disabilities will give rise to additional support needs.

Pupils with learning difficulties, and / or social, emotional or behavioural needs may not meet a disability criteria, but may require significant additional support to access education. The Strategy therefore also includes pupils who require support to enable them to access education, regardless of whether they have a diagnosed condition or meet specific disability criteria.

The Strategy also covers prospective pupils with a disability. Aberdeenshire schools must be prepared to welcome pupils with a disability even when they are unaware at present of who these pupils might be.

2 Review of Accessibility Strategy and Planning for Period 2019-2021

This is Aberdeenshire's third Accessibility Strategy which sets out progress to-date and plans for moving forward. Much has happened to improve and develop access and support to services for children and young people and our commitment to continual improvement remains a key priority of our vision, values and aims for Education and Children's Services.

2.1 Review of Enhanced Provision and implementation of Nine Area Model

Aberdeenshire Council's vision is that:

- All children and young people will receive the right support, in the right place, at the right time.
- Children and young people will be supported to remain with their families and be educated in their local communities.

The aim of the Enhanced Provision model is to provide a range of supports, and targeted and specialist services across each cluster. This includes appropriate levels of staffing, expertise and appropriate learning environments. A review of enhanced provision was conducted in 2013 and invest-to-save funding was approved in 2014 to deliver on the three year Enhanced Provision project aimed at improving existing provision across Aberdeenshire.

The Enhanced Provision Nine Area model provides a continuum of universal, targeted and specialist support across all schools in every area:

- Mainstream provision
- Enhanced Provision Schools (17 Primary and 17 Secondary Schools)
- Community Resource Hubs (5 Primary and 5 Secondary Schools, 4 Special Schools)

Enhanced nursery provision was aligned to the primary enhanced provision model. (Appendix 1)

2.1.1 Enhanced Provision Schools

Some children have needs which affect their learning that require greater levels of support than that available within the mainstream classroom environment. They may require a more targeted curriculum which requires access to sensory rooms, targeted support with life skill development, and/or specialist approaches to learning and teaching. The resources to provide this level of support are referred to as 'enhanced provision' and comprise of teachers with a higher level of expertise than those supporting mainstream classes, and life skills/multi-sensory areas within a building – enhanced staffing and environment.

Children may access 'enhanced provision' according to their needs for as long or short a time as would be appropriate.

When a child / young person is attending a school which is not a designated enhanced provision, outreach support may be available from the nearest school with enhanced provision. This may take the form of direct support to the child / young person, or advice and consultation to teaching staff.

Alternatively, a blended placement may be offered between the mainstream school that a child/young person is attending and the nearest school with

enhanced provision, in order that the child can remain with their peers in their own local school whilst also accessing the resources and expertise of the enhanced provision.

This degree of flexibility ensures that a child/young person's needs can be met fully under the GIRFEC principles (Getting it right for every child).

2.1.2 Community Resource Hubs

A community resource hub supports pupils with significant and complex needs that cannot be met within the context of mainstream or enhanced provision. Many, but not all, children and young people being supported by Community Resource Hubs will be learning within the pre-early or early level of the Curriculum for Excellence. They are learners who require a specialist level of expertise and resource to access learning. The curriculum is based strongly on practical life skills, personal self-help skills, language and communication skills, self-regulation and sensory integration.

Community Resource Hub in-reach support may take the form of a full-time placement, a blended place with an enhanced provision school, or in exceptional circumstances, a short-term assessment place.

Outreach support may be offered in the form of direct intervention work with the child / young person, or advice and consultation to teaching staff.

2.1.3 Enhanced Provision Accommodation Upgrade Programme

Due to the large geographical area and age of some of the school buildings and their unsuitability to be converted to being fully accessible, the Nine Area model ensures that each of the 9 areas of Aberdeenshire has the necessary facilities to meet all levels of accessibility.

An audit of each school was conducted, and invest-to-save funding led to a programme of buildings adaptations and improvements to ensure that all Enhanced Provision Schools and Community Resource Hub schools were physically accessible, in addition to appropriate flexible space to support learning, including:

- a like skills area in order to promote the learning of social and independence skills
- a quiet area for use by children/young people who need space for time alone, or to work with an adult or in a small group
- a basic specification of sensory equipment in a designated sensory area, to enable delivery of a sensory curriculum

Invest-to-save funding was approved via committee process to develop Fraserburgh Community Resource Hub on the Westfield (special school) site to include three facilities:

- a new build Family Resource Centre following the demolition of part of the existing building,
- a 0-3 nursery community wing developed from within the existing building
- a refurbished educational facility for children and young people with additional support needs.

Stonehaven Community Resource Hub included the refurbishment of the existing Carronhill (special school) site within the larger campus of Mill O'Forest School and Stonehaven Family Resource Centre

2.1.4 Enhanced Provision/ Community Resource Hub Guidance

Guidelines for staff on the management of Enhanced Provision and Community Resource Hubs were launched in 2015, and updated in November 2017.

Additional practitioner guidelines were developed to support child-centered planning of blended placements between mainstream / enhanced provision / community resource hub provisions.

These are published on the ASN website:

<http://asn-aberdeenshire.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Managing-Aberdeenshires-Enhanced-Provision-Centres-and-Community-Resource-Hubs-Guidelines-November-2017.pdf>

Next steps:

Work will be progressed to review and refresh Aberdeenshire Council's guidelines on inclusive education through the development of an Inclusive Education Statement in line with emerging national drivers.

2.1.5 Enhanced Provision Self-Evaluation Toolkit

In 2016 the Enhanced Provision Self-Evaluation Toolkit was launched to further support standards of consistency across Aberdeenshire in terms of how Enhanced Provision schools operate and the philosophy underpinning everyday practice. The tool is intended as a framework to support professional reflection on the development of Enhanced Provision, and to complement and support existing approaches to self-evaluation and improvement, including How Good Is Our School 4. It is also a helpful process for any school leadership team seeking to reflect on the inclusiveness of their establishment.

The toolkit is published on the ASN website:

<http://asn-aberdeenshire.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Reflective-Toolkit-for-EPC.pdf>

2.2 Peripatetic Support Services

A range of peripatetic education support services provide consultation, advice and support to ensure that additional support needs are appropriately assessed and planned for.

2.2.1 Sensory Support Service

Aberdeenshire Sensory Support Service is a peripatetic service staffed by:

- Teacher who have a mandatory specialist qualification that allows them to work with pupils who have a hearing or visual impairment.
- Communicators qualified and experienced in using either British Sign Language or Braille, and
- An Early Years Deaf Support Worker experienced in working with children who have a hearing impairment.

The Service works with babies, children and young people with a hearing or visual impairment until they reach school leaving age, parents and carers, school staff, and other agencies. The Service gets involved within weeks of a diagnosis of hearing or visual impairment being made, or when a referral is made by a hospital specialist, a parent / carer, a school or partner agency.

The Sensory Support Service provides support with:

- Assessment of a child's hearing or vision, with recommendations on how the child's needs can best be met
- Information, practical help and advice
- Support in the use of specialist resources to promote independence
- The development of language and communication skills in pupils with a hearing impairment
- Advice and support around inclusion
- Work alongside teachers when pupils use Sign or Braille
- Develop the use of Braille or Sign and teach it to pupils
- Organise mobility training / life skills for pupils with severe visual impairment
- Monitor a pupil's progress and provide reports
- Contribute to single and multi-agency action planning meetings
- Provide guidance on physical adjustments and improving access to the school environment, and communication for parents / carers.

2.2.2 ASPECTS

ASPECTS is a service staffed by teachers who specialise in sourcing, developing and using assistive technology to support Aberdeenshire pupils additional support needs. The service aims to assist pupils whose curricular access needs cannot be met using standard school technology. ASPECTS can provide advice, training, software and hardware, as appropriate to the needs of the pupil.

2.2.3 Educational Psychology Service

The Educational Psychology Service provides a service to children and young people from birth to post-school. Educational Psychologists provide advice and guidance, and support others to problem-solve their way through potentially difficult and complex situations, in which social, emotional, learning and/or mental or physical health factors are impacting on a young person's access to education.

2.2.4 English as an Additional Language (EAL) Service

The EAL Service provides advice and support to children and young people for whom English is not their first language. The Service has a consultation, advice, training and teaching role. Referrals are made by schools at the stage at which the pupil is enrolled. The EAL Service then offers an initial assessment to ascertain level of English and to determine the appropriate level of support required for the pupil to access education.

2.3 Professional Learning

2.3.1 ASN Career Long Professional Learning Strategy

An ASN Professional Learning Plan will be developed, based on a skills and training audit of all ASN staff. The strategy will cover all staff involved in meeting additional support needs of learners. It will set out:

- Roles and Responsibilities
- Priority areas under 5 key themes:
 - Safety, Health & Wellbeing
 - Language & Communication
 - ICT
 - Positive Relationships
 - Learning & Teaching
- The identification of learning and development needs
- How learning and development needs will be addressed
- How training needs will be reviewed

2.3.2 Equality and Diversity Training

All Aberdeenshire Council staff are expected to undertake two online training modules which promote positive attitudes to equality and diversity in the workplace, and help increase understanding of the challenges facing people from different groups.

3 Access to the Curriculum

The primary responsibility for ensuring that children and young people with disabilities have equity of access to the curriculum lies with Aberdeenshire schools and services to ensure children and young people receive their entitlement and opportunities to extend their experiences and understanding in a range of contexts. This covers learning and teaching and the full breadth of the curriculum including after-school clubs, sports, leisure and cultural activities and school visits.

Adjustments that would help children and young people with additional support needs have better access to the curriculum might include:

- learning & teaching approaches
- classroom organisation
- timetabling
- peer support opportunities
- alternative assessment arrangements

3.1 Inclusive Education: The Universal Offer

Aberdeenshire Council is committed to the presumption of mainstream, which is supported through inclusive practices that are universally available for all. This commitment is underpinned by single- and multi-agency development of guidelines, practice innovations, and professional learning opportunities related to the following key areas.

3.1.1 Dyslexia Friendly Schools

Aberdeenshire Council staff are encouraged and supported to use the “Addressing Dyslexia Toolkit”, which is a free comprehensive online resource for all who are involved in the identification and support of learners aged 3-18 years who are showing signs of literacy difficulties.

The following documents have also been created to support dyslexia friendly practices across Aberdeenshire Council. The documents are in line with Aberdeenshire Council’s staged procedures and build upon good practice and the concept of inclusive practice:

- Guidelines to Support Literacy
- Whole School Dyslexia Reflective Tool
- Dyslexia in the Classroom Reflective Tool
- Materials to support collaborative assessment

Additional links to a range of resources and information, including digital library resources, are available via the Aberdeenshire Council ASN Website, and Aberdeenshire Learning and Development Online (ALDO).

3.1.2 Autism Friendly Schools

- Aberdeenshire Council has worked with partners to take forward a number of areas which support the ongoing development of practices that are appropriate for children and young people with autism. Examples of the work undertaken to-date includes:
- Promoting the use of the Autism Toolbox in Aberdeenshire Schools. This resource was developed by the Scottish Government in partnership with the national charity, Scottish Autism with support from Autism Network Scotland.
- Online and face-to-face autism awareness raising sessions for staff
- Professional learning opportunities on practical support strategies, such as Visual Timetables and Social Stories
- Setting up professional mentoring opportunities to share good practice and experience
- Supporting teaching staff to undertake a Postgraduate Certificate in Autism
- The development of bespoke professional learning opportunities focusing on a particular aspect of Autism. For example, a suite of online training modules on “Understanding sensory behaviours”.

Next steps:

- Representatives from local parent support groups in Aberdeenshire will be invited to participate in a series of focus groups on “autism friendly schools”. The information gathered from across Aberdeenshire will be collated, themed and used to inform strategic improvement planning. A summary report will also be shared directly with all Aberdeenshire schools.
- Develop an Autism Friendly School Self-Evaluation Framework with associated guidance and professional learning opportunities.
- Review of evidence-based targeted interventions to support pupils with Autism who are experiencing high levels of anxiety.
- Review and update career long professional learning and support materials in line with forthcoming updated national autism guidance and toolbox.

3.1.3 Inclusion through Positive Relationships

Aberdeenshire has developed a comprehensive strategy to support the development of evidence-based whole school approaches which are known to improve relationships and behaviour, and subsequently, access to education for those who may be experiencing social and / or emotional difficulties. The “Promoting an Inclusive Culture and Ethos through Positive Relationships” Strategy, identifies 4 key areas of universal practice; (1) Universal and Targeted Nurture, (2) Solution-oriented Approaches, (3) Restorative Practices, and (4) Resilience Building Approaches.

Development work undertaken to-date includes:

- Establishing an Aberdeenshire model of Nurturing Schools and a rolling programme of associated professional learning opportunities.
- Working in partnership with Education Scotland to develop a sustainable “Train the Trainer” model of implementing Restorative Practice across Schools.
- Cluster-level professional learning opportunities for staff to develop their skills in solution-oriented approaches.

Next steps:

- A review of Aberdeenshire Council’s Education & Children’s Services current policy on exclusion and the development of a Promoting Inclusion and preventing Exclusion Policy, with accompanying guidelines and CLPL opportunities for staff.
- Ongoing roll-out of the Educational Psychology Service Nurturing Schools training programme.
- Develop online resources and practitioner support network for restorative practice.
- Develop offer for schools on Resilience Building Approaches.

3.1.3 Learning Pathway Plus

A Learning Pathway Plus (LPP) is an individualised programme of learning which involves an increased range and/or level of service to support the delivery of an appropriate curriculum. A LPP represents a high level of curriculum flexibility which requires resources beyond those that would usually be available through the school, cluster or service. These services are therefore sourced locally and commissioned by Education and Children’s Services.

A LPP usually emerges from multi-agency assessment and action planning processes for those children and young people most at risk of disengagement, exclusion and going to an out-of-authority placement.

Next steps:

Work with schools to apply similar principles and processes to support the development of Flexible Learning Programmes for identified groups of vulnerable learners through a life-cycle framework. This may include, for example, children in the early years with attachment-related needs, Senior Phase pupils with complex needs, Primary to Secondary Transition programmes.

3.3 Digital Technology

Aberdeenshire Council recognises that the implementation of technology and digital services has the ability to transform the way services are organised and delivered, and has a fundamental role to play in improving accessibility.

3.3.1 Assistive Technology

Basic Digital Knowledge to support all learners continues to evolve. At present in Aberdeenshire it includes:

- Text to Speech
- Speech to Text
- Immersive Reader
- TextHelp
- Digital Books
- Digital Exams
- Device built-in Accessibility Settings
- Specialised Assistive Technology (i.e. Braille note taker, FM system).

3.3.2 Online Learning & Teaching

A pilot project is currently underway to provide real time, online teaching to pupils who are currently unable or unwilling to attend school pupils with chronic absence as a result of health issues (home or hospital); school refusers; young carers and pupils with particular additional support needs). The initial focus for 2019-20 is on a core of English & Maths at levels National 4 & 5. Each class will be timetabled for 4 periods per week.

Next steps:

During 2019-20 the recording of Digital Technology CLPL events will be piloted. The plan will be to, where appropriate, make them accessible to pupils. This would, potentially, support young people with non-attendance to learn about the technology available that would support them accessing relevant learning and teaching remotely.

In the longer term, options will be explored which will allow the streaming of a small number of National 4 and 5 subjects to schools where there are critical staffing shortages. These will be recorded and archived then accessed by non-attenders, with some remote tutorial support.

3.4 Reasonable Adjustments / Special Exam Arrangements

Special arrangements will be made to ensure that pupils with additional support needs have appropriate arrangements in place to enable them to demonstrate achievement and attainment. Aberdeenshire Council works closely with the Scottish Qualifications Authority to ensure that any reasonable adjustments / special arrangements are put in place for pupils. Whilst the term “special

arrangements” is often referred to in the case of pupil examinations, it is recognised that these arrangements are in place across the whole of the curriculum to ensure equity and accessibility. Assessment and Planning advice is available from a range of Peripatetic Services.

3.5 Gypsy / Travellers

Gypsy/Travellers are a recognised ethnic group. They consider the travelling lifestyle part of their ethnic identity and culture. Whilst it is difficult to give an exact figure of how many Gypsy/Travellers live in Aberdeenshire, a study has suggested there are 100 to 200 living in Aberdeenshire at any one time.

Aberdeenshire Council has a dedicated Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer, who, in addition to managing the Aikey Brae site, helps to provide support, information and advice to the Gypsy/Travellers community by signposting them to various services such as education and health.

In 2018 Guidance was published to support learners from Gypsy/Traveller Communities. This can be found on the ASN website:

<http://asn-aberdeenshire.org/policies-and-guidance/?hilite=%27gypsy%27>

4 Access to Physical Environment

4.1 Introduction

Suitability is a measure of whether a school is fit for the purpose of delivering the education curriculum and whether it is ‘inclusive’ and accessible. Aberdeenshire have completed an Education and Children’s Services Accessibility Design Brief to outline necessary building changes. This can be found in Appendix 3.

Due to the large and diverse nature of the Aberdeenshire school estate there are schools that will require improvement and updating over time, improving accessibility will be taken into consideration prior to any planned refurbishment works. Schools will be identified and prioritised for refurbishment based on:

- Known requirements for existing pupils
- Suitability Core Facts
- Planning for pupils within the cluster

The analysis of the accessibility facts will provide Aberdeenshire Council with robust information to ensure that there is a strategic approach to improving accessibility throughout the Learning Estate.

There will be some instances where improvements to a pupil’s zoned school is not possible, an accessible alternative will be made available with suitable transport.

Improving the physical environment of the school for the purpose of increasing the extent to which pupils with a disability are able to take advantage of education and associated services provided or offered by such school or schools is a priority for Aberdeenshire Council.

Building Better Schools (Scottish Government and COSLA) prescribes that all children and young people should be educated in schools that ‘are fit for purpose’ in terms of suitability. Current legislation has an explicit presumption of mainstreaming and therefore a suitable school environment is one which is fully accessible to all disabled pupils. The school environment comprises of classrooms, surroundings, school transport, and outdoor activities.

4.2 New Buildings

All new Primary and Secondary schools built in Aberdeenshire are fully accessible. The new build primary schools and extensions adhere to the Aberdeenshire new build primary school brief (2015). The supplementary documentation of access brief outlines appropriate adaptations to buildings. Equity and inclusion are at the heart of Aberdeenshire Council ethos, culture and practice, therefore barriers must not be created due to constraints of the building. New buildings will be accessible to all children including those with a non-physical disability.

All new schools must have the following accommodation:

- Low sensory stimulation area
- Multi-sensory spaces
- The facility to install hoists if required in future
- Accessible toilets which are wide enough to allow two adult assistants with plinth and to be located with pupil toilets
- Shared intervention spaces for nurture and small group working
- Break out spaces adjacent to classrooms
- Sufficient storage space for specialised equipment

4.3 Existing Estate

Within the existing estate, one Primary school in each network is designated as the location of enhanced provision and include the following additional spaces: Multi-Sensory Room, Therapy Room and Life Skills Room. Enhanced provision schools within each network are detailed in Appendix 1.

The table below shows the number of schools within the existing estate that have an Accessible Toilet, Wheelchair Access, Multi-sensory Room, Disabled Parking, Nurture Space and a Life Skills Area. A full list of these schools can be found in Appendix 2.

Accommodation	Number of Aberdeenshire Schools
Accessible Toilet	120
Wheelchair Access	102
Multi-sensory Room	45
Disabled parking	63
Nurture Space	56
Life Skills Area	41

4.4 Strategy

The following processes will identify and prioritise school buildings for access improvements

- Any changes to schools within the learning estates including reconfiguration, extensions and new builds will be fully accessible.
- Reactive to pupils needs identified through transitions or the Multi Agency Action Plan Meeting (MAAPM) process.
- Suitability Core Facts analysis will identify schools beyond those within the nine-area model are equipped with the appropriate building adaptations. This will begin with satellite schools (those outwith 20 miles of the enhanced provision)

5 Improving Access to Communication and to the Delivery of School Information

5.1 Parental Involvement and Engagement

Both globally and nationally it is recognised that parents are the single most important influence on their children's development, learning and achievement. The involvement and engagement of parents in their children's learning is recognised as a key element in raising attainment through support, help and encouragement given at home and while at school.

The Parental Involvement and Engagement Strategy and Action Plan demonstrates the commitment by Aberdeenshire Council to improve the quality and the extent of all parents' involvement in their child's learning and the important role they play in their child's education. The Action Plan sets out a vision for parental involvement and engagement for the next three years and covers a journey that a child takes from pre-birth to age 18. It highlights the leadership of those who make the difference day in and day out.

The Action Plan is published on the council website:

<http://publications.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/dataset/parental-involvement-and-engagement-strategy-and-action-plan/resource/02c6596e-8cba-42c7-b28a-ee64086ea42>

5.1.2 Parental Engagement Support Hub Aberdeenshire (PESHA)

PESHA supports all aspects of Parental Engagement across Aberdeenshire. This includes providing training, support and guidance for parents, schools and parent councils.

5.1.3 Methods of communication

Communication with parents/carers may take place through a variety of channels. Aberdeenshire Schools are prepared to contact parents and carers by the most effective way to make the information accessible. This may mean the use of a textphone, Typetalk, mobile phone or email for deaf

or hard of hearing parents, or the use of a tape or email for those with visual difficulties or dyslexia.

Parents/Carers must be consulted at time of enrolment to ensure that the format of information which is sent home is accessible to them. Where specialist support and information is required, this too must be presented in alternative formats where necessary to ensure accessibility and help understanding.

5.1.4 Parental Involvement in Assessment & Planning Processes

Aberdeenshire Council is committed to providing the right support, in the right place, and at the right time in order to help individual children and young people achieve their potential and goals. Aberdeenshire Council works with children, young people, parents and carers, and a range of multi-agency partners, using the GIRFEC National Practice Model.

Parents/carers should be encouraged to be routinely involved in reviewing their child's additional support needs. It is recognised that attending meetings can be a nerve-racking experience for families. Aberdeenshire multi-agency operational guidance on effective Child's Plan meetings provide prompts for before, during and after a meeting to help ensure everyone feels welcome to join in discussion at meetings, leading to the best chance of a positive outcome and shared sense of ownership towards the Child's Plan. Multi-agency training is also available to practitioners on effective Child's Planning meetings.

5.1.5 Addressing Concerns and Complaints

Parents/carers are encouraged to approach school management if there are aspects of accessibility they have concerns about so that strategies can be considered and put in place.

Concerns are almost always most quickly and easily addressed informally through discussion between parents/carers and those most directly involved with their child. Initially parents/carers should be advised to discuss concerns with the class teacher, principal teacher, depute headteacher or headteacher dependent on age and stage.

Aberdeenshire Council recognises the vital role that parents play in supporting their child's learning and is committed to fostering positive relationships with parents. No matter how strong partnerships are, or how good our policies are, sometimes things can still go wrong and there may be occasions where parents wish to express unhappiness or dissatisfaction with council services, policies or staff behaviour.

The complaints procedure is available on the Council website:
https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/media/14581/complaints-procedure-customer_v6.pdf

5.1.6 Dispute Resolution

Further information about Resolving Disputes and the Rights of Parents can be found on the ENQUIRE Parent Information Service: <https://enquire.org.uk/>

5.2 Voice of the Child or Young Person

The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 included new law which helps make sure children's rights are promoted across Scotland.

Aberdeenshire Council is committed to supporting children and young people's involvement in discussing what support could help them. Children and young people should be given the option to participate in their assessment and planning meetings. The opportunity to bring a support person along to single- or multi-agency planning meetings (e.g. a helpful family member or a trusted Pupil Support Assistant) should be offered. In some less common circumstances, advocacy entitlement or legal representation may be appropriate to arrange for the child or young person.

If the child or young person does not wish to be physically present at a meeting, they should be supported to express their views, so these can be taken into account. Views can be represented at meetings in a number of ways, such as drawings, writing them down in advance, recording video clips, or discussing what they would like to happen with someone they trust in order that they can advocate on their behalf. Tools such as the "Have your say" form and "My Voice" software can also be used.

"My Voice" is a unique consulting platform for engaging with and gathering the views of children and young people who use social work services in Aberdeenshire. In 2015 the Children's Services team involved young people and practitioners in the design of the system from inception and development, through to delivery. The resulting platform and solution, My Voice - Together Aberdeenshire, is now 'tried, tested and well received' by service users and service providers.

Based on the 8 Wellbeing Indicators, My Voice software uses widget symbols and audio to support children with a disability to answer survey questions and express their views. Over 2017 this approach was further piloted, and has now been rolled out across Aberdeenshire. All schools are expected to use My Voice, to strengthen the voice of disabled children and young people within any assessment or Child's Plan.

Next steps:

Develop an online toolkit with a continuum of methodologies that support the views of children and young people with different levels and types of additional support needs to be incorporated into single- and multi-agency assessment and planning processes.

5.3 Total Communication Approach

In 2015 the Aberdeenshire Total Communication Approach was developed in partnership with allied health professionals from NHS Grampian Speech & Language Therapy Team.

The Total Communication Approach emphasises the importance of using any means of communicating. Children with speech and language difficulties or more complex needs may require support to initiate and participate in communication and interaction. This means making use of all the means of communication that are available to the children. This may include;

- Speech and spoken language
- Makaton signing
- British Sign Language (BSL)
- Photos
- Picture symbols
- Pictures
- Objects
- Voice output communication aids and computer based systems
- On body signing
- Natural gesture

The Total Communication Approach involves the use of WIDGIT symbols in all Aberdeenshire schools and the use of Makaton as the preferred method of sign communication. However, children and young people for whom a severe / profound hearing loss is their main difficulty and they have no other significant support need, then BSL would be the preferred method of communication. Training in the use of Makaton or BSL is delivered to Aberdeenshire school staff on a needs-led basis. Makaton training for parents is available via NHS Grampian Speech and Language Therapy.

Next steps:

Work will be undertaken in partnership with the Sensory Support Service and Speech & Language Therapy to further strengthen the total communication approach at universal and targeted levels across schools.

5.4 Sensory Impairment

The Sensory Support Service provides advice and guidance to schools and families on alternative formats for the presentation of information and the use of technology to support pupils with hearing or visual impairments.

Pupils who are blind and visually impaired may require computer programmes to produce customised materials. Specialist aids are made available for those who require them.

Consideration is being given in all new buildings to the installation of loop and sound field systems at the time of building. A number of professional colleagues are consulted including Aberdeenshire Council Property Service. Consideration will also be given to the colour schemes, lighting and signing of all new building, and of existing buildings at the time of decoration.

Plans of school layout can be made available to pupils to facilitate their access to the whole school, and to help parents/carers to prepare their children for a new school.

5.5 English as an Additional Language

As Aberdeenshire increasingly welcomes families where English is an additional language to its communities, there is a requirement to ensure that language is not a barrier to children and their families. There also needs to be awareness that families may have different experiences of education, and so it cannot be assumed that they will know about the curriculum or expectations of school routines, homework, holidays, lunches, free school meals, parental engagement, uniforms, charity days and any other concepts which may be different or not present in other education systems. .

A range of generic materials have been produced in a variety of languages to support learning and home-school communication. Primary school menus and guidance on payment for meals and entitlement to free school meals is available in some languages on the council website. Access to translation and interpretation services is arranged through the English as an Additional Language (EAL) Service. Information on the Scottish education system and parents as partners is also available in some languages.

In 2017 guidance was refreshed to support schools to settle in bilingual children and young people. This includes tips on involving and communicating with parents, and useful learning & teaching strategies to support social inclusion, learning, communication, and the acquisition of English. The EAL Service also offers training courses on supporting bilingual learners. These courses can be arranged by contacting the EAL Service and can be booked through ALDO.

Next steps:

Further develop the concept of bilingual friendly schools as a universal offer in Aberdeenshire schools. A suite of training modules and resources for school staff with practical examples of good practice will be developed.

5.6 Web resources

5.6.1 ASN Website

The Aberdeenshire Council website for Additional Support Needs (<http://asn-aberdeenshire.org/>) provides information, advice, and signposting on a range of additional support needs for children and young people, parents, and professionals.

The website now includes:

- Aberdeenshire Support Manual Part 1: Legislative Background and meeting learner's needs
- Aberdeenshire Support Manual Part 2: Effective Leadership, Partnership, Roles, Responsibilities, Identification & Assessment of ASN
- Aberdeenshire Support Manual Part 3: Ensuring entitlement of children and young people with significant and complex needs
- Planning documentation with supporting guidance
- List of policy and guidance documents for meeting learner's needs
- Aberdeenshire Support Directory for Families, and contact information for schools and other agencies
- Aberdeenshire Peripatetic Services
- Literacy, Autism and Nurture
- Information about new legislation and working practices and what these mean for you

Next Steps:

Stakeholder consultation to inform further development of the Website to become a one-stop-shop for Aberdeenshire Council's policy and practice framework on Inclusion, Equity and Wellbeing.

5.6.2 GIRFEC Website

Multi-agency policies, procedures and guidance to support practitioners with the implementation of the GIRFEC Approach, and information on GIRFEC for children and young people, and parents / carers, is available on the Aberdeenshire GIRFEC website (<https://www.girfec-aberdeenshire.org/>)

Appendix 1 – Enhanced Provision Model – List of Schools

Network	Enhanced Provision Centre			Community Resource Hub	
	Nursery	Primary	Secondary	Primary	Secondary
Aboyne	Aboyne Nursery	Aboyne Primary School	Aboyne Academy	Aboyne Primary School	Aboyne Academy
Banchory	Banchory Nursery	Banchory Primary School	Banchory Academy		
Alford	Alford Nursery	Alford Community Campus	Alford Community Campus	Alford Community Campus	Alford Community Campus
Banff	Banff Nursery	Banff Primary School	Banff Academy	Banff Primary School	Banff Academy
Ellon	Ellon Nursery	Ellon Primary School	Ellon Community Campus	Ellon Primary School	Ellon Community Campus
Meldrum	Meldrum Nursery	Meldrum Primary School	Meldrum Academy		
Turriff	Turriff Nursery	Turriff Primary School	Turriff Academy		
Fraserburgh	St Andrews Nursery	Fraserburgh North School Sandhaven School	Fraserburgh Academy	Westfield School, Fraserburgh	Westfield School, Fraserburgh
Huntly	Gordon Nursery	Gordon Primary School	The Gordon Schools	Gordon Primary School	The Gordon Schools
Inverurie	Strathburn Nursery	Strathburn School	Inverurie Academy	St Andrews School, Inverurie	St Andrews School, Inverurie
Kemnay	Kintore Nursery	Kintore Primary School	Kemnay Academy		
Westhill	Crombie Nursery	Crombie School	Westhill Academy		
Laurencekirk	Laurencekirk Nursery	Laurencekirk School	Mearns Academy	Carronhill School, Stonehaven	Carronhill School, Stonehaven
Stonehaven	Mill O'Forest Nursery	Mill O'Forest School	Mackie Academy		
Portlethen	Portlethen Nursery	Portlethen Primary School	Portlethen Academy		
Mintlaw	Mintlaw Nursery	Mintlaw Primary School	Mintlaw Academy	Anna Ritchie School, Peterhead	Anna Ritchie School, Peterhead
Peterhead	Dales Park Nursery	Dales Park School	Peterhead Academy		

APPENDIX 2

Aboyne Network

School	Accessible Toilet	Wheelchair Access	Multi-sensory Room	Disabled Parking	Nurture Space	Life Skills Area
Aboyne Academy	√	√	√	√	√	√
Aboyne Primary	√	√	√	√	√	
Ballater School	√	√				
Braemar School	√	√				
Crathie School						
Finzean School	√	√		√		
Kincardine O'Neil School	√	√				
Logie Coldstone School	√	√				
Lumphanan School	√	√			√	
Tarland School	√	√				
Torphins School	√	√				

Alford Network

School	Accessible Toilet	Wheelchair Access	Multi-sensory Room	Disabled Parking	Nurture Space	Life Skills Area
Alford Community Campus	√	√		√	√	√
Alford Primary	√	√	√	√	√	√
Cluny School	√	√		√	√	
Craigievar School						
Dunecht School	√	√			√	
Echt School	√					
Keig School	√	√		√		
Lumsden School	√	√				
Midmar School	√	√				
Monymusk School	√	√			√	√
Strathdon School	√	√				
Tough School		√				
Towie School		√				
Tullynessle School	√	√		√		

Banchory Network

School	Accessible Toilet	Wheelchair Access	Multi-sensory Room	Disabled Parking	Nurture Space	Life Skills Area
Banchory Academy	√	√		√	√	√
Banchory School	√	√	√	√	√	√
Crathes School	√	√		√		
Drumoak School	√	√		√		
Durris School	√	√				
Hill of Banchory School	√	√	√	√	√	√
Strachan School						

Banff Network

School	Accessible Toilet	Wheelchair Access	Multi-sensory Room	Disabled Parking	Nurture Space	Life Skills Area
Banff Academy	√	√	√	√	√	√
Aberchirder School						
Banff Primary	√	√	√	√	√	√
Bracoden School	√	√			√	√
Fordyce School		√			√	√
Macduff School	√			√		
Ordiquhill School	√	√				
Portsoy School	√	√		√	√	√
Whitehills School	√	√		√		

Ellon Network

School	Accessible Toilet	Wheelchair Access	Multi-sensory Room	Disabled Parking	Nurture Space	Life Skills Area
Ellon Academy	√	√	√	√	√	√
Arnage School						
Auchnagatt School						
Auchterellon School	√	√	√	√	√	√
Balmedie School	√	√		√		
Ellon Primary	√	√	√	√	√	√
Foveran School						
Hatton (Cruden) School						
Meiklemill School	√	√				
Newburgh Mathers	√					
Slains School	√					
Tipperty School						

Fraserburgh Network

School	Accessible Toilet	Wheelchair Access	Multi-sensory Room	Disabled Parking	Nurture Space	Life Skills Area
Fraserburgh Academy	√	√	√	√	√	√
Crimond School						
Fraserburgh North School	√	√				
Fraserburgh South Park	√			√		
Inverallochy School	√	√				
Lochpots School		√				
Rathen School	√					
Rosehearty School	√				√	
Sandhaven School	√	√				
St Andrews School	√	√			√	
St Combs School	√					
Tyrie School	√	√		√		

Huntly Network

School	Accessible Toilet	Wheelchair Access	Multi-sensory Room	Disabled Parking	Nurture Space	Life Skills Area
The Gordon Schools	√	√	√	√	√	√
Cairney School						
Clatt School						
Drumblade School		√				
Forgue School						
Gartly School	√	√			√	
Glass School						
Gordon Primary	√	√	√	√	√	√
Insch School	√	√	√		√	
Kennethmont School		√				
Largue School	√	√				
Premnay School		√				
Rhynie School	√	√				

Inverurie Network

School	Accessible Toilet	Wheelchair Access	Multi-sensory Room	Disabled Parking	Nurture Space	Life Skills Area
Inverurie Academy	√	√	√	√	√	√
Chapel of Garioch School				√		
Hatton (Fintray) School	√					
Keithhall School						
Kellands School	√	√	√		√	
Newmachar School	√	√	√		√	
Oyne School	√					
Port Elphinstone School	√					
Strathburn School	√	√	√	√	√	√
Uryside School	√	√	√	√	√	√

Kemnay Network

School	Accessible Toilet	Wheelchair Access	Multi-sensory Room	Disabled Parking	Nurture Space	Life Skills Area
Kemnay Academy	√	√	√	√	√	√
Alehousewells School	√					
Kemnay Primary	√	√				
Kinellar School	√	√	√	√		
Kintore School	√	√	√	√	√	√
Midmill School	√	√	√	√		√

Laurencekirk Network

School	Accessible Toilet	Wheelchair Access	Multi-sensory Room	Disabled Parking	Nurture Space	Life Skills Area
Mearns Academy	√	√		√		√
Auchenblae School	√	√		√		
Fettercairn School						
Laurencekirk School	√	√	√	√	√	√
Luthermuir School			√			
Marykirk School						
Redmyre School	√	√		√		
St Cyrus School	√	√		√		

Meldrum Network

School	Accessible Toilet	Wheelchair Access	Multi-sensory Room	Disabled Parking	Nurture Space	Life Skills Area
Meldrum Academy	√	√	√	√	√	√
Barthol Chapel School						
Cultercullen School						
Daviot School				√		
Logie Durno School		√				
Meldrum School	√	√	√	√	√	√
Methlick School	√	√		√		
Pitmedden School	√					
Old Rayne School	√	√			√	
Rayne North School	√	√				
Rothienorman School	√	√		√		
Tarves School	√	√				
Udny Green School						

Mintlaw Network

School	Accessible Toilet	Wheelchair Access	Multi-sensory Room	Disabled Parking	Nurture Space	Life Skills Area
Mintlaw Academy	√	√	√	√	√	√
Auchnagatt School						
Fetterangus School						
Kininmonth School						
Longside School	√					
Maud School	√	√				
Mintlaw School	√	√	√	√	√	√
New Deer School						
New Pitsligo & St John's	√				√	√
Pitfour School						
Strichen School						
Stuartfield School	√	√				

Peterhead Network

School	Accessible Toilet	Wheelchair Access	Multi-sensory Room	Disabled Parking	Nurture Space	Life Skills Area
Peterhead Academy	√	√	√	√	√	√
Boddam School	√					
Buchanhaven School	√		√		√	√
Burnhaven School	√					
Clerkhill School		√		√	√	
Dales Park School	√	√	√	√	√	√
Longhaven School	√					
Meethill School		√			√	
Peterhead Central School	√					
Port Erroll School	√	√		√		
St Fergus School	√	√				

Portlethen Network

School	Accessible Toilet	Wheelchair Access	Multi-sensory Room	Disabled Parking	Nurture Space	Life Skills Area
Portlethen Academy	√	√		√	√	√
Banchory Devenick School	√	√				
Fishermoss School	√	√		√		
Hillside School	√	√	√	√		√
Newtonhill School	√	√	√	√	√	
Portlethen Primary	√	√	√	√	√	√

Stonehaven Network

School	Accessible Toilet	Wheelchair Access	Multi-sensory Room	Disabled Parking	Nurture Space	Life Skills Area
Mackie Academy	√	√	√	√	√	√
Arduthie School	√	√			√	
Bervie School	√	√	√	√	√	√
Catterline School	√	√	√			
Dunnottar School						
Glenbervie School			√			
Gourdon School		√				
Johnshaven School	√	√				
Kinneff School	√	√				
Lairhillock School	√	√		√		
Mill O'Forest School	√	√	√	√	√	√

Turriff Network

School	Accessible Toilet	Wheelchair Access	Multi-sensory Room	Disabled Parking	Nurture Space	Life Skills Area
Turriff Academy	√	√	√	√	√	√
Auchterless School	√					
Crudie School						
Easterfield School						
Fintry School		√				
Fisherford School						
Fyvie School	√	√		√	√	
King Edward School		√				
Monquhitter School		√				
Turriff School	√	√	√	√	√	√

Westhill Network

School	Accessible Toilet	Wheelchair Access	Multi-sensory Room	Disabled Parking	Nurture Space	Life Skills Area
Westhill Academy	√	√	√	√	√	√
Crombie School	√	√	√			
Elrick School	√		√		√	
Skene School	√					
Westhill Primary	√	√	√	√		



From mountain to sea



From mountain to sea

Education & Children's Services Accessibility Design Brief

From mountain to sea



12 April 2019

Accessibility Brief

Inclusion and Accessibility is at the heart of Aberdeenshire Council ethos, culture and practice. Aberdeenshire aspire for all buildings to achieve this, thereby not creating barriers for their learner communities.

The building must be accessible to all children, staff and community including those with non-physical and physical disability.

This document should not be read in isolation, as this is part of a suite of documentation including:

- New Build Primary School Brief
- Design Guidance for Secondary Schools
- New Build Nursery and Pre-Schools Aberdeenshire

This document should be referred to during any changes to school facilities to ensure buildings are future-proofed and therefore negate the requirement for retrofit works.

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- 1.0 Introduction**
- 2.0 Current Key Initiatives**
- 3.0 Our Goals**
- 4.0 Learning Environment**
- 5.0 Mainstream Schools**
- 6.0 Enhanced Provision**
- 7.0 Community Resource Hubs**
- 8.0 Appendices**

1.0 Introduction

Aberdeenshire Council is committed to providing 21st Century facilities for a 21st Century curriculum.

- All learners should have access to positive learning environments and opportunities to develop their knowledge, skills, ambitions, confidence and self-esteem to the fullest potential. School buildings have a significant role to play in raising educational standards. Schools are required to be well designed and have facilities that inspire young people, teachers and communities and meet their aspirations and evolving needs.
- School buildings represent a long- term investment for Aberdeenshire Council and space standards have been developed to provide flexible schools which will be capable of responding to future changes in educational policy.
- All new schools will be suitable for access by the wider Community with facilities designed so that they can be utilised as fully as possible beyond the school day.

Aberdeenshire Council adopt space standards which are recommended by the Scottish Futures Trust Programme.

2.0 Current Key Initiatives

- 2.1 **Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004, amended 2009**
Local Authorities must provide support for any child with additional support needs.
- 2.2 **Getting it Right for Every Child** This approach helps practitioners focus on what makes a positive difference for children and young people and how they can act to deliver these improvements. Getting it right for every child is threaded through all existing policy, practice, strategy and legislation affecting children, young people and their families.
- 2.3 **Curriculum For Excellence** The 3-18 curriculum aims to ensure that all children and young people in Scotland develop the attributes, knowledge and skills they will need to flourish in life, learning and work.
- 2.4 **Curriculum For Excellence Through Outdoor Learning Curriculum for Excellence** offers opportunities for all children and young people to enjoy first-hand experience outdoors, whether within the school grounds, in urban green spaces, in Scotland's countryside or in wilder environments.
- 2.5 **The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014** Provides the legislative framework for looked after children and their rights.
- 2.6 **Building Better Schools** sets out a shared vision and aspirations for the school estate and the guiding principles and objectives.
- 2.7 **Standards in Scotland's Schools Act 2000** provides the legal framework which underpins the policy of 'presumption of mainstreaming': that all children will be expected to attend mainstream school unless certain circumstances apply.
- 2.8 **The Code of Practice 2010** explains the duties on education authorities and other agencies to support children and young people's learning.
- 2.9 **The Equality Act 2010** provides a legal framework to protect the rights of individuals and advance equality of opportunity for all.
- 2.10 **The Education (Disability Strategies and Pupils' Educational Records) (Scotland) Act 2002**

3.0 Our Goals

All young people should have exposure to 21st century accommodation which ensures young people experience:

- Flexible internal learning environments which are easily adapted to facilitate active, investigative and exploratory learning
- An accessible learning environment for all pupils with additional support needs
- School provision that is fully accessible and carers for pupils with a wide range of disabilities
- Internal space which links directly to external spaces to maximise outdoor learning potential.
- A school large enough to accommodate all zoned pupils and designed for future expansion
- General purpose space for a range of activities
- Core provision; eg dining area, physical education facilities etc

Policy and Resources Committee paper, April 2012

4.0 Learning Environment

Aberdeenshire schools are categorised as;

- Mainstream
- Primary Enhanced Provision
- Secondary Enhanced Provision
- Community Resource Hubs

There are also mainstream schools which are geographically located too far from the cluster enhanced provision and therefore should be prioritised for additional facilities where necessary.

This document seeks to differentiate between the facilities and outline the baseline of provision regarding Additional support needs to ensure accessibility in each.

5.0 Mainstream Schools

All mainstream schools should be provided with the following accommodation;

- Low sensory stimulation area - this is a flexible General Purpose space, or room, away from the main teaching environment to allow for some 'break away' from high sensory stimulation areas
- A hoist strategy must be in place to ensure that the potential for future installation can be carried out. It is acknowledged that fixed hoists to all spaces is difficult to achieve, particularly with large open areas, but consideration should be given towards ensuring hoist provision (fixed or mobile) is achievable
- Accessible toilets according to the bronze standard
- Small group spaces should be available for the school to determine its use according to need of the cohort of pupils on roll, these spaces can also be used as meeting spaces and is envisaged as a flexible General Purpose space, or room.

Refer to appendix 8.1 for table of accommodation requirements.

Refer to appendix 8.2 for a detailed drawing (Room Data Sheet) of each space.

Refer to appendix 8.3 where guidance is provided to relevant technical documentation.

5.1 Access and Circulation

- Routes into the school from the bus park and accessible car spaces should have a distinct tactile path
- Dropped curbs on main route into building and access to playing fields
- Hearing loops should be provided in the reception and public areas. All other areas can be facilitated by mobile systems.

5.2 Doors

- Signage should be provided on each side of entrance openings
- Coloured manifestations should be applied to doors for access to main school with highlighted door sections
- All doors to have braille labelling
- Doors to have double door handles (at varying heights) where required
- Provide a smooth contrasting colour panel behind door opening pad
- Revolving doors to have a highlighted edge on each blade and manifestations to glass
- All external doors to have coloured manifestations with colour contrast strip to leading edges
- Door release panels to be highlighted
- Electro – Magnetic hold open system on doors to corridors

5.3 Circulation and Stairways

- All handrails to have double height rails
- All internal pillars to have highlighted poles
- Texture change at the top and base of stairs
- Highlighted stair nosing
- Retractable seating to have highlighted step nosing

5.4 Lifts

- Highlight swipe to activate the lift
- Braille on all buttons
- Stair Lifts should be installed to allow access to all areas

5.5 Ramps

- Ramps should be fit to all areas to aid access.

Where lifts/ ramps and stairlifts cannot be fitted, these areas should not accommodate specific essential learning spaces for pupils, i.e science labs, lunch areas

5.6 Decoration and Flooring

Decoration must be considered carefully. Neutral colours should be used with contrasting doorframes and edging to aid the movement of individuals with sight difficulties. All other colour should be gained through the work of pupils. Patterns on walls or carpet should be avoided, as these can be confusing and may increase anxiety to individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

There should be a colour change or change in texture to flooring before doorways or stairways.

5.7 Furniture

There should be access to adjustable furniture including desks, sinks and appliances in all main areas and faculties. Sound proof seating pods are useful for individual tuition and discussion. Dining furniture should be adult height and varying shapes with different layouts including higher bistro styles and benches. No fixed button seating should be used.

5.8 Acoustics

There is published design guidance from the Department for Education which is for use in England and Wales – the principles of this should be adopted. The specific guidance document should be followed however the following key items have been extracted for guidance;

- Consider room/space size – Reverberation naturally increases with room volume, so large rooms need more acoustic treatment. Children with special needs may also be taught in smaller class environments.
- Finishes – use only “Class a” absorptive finishes, where possible.
- Walls – use dry lined walls as these provide some useful bass absorption at no extra cost. The new standard also lets us include the effects of furniture and fittings. Consider application of absorbent wall panels and at least some of these should be at ear height.
- Ceilings – Keep ceiling heights to 2.4m and use conventional “Class A” suspended ceiling tile is most efficient and provides some bass absorption, especially if you use proprietary “Bass pads” on top of the tiles. If suspended ceilings aren’t possible at 2.4m then consider suspended baffles or rafts which will sit at 2.4m from floor level.
- To get the detailed acoustic design correct a 3-D acoustic computer model should be carried out to determine applicable solutions

Designers should be familiar with the requirements of BB93 and also the information contained within the “Essex Report” both of which are contained as appendices within this document.

5.9 Storage

Sufficient storage for specialist equipment –General storage provision to provided throughout the school, in close proximity to teaching areas.

5.10 External Spaces

All external areas should not exclude any users. All surfaces, pathways, seating and designated activity areas to ensure that inclusion for all is considered.

6.0 Enhanced Provision

Enhanced provision should be equipped with all of the specifications of 5.0 Mainstream and in addition:

- Sensory Room; specialist room
- Therapy Room;
- Life Skills Room; at least one with fitted kitchen facilities
- Nurture Spaces;
- Quiet Area; for use by children/young people who need space for time alone, or to work with an adult or in a small group (nest spaces)
- Flexible Spaces; for physiotherapy.

Specialist rooms and toilets should be co-located with other teaching areas to allow integration of all children with additional requirements.

Refer to appendix 8.1 for table of accommodation requirements.

Refer to appendix 8.2 for a detailed drawing (Room Data Sheet) of each space.

Refer to appendix 8.3 where guidance is provided to relevant technical documentation.

6.1 Dining Areas

Dining areas should have spaces and furniture to allow for privacy dining, one to one. This can be achieved with the use of baffle boarding.

6.2 Toilet Provision

Silver Standards for Changing Places/Toilets should be included.

6.3 Storage

Within enhanced provision it is anticipated there will be a higher demand on storage requirement due to the increased requirement for specialist equipment. Depending on the school roll, there should be consideration to increased storage provision to ensure the increased equipment demand does not reduce the effective use of teaching spaces.

7.0 Community Resource Hubs

Community Resource Hubs should be equipped with all of the specifications of 5.0 Mainstream, 6.0 Enhanced Provision and in addition:

- Dark room; specialist room

Refer to appendix 8.1 for table of accommodation requirements.

Refer to appendix 8.2 for a detailed drawing (Room Data Sheet) of each space.

Refer to appendix 8.3 where guidance is provided to relevant technical documentation.

7.1 Toilet Provision

Gold Standard for Changing Places/Toilets should be included.

7.2 Storage

As with enhanced provision it is anticipated there will be a higher demand on storage requirement due to the increased requirement for specialist equipment. Depending on the school roll, there should be consideration to increased storage provision to ensure the increased equipment demand does not reduce the effective use of teaching spaces.

8.0 Appendices

8.1 – Schedule of requirements across school categories

Item	Accommodation Requirement	Room Data Sheet Reference	Learning Environment		
			Mainstream	Enhanced Provision	Community Resource Hubs
1	Low sensory stimulation area	RDS01	•	•	•
2	Small group space	RDS02		•	•
3	Sensory room	RDS03		•	•
4	Dark room	RDS04			•
5	Therapy room	RDS05		•	•
6	Life skills room	RDS06		•	•
7	Nurture space	RDS07		•	•
8	Quiet area	RDS08		•	•
9	Space for physiotherapy	RDS09		•	•
10	Hoist strategy	RDS10	•	•	•
11	Storage – general provision	RDS11	•		
12	Storage – increased provision	RDS12		•	
13	Storage – high demand provision	RDS13			•
14	Accessible toilet - Bronze Standard Changing Places	RDS14	•		
15	Accessible toilet - Silver Standard Changing Places	RDS15		•	
16	Accessible toilet - Gold Standard Changing Places	RDS16			•

8.2 Room Data Sheets included for each of the identified accommodation requirements above

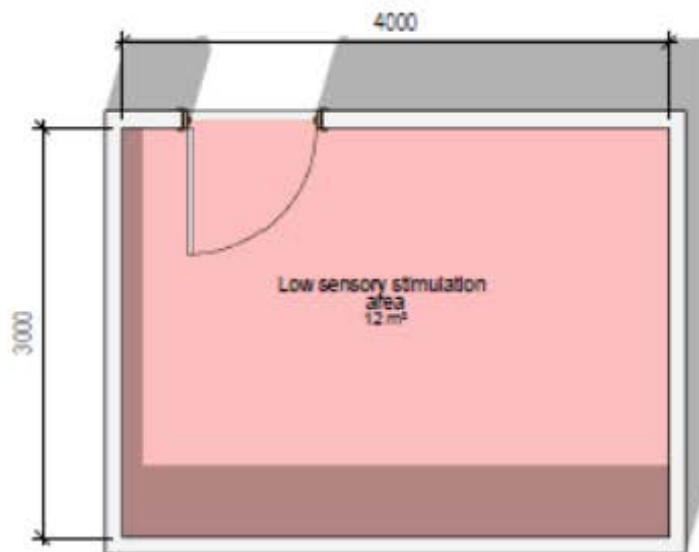
8.3 Reference Technical Documentation:

8.3.1 BS 8300-2:2018 Design of an accessible and inclusive built environment. Buildings. Code of practice

8.3.2 Acoustic Design of school: performance standards: Building bulletin 93: February 2015

8.3.3 - The Essex Study – Optimised classroom acoustics for all

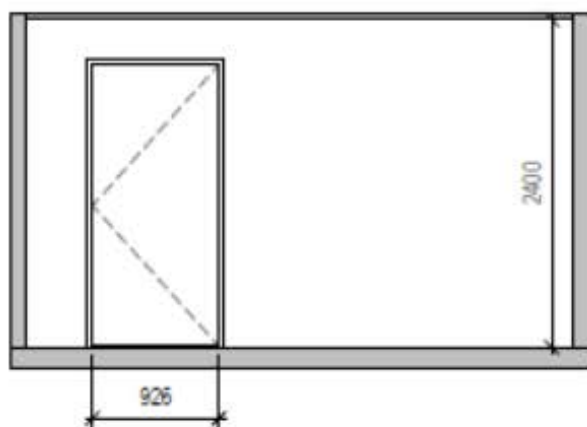
8.3.4 – Changing Places: the practical guide – Changing Places Consortium



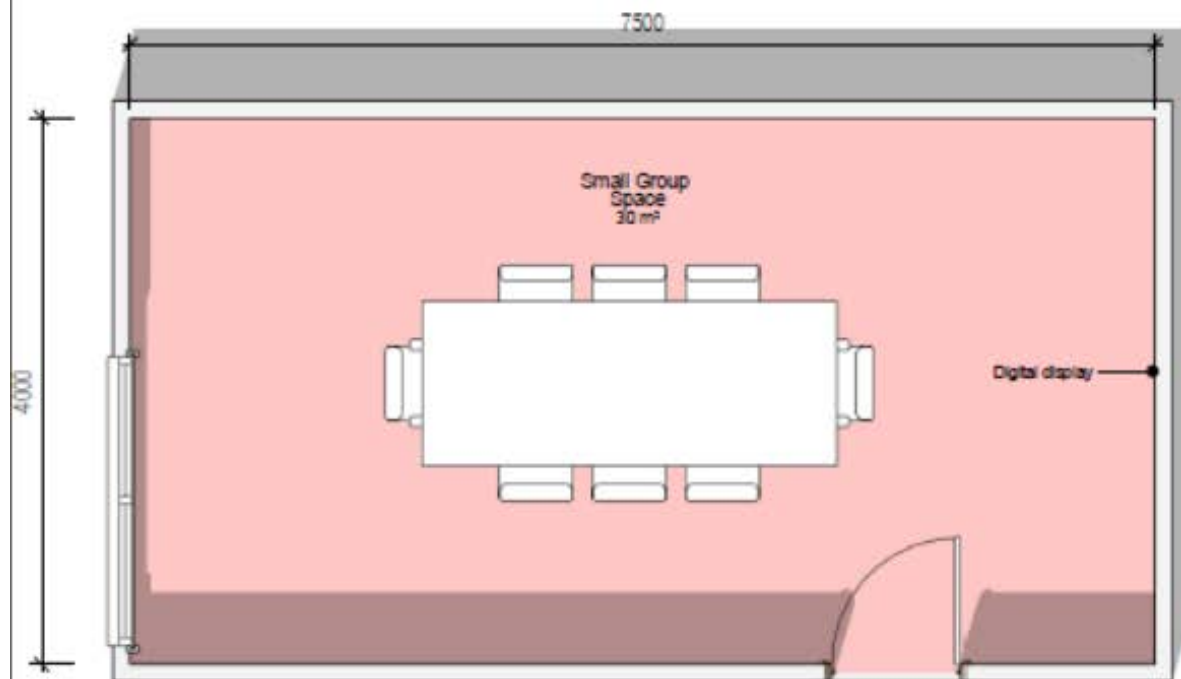
Plan

The basic specification developed for a low sensory stimulation area within a mainstream school is as follows:

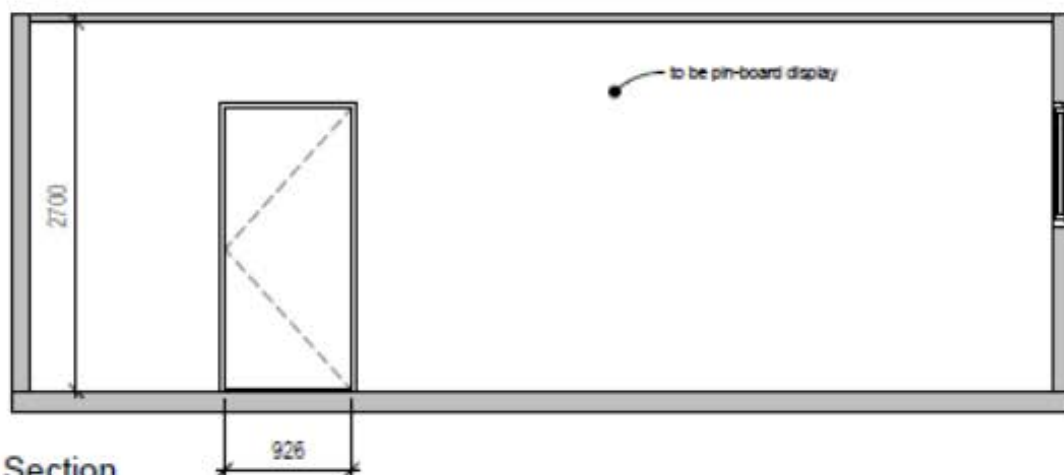
- Ideal size: 12m²
- Enclosed room or part of an open General Purpose Space
- Location should be such to allow the area to be low sensory stimulation, so consideration should be given to neighbouring circulation and occupied teaching areas
- Informal seating



Section



Plan



Section

The basic specification developed for a Small group space within an Enhanced Provision Learning Centre is as follows;

- Can be used as a meeting space
- A flexible general purpose space
- Teaching wall display
- Lighting levels to achieve general classroom lux levels
- Meeting table and and table seating
- If windows are located within the space then full blackout blinds are to be fitted

Outline of Room description

- White walls
- Ceiling finish to be white and to a 1 class A acoustic absorption rating
- Ideal size 30m²

Outline of electrical outlets

- Double socket and data supply socket required for the teaching wall display and throughout the room for flexibility

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Business Services
Property and Facilities Management
Woodhill House Westburn Road Aberdeen AB16 5GB
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job title Accessibility Design Brief

dwg title RDS02 Small group space

dwg
status

date 04/24/19

scales 1 : 50

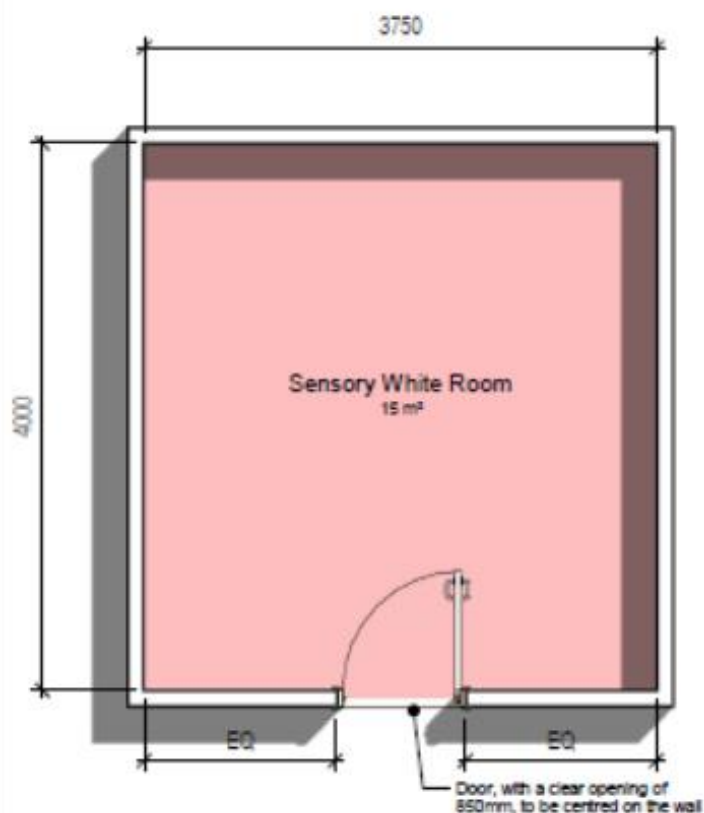
drawn by G. Munro

chkd by Checker

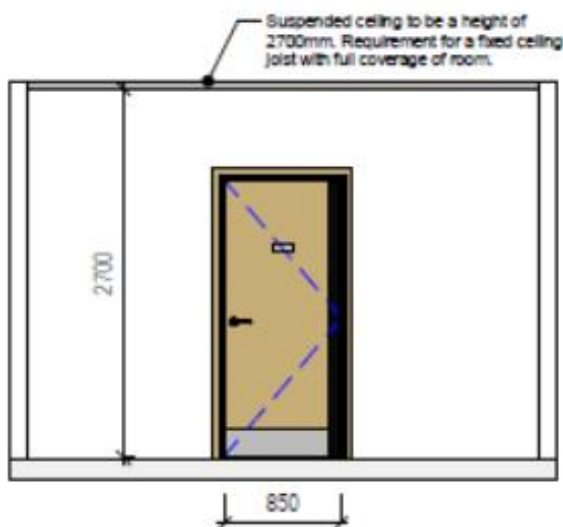
dwg no 0000-PFM-V1-XX-DR-A-09-02

rev

07/06/2019 14:25:06



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The basic specification developed for a sensory room within an Enhanced Provision Learning Centre is as follows;

- Glitter Ball
- Pin Spot Projector
- hi-fi system
- Bubble Wall
- Bean Bag
- Weighted Blanket

Outline of Electrical Outlets

- Either two double sockets at a minimum height of 1.5m above finished floor level in the proposed location of the bubble tube or hardwired with teacher access to fused on/off switch
- Install a shelf to house hi-fi system at a height of 1.65m to avoid head height of pupils. Double socket required.
- Double socket at a height of 2m for the proposed location of the Pinspot and projector, or hardwired with teacher access to fused on/off switch
- One double socket to accommodate rotating glitter ball. This should be located at the top of the wall touching the ceiling or hardwired with teacher access to fused on/off switch

Outline of Room Decoration

- Green or Blue carpet
- White Walls
- If windows are located within the space then full blackout blinds are to be fitted
- The ideal size for a sensory room should be a minimum of 15m²
- If this room is internal then the mechanical ventilation should take into consideration acoustic requirements regarding plant noise
- Ceiling finish to be white and to a class '0' acoustic absorption rating

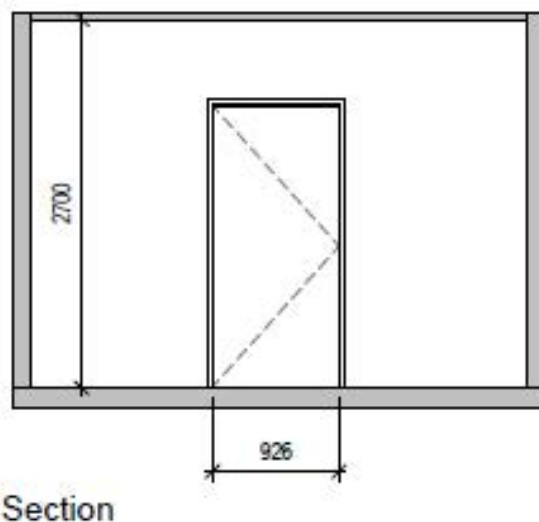
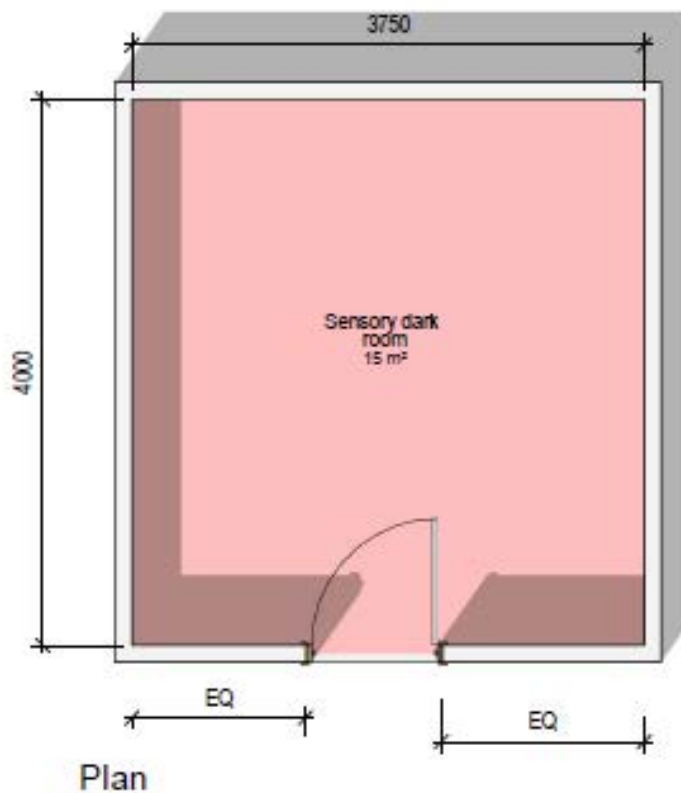


Example sensory space with fit-out

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job title	Accessibility Design Brief		
dwg title	RDS03 - Sensory Room		
dwg status			
date	18/04/2019	scales	1 : 50
drawn by	C. Lumsden	chkd by	
dwg no	0000--PFM-V1-XX-DR-A-09-03	rev	



The basic specification developed for a dark room within an Enhanced Provision Learning Centre is as follows:

- Glitter ball
- Pin Spot Projector
- hi-fi system
- Bubble Wall
- Bean bag
- Weighted blanket

Outline of electrical outlets

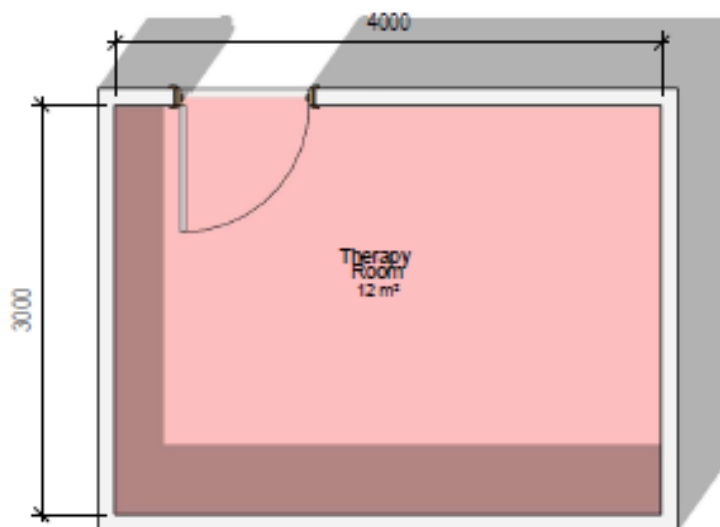
- Either two double sockets at a minimum height of 1.5m above finished floor level in the proposed location of the bubble tube or hardwired with teacher access to fused on/off switch
- Install a shelf to house hi-fi system at a height of 1.65m to avoid head height of pupils. Double socket required.
- Double socket at a height of 2m for the proposed location of the Pinspot and projector, or hardwired with teacher access to fused on/off switch
- One double socket to accommodate rotating glitter ball. This should be located at the top of the wall touching the ceiling or hardwired with teacher access to fused on/off switch.

Outline of Room Decoration

- Black carpet
- Black walls
- If windows are located within the space then full blackout blinds are to be fitted
- The ideal size for a dark room should be a minimum of 15m²
- If this room is internal then the mechanical ventilation should take into consideration acoustic requirements regarding plant noise
- Ceiling finish to be black and to a class '0' acoustic absorption rating



Example dark room



The basic specification developed for a therapy room within an Enhanced Provision Learning Centre is as follows;

- Ideal size 12m²
- Enclosed room or part of an open General Purpose Space
- Location should be such to allow the area to be low sensory stimulation, so consideration should be given to neighbouring circulation and occupied teaching areas
- Informal seating

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job title Accessibility Design Brief

dwg title RDS05 - Therapy room

dwg
status

date 04/24/19

scales 1 : 50

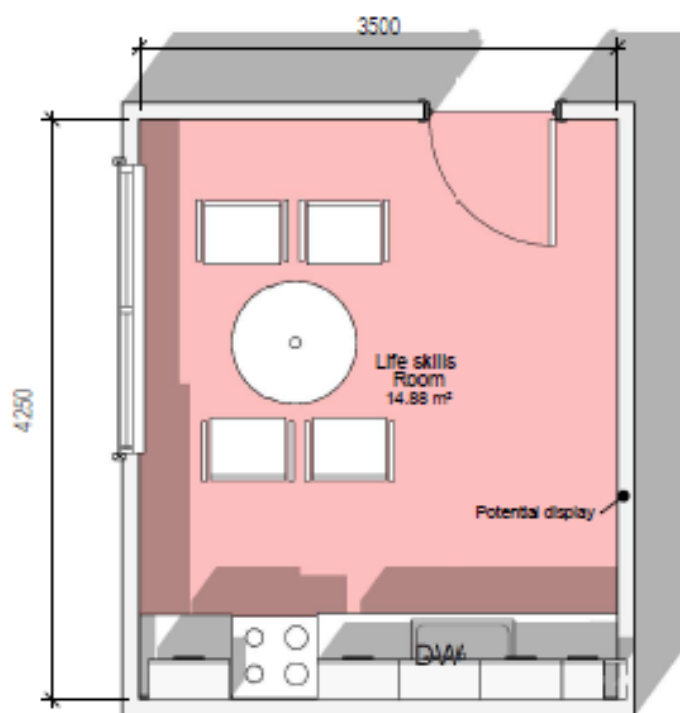
drawn by Author

chkd by Checker

dwg no 0000-PFM-V1-XX-DR-A-09-05

rev

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Plan

The basic specification developed for a Life skills room within an Enhanced Provision Learning Centre is as follows;

- Domestic feel
- Kitchen/tea prep area
- Lounge seating
- Small circular coffee table
- Unframed felt noticeboard

Outline of electrical outlets

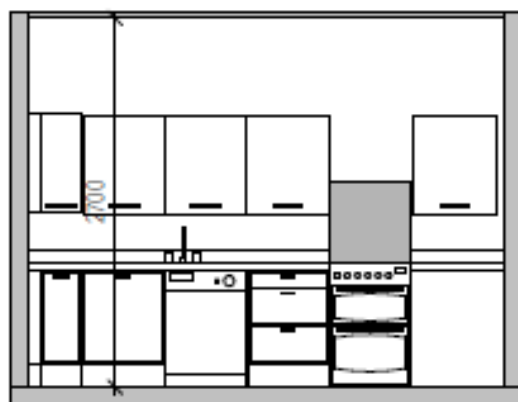
- Dishwasher outlet within sink unit
- Low level fridge outlet
- Switch for dishwasher, hob, oven and fridge
- 2 double sockets above worktop level

Outline of room description

- White walls
- Ceiling finish to be white and to a class 'D' acoustic absorption rating
- Ideal size 15m²
- Vinyl flooring
- If windows are located within the space then full blackout blinds are to be fitted

Outline of furniture description

- 300mm base unit
- 600mm sink base unit
- 600mm oven base unit
- 600mm drawer base unit
- 300mm wall unit
- 4 x 600mm wall units
- Neff B15M52N single oven
- Neff T11K40x2 inset hob
- Miele P8080 dishwasher
- GramK210 white under counter fridge
- Stainless steel splashback



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job title Accessibility Design Brief

dwg title RDS06 - Life skills room

dwg
status

date 04/24/19

scales 1 : 50

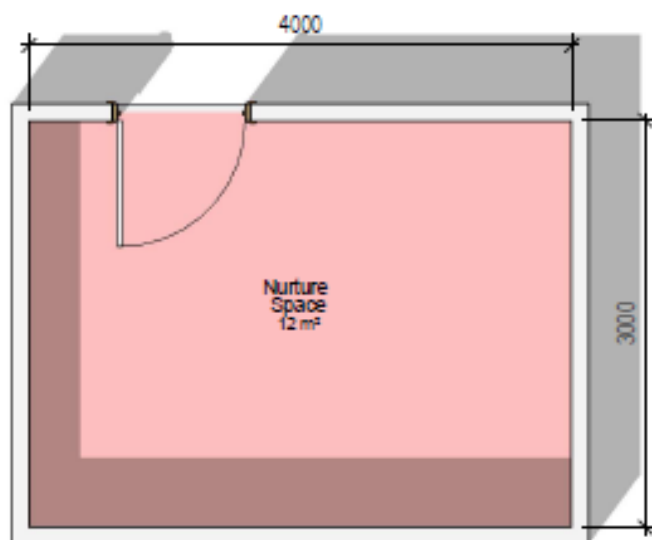
drawn by G. Munro

chkd by Checker

dwg no 0000-PFM-V1-XX-DR-A-09-06

rev

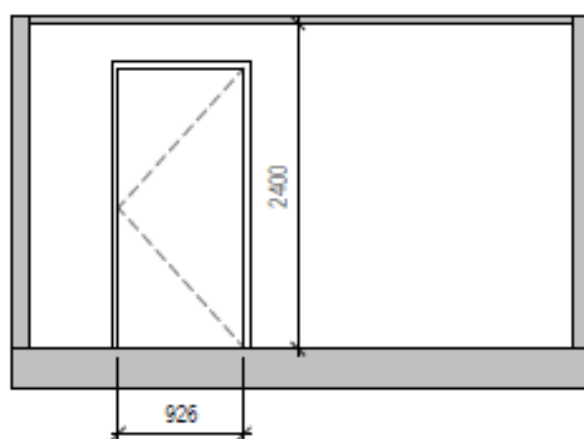
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The basic specification developed for a nurture space within an Enhanced Provision Learning Centre is as follows;

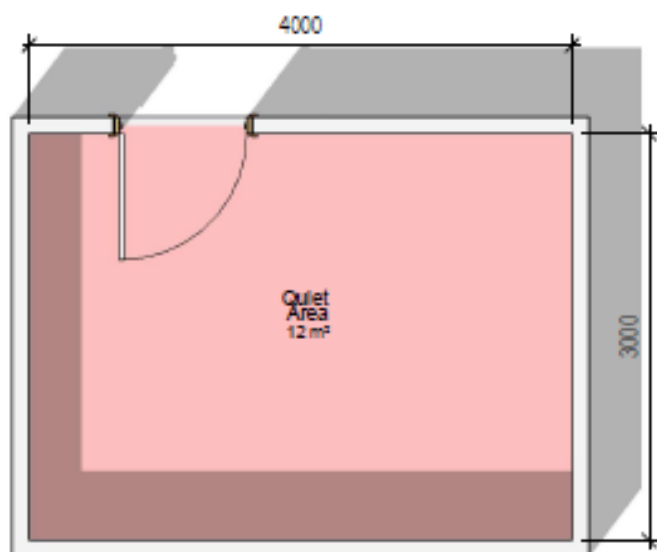
- Ideal size 12m²
- Enclosed room or part of an open General Purpose Space
- Location should be such to allow the area to be low sensory stimulation, so consideration should be given to neighbouring circulation and occupied teaching areas
- Informal seating

Plan



Section

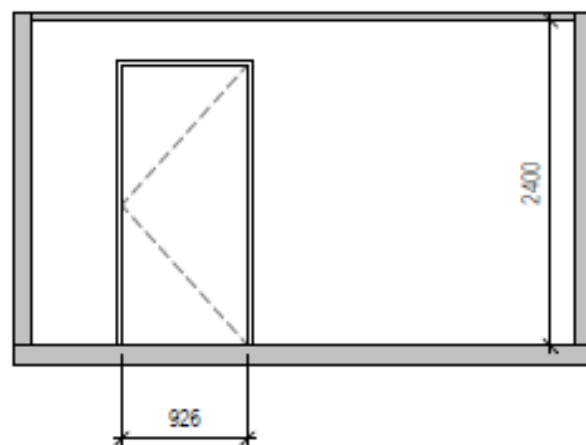
job title	Accessibility Design Brief		
dwg title	RDS07 - Nurture space		
dwg status			
date	04/24/19	scales	1 : 50
drawn by	G. Munro	chkd by	Checker
dwg no	0000-PFM-V1-XX-DR-A-09-07	rev	



The basic specification developed for a quiet area within an Enhanced Provision Learning Centre is as follows;

- Ideal size 12m²
- Enclosed room or part of an open General Purpose Space
- Location should be such to allow the area to be low sensory stimulation, so consideration should be given to neighbouring circulation and occupied teaching areas
- Informal seating

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job title Accessibility Design Brief

dwg title RDS08 - Quiet area

dwg
status

date 04/24/19

scales 1 : 50

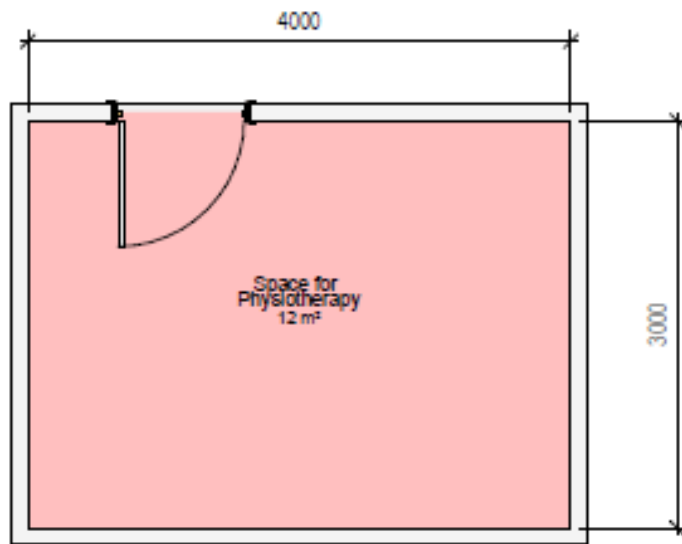
drawn by G. Munro

chkd by Checker

dwg no 0000-PFM-V1-XX-DR-A-09-08

rev

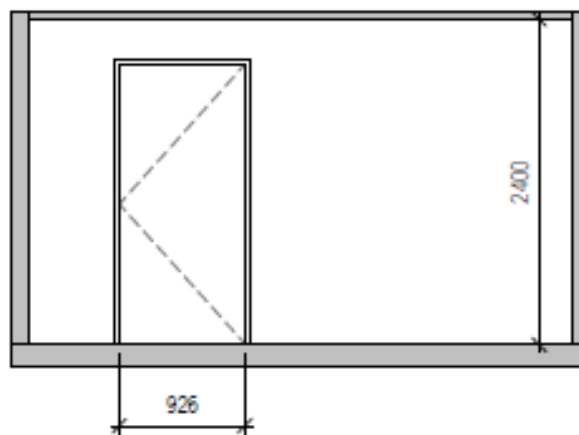
07/06/2019 14:27:22



The basic specification developed for a space for physiotherapy within an Enhanced Provision Learning Centre is as follows;

- Ideal size 12m²
- Enclosed room or part of an open General Purpose Space
- Location should be such to allow the area to be low sensory stimulation, so consideration should be given to neighbouring circulation and occupied teaching areas
- Informal seating

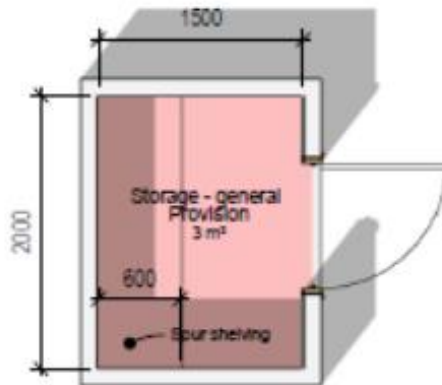
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Section

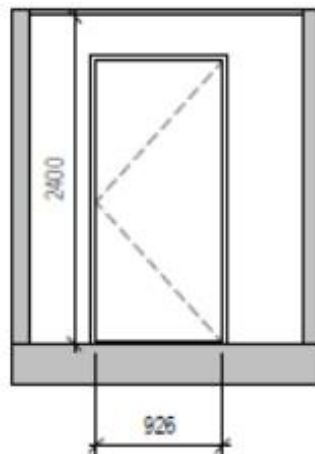
job title	Accessibility Design Brief		
dwg title	RDS09 - Space for physiotherapy		
dwg status			
date	04/24/19	scales	1 : 50
drawn by	G. Munro	chkd by	Checker
dwg no	0000-PFM-V1-XX-DR-A-09-09	rev	

Hoist strategy to be developed specific to the requirements of the school



The basic specification developed for Storage - General Provision within a Mainstream school is as follows;

- 3 rows of 600mm deep adjustable spur shelving



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job title Accessibility Design Brief

dwg title RDS11 - Storage - general provision

dwg
status

date 04/24/19

scales 1 : 50

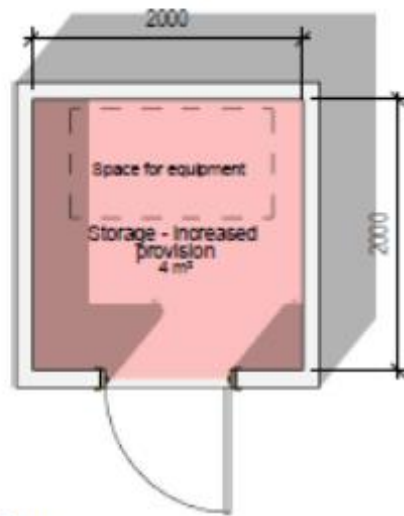
drawn by G. Munro

chkd by Checker

dwg no 0000-PFM-V1-XX-DR-A-09-11

rev

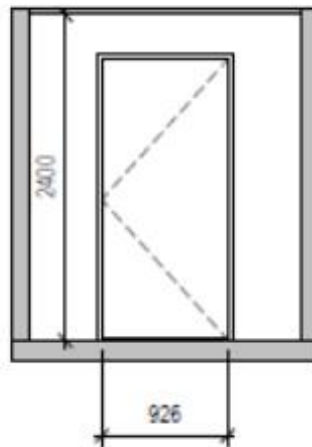
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Plan

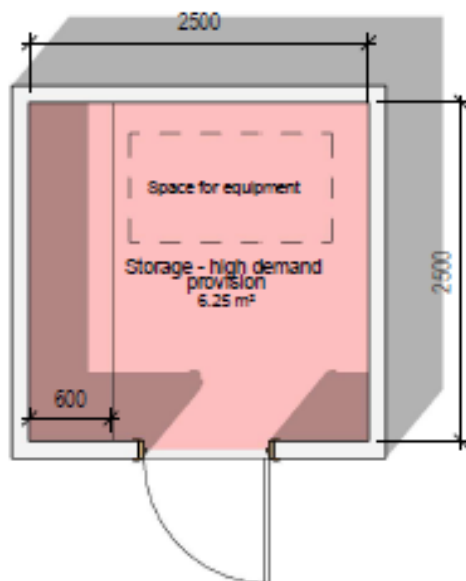
The basic specification developed for Storage - increased provision within a Mainstream school is as follows;

- Spur shelving



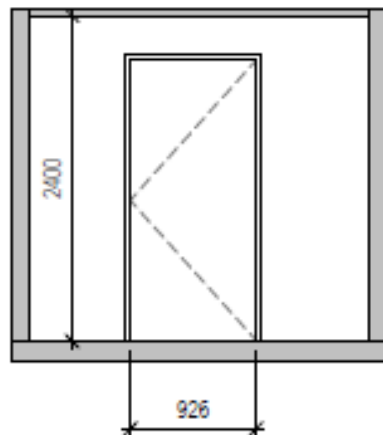
Section

job title	Accessibility Design Brief		
dwg title	RDS12 - Storage - increased provision		
dwg status			
date	04/24/19	scales	1 : 50
drawn by	G. Munro	chkd by	Checker
dwg no	0000-PFM-V1-XX-DR-A-09-12	rev	

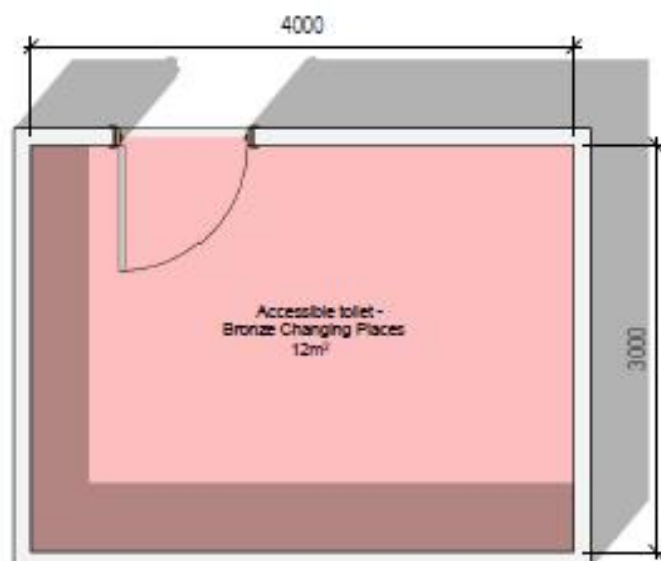


The basic specification developed for Storage - high demand provision within an Enhanced Provision Learning Centre is as follows;

- 3 rows of 600mm deep adjustable spur shelving



job title	Accessibility Design Brief		
dwg title	RDS13 - Storage - high demand provision		
dwg status			
date	04/24/19	scales	1 : 50
drawn by	G. Munro	chkd by	Checker
dwg no	0000-PFM-V1-XX-DR-A-09-13	rev	



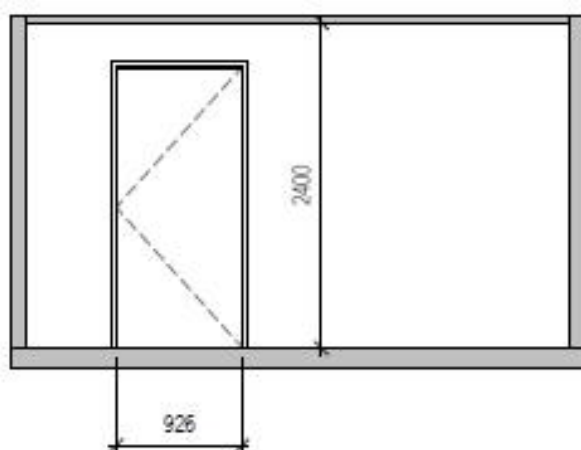
The basic specification developed for an Accessible toilet - Bronze Standard Changing Places within a mainstream school is as follows;

- A height adjustable, adult sized changing bench to be a minimum length of 1800mm and minimum width of 800mm. The bench can be free standing or wall mounted.
- A tracking hoist system to conform to BS EN ISO 10535
- Adequate space in the changing area for the disabled person and up to two carers
- A centrally placed toilet with space either side for the carers
- Wide tear off paper roll to cover the bench
- A large waste bin for disposable pads
- Washbasin

Outline of room decoration

- Ceiling to be demountable and moisture resistant
- All walls to be wet wall
- A non-slip floor

Plan



Section



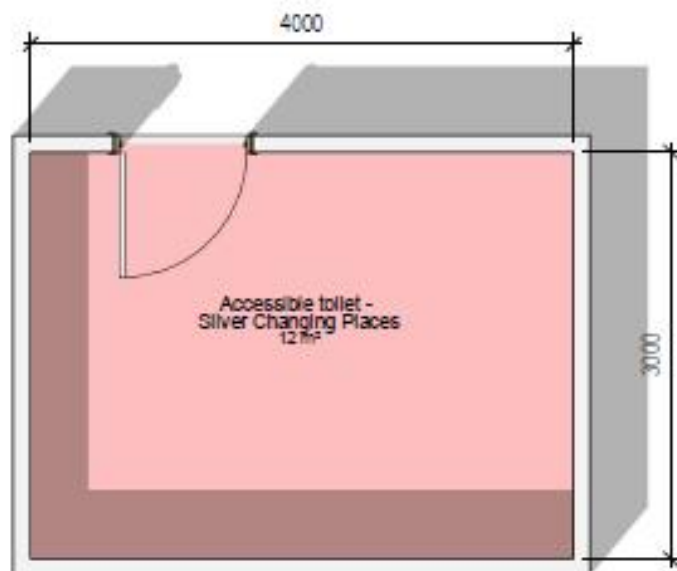
Example accessible toilet

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job title	Accessibility Design Brief		
dwg title	RDS14 - 'Accessible toilet - 'Bronze Standard Changing Places		
dwg status			
date	04/24/19	scales	1 : 50
drawn by	G. Munro	chkd by	Checker
dwg no	0000-PFM-V1-XX-DR-A-09-14	rev	

07/06/2019 14:29:50



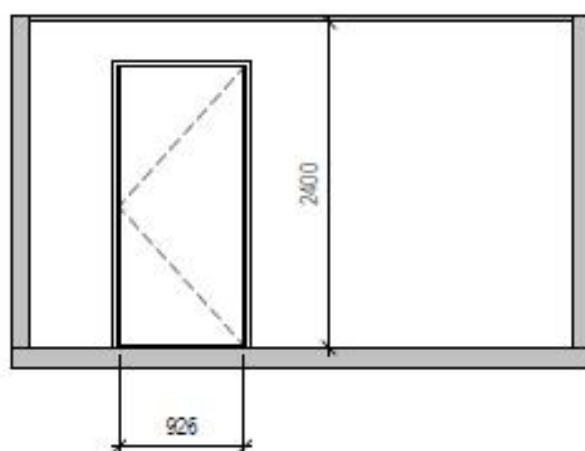
The basic specification developed for an Accessible toilet - Silver Standard Changing Places within an Enhanced Provision Learning Centre is as follows;

- A height adjustable, adult sized changing bench
- A tracking hoist system
- Adequate space in the changing area for the disabled person and up to carers
- A peninsular (central) placed toilet with at least 1m away from the wall either side
- A screen or curtain to allow the disabled person and carer some privacy
- Wide tear off paper roll to cover the bench
- A large waste bin for disposable pads
- Washbasin
- Showerfloor drain

Outline of room decoration

- Ceiling to be demountable and moisture resistant
- All walls to be wet wall
- A non-slip floor

Plan



Section



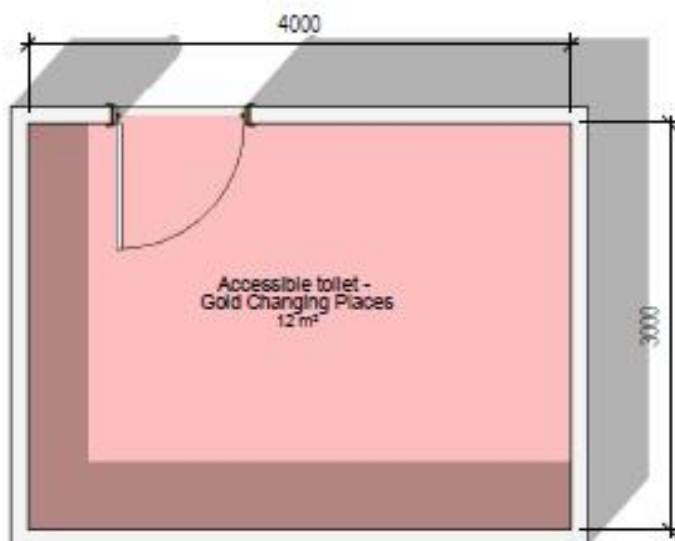
Example accessible toilet

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job title	Accessibility Design Brief		
dwg title	RDS15 - 'Accessible toilet - 'Silver Standard Changing Places		
dwg status			
date	04/24/19	scales	1 : 50
drawn by	G. Munro	chkd by	Checker
dwg no	0000-PFM-V1-XX-DR-A-09-15	rev	

07/06/2019 14:30:15



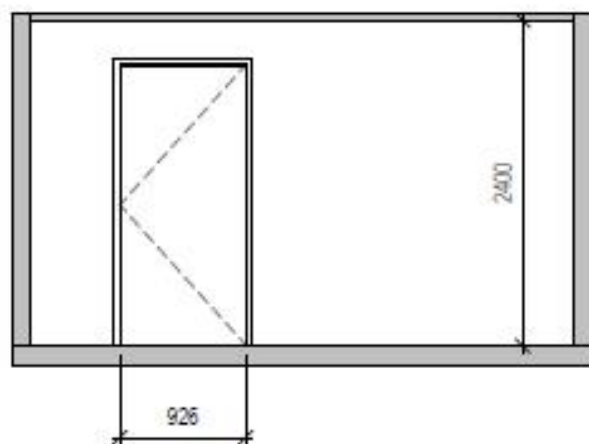
The basic specification developed for an Accessible toilet - Gold Standard Changing Places within an Enhanced Provision Learning Centre is as follows;

- A height adjustable, adult sized changing bench
- A tracking hoist system
- Multi-sized harness
- Adequate space in the changing area for the disabled person and up to carers
- A peninsular (central) placed toilet with at least 1m away from the wall either side
- A screen or curtain to allow the disabled person and carer some privacy
- Wide tear off paper roll to cover the bench
- A large waste bin for disposable pads
- Washbasin
- Shower/floor drain

Outline of room decoration

- Ceiling to be demountable and moisture resistant
- All walls to be wet wall
- A non-slip floor

Plan



Section



Example accessible toilet

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job title	Accessibility Design Brief		
dwg title	RDS16 - 'Accessible toilet - 'Gold Standard Changing Places		
dwg status			
date	04/24/19	scales	1 : 50
drawn by	G. Munro	chkd by	Checker
dwg no	0000-PFM-V1-XX-DR-A-09-16	rev	

07/06/2019 14:31:06