Accessibility Audit & Plan

18/02/2025

Brunel Academies Trust

Churchward School

Churchward School
William Morris Way
Swindon
SN25 2PP
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School Type	Special
Pupil Age Range	Secondary
Most recent OFSTED rating	Good
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SENCO	Lorna Dickson – ldickson@churchwardschool.org.uk
Lead Officer re Site & Facilities	Adrian Jefferies
Next Audit & Plan due by	18/02/2028

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Equality Act Audits

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1. Executive Summary

An Accessibility Audit of Churchward School was commissioned by Theresa Linton, The Senior Health, Safety and Continuity Advisor for the Brunel Academies Trust.

The audit visit took place on **18/02/2025**. Further information was obtained from the school website and by pre-visit questionnaire.

Accessibility and Equality legislation as it applies in schools is summarised in Sections 2 and 3 below. The public sector Equality Duty came into force on 5 April 2011. The Equality Duty ensures that all public bodies play their part in making society fairer by tackling discrimination and providing equality of opportunity for all. Under the equality duty, they are required to publish relevant information regarding their compliance with the duty, and to set and publish equality objectives. Their Equality Objectives along with a summary of the way in which they respond to this duty are included on their website. They publish information relating to their compliance with the duty in the head teachers report to the governors, so that governors can critically review the extent to which they meet the aims of the duty. Contextual background information is summarised in Section 7. The school context is considered when suggesting recommendations for improvements to accessibility.

The constraints and limitations to the audit are considered in Section 8.

At Churchward School in Swindon, they are committed to fostering an inclusive and supportive environment that enables all students, staff, and visitors to thrive. As a specialist provision for young people aged 11 to 19 with autism spectrum conditions and associated needs, accessibility is at the core of their mission. They firmly believe that every individual has the right to an education that is free from barriers, ensuring equal opportunities for personal development and academic achievement.

This Accessibility Plan outlines their commitment to identifying and addressing any physical, curricular, and communication barriers that may affect members of their school community. In alignment with the Equality Act 2010 and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice (2015), they aim to ensure that all aspects of school life—learning, extracurricular activities, and social interactions—are accessible to everyone, regardless of their individual needs.

The plan highlights key priorities for improvement, informed by ongoing consultation with stakeholders, including students, parents, staff, and external experts. It reflects their dedication to creating a learning environment that not only complies with statutory requirements but also embodies their values of respect, compassion, and inclusion.

The detailed Access Audit follows in Section 10 and is summarised in Section 1.1 below. The Audit section describes accepted best practice where appropriate.

Based upon the audit findings, the suggested School Accessibility Plan together with a suggested Action Plan, is provided at Sections 11 and 13 respectively.

This Accessibility Plan contains relevant and timely actions to:- Increase access to the curriculum for pupils with a physical disability and/or sensory impairments, expanding the curriculum as necessary to ensure that pupils with a disability are as equally prepared for life as the able-bodied pupils; (If a school fails to do this they are in breach of their duties under the Equalities Act 2010); this covers teaching and learning and the wider curriculum of the school such as participation in after-school clubs, leisure and cultural activities or schools visits – it also covers the provision of specialist or auxiliary aids and equipment, which may assist these pupils in accessing the curriculum within a reasonable timeframe.

At Churchward School they are committed to providing an education and ethos that positively promotes equality of opportunity and achievement for all their children. The governors and school staff are committed to removing any barriers, which would impede learning, development, continuity and participation in their school. They oppose all forms of unlawful or unfair discrimination, whether because of race, colour, ethnic or national origin, gender, sexual orientation, religion or beliefs, disability, age or any other condition or requirement which places a person at a disadvantage and cannot be justified.

As a school they are committed to providing premises that are suitable and sufficient for all educational purposes and give access to a broad and balanced curriculum for all students, irrespective of special need or disability. They aim to improve access at a local level, by committing the school to a programme of actions, evaluation and review which will improve access to the curriculum for students with special needs and disabilities.

SEND at Churchward School

Churchward School's SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) objectives focus on supporting students aged 11 to 19 with autism spectrum conditions and associated social communication difficulties. Their key aims include:

1. **Personalized Learning**: Providing bespoke curriculum and therapeutic packages tailored to each student's individual needs, ensuring equal opportunities for academic and personal growth.

2. **Emotional and Social Development**: Using approaches like the Thrive model to address students' emotional regulation, social interaction, and flexibility of thought, which are central to their development.

3. **Skill Building**: Emphasizing strong foundational skills in English, maths, and PSHCE (Personal, Social, Health, and Citizenship Education) to prepare students for future opportunities, including further education, employment, and independent living.

4. **Inclusive Environment**: Creating a safe, secure, and happy learning environment where students feel supported and valued, enabling them to overcome challenges and achieve success.

5. **Preparation for Adulthood**: Offering careers education and guidance, alongside life skills training, to help students transition smoothly into the wider world.

Access to the Buildings

Churchward School operates across three sites in Swindon:

1. Main School Site: Located at William Morris Way, Tadpole Garden Village, Swindon, SN25 2PP. This is the primary location for the school and serves as the central hub for its operations.

2. Links Campus: Situated at UTC Swindon, Bristol Street, Swindon, SN1 5ET. This site provides additional learning spaces and facilities.

3. Bagbury Park: Bagbury Park, Lydiard Millicent, Swindon. This site provides opportunities for smaller group work, vocational training, and other bespoke programs that align with the school's commitment to personalized education.

The school was approved by the Department for Education in 2016 and officially opened in September

2018. It moved into its permanent, custom-built main site in September 2020. This purpose-built facility was designed to meet the needs of students aged 11 to 19 with autism spectrum conditions and associated social communication difficulties.

Accessibility Features

The main site is equipped with several features to support accessibility:

- **Step-Free Access**: The building is fully wheelchair accessible, with step-free entry points and wide corridors to accommodate mobility aids.
- **Accessible Toilets and Changing Facilities**: These are available throughout the school, ensuring dignity and convenience for all students.
- **Specialist Learning Spaces**: Classrooms and therapeutic areas are designed to cater to sensory needs, with adjustable lighting and soundproofing where necessary.
- **Outdoor Spaces**: The site includes safe and secure outdoor areas for recreation and sensory activities.
- **Visual and Auditory Aids**: Signage and communication tools are in place to support students with visual or auditory impairments.

Churchward School manages and improves the physical environment of the school buildings and grounds to meet the needs of a range of disabled students currently on roll and prospective students. The needs of future cohorts and any staff appointed with disabilities will be assessed and provision made as they arise. Annual reviews of physical accessibility are undertaken.

Access to the Curriculum

Churchward School ensures access to the curriculum for all students through a combination of personalized learning, specialist support, and a nurturing environment. Here are some key approaches they use:

1. **Personalized Curriculum**: The school tailors its curriculum to meet the individual needs of each student. This includes bespoke learning packages that focus on core subjects like English, maths, and PSHCE (Personal, Social, Health, and Citizenship Education), alongside therapeutic interventions.
2. **Specialist Support**: A team of trained staff, including subject specialists and Thrive practitioners, work collaboratively to address the social, emotional, and academic needs of students. The Thrive Approach is integrated into the curriculum to support emotional regulation, social interaction, and flexibility of thought.
3. **Interventions Program**: The school runs targeted interventions as part of the curriculum to address specific learning gaps and support maximum progress. These interventions are seamlessly integrated into the students' learning journey.
4. **Inclusive Environment**: The school creates a safe and enabling environment that supports sensory differences and other needs. This includes adjustments to the physical environment, teaching methods, and resources to ensure all students can engage fully.
5. **Focus on Life Skills**: The curriculum emphasizes the development of transferable skills, such as independence, decision-making, and emotional regulation, to prepare students for adulthood and future opportunities.
6. **Assessment and Progress Monitoring**: The school uses a tailored assessment system to track each student's progress and adapt their learning plans accordingly.

7.

Access to information

The school strives to improve the delivery of written information to pupils, staff, parents and visitors with disabilities, including handouts, timetables, textbooks and information about the school and school events. The information is made available in various preferred formats within a reasonable time frame.

Website: Web accessibility is the inclusive practice of ensuring there are no barriers that prevent interaction with, or access to, websites by people with all types of disabilities. When sites are correctly designed, developed and edited, more users have equal access to information and functionality. Within the context of 'reasonable' under the Equality Act, the school's website is acceptable.

The website contains all of the information available to parents and students that is required. There is a link to Google Maps for users to plan their route and the website is easy to navigate.

Signage: School signage, internal and external, should be large enough (large font) and at a height which can be read easily by any user of the building including those in wheelchairs. School signs make clear where access points and exits points are including disabled signs and disabled toilets.

Technology and furniture: Technology enables all students to access information readily regardless of their disability and is adjusted, where appropriate for students, known to the school already, who suffer hearing loss.

Where appropriate, disabled students are equipped with laptop, iPad, reading pen or other new technologies to assist them in accessing information and learning including practical subjects such as technology and PE.

Where appropriate and if required, specialist ergonomic furniture will be purchased to enable those with a disability to learn.

Summary

It is for the School's Senior Leadership Team and Management to take ownership of actions to improve accessibility, in the context of the many competing demands schools face. The priorities suggested in the Accessibility Action Plan may be helpful in that regard.

It is suggested that the school's own development and improvement plan (SIP) contains targets linked to this Accessibility Action Plan, to encourage allocation of staffing and budget resource to support further improvements to accessibility.

Links to enable school staff to access guidance and support is provided in Section 14.

Equality Act Audits relationship with Churchward School **does not end with the submission of this document. We remain available by telephone or email for further discussion, advice and support throughout the currency of this audit. We especially welcome feedback regarding your progress. Please do share your success stories with us.**

Thank you for the opportunity to work with the school, and the hospitality extended during our visit to the school. We look forward to having the opportunity to support the school again, should you kindly choose to reappoint us.

Auditor name, post nominal qualifications

19/02/2025

For Equality Act Audits.

1.1 Table of Audit Findings

This table summarises the audit outcomes. The detailed findings are given in Section 10 below.

Action Plan recommendations, where appropriate, are provided in Section 13.

Reference	Audit Aspect	Outcome 2025
Access to Information		
10.1.1	Staff Training – Is awareness training provided to enable all staff to understand and recognise disability issues?	Compliant
10.1.2	Arrangements for providing information in simple language, large print, via digital audio, by Braille	Compliant
10.1.3	Is the school website and social media content accessible?	Compliant
10.1.4	Is information presented to groups in a user-friendly way for people with disabilities which affect their vision?	Compliant
10.1.5	Staff familiarity with technologies and support strategies and processes developed to assist people with disabilities	Compliant
10.1.6	Complaints process	Compliant
Access to Site and Facilities		
10.2.1	Access via Public Transport	Compliant
10.2.2	Arrangements for disabled parking	Improvement Recommended
10.2.3	Security gates and barriers	Exemplary
10.2.4	Access through the site to Reception	Compliant
10.2.5	Reception facilities	Improvement Recommended

10.2.6	External areas, movement between buildings	Improvement Recommended
10.2.7	Emergency Evacuation and Lockdown Procedures	Compliant
10.2.8	Internal movement – corridors and evacuation routes	Compliant
10.2.9	Internal movement – stairs and lifts	Improvement Recommended
10.2.10	Accessible Toilets	Improvement Recommended
10.2.11	Changing Rooms	Compliant
10.2.12	Medical Facilities	Compliant
10.2.13	Internal Signage	Improvement Recommended
10.2.14	Internal décor and finishes	Compliant
10.2.15	Lighting	Compliant
10.2.16	Dining and Catering	Compliant
10.2.17	Social spaces & quiet spaces	Compliant
10.2.18	Doors	Improvement Recommended
10.2.19	Teaching and study spaces, Furniture & teaching Equipment	Compliant
10.2.20	Staff facilities	Improvement Recommended
Access to Education		
10.3.1	Training & accreditation of Teachers and Teaching Assistants	Compliant
10.3.2	Pre-admission visits	Compliant
10.3.3	Admission	Compliant
10.3.4	Safeguarding	Compliant
10.3.5	Pupils with Temporary, Emerging or ongoing Health Care Needs	Improvement Recommended
10.3.6	Access to the Curriculum	Exemplary
10.3.7	Lesson planning and support for pupils with disabilities and SEN	Exemplary

10.3.8	Access to Educational Visits and Extra Curricular Activities	Exemplary
10.3.9	Pupil Outcomes	Exemplary
10.3.10	Staffing & Leadership	Exemplary

Introduction to Accessibility and Equality Legislation in Schools

Whilst this audit and report focuses primarily upon accessibility for disabled persons, schools still need to comply with the whole of the Equality Act 2010. To that end this section introduces the wider Act so that the disability access issues raised can be considered within the context of the overall Act.

The following has largely been extracted and paraphrased from *The Equality Act 2010 and Schools – Departmental Advice for school leaders, school staff, governing bodies and local authorities*, Department for Education (May 2014) as permitted under Open Government Licence V2.0.

1.2. Overview of The Equality Act 2010

1.2.1 The Equality Act 2010 replaced nine major Acts of Parliament and almost a hundred sets of regulations which had been introduced over several decades. It provides a single, consolidated source of discrimination law, covering all the types of discrimination that are unlawful. It simplifies the law by getting rid of anomalies and inconsistencies that had developed over time, and it extends protection against discrimination in certain areas.

1.2.2 As far as schools are concerned there are some changes, but for the most part the effect of the law is the same as it has been in the past – schools which are already complying with the law will not find major differences in what they need to do. In some areas – in particular the introduction of the public sector equality duty which has replaced the three separate duties on race, disability and gender – the overall effect of the Act is to reduce a certain amount of bureaucracy and so should be less burdensome and more effective.

1.3. Schools: who and what the Act applies to

1.3.1 In England and Wales the Act applies to all maintained and independent schools, including Academies, and maintained and non-maintained special schools. In Scotland it applies to schools managed by education authorities, independent schools and schools receiving grants under section 73(c) or (d) of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980.

1.3.2 The Act makes it unlawful for the responsible body of a school to discriminate against, harass or victimise a pupil or potential pupil:

- in relation to admissions,
- in the way it provides education for pupils,
- in the way it provides pupils access to any benefit, facility or service, or
- by excluding a pupil or subjecting them to any other detriment.

1.3.3 The “responsible body” is the governing body or the local authority for maintained schools in England and Wales, the education authority in the case of maintained schools in Scotland, and the proprietor in the case of independent schools, Academies or non-maintained special schools. In practice,

any persons acting on behalf of the responsible body – including employees of the school – are liable for their own discriminatory actions, and the responsible body is also liable unless it can show that it has taken all reasonable steps to stop the individual from doing the discriminatory action or from doing anything of that kind.

1.3.4 The Act deals with the way in which schools treat their pupils and prospective pupils: the relationship between one pupil and another is not within its scope. It does not therefore bear directly on such issues as bullying by pupils. However, if a school treats bullying which relates to a protected ground less seriously than other forms of bullying – for example failing to protect a disabled pupil against bullying by classmates – then it may be guilty of unlawful discrimination.

1.3.5 The school's liability not to discriminate, harass or victimise does not end when a pupil has left the school, but will apply to subsequent actions connected to the previous relationship between school and pupil, such as the provision of references on former pupils or access to "old pupils" communications and activities.

1.4. Protected characteristics

1.4.1 The term "protected characteristics" is used as a convenient way to refer to the personal characteristics to which the law applies.

1.4.2 It is unlawful for a school to discriminate against a pupil or prospective pupil by treating them less favourably because of their:

- sex
- race
- disability
- religion or belief
- sexual orientation
- gender reassignment
- pregnancy or maternity

1.4.3 This audit and report specifically focusses upon disability access. <Equality Act Audits can undertake separate audits of compliance in the remaining areas – please contact us for further details and a quotation.

2. Special provisions for disability

The following has been extracted and paraphrased from *The Equality Act 2010 and Schools – Departmental Advice for school leaders, school staff, governing bodies and local authorities*, Department for Education (May 2014) as permitted under Open Government Licence V2.0.

2.1.1 The law on disability discrimination is different from the rest of the Act in several ways. It works in only one direction – that is to say, it protects disabled people but not people who are not disabled. This means that schools are allowed to treat disabled pupils more favourably than non-disabled pupils, and in some cases are required to do so, by making reasonable adjustments to put them on a more level footing with pupils without disabilities.

2.1.2 The definition of what constitutes discrimination is more complex. Provision for disabled pupils is closely connected with the regime for children with special educational needs

2.1.3 The overriding principle of equality legislation is generally one of equal treatment - i.e., that you must treat a black person no less well than a white person, or a man as favourably as a woman. However, the provisions relating to disability discrimination are different in that you may, and often must, treat a disabled person more favourably than a person who is not disabled and may have to make changes to your practices to ensure, as far as is reasonably possible, that a disabled person can benefit from what you offer to the same extent that a person without that disability can. So, in a school setting the general principle is that you must treat male and female, black and white, gay and straight pupils equally - but you may be required to treat disabled pupils differently. Discrimination is also defined rather differently in relation to disability

2.1. Provisions relating to disability

The disability provisions in the Equality Act mainly replicate those in the former Disability Discrimination Act (DDA). There are some minor differences as follows:

- Unlike the DDA the Equality Act does not list the types of day-to-day activities which a disabled person must demonstrate that they cannot carry out, thus making the definition of disability less restrictive for disabled people to meet.
- Failure to make a reasonable adjustment can no longer be defended as justified. The fact that it must be reasonable provides the necessary test.
- Direct discrimination against a disabled person can no longer be defended as justified – bringing it into line with the definition of direct discrimination generally.
- From September 2012 schools and local authorities have a duty to supply auxiliary aids and services as reasonable adjustments where these are not being supplied through Educational Health Care Plans or from other sources. In practice this will already be being done in many cases.

2.2. Definition of disability

2.2.1 The Act defines disability as when a person has a 'physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities.' Some specified medical conditions, HIV, multiple sclerosis and cancer are all considered as disabilities, regardless of their effect.
2.2.2 The Act sets out details of matters that may be relevant when determining whether a person meets the definition of disability. Long term is defined as lasting, or likely to last, for at least 12 months.

2.3. Unlawful behaviour regarding disabled pupils

2.3.1 Direct discrimination

A school must not treat a disabled pupil less favourably simply because that pupil is disabled – for example by having an admission bar on disabled applicants.

A change for schools in this Act is that there can no longer be justification for direct discrimination in any circumstances. Under the DDA schools could justify some direct discrimination – if it was a proportionate means of meeting a legitimate aim. What the change means is that if a school discriminates against a

person purely because of his or her disability (even if they are trying to achieve a legitimate aim) then it would be unlawful discrimination as there can be no justification for their actions.

2.3.2 Indirect discrimination

A school must not do something which applies to all pupils, but which is more likely to have an adverse effect on disabled pupils only – for example having a rule that all pupils must demonstrate physical fitness levels before being admitted to the school – unless they can show that it is done for a legitimate reason and is a proportionate way of achieving that legitimate aim.

2.3.3 Discrimination arising from disability

A school must not discriminate against a disabled pupil because of something that is a consequence of their disability – for example by not allowing a disabled pupil on crutches outside at break time because it would take too long for her to get out and back. Like indirect discrimination, discrimination arising from disability can potentially be justified.

2.3.4 Harassment

A school must not harass a pupil because of his disability – for example, a teacher shouting at the pupil because the disability means that he is constantly struggling with class-work or unable to concentrate.

2.4. Public Sector Equality Duty

The Public Sector Equality Duty requires all public authorities, including schools, to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination and other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations

2.5 Disability Equality Duty

Schools previously had a statutory duty which required them to take proactive steps to tackle disability discrimination and promote equality of opportunity for disabled pupils. Under the Equality Act, this has been replaced by the ***general equality duty*** not to discriminate, and the ***specific duties*** below.

2.5.1 Reasonable adjustments and when they must be made

The duty to make reasonable adjustments applies only to disabled people. For schools the duty is summarised as follows:

- Where something a school does places a disabled pupil at a disadvantage compared to other pupils then the school must take reasonable steps to try and avoid that disadvantage.
- Schools will be expected to provide an auxiliary aid or service for a disabled pupil when it would be reasonable to do so and if such an aid would alleviate any substantial disadvantage that the

pupil faces in comparison to non-disabled pupils. Schools are not subject to the requirement of reasonable adjustment duty concerned with making alterations to physical features because this is already considered as part of their planning duties.

2.5.2 Auxiliary aids and services

The duty to provide auxiliary aids as part of the reasonable adjustment duty is a change for all schools from September 2012 and also extends to maintaining local authorities.

2.5.2.1 Many disabled children will have a SEN and may need auxiliary aids which are necessary as part of their SEN provision; in some circumstances as part of an Educational Health Care Plan. These aids may be provided in the school under the SEN route, in which case there will be no need for the school to provide those aids as part of their reasonable adjustment duty.

2.5.2.2 Schools will have to consider whether to provide auxiliary aids as a reasonable adjustment for disabled children. This will particularly be the case where a disabled child does not have an Educational Health Care Plan or where the Educational Health Care Plan does not provide the auxiliary aid or service.

2.5.2.3 There should be no assumption, however, that if an auxiliary aid is not provided under the SEN regime, then it must be provided as a reasonable adjustment. Similarly, whilst schools and LAs are under the same reasonable adjustment duty, there should be no assumption that where it is unreasonable for a school to provide an auxiliary aid or service, for example on cost grounds, it would then be reasonable for the local authority to provide it. All decisions would depend on the facts of each individual case. The nature of the aid or service, and perhaps also the existence of local arrangements between schools and local authorities, will help to determine what would be reasonable for the school or the LA to provide. For example, where there is a centrally organised visual or hearing impairment service it may be reasonable for the local authority to provide more expensive aids or support through that service but not reasonable for an individual school to have to provide them.

2.5.2.4 The term “auxiliary aids” found in the Equality Act 2010 covers both auxiliary aids and services but there is no legal definition for what constitutes auxiliary aids and services. Considering the everyday meaning of the words, is, however, helpful. Legal cases have referred to the Oxford English Dictionary definition of auxiliary as “helpful, assistant, affording aid, rendering assistance, giving support or succour” and that auxiliary aids and services “are things or persons which help.” Examples of what may be considered an auxiliary aid could be; hearing loops; adaptive keyboards and special software. However, the key test is reasonableness and what may be reasonable for one school to provide may not be reasonable for another given the circumstances of each case.

2.5.2.5 Some disabled children will have a need for auxiliary aids which are not directly related to their educational needs or their participation in school life, for example, things which are generally necessary for all aspects of their life, such as hearing aids. It is likely to be held that it would be unreasonable for a school to be expected to provide these auxiliary aids.

2.5.3 Making reasonable adjustments

2.5.3.1 A minor change for schools is that a failure to make a reasonable adjustment cannot now be justified, whereas under the previous disability discrimination legislation it could be. However, this change should not have any practical effect due to the application of the reasonableness test – i.e., if an adjustment is reasonable then it should be made and there can be no justification for why it is not made. Schools will not be expected to make adjustments that are not reasonable.

2.5.3.2 In addition to having a duty to consider reasonable adjustments for individual disabled pupils, schools will also have to consider potential adjustments which may be needed for disabled pupils

generally as it is likely that any school will have a disabled pupil at some point. However, schools are not obliged to anticipate and adjust for every imaginable disability and need only consider general reasonable adjustments - e.g., being prepared to produce large font papers for pupils with a visual impairment even though there are no such pupils currently admitted to the school. Such a strategic and wider view of the school's approach to planning for disabled pupils will also link closely with its planning duties.

2.5.3.3 The Act does not set out what would be a reasonable adjustment or a list of factors to consider in determining what is reasonable. It will be for schools to consider the reasonableness of adjustments based on the circumstances of each case. However, factors a school may consider when assessing the reasonableness of an adjustment may include the financial or other resources required for the adjustment, its effectiveness, its effect on other pupils, health and safety requirements, and whether aids have been made available through the Special Educational Needs route.

2.5.3.4 Cost will inevitably play a major part in determining what is reasonable and it is more likely to be reasonable for a school with substantial financial resources to have to make an adjustment with a significant cost, than for a school with fewer resources. For example, a small rural primary school may not be able to provide specialised IT equipment for any disabled pupils who may need it, and it may not be reasonable for the school to provide that equipment. On the other hand, a much larger school might reasonably be expected to provide it.

2.5.3.5 Often, though, effective and practicable adjustments for disabled pupils will involve little or no cost or disruption and are therefore very likely to be reasonable for a school to have to make.
2.5.3.6 Schools generally will try to ensure that disabled pupils can play as full a part as possible in school life and the reasonable adjustments duty will help support that. However, there will be times when adjustments cannot be made because to do so would have a detrimental effect on other pupils and would therefore not be reasonable – for example, if a school put on a geology field trip which necessarily involved climbing and walking over rough ground and after fully considering alternatives to accommodate a disabled pupil in a wheelchair who could not take part it determined that there was no viable alternative or way of enabling the disabled pupil to participate or be involved, it would not have to cancel the trip as originally planned. This is unlikely to constitute direct discrimination or failure to make a reasonable adjustment

2.5.3.7 The reasonable adjustments duties on schools are intended to complement the accessibility planning duties and the existing Educational Health Care Plan provisions which are part of education legislation, under which local authorities must provide auxiliary aids to pupils with an Educational Health Care Plan.

2.5.4 Schools' duties around accessibility for disabled pupils

2.5.4.1 Schools and LAs need to carry out ***accessibility planning*** for disabled pupils. These are the same duties as previously existed under the DDA and have been replicated in the Equality Act 2010.

2.5.4.2 Schools must create and provide adequate resources to implement ***accessibility plans*** which are aimed at:

- increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum;
- improving the physical environment of schools to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided; and • improving the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils.

2.5.4.3 School accessibility plans shall be reviewed at least every 3 years.

2.5.4.4 An accessibility plan may be a freestanding document but may also be published as part of another document such as the school development plan.

2.5.4.5 OFSTED inspections may include a school's accessibility plan as part of their review.

2.5.5 Local authorities' duties around accessibility for disabled pupils

LAs must, for the schools for which they are responsible, prepare accessibility strategies based on the same principle as the access plans for schools.

3. Purpose of Audit

3.1. The audit addresses and recognises the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. The report includes recommendations for required remedial actions and ongoing monitoring and control measures. Guidance is also referred to such as BS8300: 2009 - Design of Buildings and Their Approach to Meet the Needs of Disabled People - Code of Practice; along with other applicable sources where appropriate.

3.2. The focus of this report is to ensure that the school meets with the requirements of part IV of the Equality Act and so does not discriminate against disabled pupils.

3.3. However, the report will also deal with the obligations under section III of the Equality Act 2010 which relates to the provision of services to members of the public.

3.4. To achieve this, the report will identify where communication strategies, the property, and educational teaching and support processes do not meet current legislation or best practice standards. The report will recommend ways to overcome these issues. Recommendations may incorporate physical adaptations to the site, changes to policies and procedures or a combination of these.

4. Commissioning of Audit

4.1. An Accessibility Plan and Audit of **Churchward School** was commissioned by Theresa Linton, The Senior Health, Safety and Continuity Advisor for the Brunel Academies Trust.

4.2. This is the first Accessibility Audit report undertaken at this School by Equality Act Audits.

4.3. Initial information was gathered by an initial fact-finding questionnaire and review of information published on the school website.

4.4. An on-site audit was undertaken on 18/02/2025 using a checklist.

4.5. On the day, the auditor met with Steve Oates and Vanessa.

4.6. The resulting information was compiled into this Audit Report and Action Plan.

5. Credentials of Head Access Auditor

Lesley Mifsud – CEO and Head Access Consultant

Lesley set up Equality Act Audits in 2010 with the aim to promote equality in education and ensuring children with special educational needs have the same opportunities as others. Since setting up EA Audits, Lesley has personally advised over 1500 schools on accessibility, helping them to comply with the Equality Act 2010.

Lesley has over 30 years' experience in teaching, and has held the positions of Head of Year, Deputy Head and Headteacher. Lesley has a passion for children and education and has an excellent knowledge of all areas related to Equality in Schools and SEN.

As well as Access Auditing schools to ensure they conform to the Equality Act of 2010 and writing their SEN Policies and Accessibility Plans, Lesley also regularly undertakes the following:

- Advising schools on inclusion for their SEN pupils.
- Advising on classroom construction for hearing impaired pupils and staff. Training others in access auditing schools.
- Training others in access auditing schools.
- Advising Local Education Authorities of their duties regarding The Equality Act.
- Public Speaking on equality in education.
- Assisting schools with disability discrimination claims and being an expert witness when needed.

6. Contextual Background to the School

Each individual school differs in context from other schools. This individual context will have a bearing on how and to what extent the school is able to respond to the challenges of maximising accessibility.

7.1 Locations.

1.Main School Site (William Morris Way, Tadpole Garden Village, Swindon, SN25 2PP)

2.Links Campus (UTC Swindon, Bristol Street, Swindon, SN1 5ET)

3.Bagbury Park (Lydiard Millicent, Swindon, SN5 3LW)

7.2 Ethos of the School. Churchward School's ethos is centred on creating an inclusive, aspirational, and supportive community for students aged 11 to 19 with autism spectrum conditions and social communication challenges. Their guiding principles include:

1. **Recognizing Strengths, Gaining Skills, Achieving Success**: The school is dedicated to helping students identify their unique abilities, develop essential skills, and achieve personal and academic success.
2. **Holistic Development**: They prioritize the emotional, social, and academic growth of each student, ensuring a well-rounded approach to education.
3. **Personalized Learning**: The school tailors its curriculum and support to meet the individual needs of students, fostering independence, resilience, and flexibility of thought.
4. **Inclusive Environment**: Churchward School is committed to creating a safe and nurturing space where every student feels valued and supported.
5. **Preparation for the Future**: They aim to equip students with the life and work skills needed for a sustainable and fulfilling future, promoting independence and interdependence.

The school also integrates the Thrive Approach, which focuses on emotional and social well-being as a foundation for academic success. This ethos reflects their dedication to empowering students to thrive both within the school and beyond.

7.3 Nature of School Sites. The primary location and central hub for Churchward School is on William Morris Way. The site boasts modern, bespoke educational spaces, therapeutic rooms, and a safe, inclusive learning environment. It is fully accessible, with step-free entry, wide corridors, and specialist features to cater to sensory needs, such as soundproofed areas and adjustable lighting.
It also includes outdoor spaces for recreation and sensory activities, as well as accessible toilets and changing facilities to ensure comfort and dignity for all students.

The Links Campus provides additional learning spaces to complement the main site. It supports the school's mission by offering specialized facilities and resources for older students or those requiring specific vocational or therapeutic programs. The campus is conveniently located in Swindon and designed to provide a professional learning environment. It focuses on preparing students for transitions to further education or employment.

This Bagbury Park site further expands the school's provision by offering tailored facilities for smaller groups, specialized interventions, or vocational training. Bagbury Park provides a quieter and more focused setting, ideal for students requiring additional support or bespoke educational experiences. Its rural location offers opportunities for outdoor learning and activities.

Each site plays a vital role in Churchward School's dedication to meeting the diverse needs of its students.

7.4 Number of pupils. There are 126 total pupils at the school, all have SEND.

7.5 Trend in pupil numbers. School numbers are increasing.

7.6 Able, gifted and talented. At Churchward School, they believe in treating all pupils as individuals and so catering for their individual needs. All pupils including the most able are entitled to a challenging and stimulating curriculum that develops their full potential. Within the school's general policy of inclusion, provision for able, gifted and talented pupils is a matter of equal opportunity and they ensure that the most able have the opportunity to nurture their ability, stimulate their desire for life- long learning and to achieve and excel.

7.7 Pupil Premium. There are 44 Pupil Premium pupils which equates to 35.2% of the total population of the students.

The Pupil Premium is an extra grant of money given to schools by central government to support pupils who qualify for Free School Meals (FSM). The definition includes and pupil that has qualified for FSM in the last 6 years, even if they are not currently claiming. Research shows that on average, pupils qualifying for FSM are likely to do less well at school. Whilst this is an average and a generalisation, the initiative behind the grant is to use the pupil premium to support FSM pupils in any relevant or special ways to enable them to attain and achieve as well as their non-FSM peers.

7.8 Pupils for whom English is not the first language. English as an additional language (EAL) refers to learners whose first language is not English. They may be capable of speaking English and, indeed writing in English, but, as English was not their first language, it is an additional language. A pupil's first language is defined as any language other than English that a child was exposed to during early development and continues to be exposed to in the home or community. If a child was exposed to more than one language (which may include English) during early development, a language other than English should be recorded, irrespective of the child's proficiency in English.

Where appropriate, EAL pupils will be supported by the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO/Head of Learning Support) and teaching staff in the classroom to enable the pupil to complete tasks with understanding. They have one EAL student on roll.

7.9 SEN Staffing. Class Teachers are responsible for: Checking on the progress of pupils and identifying, planning and delivering any additional help they may need (this could be targeted work or additional support) and informing the Special Education Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator (SENCO). Writing Individual Learning Support Plans for Inclusion/Individual target plans and sharing and reviewing these with parents at least once each term and planning for the next term. Personalised teaching and learning for pupils as identified on the school's provision map. Ensuring that the school's SEN Policy is followed in their classroom and for all the pupils they teach with any SEN.

The SENCo is responsible for: Providing professional guidance to colleagues and working closely with staff, parents/carers and other agencies. Writing the SEN Information Report which MUST be published on the setting website and updated annually. Overseeing the day-to-day operation of the school's SEN policy. Co-ordinating provision for children with SEN. Advising on a graduated approach to provide SEN Support.

Advising on the deployment of the school's delegated budget and other resources to meet pupils needs effectively. Liaising with parents/carers of pupils with SEN. Liaising with EYFS providers, other schools, Educational Psychologist, health and social care professionals and independent or voluntary bodies, LA. Managing the transition process – between the varying levels of SEN support, from one year group to the next and any change of school.

7.10 SENCO. The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator is Lorna Dickson. All teachers are teachers of students with Special Educational Needs. Teaching such students is therefore a whole school responsibility, requiring a whole school response. The needs of all students are at the centre of whole school teaching and learning at xxxx School is based on good practice as established over many years.

Parents/carers and students can be sure that Churchward School is a fully inclusive school which values every member of the school community. They strive always to raise aspirations and attainment of all students in partnership with a range of outside agencies and stakeholders. Their team is established and fully committed to ensuring students are aspirational working to unlock personal potential. Learning Support Assistants work with students with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) across the curriculum in all years, as well as supporting students and teachers in the classroom. The majority of this support is classroom based, as well as a range of interventions and programmes (including some withdrawal) when needed and appropriate.

7.11 Safeguarding. As well as statutory responsibilities in relation to children's learning, the school has a pastoral and legal responsibility towards their pupils and must recognise that the children and young people in their charge have a fundamental right to be protected from harm.

Churchward School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare and well-being of children, young people and staff. They believe that everyone, without exception, has a right to be safe and to be treated with dignity and respect regardless of background and free from discrimination. The school recognises that children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure. Any allegation of child abuse or a safeguarding issue will be treated with the utmost concern. They will always liaise with relevant external agencies in accordance with locally agreed protocols.

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. There is a clear ethos across the school that sets the safety of pupils as a high priority. Leaders have been effective in creating a culture in which safeguarding is seen as everyone's responsibility and not just the designated safeguarding leader. Effective recordkeeping reflects the school's commitment to keep all pupils safe. Parents and carers say their children are well cared for and safe at school. Training for staff and governors in child protection means that they are knowledgeable and up to date with the most recent guidance and legislation. Staff are vigilant and know what to do should they have any concerns about a child's welfare. The school works very well with parents/carers and a wide range of external agencies to keep children safe and free from harm. Leaders are tenacious in making sure that safeguarding matters are followed up thoroughly. Governors make sure that all checks on staff and volunteers working with children are made and recorded.

8. Constraints and limitations to the audit

8.1 This report may not be copied or reproduced by any means without prior written permission from Equality Act Audits. It is a confidential report and has been prepared for the exclusive use of the commissioning party and unless otherwise agreed in writing by Equality Act Audits, no other party may use, make use of or rely on the contents of this report. No liability is accepted by Equality Act Audits for any use of this report, other than for the purposes for which it was originally prepared and provided.

8.2 Opinions and information provided in the report are based on Equality Act Audits using due skill, care and diligence in the preparation of the same and no warranty is provided as to their accuracy. It should be noted, and it is expressly stated, that no independent verification of any of the documents or information supplied to Equality Act Audits has been made.

8.3 The content of this report is based on the information and access provided to the consultant at the time of this audit. Any recommendations or advice in this report is based upon evidence seen. Whilst every care is taken to interpret current Acts, Regulations and Approved Codes of Practices, these can only be authoritatively interpreted by Courts of Law. Undergoing of the recommendations in the report could assist in meeting the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 / Disability Discrimination Act but does not guarantee it. Nor does compliance with this report remove any liability on the part of the client or give protection against legal proceedings.

8.4 OFSTED and others should not infer weakness in the management of a school from the outcomes of the accessibility audit. The ability of the school to address issues considered to require improvement or be inadequate may be constrained by a variety of factors outside the control and influence of the school management and leadership team.

8.5 The “myth” of compliance: There is actually no such concept as being “fully DDA compliant” for an existing building. The phrase has entered the language, but the legislation reads differently. A new public building will have to show disabled access, accessible toilets etc. but an existing structure will be asked to make “reasonable adjustments”.

8.6 Disability and equality legislation is not prescriptive in its recommendations to improve accessibility. As such, compliance with the various Acts cannot ultimately be determined or used as a method for assessing accessibility. Only tangible standards set out in guidance documents such as BS8300: 2009 can be referred to for 'compliance'.

8.7 Although we have included the code of practice for means of escape for disabled people within our criteria, this report should not be considered as a detailed assessment of the overall means of escape provision, which should be included in the school’s emergency evacuation plan.

8.8 In the time available it is not possible to visit every occupied room. In the case of large school premises, a reasonable sample of teaching environments for pupils and working environments for staff and visitors has been visited. Plant rooms and workshops etc not used for educational purposes, and rooms otherwise not visited during the audit process are not covered by this report.

8.9 Recommendations represent best practice at the time of writing, but the concepts of “best practice” and “reasonable” will change with time. Research and innovation allow new concepts and products/services to become available. Therefore, the Equality Act recommends a school be audited every 3 years.

8.10 Fire Evacuation and Health & Safety legislation may conflict with disability equality legislation. When this happens fire and safety legislation take priority (although H&S and disability equality often share common objectives).

8.11 For this report, consultation with local Access Groups has not been undertaken. It is advisable to seek advice from various user groups and appropriate employees prior to undertaking specific adaptation works arising from recommendations within this report.

8.12 If the site or buildings have a listed building status or are located within a designated conservation area, professional advice must be sort for planning applications.

8.13 Where recommendations have been suggested that may influence the evacuation strategy or the fire safety integrity of the building additional consultation with the relevant local Fire Officer is advised prior to works being undertaken.

8.14 Externally sourced images are used within this report; these are for illustrative purposes only. External images are indicated along with their source.

9. Key to the Accessibility Audit

9.1 Key

Reference No.	The reference number of the audit item. This links through to the Action Plan.
Best Practice	A brief summary of accepted best practice in the area being considered, including where appropriate a perspective from the point of view of disabled persons.
Audit findings	Captures what was observed or stated to be the case during the audit process. Where appropriate a photo will provide visual support to the evidence.
Grade 2025	The Audit aims to take a non-judgemental stance. However, it is perhaps inevitable that grading findings may feel judgemental. Feedback indicates that many schools find ranking the findings to be helpful. Understand that the grades are intended to help focus attention where it is most required, for the benefit of those affected, and are not intended as a judgement on the quality of leadership or management.
Suggestions to improve/resolve	Constructive suggestions as to how further actions will help improve accessibility. Significant actions will be referred to in the Action Plan.

9.2 Findings descriptors

For each of the three sections of the audit, an overall grade is indicated.
These three grades together inform the overall audit grade indicated in the Executive Summary.

	In an audit item
Exemplary	Highly effective, exemplary or innovative practice that fully supports accessibility for all pupils or visitors.
Compliant	Effective practice that supports accessibility for a significant majority of pupils or visitors

Requires Improvement	Practice supports accessibility for most pupils; however, a significant minority of pupils or visitors could be more effectively supported. In some cases, there may be potential health and safety risks or where failure to implement changes would be highly likely to attract legal implications. Immediate action is recommended to put changes into effect – see Action Plan.

Accessibility Audit

10.1. Access to Information

An accessible school is one where pupils and parents/carers can access information normally provided by the school to its pupils available to disabled pupils, by means appropriate to the relevant disability; and where staff are well trained, aware, and able to initiate and implement changes to facilitate such access. Information might include items such as handouts, timetables, textbooks or information about school events, reports, newsletters, and general letters home.

Schools have a duty to parents/carers with disabilities to let them have reasonable access to services related to the education of their child or children. This is to make sure parents/carers with disabilities can be fully involved in their child's education. Your child's school should make 'reasonable adjustments' to procedures and policies or provide you with aids to help you access their services, like putting information in accessible formats. They must not refuse to provide a service, or provide a lesser service, to you as a parent/carer with disabilities.

Alternative formats for the provision of information might include: large print, audio tape, Braille, a recognised symbol system, the use of ICT and the provision of information orally, through lip reading or in sign language.

Information must be provided within a reasonable time frame, i.e., to be of proper use for the pupil. For example, a reasonable time frame for the provision of a handout needed during a lesson would be the start of the lesson.

In practice, it is anticipated that most pupils requiring information to be provided in a different format will already have had their needs identified through the school's and/or the Local Authority's SEN identification processes.

10.1.1	**Staff Training – Is awareness training provided to enable all staff to understand and recognise disability issues?**
Best Practice	You must not discriminate against a pupil in your school, in the provision of education, or access to any benefit, facility or service, by excluding them or by subjecting them to any other detriment. It is your school's responsible body that is liable for any acts of discrimination. All staff should receive disability awareness training as part of their Induction. Refresher and update training should be provided. Training in medical conditions pertaining to individual pupil medical conditions should be provided to those staff working with such pupils.
Audit Findings	Churchward School places a strong emphasis on staff training to ensure an inclusive and supportive environment for all students. Training includes: • **Understanding Autism and SEND**: Training on the characteristics of autism and other special educational needs, focusing on how these impact learning and social interactions.

	• **Safeguarding and Intimate Care**: Ensuring staff are equipped to provide care while maintaining students' dignity and safety. • **Communication Strategies**: Training in alternative communication methods, such as visual aids or assistive technologies, to support students with communication challenges. • **Emotional Regulation and Behaviour Support**: Using approaches like the Thrive model to help staff support students' emotional and social development.
Grade 2025	**Compliant**
Suggestions to improve/resolve	Maintain existing action and processes.

10.1.2	**Arrangements for providing information in simple language, large print, via digital audio, by Braille**

Best Practice	To reach all their audience, schools need to make effective use of accessible communication formats (also known as alternative formats). Involve disabled people from your school parents/carers in developing and reviewing a strategy for producing information in accessible formats. They will know their needs and could help you find the most effective ways of meeting them. You can also approach disability organisations for advice. Your strategy should outline: • how you will anticipate the needs of disabled people • what minimum standards are in place • who is responsible and who will pay for the accessible formats • what type of information you will prioritise • how you will enforce and monitor the strategy • you could potentially include a note on your website or promotional materials, create a sign or post a notice on a bulletin board. Examples of how and when schools can support parents with disabilities include: • using a pen and notepad to communicate with you if you are deaf or hearing impaired and/or providing induction loops in a certain room. • arranging for an interpreter, for example, in British Sign Language (BSL) and/or allowing more time for one-to-one meetings. • updating you on your child's progress by telephone or email if you are unable to go to a meeting because of your impairment. • holding a meeting in an accessible location, for example, to avoid stairs, if you have impaired mobility. • providing a script of a school play if you are deaf or hearing impaired to help follow the action. • The UK Association for Accessible Formats is an industry association that sets standards and promotes best practice for quality accessible
	information based on user needs. Their website includes a directory of accessible format producers.

Audit Findings	Churchward School has arrangements in place to ensure that information is accessible to all members of its community, including those with disabilities. 1. **Simple Language**: Information is presented in clear, straightforward language to ensure it is easily understood by all. 2. **Large Print**: Documents and materials can be provided in large print for individuals with visual impairments. 3. **Digital Audio**: Audio versions of key documents or information may be made available for those who benefit from auditory learning or have difficulty reading text. 4. **Braille**: For individuals who are blind or have severe visual impairments, important information can be transcribed into Braille. 5. **Assistive Technology**: Schools often use assistive technologies, such as screen readers or text-to-speech software, to enhance accessibility. 6. **On-Demand Adjustments**: Schools typically encourage parents, carers, or students to request specific formats or adjustments as needed.
Grade 2025	**Compliant**
Suggestions to improve/resolve	Maintain existing action and processes.

10.1.3	**Is the school Website and Social Media content accessible?**
Best Practice	It is essential that the school's website is accessible in order to provide equal access and equal opportunity to people with diverse abilities. On a website, accessibility depends on how a person's disability affects the way they perceive information on a page and how they navigate within and between pages. Websites should be accessible to everyone, including users with impairments to their: • Vision – severely sight impaired (blind), sight impaired (partially sighted), or colour-blind people • Hearing – people who are deaf or hard of hearing • Mobility – those who find it hard to use a keyboard • Understanding – for example those with dyslexia, autism or learning difficulties Ensuring a school's website is accessible to everyone is essential. Here are some key components it should include: 1. **Text Alternatives**: All non-text content, like images and videos, should have alternative text descriptions (alt text) for screen readers. 2. **Keyboard Navigation**: The website should be fully navigable using a keyboard, for those who cannot use a mouse.

	3. **Readable Text**: Use clear and simple language. Ensure text contrast ratios meet accessibility standards to make text easy to read. 4. **Captions and Transcripts**: Provide captions for videos and transcripts for audio content. 5. **Consistent Layout**: Use a consistent and predictable layout, so users can easily find and understand the information. 6. **Scalable Text**: Allow users to enlarge text without loss of content or functionality. 7. **Accessible Forms**: Ensure forms are labelled clearly, with instructions available for users who rely on screen readers. 8. **Error Identification**: Clearly identify errors in forms and provide guidance on how to correct them. 9. **Interactive Elements**: Make sure all interactive elements (buttons, links, etc.) are accessible and operable by all users. 10. **Accessibility Statement**: Include an accessibility statement outlining the measures taken and providing contact information for users who encounter issues. These practices will help create an inclusive, user-friendly experience for all visitors to the school's website. Schools must publish specific information online to comply with regulations. This includes policies on admission arrangements, behaviour, complaints, charging and remissions, curriculum, special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), and more. The school's SEN Information Report must be published on their website. This report provides details about the support and provisions available for students with SEN, ensuring transparency and accessibility for parents, carers, and the wider community. Independent schools are not legally required to publish a Special Educational Needs (SEN) Information Report. However, it is strongly recommended

Audit Findings	• Is the school's SEN Information Report available on the website? Yes, Churchward School's SEN Information Report is available on their website. You can find it on their SEND Local Offer page. This report provides detailed information about the school's provision for students with special educational needs, including their policies, support strategies, and admissions process. • Are all policies relating to equality, access, and medical support processes available on the website? Yes • Does the website have an Accessibility Statement available? I couldn't find specific information about an Accessibility Statement on Churchward School's website. Accessibility Statements are typically included to outline how a website complies with accessibility standards and to provide support for users with disabilities. • Does the website have scalable text allowing users to enlarge text without loss of content or functionality? Yes
	• Is the website easy to navigate? Yes Website accessibility is an ongoing process and if the school would like to make further improvements, here are some points to consider: • Some visually impaired users, especially those using keyboard and screen reader users, often navigate by heading elements. An empty heading on your website will present no information to them, causing confusion. • Identifying the language of the page. This allows screen readers to understand the content visually impaired users are accessing. • Increase the contrast between the foreground text colour and the background colour. Large text, such as those larger than 18 point or 14 point or in bold, does not require as much contrast as smaller text. • Image links can be confusing to users accessing websites via screen readers. Include appropriate alternative text on an image within a link to guarantee that the function and purpose of the link, as well as the content of the image itself, is understandable.
Grade 2025	**Compliant**
Suggestions to improve/resolve	Maintain existing action and processes.

10.1.4	**Is information presented to groups in a user-friendly way for people with disabilities which affect their vision?**

Best Practice	Sight is key to communication, learning and movement. It co-ordinates other senses and helps people to understand what they have heard, touched, tasted or smelled. The more people can see, the easier it is for them to make sense of the environment around them. Assistance with a sight problem may include medical intervention or specialist equipment. However, simple changes in our behaviour or in the environment can be the most affective and cost nothing. The following are some of the things that may be considered in the treatment of an eye condition: It is often believed that people with intellectual disabilities will automatically reject glasses. Yet many people have benefited from carefully prescribed and chosen glasses. Glasses should be introduced in a planned way and involve the individual wearing them for motivating activities (that are obviously appropriate to the function of the glasses, e.g., near vision) and should always be clean. All people with intellectual disabilities should obtain regular eye checks. (RNIB advises annual checks). All those involved in the support of a person with intellectual disabilities who has a sight problem should know the details of the condition. All those involved in the support of a person with intellectual disabilities should have an understanding of how they can adapt the environment and their own behaviour to meet the individual's visual needs.
	All those involved in the support of a person with intellectual disabilities know how to use and maintain any specialist equipment (e.g., people know what tasks a specific pair of glasses should be used for).
Audit Findings	Churchward School is committed to inclusivity, and adopt the following strategies: • **Clear Verbal Communication**: Presenters ensure that all key points are spoken clearly and concisely, accommodating those who may rely on auditory information. • **Accessible Materials**: Handouts or presentations are often provided in accessible formats, such as large print, high-contrast text, or digital formats compatible with screen readers. • **Assistive Technology**: The use of tools like screen readers, magnifiers, or Braille displays can support individuals with vision impairments. • **Descriptive Content**: Visual elements, such as charts or images, are described verbally to ensure everyone can access the information.
Grade 2025	**Compliant**
Suggestions to improve/resolve	Maintain existing action and processes.

10.1.5	**Staff familiarity with technologies and support strategies and processes developed to assist people with disabilities**
Best Practice	Learning disabilities impact the way children are able to process and understand information; they are neurological disorders that might manifest themselves as difficulty listening, thinking, writing, speaking, spelling, or doing mathematical calculations. Dyslexia, dyscalculia, dysgraphia, dyspraxia, visual perception disorders, auditory processing disorders, and language disorders fall under the umbrella of learning disorders. Many children with ADHD also have comorbid learning disorders. An idea that teachers must understand is that students with special needs such as learning disabilities need to be taught differently or need some accommodations to enhance the learning environment. Not everyone learns in the same way, and you can follow some tips to create a well-rounded learning atmosphere: • Maintain an organized classroom and limit distractions • Use music and voice inflection. • Break down instructions into smaller, manageable tasks. • Use multi-sensory strategies. • Give students with special needs opportunities for success.
Audit Findings	The school understands their obligations to provide auxiliary aides to those pupils who require them where it is reasonable to do so without putting the disabled pupil at a substantial disadvantage.
	They prioritize staff training to ensure familiarity with assistive technologies and support strategies for students with disabilities. 1. **Regular Training Sessions**: Staff are trained on the use of assistive technologies, such as communication devices, screen readers, and sensory aids, to support students effectively. 2. **Specialist Support**: The school has SEND specialists or external trainers who provide guidance on best practices for supporting students with disabilities. 3. **Collaborative Approach**: Staff are encouraged to share knowledge and experiences, fostering a whole-school approach to understanding and implementing support strategies. 4. **Ongoing Professional Development**: Training is updated regularly to keep staff informed about new technologies and methodologies. 5. **Tailored Support Plans**: Staff are trained to develop and implement individualized support plans that address the unique needs of each student.
Grade 2025	**Compliant**
Suggestions to improve/resolve	Maintain existing action and processes.

10.1.6	**Complaints Process**
Best Practice	• It's in everyone's interest that complaints are resolved at the earliest possible stage. Many issues can be resolved informally, without the need to follow formal procedures. Schools should take informal concerns seriously and make every effort to resolve the matter as quickly as possible. • Pupils, parents and visitors should be able to complain if their accessibility needs are not being met. • If a school's complaint procedure says you should write to the Headteacher, you should be allowed to make a verbal complaint if you are unable to write because of your impairment. • A school complaints procedure is an Ofsted publication requirement.
Audit Findings	Churchward School follows the complaints process outlined by the Brunel Academies Trust, which oversees the school. The process includes the following steps: 1. **Informal Resolution**: Concerns are addressed informally by speaking directly with the relevant staff member or the school leadership team. Many issues can be resolved at this stage. 2. **Formal Complaint**: If the issue is not resolved informally, a formal complaint can be submitted in writing to the Headteacher. The complaint will be investigated, and a response will be provided within a specified timeframe.
	3. **Escalation**: If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome, they can escalate the complaint to the Brunel Academies Trust. The Trust will review the complaint and provide a final decision.
Grade 2025	**Compliant**
Suggestions to improve/resolve	Maintain existing action and processes.

10.2. Access to Site and Facilities

An accessible school is one where the physical environment does not limit a pupil's ability to take advantage of the education (and other) opportunities on offer.

The purpose of this section of the access audit is to assess how well a site performs in terms of access and ease of use by a wide range of potential users, including people with disabilities. The audit provides a certain "snapshot" of a building at one point in its life. As the starting point of an ongoing access action plan, it can be used to highlight areas for improvement as well as a general risk assessment.

The physical environment includes steps, stairways, kerbs, exterior surfaces and paving, parking areas, building entrances and exits (including emergency escape routes), internal and external doors, gates, toilets and washing facilities, lighting, heating, ventilation, lifts, floor coverings, signs, interior surfaces, room décor and furniture.

Improvements to physical access include ramps, handrails, lifts, widened doorways, electromagnetic doors, adapted toilets and washing facilities, adjustable lighting, blinds, induction loops, communication aids, well designed (passive) room acoustics and way-finding systems. Improvements can also be made through rearranging room space, removing obstructions from walkways, changing the layout of classrooms, providing designated storage space or reallocating rooms to subject specialisms.

The most obvious part of a building, which determines its accessibility, is the shell. Decisions made by the architect can fundamentally affect the accessibility for a long time.

When the building is fitted out, fixtures and fittings can be critical. Most do not survive as long as the building itself, and if deficiencies are identified, these can be included in the next potential refurbishment.

A building is next furnished and equipped, and at this stage many mistakes can occur. Furnishings are generally short-lived so opportunities for improvement tend to occur more regularly.

Finally, as the building is occupied, the way it is used and managed becomes crucial. Accessibility is affected when bad housekeeping exists causing tripping hazards or, for example, over-zealous polishing leads to slippery floors. Continual monitoring by management therefore has a considerable role to play.

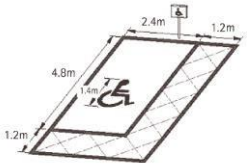
10.2.1	**Access to Public Transport**
Best Practice	The most accessible schools will have effective access to public transport. Depending on the locality, this could include airports, National & local bus routes, Railways, trams, underground or other light transit systems, cycle lanes, local taxi infrastructure. People with disabilities may rely on such services to reach the school.

Audit Findings	There is public transport available in the areas surrounding Churchward School and its two other sites in Swindon. Swindon has a well-connected bus network operated by Swindon's Bus Company and Stagecoach West, providing links across the town and beyond. The bus routes serve various locations, including Tadpole Garden Village (where the main school site is located), UTC Swindon, and Bagbury Park. Additionally, Swindon has a railway station that connects to major cities, offering further transport options. The school website provide links to route planning sites (e.g., Google maps etc)? Yes
	There are a few main reasons to add a Google map to a website: It helps customers or website visitors get directions to your business and saves customers the steps of opening a new browser window, leaving your website, and finding directions. Potential visitors can simply use the map on your website.
Grade 2025	**Compliant**
Suggestions to improve/resolve	Maintain existing action and processes.

10.2.2	**Arrangements for disabled parking**

Best Practice	For a number of wheelchair users and mobility impaired people it is very important that designated, well sized, accessible parking bays are provided as close as possible to the entrance points. If there is not sufficient size to allow a person to transfer from the car to a chair it may actually prevent that person from visiting the building at all or could result in them parking improperly causing an obstruction to other users. As a result, it is essential that an adequate number of well-designed accessible bays are provided. For a site of this type and use there is no specific guidance to follow but we would suggest that 5% of the overall parking provision should be made available for disabled use. Having provided well designed accessible parking it is equally important to ensure that pedestrian routes to and from the main disabled entrance are accessible as well as routes for other pedestrians. Routes should be level, free from steps, bollards and steep slopes which present difficulties for many disabled people. Moveable street furniture such as bins, seating and A-boards should be carefully located so as to not obstruct walking routes. Well-designed dropped kerbs with appropriate tactile paving should be provided where necessary. In addition, the hatched areas should allow a 1.2m access zone between bays at the side and 1.2m at the rear for easy boot access. Disabled users are likely to be more vulnerable to collision with traffic and a mobility impaired or elderly person is unlikely to be able to move as quickly as a disabled person. Equally a visually impaired person will be less aware of oncoming traffic. As a result, a safe route should be provided from accessible parking bays to the nearest exit or entrance. Any new bays should be designed to meet the requirements of BS8300: 2001. In effect this design ensures that the surface is relatively level, have a hard finish and free from stones, gravel etc. As well as a sign on the ground as provision for disabled drivers or passengers only, there should also be a sign immediately in front of the space, or to the side of the space, which is good practice. This is needed in case of snow or leaf

	covering on the ground. For wheelchair users, signs should be placed between 1000mm and 1100mm above floor level. The lettering should be in small case and should contrast with the sign board, and the sign should have a matt surface. Symbols can be used to supplement written signs. Pedestrian safety is a crucial aspect of parking lot design. Safe walkways are designed to provide a clear and safe path for pedestrians to walk on, away from moving vehicles. They are usually marked with bright colours and signs to make them easily visible. Walking behind a parked car in a parking lot is generally safer than walking in between parked cars. This is because drivers are more likely to see pedestrians walking behind their car and can adjust their driving accordingly. Some car parks may even suggest that drivers reverse into the space to provide better visibility when exiting the car park. However, it is still important to be cautious and aware of your surroundings when walking in a car park. Directions to the disabled car parking are required to be placed at the entrance to the site so any disabled visitors know which way to go to access the designated disabled car park space.	
Audit Findings	 	The school has provided accessible spaces at 2 of their sites but none have been marked out at UTC site. • How does school remind parents to park sensibly and safely when collecting children? Written communication via letters and email. There are also staff on duty at the entrances to the sites to guide and remind parents about parking and consideration for others. • Does the school have safe walkways in the car parks? • Is there a sign at the entrance to the sites showing the location of disabled parking? No • Is there a sign (at a raised level) in front of the accessible parking bay/s? No • Are accessible parking bays correctly marked out? Yes, at Tadpole site.
Grade 2025	**Improvement Recommended**	

Suggestions to improve/resolve	Ask if UTC Swindon will mark out an accessible bay in their car park, close to your entrance. 
	Place a sign at the entrance to the Tadpole site carpark showing that there is accessible parking available and where it is located. For example: Erect a sign in front of the bays at a height of 1 metre (this is in case of snow on the ground). For example: Mark out a safe walkway in the Tadpole site carpark. For example:

10.2.3	**Security Gates & Barriers**

Best Practice	Security and safety in schools is a highly emotive subject and one which is never far from the conscience of the head teacher, facilities team, governing body and LEA who all have roles to play in the implementation of an effective school security strategy. Through initiatives such as the Building Schools for the Future campaign, funding may be available for schools to upgrade perimeter security to the "duty of care" levels commensurate with the school/pupil relationship. Schools have a basic requirement to safely contain students in their care during school hours, keeping them protected from unwanted intruders and away from any danger within the confines of the grounds. After hours the school also needs to be able to 'lock-down' to deter acts of vandalism, theft, concealment and even arson. The physical security that surrounds a school site needs to be interfaced with intelligent access control solutions across the entire campus. Generally speaking, most schools (and nurseries) will require segregated access to the main reception from the car park, at which point all visitors are vetted and their reason for wanting to gain entry to be qualified prior to being granted access to the site. In the interest of safety, all access controls must work in conjunction with any fire alarm installation to ensure a speedy evacuation of the site when required

	All fencing, gate and access control solutions must be carefully considered to ensure they are compliant with the stringent safety regulations designed to minimise the risk of accidents. In infant and junior schools and for play areas, it is important to look for RoSPA approved and BS EN 1176 compliant products which have been tested for their ability to provide a safe fencing or gate solution, reducing the risk of puncture wounds or the entrapment of limbs. Schools selecting these products will significantly reduce the risk of public liability claims– an all-important consideration in today's increasingly litigious society. Controls need to be accessible. Intercoms should be easy to use and have good signage. User operated parts to be highlighted including gate handles.	
Audit Findings	 	securityard School prioritizes the safety and sites. of its students and staff across all three 1. **Access-Controlled Systems**: Enhanced access control systems are in place to ensure that only authorized individuals can enter the premises.

	       	2. **Safeguarding Policies**: The school emphasizes safeguarding as a top priority, with policies and procedures designed to protect students. 3. **Staff Training**: Staff are trained in safeguarding and emergency protocols to respond effectively to any incidents. 4. **Secure Facilities**: The buildings are custom-built to support the needs of students, which include secure entry points and monitored areas. 5. **Monitoring and Surveillance**: CCTV cameras and other monitoring systems are used to enhance security.
Grade 2025	**Exemplary**	
Suggestions to improve/resolve	Maintain existing action and processes.	

10.2.4	**Access through the site to Reception**

Best Practice	The approach from gate to entrance doors should have: • vehicular circulation that allows for public and private transport, including set-down and drop-off without congestion (for example, one way or roundabout traffic flow), and makes provision for emergency access and maintenance • designated safe pedestrian routes – some people have less awareness of the risks of traffic (or cannot see/hear vehicles). • easily accessible, level or ramped slip-resistant and well-drained surfaces along the route, without trip hazards and with an accessible stepped route nearby to give a choice. • suitable car parking, with accessible parking bays near the entrance • good quality external lighting for routes, clear legible signage, visual contrast and sensory wayfinding to help independence. Children may all enter the school through the main entrance, or there could be separate entrances, depending on the way the school is organised. • For younger pupils, entry might be via a gated or fenced area, with sheltered access and waiting areas. The school building's entrance should be easily identified from a distance by its design, location, lighting and signage (tactile signs are generally not recommended for external use), and have: • a level threshold with a safe, level drop-off zone that has, ideally, only shallow gradient ramps. • a canopy or covered access to the pavement for children transferring to or from buses or taxis. • sheltered, accessible waiting spaces - for parents with other children, if appropriate, and for children with SEN and disabilities to wait for

	assistance - with a visible, easily operated entry phone or intercom to reception. • easily operated doors, such as automatically operated sliding doors, with appropriate fail-safe mechanisms, wide enough and in a safe and secure position. • sufficient circulation space for people (including those in wheelchairs) to gather inside the building at the start and finish of the school day, avoiding congestion – safety is paramount, since this can be a particularly stressful time for some children. • a good visual link between inside and outside, so that reception staff can oversee and supervise easily (CCTV cameras should be discreet and not detract from the welcome or reduce accessibility).

Audit Findings	 	**Main Site (Tadpole Garden Village)**: • The site is custom-built, featuring level access pathways leading to reception. This ensures accessibility for individuals with mobility challenges. **UTC Swindon**: • As part of a larger educational facility, the reception area is accessible via clear signage and level walkways. It is to the left as you enter the site. **Bagbury Park**: • This site includes an accessible pathway and signage to guide visitors to reception. Each site has 1 pedestrian entrance. Signage has been provided indicating the different entrances. There are no obstructions from the main pedestrian entrances to the school entrances and the routes are smooth and free from loose stones. The routes are free from hazards and easily accessible and are also well lit. Although the auditor surveyed the buildings in the daytime, the routes are free from shadows and would not cause a problem for the partially sighted. External street lighting is provided throughout and is available on approach to the site. Adequate lighting is essential for all visitors Are there separate pedestrian and vehicle entrances to the sites? Yes

	     	Are pedestrian routes marked on the ground, signposted, and separated from vehicle routes by barrier so far as is reasonably practical? Yes Are pavements in sound condition? Yes Is tactile paving used? Yes Are approaches to Pedestrian entrances clear? Yes Are grit bins provided for easy gritting of pedestrian routes in case of ice and snow? Yes Are main entrance doors automatic or manual entry? Auto and manual All 3 entrances offer wheelchair access. The cost of providing powered doors to all the main entrance doors to the sites would be significant and can only be justified in the light of students and staff with a long-term disability requiring access.
Grade 2025	**Compliant**	
Suggestions to improve/resolve	Maintain existing action and processes.	

10.2.5	**Reception Facilities**
Best Practice	The reception space should be attractive, friendly and welcoming, with: • a secure, draught-free, convenient and welcoming lobby, with outer and inner doors and security controls, giving reception staff better access control. • an easily identifiable reception counter, ideally facing onto the secure lobby, with a sliding window or glazed screen at an accessible height, a lower section and knee recess for wheelchair users, and a hearing loop. • waiting and seating areas with sufficient space for wheelchair users or people with buggies. • visual and/or tactile signage, sited where users can take time to read it. An individual with a disability should be able to move about in the reception area without interference by furniture, planters or similar movable objects. Remember to consider persons with mobility and visual disability issues. The entrance/reception can offer a transition lighting zone where people with visual impairments can adjust between a bright exterior and a subdued interior - the receptionist's face should be clearly visible, avoiding down-lighting that casts shadows on the face of the receptionist or visitor. The following are also recommended:

	• well organised safe display of children's work to promote a sense of achievement and belonging (without impeding circulation, causing hazards or obstructing lighting). • safe storage of personal belongings and mobility equipment, with battery charging close by, so that there can be easy transition between equipment from home and school. • accessible toilet(s)/changing room signposted nearby. • a parents' room (often) located nearby

Audit Findings	 	A wheelchair user can enter principal main entrances unaided. Reception staff are aware of the needs of disabled visitors and communication is inclusive and supportive. Tadpole site has a purpose built reception area with a shelf installed to aid wheelchair users. Bagbury reception area is inside the office as you enter, and UTC has a reception desk by the entrance. UTC reception area is not wheelchair friendly and would benefit from a refit to make it more accessible. Signing in at each site is electronic. The current sign-in iPad at the UTC site is not fully accessible, which may hinder individuals with disabilities from independently using the system. To rectify this, the following adjustments are recommended: 1. **Height Adjustment**: Ensure the iPad is mounted at an accessible height, enabling individuals using wheelchairs or those with limited mobility to reach and interact with the device easily. 2. **Alternative Signing-In Methods**: Provide additional options for signing in, such as a paper-based system or a QR code linked to a mobile-friendly platform, to accommodate various needs. 3. **Staff Support**: Ensure staff are available to assist visitors or users who encounter challenges with the system. Implementing these measures will ensure inclusivity, improve user experience, and align with accessibility requirements. • Intercoms / video phones at appropriate height? Yes • Are manual doors heavy to operate? No • Wheelchair accessible counters? No • Space for a wheelchair to wait? Yes

		• Reception Chairs with arms? No • Alternative Signage in large fonts available? Yes • Permanent hard-wired or Portable Induction Hearing Loop available? Yes, at Tadpole site only. An induction loop with appropriate signage should be provided to assist hearing-aid users to communicate with the receptionist. There is no induction loop fitted to assist visitors who have impaired hearing in the reception area. Hearing (induction) loops help people with hearing loss to hear sounds more clearly by reducing the effect of background noise. When a staff member speaks into that microphone, sound is transmitted as a magnetic field which can be picked up by hearing aids when set to the 'T' setting or hearing loop program. This applies to different types of hearing aids, including digital. A portable hearing loop provides limited coverage and is designed for one-to-one conversation for people with hearing aids. Accessible toilets available nearby? Yes
Grade 2025	**Improvement Recommended**	
Suggestions to improve/resolve	Install portable hearing loops at UTC and Bagbury Park sites and clearly display the signs. Provide either signage or instructions from the reception areas to the visitor's accessible toilets. For example: Provide a seat with high back and arms at Tadpole and Bagbury sites. For example:	

	 Provide signage next to the intercoms at the main entrances at each site. For example: Attention is needed to the reception area at UTC to make it more accessible to wheelchair users.

10.2.6	**External areas, Movement between buildings**
Best Practice	(See Part M Access to buildings other than dwellings) Ramps should have the following dimensions: 1.5m wide with a minimum unobstructed width of 1.5m. Have a maximum individual flight of 10m and maximum gradients of 1:20 if longer than 5m, 1:15 if longer than 2m or 1:12 if shorter than 2m. Have 100mm high raised kerbs to any open side of ramp or landings Have a continuous suitable handrail on each side which is easy to grip: slip resistant, non-reflective and not cold to touch. Handrails to project 300mm beyond top and bottom landings with closed ends. Handrails to be between 900mm and 1000mm above surface or steps pitch line / 900mm and 1100mm above surface of landings. Handrail profile to be diameter between 40mm and 45mm (where circular) or Oval 15mm min radius (preferred solution) min 50mm width (refer diameter 7 A.D.M). Max 100mm projection into surface width of steps, landings or ramps. Clearance of between 60mm and 75mm between handrail and any wall surface. Min 50mm clearance between the cranked support and the underside of the handrail. Inner face to be N.M.T 50mm beyond the surface width of the ramp or step access. All steps in frequent use should be painted with contrasting nosings OR have tactile paving at the top and bottom of the flight of steps. This will alert a sight impaired person to a change in level. Nosings should be 2-inch strips which are painted or attached to the front and top of each step. Usually, yellow is used as it is a good contrasting colour. If nosings are not painted, then tactile paving should be used. Nosings, (stair edgings) are used to define the edges of steps in line with guidelines in Approved Document M (ADM) of The Building Regulations 2010 and BS8300:2009+A1:2010. Nosings can help to reduce accidents on stairs and steps as well as helping to provide an 'inclusive' environment giving access to all school users.

	Pedestrian walkways are designated areas in car parks and school grounds, intended for those on foot. They lead to specific areas, such as entrances. The intent behind pedestrian walkways is safety, to keep people walking apart from those in vehicles and to reduce the incidence and possibility of accidents in the car park. The way in which information is relayed is important. Not everyone is able to read a variety of text styles, sizes and formats. Clear and concise signage is particularly important for people who find communication more difficult (such as people with hearing loss or speech impairments). Signs should be provided at each decision point where a choice of routes is available, for example more than one pathway or corridor, or a series of doors. External spaces can be a particular issue, as there is often limited visual contrast around green space and the route someone may take is not as regulated as indoors. Making routes and directions clear is very important. Some disabled people need to conserve their energy and not waste it walking around areas trying to find their destination. Others will experience fatigue, breathlessness or pain and discomfort.	
Audit Findings	 These steps would benefit from handrails each side. 	Churchward School's external areas and movement between buildings are designed to support accessibility and inclusivity. Pathways are wide, level, and well-maintained to accommodate wheelchairs and other mobility aids. Clear signage and visual cues are used to guide students and visitors around the site. The school has sensory-friendly outdoor areas, gardens or quiet zones, to provide calming environments for students. Entrances are equipped with ramps or level access, automatic doors, and clear signage to support ease of movement. External areas are secured with fencing and monitored to ensure the safety of students. Paths and routes are safe and clearly marked, with surfaces and kerbs free from trip or safety hazards. They are also separate from all vehicle movements.

Grade 2025	Improvement Recommended
Suggestions to improve/resolve	Install handrails to the outside steps at the Churchward site. All steps with 3 or more risings should have handrails fitted on both sides. Mark the edges of the steps with nosings. Nosings should be 2-inch strips which are painted or attached to the front and top of each step. Usually, yellow is used as it is a good contrasting colour. Re paint at the first sign of wear.

10.2.7	Emergency Evacuation & Lockdown procedures
Best Practice	Schools must comply with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Services) Order 2005 to ensure that they have adequate fire precautions in place to allow the safe escape of all occupants in case of fire. Staff and students with disabilities should be able to evacuate a building promptly in the case of an emergency. Ensuring safe evacuation in an emergency is a complex issue, requiring consideration of a broad range of factors that it is not possible to cover in detail in this audit. Some areas for consideration include: • the use of both visual and audible alarm systems, escape doors with opening devices and opening forces designed to meet the needs of both students and staff. • balancing personal dignity and independence with safety and speed of evacuation. • the risk of using lifts or evacuation chairs to evacuate people with mobility difficulties down or up to ground level. • ensuring that evacuation chairs are suitable for the intended users, ensuring that emergency contact facilities inside lifts (phones or intercom systems) are monitored at all times that the school may be used. • the needs of students who require personal care – for example, someone could be toileting with a career when the alarm is raised or other respiratory conditions in particular the possible impact of smoke on everybody, particularly students with asthma. • the use of zones and compartmentation to support phased evacuation of the building. • the use of vibrating alarms or other assistive technologies to raise the alarm for staff or students who are deaf or hard of hearing. • the location of assembly points to be reachable by all students. • Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) for staff and students who may need assistance during evacuation. • making students aware of evacuation procedures, which should be practiced regularly throughout the school year.

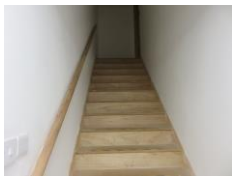
Audit Findings		Do pupils with SEND needs have Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans in place? Yes, when required. Fire drills/emergency evacuations are rehearsed termly, and certain members of staff are trained in helping mobility impaired people evacuate. The school should always remember that certain
	          	members of staff should always be trained in emergency evacuation procedures for the mobility impaired, regardless of whether or not there are pupils on the school roll with a mobility impairment. There may be visitors present during the time of an emergency. All necessary fire risk assessments have been carried out with all fire extinguishers checked and serviced annually.
Grade 2025	**Compliant**	
Suggestions to improve/resolve	Maintain existing action and processes.	

10.2.8	**Internal movement – corridors and evacuation routes**

Best Practice	According to ADM the following apply: • Corridor unobstructed widths of 1200mm with 1800mm by 1800mm passing places or 1800 width without passing places. Passing places to be at reasonable intervals. • Projections in to the corridor to have contrasting guardrails. • Floors to be level – max gradient 1 in 60. Any gradients steeper than 1 in 20 to be designed as ramps. • Ramps less steep than 1 in 20 to have max rise 500mm with 1500mm long rest landings. • No door to open across the corridor (doors should be recessed back from corridor) - except a unisex toilet door where the corridor is 1800mm wide.	
	• Some minor utility cupboards can outward open i.e., small store cupboards. • Slip resistance floor surfaces. Avoid patterns to floor coverings. • Glazed screens alongside the corridor to have manifestation at two levels. • Projections to be protected with contrasting guardrails.	
Audit Findings	 	All corridors and circulation routes have a clear unobstructed width of 1.2M. All corridors and circulation routes have surfaces that are not slippery, and are free from trip hazards. • Is there a system in place to systematically check that corridors and escape routes are free from obstructions? Yes • Are wheelchair users able to reach and operate emergency fire exit devices when unaccompanied? Yes • Is there a system in place to systematically check that floor surfaces are free from slip and trip hazards? Yes
Grade 2025	**Compliant**	
Suggestions to improve/resolve	Maintain existing action and processes.	

10.2.9	**Internal movement – stairs and lifts**

Best Practice	The design for internal stairs, steps and ramps is the same as the external stair dimensions. see previous notes which also apply to handrails. Steps 12 risers maximum to a landing, but exceptionally no more than 16 in small premises where plan area is restricted. Rise of between 150mm and 170mm and going at least 250mm. (150mm max rise / min 280mm going for schools). No need for tactile warnings as external stairs. Provide guarding under landings less than 2100mm to prevent visually impaired walking into them. Ramps - Where the change in level is more than 300mm – 2 or more clearly signposted steps must be provided in addition to ramp. Where the change in level is less than 300mm – a ramp is to be provided instead of a single step. All landings to be level – subject to a max 1 in 60 gradient along their length. Provide guarding under landings less than 2100mm to prevent visually impaired walking into them. A.D.M recommends: **Lifting Devices** Passenger lifts preferred option for all buildings, however for existing buildings in exceptional circumstances a platform lift may be considered and in exceptional circumstances, in an existing building giving access to a small area with a unique function, a wheelchair platform stair lift could be considered. All new developments to have a passenger lift provided serving all storeys. An

	unobstructed manoeuvring space of 1500mm x 1500mm or 900mm straight access route to the lift. Landing call buttons located between 900mm and 1100mm – 500mm from any return wall, with raised symbols for tactile reading. Controls to have contrasting finish from background. Avoid dark colours to car floor and ensure floor frictional qualities similar or higher than the landing floor. A handrail on one wall 900mm above the floor. An emergency communication system. **Passenger Lifts** Lift car to be designed in accordance with A.D.M. - 1100mm wide x 1400mm deep and the provision of a mirror to allow wheelchair user to see behind. Min 800mm clear width of opening doors – doors to have timing and re-opening activators to allow for people to enter or leave car. Doors to contrast surrounding surfaces. Car controls between 900mm and 1200mm. Audible and visual indication of lift arrival and location in and out the car. Avoid use of visually and acoustically reflective wall surfaces **Lifting Platforms** Vertical travel distance of 2.0m maximum with no enclosure and no floor penetration. More than 2.0m with a lift enclosure. Over 3m travel a product certificate issued by a Notified Body is required. Continuous pressure controls located between 800mm and 1100mm and at least 400mm from any return walls. Landing call buttons located between 900mm and 1100mm – 500mm from any return wall, with raised symbols for tactile reading. Controls to have contrasting finish from background. Three platform sizes depending on enclosures and accompanied or not; 800mm wide x 1250mm deep minimum – non-enclosed platform and no provision made for wheelchair companion. 900mm wide x 1400mm deep minimum – enclosed platform and no provision made for wheelchair companion. 1100mm wide x 1400mm deep minimum – 2 doors at 90 degrees relative to each other / enclosed platform and provision made for wheelchair companion.	
Audit Findings	 A further handrail is recommended on both sets of stairs.	Churchward School's three sites prioritize accessibility and ease of internal movement for students, staff, and visitors. 1. **Main Site (Tadpole Garden Village)**: The custom-built site is all on one level. 2. **Links Campus (UTC Swindon)**: As part of a larger educational facility, this site features a platform lift and staircases designed to accommodate diverse needs, including wide steps and handrails. • is the lift suitable for wheelchair users available? Yes

	   	• Have staff been trained in emergency release procedures if lifts break down, e.g., between floors? No • Are emergency evacuation chairs and trained staff to use them available if lifts must not be used (e.g., when the fire alarm activates)? Yes •**Bagbury Park Site**: This site has no lift and only the ground floor is accessible for all. There are 2 sets of internal steps. Both sets only have 1 handrail fitted. • Do all stairs and steps have high contrast nosings, visible on both horizontal and vertical planes? No
Grade 2025	**Improvement Recommended**	
Suggestions to improve/resolve	Install B.S. compliant handrails to the missing sides of the stairwells at Bagbury. They need to be 50mm diameter and should be located 1000mm above the risers. They need to extend 300mm at the top and bottom of the steps. Highlight these steps with nosings. Arrange training in emergency release procedures if lifts break down, e.g., between floors for staff at UTC site.	

10.2.10	**Accessible toilets**

Best Practice	An accessible toilet is designed to meet the majority of needs of independent wheelchair users and people with mobility impairments, as well as the additional requirements of people with bowel and bladder conditions (such as colostomy bag users). It also helps people with other physical conditions such as impaired dexterity and grip, balance and other conditions where physical support from grab rails and the presence of an emergency alarm is helpful. Each toilet for disabled pupils needs to contain one toilet and one washbasin (and possibly a shower or other wash down fitting) and have a door opening directly onto a circulation space that is not a staircase and which can be secured from the inside. Where possible, the number and location of accessible toilets will be sufficient to ensure a reasonable travel distance for users that does not involve changing floor levels A.D.M recommend: Wheelchair accessible unisex toilet provision One located near to entrance and/or waiting area in a building. Not located in a way that compromises privacy of users. Located in similar position of each floor of a multi-storey building with choice of transfer layouts on alternate floors. Choice of transfer layouts when more than one unisex toilet is available. Where W.C is the only one in a building the width must be increased to 2000mm to accommodate an additional standing

	W.C located on accessible routes that are direct and obstruction free. 40m maximum travel distance to an accessible toilet. Travel between floors restricted to one floor if a lifting platform is only provided. Doors to outward open – with horizontal closing bar to rear. Heat emitters not to restrict wheelchair manoeuvring space or space beside W.C Toilets in separate sex washrooms Ambulant disabled people should be able to use a W.C compartment within any separate sex toilet washroom. 450mm diameter manoeuvring space is provided in cubicle between door swing and edge of pan. Minimum dimensions of compartments for ambulant disabled people. Compartment doors for ambulant disabled people preferably open outward. One low level washbasin and urinal with vertical grab bars. **The following recommendations should form part of an overall good housekeeping policy:** Accessible toilets should never be used for miscellaneous storage. Lighting that is triggered by movement can be dangerous in an accessible toilet, as a disabled user may not have sufficient movement ability to trigger the lights if they go out. Cleaning and housekeeping staff should have induction training to ensure they understand the need to keep transfer zones, cistern tops and shelves in accessible WC's clear at all times and never to tie up alarm pull cords. Boxing in of pipes etc., and the addition of vanity units around basins can compromise important reach and spatial needs. Maintenance, refurbishment and decoration of toilet facilities should be scheduled in advance, at times to minimise inconvenience. If an accessible toilet is out of order, it is extremely important to notify building users as soon as practicable. They will need to know: how long the facility is likely to be unavailable Disabled people often plan their journeys meticulously to ensure that their access needs can be met. Toilets are critical to travel both during the journey and at the destination and therefore every effort should be made to communicate up to date information. In principle, suitable sanitary accommodation should be available to everybody, including sanitary accommodation designed for wheelchair users, ambulant disabled people, people of either sex with babies and small children or people encumbered by luggage. A number of issues need to be considered in connection with all forms of sanitary accommodation. These relate to the needs of people with visual or hearing impairments, people with learning difficulties and people whose lack of tactile sensitivity can cause them to be injured by touching hot surfaces. Taps and WC cubicle doors should be operable by people with limited strength or manual dexterity and doors to cubicles should be capable of being opened if a person has collapsed against them while

	inside the cubicle. Preferably, all doors to WC cubicles and wheelchair-accessible unisex toilets open out or, if they open in, the door

	swing should not encroach into the wheelchair turning space or minimum activity space. Where possible, light switches with large push pads should be used in preference to pull cords.	
Audit Findings	 	Accessible toilets are available at each of their three sites. These facilities are designed to accommodate individuals with mobility challenges and include features such as grab rails, emergency pull cords, and sufficient space for wheelchair users. At The Tadpole site, there are 5 accessible toilets- reception, staff area, 2 in the main corridors and 1 in the pastoral area. At Bagbury – 2, reception and main corridor. At UTC – 1 toilet. • Are the fittings compliant with code of practice? Yes • Sink, hand drying facility, mirror, coat hooks, shelf for belongings, – provided and at an accessible height? No • Are the floor surfaces slip-resistant? Yes • Are emergency aid cords fitted, are the tangled, tied back, or in ready to use condition? Yes • Are emergency aid beacons provided outside the toilet with a repeater beacon in a staffed area? Yes • Have staff been trained and know how to respond to an activation of the emergency beacon? Yes • Are the toilets fitted with flashing fire alarms for deaf users? No, not all.
Grade 2025	**Improvement Recommended**	
Suggestions to improve/resolve	All accessible toilets to have coat hooks, shelf for belongings and a mirror at an accessible height. All accessible toilets to be fitted with flashing fire alarms for deaf users. All accessible toilets to have emergency alarms with cords which are loose and can be reached from the ground.	

10.2.11	**Changing Rooms**

Best Practice	It is preferable for showers to be in areas separated from toilets and they need to provide adequate privacy and be accessible. Consideration may also be given to providing changing rooms, with or without showers, at primary schools for pupils who need to wear sports kit for physical education, but this is not required under the regulations.	
Audit Findings	 	Just Tadpole site has changing rooms and these are located in the pastoral area of the school. They are fully accessible.
Grade 2025	**Compliant**	
Suggestions to improve/resolve	Maintain existing action and processes.	

10.2.12	**Medical Facilities**

Best Practice	The requirements for medical and therapy rooms enable pupils that are ill or injured to be looked after appropriately, and for therapy to be offered to those with special educational needs or disabilities who need it. In mainstream schools this may involve assistance from visiting specialists, such as a physiotherapist or speech therapist. SS Regulation 23B — (1) The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that suitable accommodation is provided in order to cater for the medical and therapy needs of pupils, including— (a) accommodation for the medical examination and treatment of pupils; (b) accommodation for the short term care of sick and injured pupils, which includes a washing facility and is near to a toilet facility; and (c) where a school caters for pupils with complex needs, additional medical accommodation which caters for those needs. 2) The accommodation provided under sub-paragraphs (1)(a) and (b) may be used for other purposes (apart from teaching) provided it is always readily available to be used for the purposes set out in sub-paragraphs (1)(a) and (b). (3) For the purposes of sub-paragraph (1)(c), a pupil has "complex needs" if the pupil has profound and multiple learning difficulties in addition to other significant difficulties, such as a physical disability or sensory impairment, which require provision which is additional to or different from that generally required by children of the same age in schools other than special schools or by children with special requirements. Some therapy can take place in a teaching space or in a small quiet room, such as an office. The dedicated accommodation can be used for other purposes, except teaching, so long as it is readily available for medical use when needed.

Audit Findings	 	Churchward School is equipped with medical facilities at each of its three sites to support the health and well-being of its students. 1. **Dedicated Medical Rooms**: Tadpole site has a designated medical room equipped with basic first aid supplies, a bed or couch for rest, and privacy screens. Bagbury has a medical area at reception and UTC , a medical area next to the staff room. 2. **Trained Staff**: Staff members are trained in first aid and emergency response to handle minor injuries or medical situations. 3. **Medication Management**: Secure storage for medications and clear procedures for administering them to students as needed. 4. **Accessibility**: Medical facilities are designed to be accessible to all students, including those with mobility challenges. 5. **Emergency Protocols**: Clear protocols for managing medical emergencies, including contacting parents or carers and emergency services if required.
Grade 2025	**Compliant**	
Suggestions to improve/resolve	Maintain existing action and processes.	

10.2.13	**Internal Signage**

Best Practice	In order that signs can firstly be located and then read it is important that signboards are well contrasted to their background. Arrows can be useful to signs but they can also be very confusing if not applied correctly. In general, signs should be designed so that arrows directing users to the left, up or down are set to the left-hand side of the lettering. Arrows directing to the right should be to the right-hand side of the lettering. As this is the Standard method, any sign adopting a different approach may prove confusing for the visually impaired person or someone with learning difficulties. Using colour as an additional aid to way-finding works well in schools, as it works almost subconsciously and can be easily introduced as part of the décor or on the signs themselves. You can then co-ordinate this with a particular activity or part of the site. For example, if you had two car halls, you would be

	able to ask visitors to “go to the lower hall (follow the orange signs)” or “follow the brown signs for the sports facilities”. Choose colours that are different to the background they’ll be seen against (for example avoid green signs in areas that are predominantly trees, bushes and grass). Tactile information such as Braille and/ or embossed text will be helpful to some and is critical on certain signs, such as toilet doors. It is possible to add Braille information using a transparent self-adhesive tape below an existing sign, on a temporary notice or even on files, lockers and equipment. There is a Dymo label maker for this, costing circa £50 but you may find a local sensory services department will offer to do this at the cost of just the tape used. The most widely used tactile information is a 19 embossed symbol or text. The RNIB also sell a product called Tactimark pen which is a plastic writing tube with gel with which you can create freehand text or lines – the substance dries to give an embossed finish. It is available in black, white and orange at about £6 a tube. Embossed lettering is only helpful when in easy reach (such as on a door 1500mm high or below) and it needs to be of sufficient size to be legible by touch - minimum 15mm height of initial capital letter and 1mm raised depth from the background. By matt laminating a simple computer print-out of appropriate text and/or symbols, and applying Tactimark pen or some Braille self-adhesive labelling it is possible to create e your own notices and signs in an accessible way. (Always use matt laminating sheets. They are only marginally more expensive and do not have the high reflectance which makes most laminated notices difficult to read under direct light or sunlight.) A painted or taped line in a distinct colour is a simple solution to some situations that are difficult to cover in signage. This can be very helpful for external environments, where the destination does not have line of sight from the departure point. Some people with visual impairments lose their ability to see colours clearly. It is therefore helpful to combine a colour with a shape, where possible – for example an orange triangle or a blue circle etc.

Audit Findings	 	Churchward School's signage across its three sites is designed to ensure accessibility and clarity for all students, staff, and visitors. 1. **Clear and Visible Signage**: Signs are placed at key locations, such as entrances, pathways, and reception areas, to guide individuals effectively. Large, easy-to-read fonts and contrasting colours are used to enhance visibility. 2. **Accessible Formats**: Some of their signs include tactile elements, such as Braille, to support individuals with visual impairments. Pictograms or symbols are often used alongside text to aid understanding.

	           	3. **Safety and Emergency Information**: Signs indicating emergency exits, fire assembly points, and safety procedures are prominently displayed. • Are classrooms uniformly signed? Yes • Is any internal signage potentially confusing? No • Clarity, visual contrast, Capitals and lower case? Yes • Use of non-verbal signage, Braille? Yes, some • Use of floor plan maps? Yes • Location and sufficiency of signage is good. Some of the signs at the UTC site are in uppercase which is not recommended for use in schools.
Grade 2025	**Improvement Recommended**	
Suggestions to improve/resolve	Review internal signage and ensure it is all in both uppercase and lowercase lettering. Consider adding options in Braille. For example: 	

10.2.14	**Internal Décor & Finishes**

Best Practice	Your school interior design and environment affects results by up to 25%, both positively and negatively. Student performance and behaviour is influenced by the surroundings in which they learn, interact and socialise.

	For people with good vision, differences in colour and colour intensity provide adequate visual contrast. However, this is not the case for everybody with vision loss. The light reflectance value (LRV) of a colour is used by professional designers to identify those colours which adequately contrast against other colours. The combination of colour, tonal and visual contrasts between surfaces and objects placed on them such as switches and litter bins are important. Ceilings should be finished in light colours. Movement and travel for people who have reduced vision is challenging and extremely tiring. The ability to judge distance, depth and speed is often compromised and therefore the need to negotiate busy, cluttered and unpredictable environments can increase stress, diminish concentration, learning and social opportunities while also increasing accident risk. All the floor surfaces should be suitable and easy for a wheelchair to manoeuvre. The means of escape should be clearly visible from both a standing and seated position. Carpets are preferred in classrooms as they will absorb sound and will give a better learning experience for any hearing-impaired pupils. Throughout the corridors, both the natural and artificial light should avoid reflection, glare, shadows and silhouette. Tonal contrast between different features is important for people with vision loss in a number of ways: floors that contrast with walls will indicate the size of a room; handrails that contrast with the wall indicate their location; and doors that contrast with their surrounding indicate their position and help wayfinding. Improving the visual contrast in a school should be considered when carrying out maintenance or refurbishment work – for instance when painting walls and doors, or renewing floor finishes. Who says that colour doesn't affect the students learning ability? The fact is, it evokes body function and somehow can influence our emotions. Colour also can give a biased perspective on our eyes to think the room is bigger or smaller than the actual size. So, the ornaments in the classroom should match the colour. Pay attention the most to the wall, furniture, and fabric curtains (if any). Blue can bring peace and spiritual meaning. White or beige maybe is the most common out. Turns out, it symbolizes innocence, completion, light, and pure. A positive feeling can be gotten from this hue. Green demonstrates nature, balance, and harmony. Imagine if this calm colour fulfils the hallway. It completely maintains the mood of students to always be positive. Yellow is associated with renewal, sunshine, and hope.

Audit Findings	None of the décor is confusing or disorienting for disabled pupils with visual impairment, autism or epilepsy. The school has ensured tonal contrast between different features to help people with vision loss in a number of ways: floors contrast with walls which helps indicate the size of a room; handrails contrast with the walls indicating
	their location; and doors contrast with their surrounding indicating their position and helping with wayfinding. Sights, sounds, sunlight, changes in barometric pressure, smells, touch, and colours can all have a profound effect on children with autism. The school has taken these factors into account and have used blinds at classroom windows and decorated in calm and subtle colours. They have avoided decorating with glass or mirrors as these are known to contribute to epileptic fits to children who suffer from this condition. There are no floor or table lamps and all the lighting is overhead. Any flickering lights at a certain speed and brightness (e.g., from televisions, computer screens) can trigger a seizure in people with photosensitive **epilepsy**. The school are aware of this and have a register of their epileptic children and the information is passed onto staff.
Grade 2025	**Compliant**
Suggestions to improve/resolve	Maintain existing action and processes.

10.2.15	**Lighting**

Best Practice	Lighting has a significant impact on the ability of students to concentrate and learn in comfort. Controllable lighting systems, which can increase or decrease light levels in particular parts of the classroom, are very helpful for students with disabilities. Proper lighting in schools can have numerous positive impacts on student productivity. It can create a more effective learning environment, which can lead to improved test scores, enhanced learning and increased overall student productivity. It is important that lighting levels are reasonably consistent, so students do not experience wide variations in light levels when moving their vision from their own desk to the teacher. Lighting should take into account the different needs of all students. Students with vision loss need good lighting levels to enhance their sight, and may require additional lighting for certain tasks. Deaf and hard-of-hearing students need clear visibility for lip-reading. Some students may be particularly sensitive to glare. Therefore, it is important to be able to control the sunlight entering a space by installing suitable blinds. Blinds and curtains in classrooms should be installed to reduce glare. (Important for lip-reading) For lighting to be suitable, attention needs to be paid to: achieving adequate light levels, including the lighting of teachers' and pupils' faces for good visual communication; giving priority to daylight in all teaching spaces, circulation, staff offices and social areas; providing adequate views to the outside or into the distance to ensure visual comfort and help avoid eye strain; providing lighting controls that are easy to use; providing means to control daylight and sunlight, to avoid glare, excessive
	internal illuminance and summertime overheating; providing external lighting to ensure safe pedestrian movement after dark; floodlighting outdoor sports areas; providing emergency lighting in areas accessible after dark. Further guidance on lighting in schools can be found in Lighting Guide 5, "Lighting for Education" (LG5), and British Standard BS EN 12464-
Audit Findings	All areas to which disabled and SEN pupils have access are well lit. There is a provision of blinds and curtains to control glare and reflections. Much of the lighting has been replaced by LED lighting with automatic sensors. Unlike fluorescent lighting, LEDs are mercury-free and are 100% recyclable—making them the most environmentally safe lighting option. Using less energy than any lighting technology on the market, LEDs cut energy and maintenance costs drastically. When overviewing a school's expenses, energy is one that can be decreased without negatively impacting student learning. By replacing a T12 fluorescent tube with a LED T8, a facility can reduce its energy consumption by 35 percent. Then adding options such as reflectors, lenses, sensors and timers can increase the savings even more.

Grade 2025	**Compliant**
Suggestions to improve/resolve	Maintain existing action and processes

10.2.16	**Dining and Catering**
Best Practice	Where dining, eating or food preparation facilities are provided; care should be taken to ensure that all students and staff members can safely and independently use the facility. Dining environments should not be viewed as purely functional but should be structured to facilitate social interaction and inclusion with peers. Tables should be accessible to wheelchair users Aisles should be wide enough to allow students carrying trays to safely pass Self-service shelves and dispensers for cutlery and condiments should be within reach of wheelchair users and people of small stature. Tray slides allow trays to be rested while moving along a counter. These should be continuous to reduce the chances of dropping trays, and have knee space underneath to accommodate wheelchair users The biggest issue in many dining areas in schools is the acoustics – lots of hard finishes can create considerable echo, which is very difficult for people with sensory impairments. Introducing some soft finishes, such as chairs or screens with fabric, curtains etc., will help a little. Refreshment areas have similar needs to reception waiting areas in terms of a mix of seating styles. If all chairs are without arm supports, consider changing

	some for sturdy chairs with arm supports. If your tables and chairs are fixed, these will be quite difficult for many disabled pupils to access and it would be beneficial to supplement or exchange one or two fixed units with some freestanding tables and chairs. This offers flexibility for all needs. Ensure aisles between tables are kept clear – at least one aisle should be wide enough for a wheelchair user to turn (1500mm width needed), and the undertable clearance height should be at least 700mm for comfortable wheelchair access. Whilst ideally serving counter heights should not be too high (850mm recommended), this can be overcome by someone else bringing items to the table. This is a recommendation anyway for items where it would be difficult or potentially dangerous for a physically disabled person to carry (for example hot drinks). The variety of food available should ideally include some finger food items. Have straws readily available for use with hot and cold drinks. Plain crockery is easier for someone with a visual impairment but must contrast from the tables on which they will be placed. A mix of cups with and without handles is also useful. Menus should be displayed in a large print, easy read format. A few schools might use a venue with a vending machine. Assistance can be provided to operate the machine if needed, especially if the coin slot is too high or the dispenser too low. Braille tape could be added to the selection panel if a need is identified and there are also self-adhesive labels called “bump-ones” available in an assortment of colours, shapes and texture that can be added to particular products.	
Audit Findings	 	Churchward School provides dining and catering facilities tailored to meet the needs of its students across its three sites. **Main Site (Tadpole Garden Village):** The school offers freshly prepared, nutritious hot meals through on-site caterers. These meals are pre-ordered via an online booking system. Students with dietary requirements, allergies, or sensory food issues are accommodated, ensuring inclusivity. The school is nut-free, so nuts or nut-based products are not allowed in packed lunches. Students eat in the dining room. **Links Campus (UTC Swindon):** This site does not have an on-site catering service. Students are encouraged to bring their own packed lunches. Students eat in the hall.

		For students eligible for free school meals, the school provides lunch options. **Bagbury Park Site:** Students bringing packed lunches and free school meal provisions available. Students eat in the hall.
Grade 2025	**Compliant**	
Suggestions to improve/resolve	Maintain existing action and processes.	

10.2.17	**Social Spaces and Quiet Spaces**
Best Practice	Outdoor circulation needs to have a clear rationale and provide a variety of accessible routes to suit the whole spectrum of children, minimising gradients so that they can easily access all outdoor facilities. There should be shelter available along routes for more vulnerable children, with seats every 50m on long pedestrian routes, safe and easily navigable surfaces (wheelchair accessible), with safe changes in level or transitions between surfaces - both ramps and steps are needed where level access is absent. Good sightlines for overseeing children's safety, with no hidden spaces, noisy busy routes separate from quieter sheltered spaces, so more vulnerable children can make their own way at their own pace, level thresholds for access by wheelchair users and to avoid staff lifting mobility equipment, wide enough gates and wide paths with defined edges, well away from outward opening windows and any hazards clearly identified. 1200mm, preferably 1500mm and 1800mm for busy routes with passing places as required. Bays off circulation routes can be provided for children to sit and talk, rest, reorientate or calm down and let others pass – but they need to allow clear sightlines and passive supervision, since hidden spaces can encourage inappropriate behaviour. There should be outdoor access for curriculum and social activities and for means of escape but it should be controllable for safety and security, especially where there is a possibility that children might try to run out of school. It is important that all students can access and use the external spaces in a School, so that they can participate in social and recreational activities. Outdoor space in Schools normally comprises a mix of hard surfaced and grassed areas. While grass may be a difficult surface for wheelchair users, access to grassed pitches can be provided using pathways or matting products. As well as areas for activities such as games and sports, quieter social spaces with seating should also be provided for students to use. Where playgrounds are provided, equipment should be carefully selected to ensure accessibility for all students, including wheelchair users, students who use crutches and walking frames, and those with hearing loss or vision loss.

Audit Findings	 	Churchward School's three sites are thoughtfully designed to support both social interaction and quiet reflection, catering to the diverse needs of their students. Quiet rooms / calming rooms are available to pupils who need such spaces and there are appropriate places for lonely pupils to seek company and friendship. **Social Spaces** Includes open-plan breakout areas where students can interact and engage in group activities. Outdoor spaces, such as playgrounds or gardens, are available for socializing in a relaxed environment. **Quiet Spaces** Includes therapeutic rooms and sensory-friendly areas designed to provide a calming environment for students who need a break from stimulation. A sensory room employs sensory-controlled techniques to bring about positive effects in individuals who struggle with sensory-overload. The benefits of having sensory or quiet rooms in schools are abundant. Providing a safe and supportive space to escape the noise of a busy classroom is vital. Some children, such as those on the autism spectrum, can easily become overwhelmed by touch, movement, sights, or sounds. Spending time in a calming sensory room might help them build intrinsic self-regulation skills to support better focus, attention, and behaviour. • Are school gardens/woodland areas/amenity spaces/playing fields accessible by wheelchair? Yes
Grade 2025	**Compliant**	
Suggestions to improve/resolve	Maintain existing action and processes.	

10.2.18	**Doors**

Best Practice	According to AD M • Doors to have maximum opening force at leading edge of 20N. Door furniture to be easily operated by a closed fist, visually apparent i.e., contrasting with door surface and not cold to touch. Door clear width

	measured from handle to jamb. Varies according to angle of approach. Straight approach to door – 800mm clear width / right angle approach to door with access route min 1500mm - 800mm clear width / right angle approach to door with access route min 1200mm - 825mm clear width and doors and side panels to doors wider than 450mm to have vision panels provided – visibility zone between 500mm and 1500mm and if necessary interrupted between 800mm and 1150mm above floor level e.g., to accommodate an intermediate horizontal rail. Unobstructed 300mm min space on door pull side between door leading edge and wall (not to powered doors). • Door frames to contrast with surrounding wall surfaces. Manifestation at two levels, 850mm to 1000mm and 1400mm to 1600mm. Glass doors in glass façade to have 150mm high contrast strip at door edges, and door protection if capable of being left open. Manifestations should visually contrast inside and out and in all lighting conditions. Fire doors self-closing either fitted with hold open devices or free swing devices and close on activation of the fire alarm (to negate requirement for 20N opening force) According to BS 8300 - Colour and luminance contrast should be used to distinguish the boundaries of floors, walls, doors and ceilings, e.g., if the architrave is the same colour as the door but a different colour from the surrounding wall, it may outline the opening for some visually impaired users when the door is open. There should be adequate space alongside the leading edge of the doors for a wheelchair user to pass through. A space of 300 mm should be provided alongside the leading edge of the door to enable wheelchair users to reach the handle. The Department of the Environment Part M Technical Guidance Document notes the importance of a 'leading edge' at every door. This is "an unobstructed space of at least 300mm between the leading edge of a single leaf door (when it opens towards you) and a return wall, unless the door is opened by remote automatic control. This enables a person in a wheelchair to reach and grip the door handle, then open the door without releasing hold on the handle and without the footrest colliding with the return wall". Doors present some of the most common accessibility issues. They may be too "heavy" and require too much force to open. Heavy doors are especially difficult for people with disabilities and seniors with limited upper body strength and/or skills in using their hands. They may close too quickly for some people to pass through easily. People who move slowly or use mobility devices like wheelchairs or walkers may not be able to pass through fast enough. Luckily, these common problems can often be resolved by simply adjusting door closers. Door controls should be at a suitable height. All door furniture and fittings to be 1000mm above floor level. Switches to be the large touch plate type. All of the door handles should be the D-shape variety. All door furniture and fittings to contrast to their background.

Audit Findings	 No contrast between the colour of the door and the handle colour. Replace handles like this with the D style handles.	All doors at Tadpole site meet best practice standards. • Are there noisy door closures? No • Do all doors have the correct D style of handles? UTC site no. • Are doors accessed by disabled pupils wide enough for wheelchair access? Yes • Do doors include vision panels that extend low enough to enable short or young or wheelchair pupils to see through and be seen? Yes • Are door with closers openable with minimum force? Yes • Are door handles of a contrasting colour to the background? Bagbury site no. • Are corridor doors held back in an open position for ease of access? Yes • Do held-open doors have high visibility edge markings for ease of identification? Yes
Grade 2025	**Improvement Recommended**	
Suggestions to improve/resolve	Change non-compliant door handles to the D style of handle: Example: Handles which do not contrast in colour to the door should either be changed or painted to a different colour. Example: 	

10.2.19	**Teaching and Learning Spaces. Furniture and Teaching Equipment**

Best Practice	The classroom is the most common type of room in a school building. An appropriate classroom environment is important for successful teaching and learning and for ensuring that all students can participate equally in classroom activities. It is important that all students can circulate freely around the classroom, and can access storage areas, equipment, sinks, sockets, and so on. The provision of ample space and level access is important for those using assistive devices, such as wheelchairs, crutches or canes. Worktops and sinks should have knee space underneath to allow a wheelchair user to use them comfortably. Anti-glare film is recommended on windows in areas which

visually impaired children use frequently. This is due to photosensitivity further reducing vision, ability to judge speed and distance and also causing eye pain and headaches.

Students with disabilities will have certain unique requirements that impact how they use School facilities. For example:

- Students with mobility disabilities may have particular difficulties with steps, or heavy doors. They may need additional desk space if they use a wheelchair, or additional storage space for a walking frame or crutches.
- Students with visual difficulties will benefit from improved lighting and clear visual contrasts on doorframes and support columns.
- Some students with emotional, psychological or mental health difficulties will benefit from a calming environment created by appropriate use of light and colour schemes.
- Many students have particular requirements for access to laptop computers or other assistive technology. Availability of power points for recharging will greatly benefit these students

At secondary level, children progress to a wider ranging and specialised curriculum, and accommodation can be correspondingly diverse. Rather than spending most of their day in one classroom as they do in primary school, children move around the school to spaces with specialist facilities for different activities. 14–19year olds often also have vocational training and work experience. Mainstream schools can be especially large, so some children with SEN and disabilities need assistance when they move between different spaces and to take part in school life.

The range of spaces needed will depend on a school's curriculum, size and organisation but will typically provide the following: - general teaching spaces, larger spaces for a range of practical specialist and performance subjects, small rooms for individual and group work, resource spaces, including library and ICT facilities, large spaces for physical education and assemblies, dining and social spaces, outdoor spaces.

These will be supported by: staff facilities, storage for personal belongings, learning aids and resources, accessible toilet and changing rooms, kitchen facilities

3 sizes of general teaching space schools are recommended: Small classrooms (49–56m2 for up to 30 children) If many children have SEN and disabilities or need a high level of support, adjustments will need to be made to how a space of this size is used. For example, class numbers might need to be reduced to allow adequate circulation space for learning aids and teaching assistants. It is not generally recommended to have small general teaching spaces in new school buildings because of their lack of flexibility.

Standard classrooms (56–63 m2 for up to 30 children) Standard teaching spaces are usually large enough for children with SEN and disabilities to access all relevant curricular activities, allowing for one child using mobility aids and a wheelchair, with access to some or all of the space, depending on the layout.

	Large classrooms (63–70 m2 for up to 30 children) Large teaching spaces are especially suitable for children with SEN and disabilities, since they provide

	enough room to accommodate one or more children (or staff) using mobility aids and/or wheelchairs, as well as the necessary support staff. Furniture layouts in the classrooms should be carefully planned to ensure space at the entrance and access to key facilities such as the whiteboard, storage areas, and practical zones. An 1800mm turning space at these areas should be maintained and a preferred circulation width of 1200mm for movement between them. A minimum of 900mm circulation width should be available on all routes. This space is based on the requirements of wheelchair users, but will also benefit a range of other users. Chairs with arms and height adjustable workbenches should be available As of September 2012, the Equality Act 2010 ("the Act") imposed a new duty on schools to make reasonable adjustments to provide auxiliary aids and services to disabled pupils. Examples of auxiliary aids might include hearing loops, adapted PE equipment, adapted keyboards and special software. Cost will inevitably play a major part in determining what is reasonable and it is more likely to be reasonable for a school with substantial financial resources to make an adjustment entailing significant cost. Even so, many reasonable adjustments are inexpensive, involving a change in practice rather than the provision of expensive pieces of equipment or additional staff.

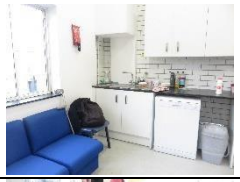
Audit Findings	 	Churchward School's teaching and learning spaces across its three sites are thoughtfully designed to support the needs of students with autism spectrum conditions and social communication difficulties. **Teaching and Learning Spaces** 1. **Main Site (Tadpole Garden Village)**: The site features a blend of general classrooms and therapeutic rooms, providing spaces for academic learning and emotional support. Classrooms are equipped with sensory-friendly elements to create a calming environment for students. 2. **Links Campus (UTC Swindon)**: This site includes dedicated teaching spaces and collaboration areas, allowing students to engage in group activities and individual learning. Students also have access to the facilities available at UTC Swindon, enhancing their learning experience. 3. **Bagbury Park Site**: Similar teaching spaces as UTC tailored to the needs of students.

	       	Furniture and Teaching Equipment • **Furniture**: Ergonomic and adaptable furniture is used to accommodate students' physical needs and promote comfort during learning. Soft seating and sensory-friendly furniture is included to support students with sensory sensitivities. • **Teaching Equipment**: Classrooms are equipped with interactive whiteboards, computers, and other modern teaching tools to facilitate engaging lessons. Specialized equipment is available for vocational training and therapeutic interventions.
Grade 2025	**Compliant**	
Suggestions to improve/resolve	Maintain existing action and processes.	

10.2.20	**Staff Facilities**

Best Practice	With respect to teachers, school facilities affect teacher recruitment, retention, commitment, and effort. With respect to students, school facilities affect health, behaviour, engagement, learning, and growth in achievement. Opinions on staff room design vary widely from school to school. In some schools, these spaces are used successfully by teachers for collaboration and knowledge sharing. In other schools, the staff room is avoided at all costs, or has even been removed altogether and replaced with mixed student and staff breakout spaces. We believe that the staff room is often the most neglected room in the school. Many schools are so focussed on attracting the top students and keeping their grounds looking immaculate, but when it comes to the staff room – the engine room of the entire school – it is a different story. Does your staff room design itself leave anything to be desired? Are there tea stains on the carpet, seating that has seen better days or overstuffed pigeonholes? Are there out-dated staff notices or overflowing bins? Your staffroom should be, in a certain sense, a haven for your staff. A place where they can meet to recharge, socialize with colleagues and obtain advice and support.

	Whilst a staff room etiquette may be necessary, we believe that creating an inspirational staff base could make a world of difference to your school. Head teachers should ask themselves these 3 very important questions: 1. Would you be happy to show your staff room to prospective parents of the school? 2. Do you enjoy using your staff room? 3. Is the furniture and decor fit for purpose? The staff room is no longer just a place to spend their lunch hour. It is a place to work undistracted by students, an escape away from noisy corridors, a change of scene, a break-out area, a library to store important documents, and a place to conduct meetings. Staff rooms boost the morale of teachers. This communal area is where teachers can connect with one another. A reminder that working in a school is a team effort. Teachers need that network and this support reflects positivity onto the students, improving results all around. Teachers are under constant scrutiny. From peers, superiors, parents and Ofsted. Staff rooms are important for members of staff and can boost morale, as well as giving them a place to call their own. Making members of staff feel like they belong and are supported reflects onto the students also.

Audit Findings	 	Churchward School provides staff rooms at each of its three sites to ensure that teachers and support staff have dedicated spaces for relaxation, collaboration, and preparation. Each staffroom provides: Comfortable Seating: Chairs and sofas for staff to unwind during breaks. Kitchenette Facilities: Amenities such as tea and coffee stations, microwaves, and refrigerators. Workspaces: Tables or desks for staff to work on lesson plans or administrative tasks. Notice Boards: Information boards for updates, schedules, and announcements. The school recognises that everyone needs 'timeout' and acknowledge that their staffrooms are extremely for their employees. Having their own break out area as the space to take time out from the hectic school day can help to keep morale high. The staffroom acts as the perfect place for members of staff to take a well-deserved break (just like the pupils do) and informally socialise with other teachers too.
		• Are the staffrooms wheelchair accessible? The staff room at Bagbury is upstairs so not accessible to all. (There is a kitchen downstairs.) • Are there high-backed seats with arms in the staffroom? There are currently no chairs with arms in the staff rooms. It is important to have chairs with arms available in staff rooms as people with mobility issues would find it easier to use them.
Grade 2025	**Improvement Recommended**	
Suggestions to improve/resolve	Provide at least one high backed chair in the staff rooms. Provide an alternative accessible space for use by staff requiring accommodations at the Bagbury site.	

10.3. Access to Education

An accessible school is one in which disabled pupils and pupils with ongoing or temporary medical limitations can participate fully in the school curriculum.

The curriculum covers teaching and learning and wider provision embracing after-school clubs; leisure, sporting and cultural activities; and school trips. Planning for improved access to the curriculum should include consideration of school and classroom organisation and support, timetabling, curriculum options, the deployment of staff and staff information and training.

Pupils with disabilities, medical or intellectual capacity needs can be amongst the most vulnerable in society. Safeguarding the wellbeing of these pupils especially is therefore an important consideration.

10.3.1	**Training & accreditation of Teachers and Teaching Assistants**
Best Practice	Teachers, Teaching Assistants (TAs), and adult helpers all have a specific job to do in the classroom and each role requires careful planning. The effective use and management of classroom TAs, specifically, also requires a coordinated approach to that planning. By law, all mainstream schools are required to have a SENCO. However, unlike in mainstream schools, where SENCOs are legally required to be qualified as a teacher/in the process of qualifying, there is no such requirement in special schools. Some special schools will employ a member of staff to essentially carry out the work a SENCO would be required to complete. They may also employ people to assist with the admin work SENCOs have to deal with. Under The Education (Special Educational Needs Coordinators) (England) Regulations 2014 a SENCO must be either: a qualified teacher; head teacher/appointed acting head teacher; or, where a person becomes the SENCO at a relevant school after 1 September 2009, and has not previously been the SENCO at that or any other relevant school for more than 12 months, the school must ensure that the person holds “The National Award for Special

	Educational Needs Co-ordination" if they are the school's SENCO at any time after the third anniversary of the date that person became a SENCO. There are great similarities in the role of a teacher and a SENCO and so understandably, the requirement to be a qualified or nearly qualified teacher is necessary. The SENCO's responsibilities are as follows: • overseeing the day-to-day operation of the school's SEN policy • co-ordinating provision for children with SEN • liaising with the relevant Designated Teacher where a looked after pupil has SEN • Advising on the graduated approach to providing SEN support • Advising on the deployment of the school's delegated budget and other resources to meet pupils' needs effectively • liaising with parents of pupils with SEN • liaising with early years providers, other schools, educational psychologists, health and social care professionals, and independent or voluntary bodies • being a key point of contact with external agencies, especially the local authority and its support services • liaising with potential next providers of education to ensure a pupil and their parents are informed about options and a smooth transition is planned • working with the headteacher and school governors to ensure that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act (2010) with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements • ensuring that the school keeps the records of all pupils with SEN up to date

Audit Findings	Churchward School staff are highly trained and qualified to work with students aged 11 to 19 who have autism spectrum conditions and associated social communication difficulties. 1. **Teaching Qualifications**: Teachers often hold Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) and may have additional qualifications in special education, such as a Postgraduate Certificate in Special Educational Needs Coordination (NASENCO). 2. **Specialist Training**: Staff are likely trained in autism-specific approaches, such as TEACCH (Treatment and Education of Autistic and related Communication-handicapped Children) or PECS (Picture Exchange Communication System). Training in sensory integration techniques and strategies to support emotional regulation is also common. 3. **Therapeutic Approaches**: Many staff members are trained in therapeutic models like the Thrive Approach, which focuses on emotional and social development. They may also have experience with speech and language therapy or occupational therapy techniques.
	4. **Safeguarding and Intimate Care**: All staff are trained in safeguarding policies and procedures, ensuring the safety and well-being of students. Training in providing intimate care while maintaining dignity and respect is essential. 5. **Ongoing Professional Development**: Staff participate in regular professional development to stay updated on best practices and new methodologies in special education. 6. **Experience**: Many staff members have prior experience working in special schools, pupil referral units, or other settings that support children with additional needs.
Grade 2025	**Compliant**
Suggestions to improve/resolve	Maintain existing actions and processes.

10.3.2	**Pre-admission**

Best Practice	All schools have admission criteria to decide which children get places. The school or local council usually set these. Admission criteria are different for each school. For example, schools may give priority to children: • who have a brother or sister at the school already? • who live close to the school? • from a particular religion (for faith schools) • who do well in an entrance exam (for selective schools, for example grammar schools or stage schools)? • who went to a particular primary school (a 'feeder school') • in care or being looked after (all schools must have this as a top priority) • who are eligible for the pupil premium? • If a child has SEN their statement or education, health and care plan will recommend a school for them. If a parent applies there, the school must give that child a place.
Audit Findings	Churchward School's pre-admission procedures are managed by the Local Authority (LA) and are designed to ensure that the school is the right fit for the student's needs. 1. **Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP)**:
	For a child to be admitted, Churchward School must be named in their EHCP. This ensures that the school is equipped to meet the specific needs of the student. 2. **Consultation with the School**: Parents or carers should request their Local Authority to consult with Churchward School as part of the EHCP process. The school will review the EHCP to determine if they can provide the necessary support. 3. **Visits and Tours**: Prospective students and their families are encouraged to visit the school to tour the premises and meet staff. This helps families understand the school's environment and facilities. 4. **Decision and Placement**: Once the consultation is complete, and if the school agrees that they can meet the student's needs, the Local Authority will finalize the placement. For more detailed information, the Admissions Policy is on the school's website.

Grade 2025	Compliant
Suggestions to improve/resolve	Maintain existing action and processes.

10.3.3	Admission
Best Practice	A school's Information Report must include information for identifying, assessing and making provision for pupils with SEN and for the admission of disabled pupils. The requirements are set out in legislation (the Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014 – see further information). The SEN Information Report should contain everything Ofsted – and for that matter any agency, parent, student or professional – could want to know in terms of SEN identification, provision and support. It can also act as a guide through SEN provision for all members of staff, whatever their career profile. It must include: • Details of and links to your area Local Offer(s). Remember that if you work with more than one local authority, then you need to have links to all of the Local Offers for those authorities. • In relation to mainstream schools and maintained nursery schools, the name and contact details of the SENCO. Best practice would be to also include the same details for your headteacher and your SEND governor, as well as how parents can make a complaint or raise a concern. • Information about the expertise and training of staff in relation to children and young people with SEN and about how specialist expertise will be secured.

	• How you make provision for pupils with SEN, whether or not they have Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs). • What interventions you have implemented and their impact. • The additional learning opportunities for pupils with SEN. • Your procedures, if you are a mainstream school or nursery, for the identification and assessment of pupils with SEN. • Your approach to teaching pupils who have SEN. • How you adapt the curriculum and the learning environment for those who have SEN. • How the school enables pupils with SEN to engage in the activities of the school (including physical activities) together with children who do not have SEN. • Details of the support that is available for improving the social, emotional and mental health and development of pupils with SEN. • How you involve pupils and their parents in decision-making. • How you evaluate the effectiveness of your provision, including securing feedback and the views of pupils and their parents

Audit Findings	The school does all that is reasonable to comply with its legal and moral responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001, in order to accommodate the needs of applicants who have disabilities for which, with reasonable adjustments, the school can cater adequately. The school is committed to promoting equal opportunities and treatment for all, regardless of gender, pregnancy or maternity, disability, race, ethnicity, religion or belief, cultural background, linguistic background, special educational need, sexual orientation, gender reassignment or academic or sporting ability. The school is pleased to receive applications for admission from pupils irrespective of race, nationality, colour, ethnic or national origin, religion or creed, disability or previous educational background. All applications are treated equally. In particular, the school takes seriously its responsibilities to ensure compliance with the Special Educational Needs and Disability and Equality Acts. Additional meetings and transition days may need to be arranged dependent upon need. Churchward School's admission process is managed in collaboration with the Local Authority (LA) and follows these steps: 1. **Eligibility Criteria**: The student must have an Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP) that identifies autism spectrum conditions or social communication difficulties as their primary need. The school must be named in the EHCP as the preferred placement. 2. **Consultation**: The Local Authority consults with the school to determine if it can meet the student's needs. This involves reviewing the EHCP and any additional reports or assessments. 3. **Parental Involvement**:
	Parents or carers are encouraged to visit the school to understand its environment, ethos, and facilities. This helps them make an informed decision about the placement. 4. **Decision and Notification**: If the school agrees that it can meet the student's needs, the Local Authority finalizes the placement and formally notifies the parents or carers. 5. **Transition Planning**: Once a place is confirmed, the school works closely with the family and the student's current educational setting to plan a smooth transition. This may include visits, meetings, and tailored support to help the student settle in.
Grade 2025	**Compliant**

Suggestions to improve/resolve	Maintain existing action and processes.

10.3.4	**Safeguarding**
Best Practice	Disabled and impaired children and young people can be amongst the most vulnerable and may be especially reliant upon the support of adults. Such groups are potentially vulnerable to being targeted inappropriately. Effective safeguarding systems are vitally important for the protection of such pupils. The DfE publishes Statutory guidance for schools and colleges on safeguarding children and safer recruitment. The guidance is updated from time to time. Statutory guidance sets out what schools must do to comply with the law. You should follow the guidance unless you have a very good reason not to. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-ineducation--2
Audit Findings	The Designated Safeguarding Lead is Dave Dearsley. Churchward acknowledges that children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) or certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges and barriers for recognising abuse and neglect and recognises that children with SEND may face additional communication barriers and experience difficulties in managing or reporting abuse or challenges. Children with SEND will be appropriately supported to communicate and ensure that their voice is heard and acted upon. All members of staff will be encouraged to appropriately explore possible indicators of abuse such as behaviour, mood changes or injuries and not to assume that they are related to the child's disability. Staff will be mindful that children with SEND, or certain medical conditions may be disproportionally impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs. Members of staff are encouraged to be aware that children with SEND can be disproportionally impacted by safeguarding concerns, such as exploitation, peer group isolation or bullying including prejudice-based bullying. To address

	these additional challenges, Churchward School will always consider implementing extra pastoral support and attention for children with SEND. Churchward School fully recognises the contribution it can make to protect children from harm and to support and promote the welfare of all children who are registered pupils at the school. Safeguarding is taken very seriously, and they understand that no single professional can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances. If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action. All visitors complete a signing in/out form, wear a school ID badge and are provided with key safeguarding information including the contact details of safeguarding personnel in school. Scheduled visitors in a professional role (e.g., fire officer) are asked to provide evidence of their role and employment details (usually an identity badge) upon arrival at school. If the visit is unscheduled and the visitor is unknown to the school, the school will contact the relevant organisation to verify the individual's identity, if necessary. All staff at the school have been provided with, read, and signed to acknowledge, the current edition of DfE "Keeping Children Safe in Education". The school has a safe and secure building and grounds; they carry out daily, weekly or yearly risk assessments for the equipment and areas used by all children, both in the school grounds and whenever they go for trips beyond their boundaries.
Grade 2025	**Compliant**
Suggestions to improve/resolve	Maintain existing action and processes.

10.3.5	**Pupils with Temporary, Emerging or ongoing Health Care Needs, and Defibrillators**

Best Practice	Section 100 of the Children and Families Act 2014 places a duty on governing bodies of maintained schools, proprietors of academies and management committees of PRUs to make arrangements for supporting pupils at their school with medical conditions. Pupils at school with medical conditions should be properly supported so that they have full access to education, including school trips and physical education. Governing bodies must ensure that arrangements are in place in schools to support pupils at school with medical conditions. Governing bodies should ensure that school leaders consult health and social care professionals, pupils and parents to ensure that the needs of children with medical conditions are effectively supported. Parents of children with medical conditions are often concerned that their child's health will deteriorate when they attend school. This is because pupils with long-term and complex medical conditions may require on-going support, medicines or care while at school to help them manage their condition and

	keep them well. Others may require monitoring and interventions in emergency circumstances. It is also the case that children's health needs may change over time, in ways that cannot always be predicted, sometimes resulting in extended absences. It is therefore important that parents feel confident that schools will provide effective support for their child's medical condition and that pupils feel safe. In making decisions about the support, they provide; schools should establish relationships with relevant local health services to help them. It is crucial that schools receive and fully consider advice from healthcare professionals and listen to and value the views of parents and pupils. In addition to the educational impacts, there are social and emotional implications associated with medical conditions. Children may be selfconscious about their condition, and some may be bullied or develop emotional disorders such as anxiety or depression around their medical condition. In particular, long-term absences due to health problems affect children's educational attainment, impact on their ability to integrate with their peers and affect their general wellbeing and emotional health. Reintegration back into school should be properly supported so that children with medical conditions fully engage with learning and do not fall behind when they are unable to attend. Short term and frequent absences, including those for appointments connected with a pupil's medical condition, (which can often be lengthy), also need to be effectively managed and appropriate support put in place to limit the impact on the child's educational attainment and emotional and general wellbeing. Some children with medical conditions may be disabled. Where this is the case governing bodies must comply with their duties under the Equality Act 2010. Some may also have special educational needs (SEN) and may have a statement, or Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan which brings together health and social care needs, as well. Ofsted - their inspection framework places a clear emphasis on meeting the needs of disabled children and pupils with SEN and considering the quality of teaching and the progress made by these pupils. Inspectors are already briefed to consider the needs of pupils with chronic or long-term medical conditions alongside these groups and to report on how well their needs are being met. Schools are expected to have a policy dealing with medical needs and to be able to demonstrate that this is implemented effectively. Defibrillators in Schools Every year an average of 270 children die at school in the UK from sudden arrhythmic death syndrome. Oliver King died aged just 12 years old when he suffered a cardiac arrest while taking part in a swimming race in 2012. Since then, Mark King, Oliver's dad, has campaigned for defibrillators to be made more widely available. Last year, 2022, legislation was introduced that all schools would be supplied with a defibrillator.

	There is clear evidence showing that defibrillators drastically increase the chance of survival from a cardiac arrest – meaning if a defibrillator had been available then, Oliver could have survived. Defibrillators have the potential to save the lives of pupils, staff and visitors in schools, with research showing that accessing these devices within 3-5 minutes of a cardiac arrest increases the chance of survival by over 40%. It's particularly important that they are available close to sports halls and playing fields that children, young people, and the wider community use daily. In 2013, The Oliver King Foundation helped to secure a change in government policy where all schools are recommended - but not obliged - to purchase a defibrillator. The first defibrillators were issued to schools on 20 January 2023 marking the start of a roll out of over 20,000 devices to almost 18,000 state-funded schools in England. The rollout is expected to be complete by the end of the academic year. The biggest and proudest achievement has been a meeting in March 2022 with Secretary of State for Education Nadim Zahawi. Every school in England should now be receiving a defibrillator. However, we know that this is not the case. The updated guidance can be found at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/automated-externaldefibrillators-aeds-in-schools

Audit Findings	Churchward School is committed to supporting pupils with temporary, emerging, or ongoing health care needs. They typically adopt the following practices: **Supporting Pupils with Health Care Needs** 1. **Individual Health Care Plans (IHCPs)**: The school collaborates with parents, carers, and healthcare professionals to create IHCPs tailored to each student's needs. These plans outline the support required, including medication administration, emergency procedures, and any necessary adjustments to the learning environment. 2. **Staff Training**: Staff are trained to recognize and respond to health care needs, including administering medication and managing emergencies. 3. **Inclusive Environment**: Adjustments are made to ensure that students with health care needs can participate fully in school life, including extracurricular activities and trips. 4. **Communication**: Clear communication channels are established between the school, families, and healthcare providers to ensure consistent support. **Defibrillators**
	Churchward School, like all state-funded schools in England, is expected to have at least one defibrillator on-site as part of a government initiative to ensure life-saving equipment is available in schools. Defibrillators are crucial for responding to cardiac emergencies, and staff are trained in their use, alongside CPR techniques. Only Tadpole site has a defibrillator on site.
Grade 2025	**Improvement Recommended**
Suggestions to improve/resolve	Install defibrillators at Bagbury and UTC sites. Contact The Oliver King Foundation https://theokfoundation.wixsite.com/theokfoundation/our-team They will be able to give you advice and more information on the government's roll out scheme of providing defibrillators in schools.

10.3.6	**Access to the Curriculum**

Best Practice	Ensuring access to the curriculum is vital in providing equal opportunities to children and young people with SEND. Considerable progress has been made to improve the accessibility of the curriculum, covering both teaching and learning, as well as Early Years, trips and visits, after school activities and extended school activities in our schools. Schools and educational settings (including Early Years) are responsible for providing a broad and balanced curriculum for all pupils and play a key role in planning to increase access to the curriculum for all pupils. Therefore, schools are required to have in place an 'Accessibility Plan' that demonstrates what actions the school is taking to increase access to the curriculum, particularly for those pupils with SEND. Adjustments that would help children with disabilities have better access to the curriculum might include: • changes to teaching and learning arrangements, classroom organisation and timetabling. • Technology suited to a child's needs can help them learn faster and more easily. This can increase their access to the curriculum. Examples of technology that can help include: • touch-screen computers, joysticks and trackerballs, easy-to-use keyboards, interactive whiteboards, text-to-speech software, Brailletranslation software, software that connects words with pictures or symbols. The following is considered good practice: • Develop effective classroom partnerships by differentiating the learning objectives and outcomes, ensuring all staff are fully briefed and can adjust the lesson to meet the needs of individual pupils. This partnership should be underpinned by encouraging independence amongst pupils. • Develop a whole school approach that raises the capability of all school staff to assist in the teaching of pupils with SEND in mainstream

	settings. In particular this approach should focus on ensuring school staff can provide care and support for vulnerable pupils and know who to speak to find out more. • Make SEND a priority by ensuring there is a member of the governing body, or a sub-committee, with specific oversight arrangements for SEN and disability. This should include regular reviews between the Headteacher, SENCO and the governing body on how resources are being allocated and the impact of this allocation.

Audit Findings	Disabled pupils can participate in all curriculum areas. Churchward School ensures access to the curriculum for all pupils, regardless of their individual needs. This commitment is central to their ethos and supported by the following approaches: 1. **Individualized Support**: Each student's unique needs are taken into account, and their learning journey is personalized through Education, Health, and Care Plans (EHCPs) and Individualized Learning Plans. Additional interventions and therapeutic approaches, such as the Thrive model, are integrated to support emotional and social development alongside academic progress. 2. **Differentiated Teaching**: Lessons are adapted to suit various learning styles and abilities, ensuring all pupils can engage with and benefit from the curriculum. Strategies like simplified instructions, visual aids, and multi-sensory teaching methods are commonly employed. 3. **Specialist Staff and Training**: Highly trained staff work collaboratively to address barriers to learning, offering specialist support for social communication, sensory regulation, and emotional needs. 4. **Assistive Technologies**: Where required, assistive tools like communication devices, visual schedules, or adaptive equipment are used to enhance access to learning. 5. **Inclusive Environment**: The school's facilities are designed to be fully accessible, with adjustments made as needed to ensure all students can participate in lessons, activities, and outings. 6. **Regular Monitoring**: Progress is reviewed frequently, and support is adjusted based on the evolving needs of each pupil, ensuring they can engage with the curriculum effectively. This comprehensive approach reflects the school's dedication to creating equal opportunities for all students to learn and thrive.
Grade 2025	**Exemplary**
Suggestions to improve/resolve	Maintain existing action and processes.

10.3.7	**Lesson planning and support for pupils with disabilities and SEN**

Best Practice	Recent legislation and guidance make clear that all the teaching staff in a school are responsible for the provision for pupils with SEN and/or disabilities. All staff should be involved in developing school policies and fully aware of the school's procedures for identifying, assessing and making provision for pupils with SEN and/or disabilities. Staff should help pupils with SEN to overcome any barriers to participating and learning, and make any reasonable adjustments needed to include disabled pupils in all aspects of school life. The Equality Act has substantial implications for everyone involved in planning and teaching the curriculum. Schools have specific duties under the Act to: make reasonable adjustments to their policies and practice to prevent discrimination against" disabled pupils increase access for disabled pupils, including access to the curriculum, through accessibility" planning, and promote disability equality and have a disability equality scheme showing how they will do so. Teachers have a statutory duty to modify the programmes of study "Schools have a responsibility to provide a broad and balanced curriculum for all pupils." This is more than just giving pupils 'access to the curriculum'. The curriculum is not immovable, like some building, to which pupils with SEN and/or disabilities have to gain access. It is there to be changed, where necessary, to include all pupils. The statutory 'inclusion statement' in the National Curriculum sets out a framework for modifying the curriculum to include all pupils. Teachers have to: set suitable learning challenges " respond to pupils' diverse learning needs, and "overcome potential barriers to learning and assessment for particular individuals and groups " of pupils. These principles allow you to: choose objectives for pupils with SEN and/or disabilities that are different from those of the rest "*of the group or modify the curriculum to remove barriers so all pupils meet the same objectives.*" Planning for pupils with SEN and/or disabilities should be part of the planning that you do for all pupils, rather than a separate activity. It doesn't need to be complicated or time-consuming. You can simply jot down brief notes in your lesson plans on the learning objectives and approaches you will use to remove barriers for pupils with SEN and/or disabilities. Any personal targets the pupil has can inform this planning. At times it may be appropriate to plan smaller steps to achieve the learning goal or provide additional resources. It is often possible to use the support available to do this, either from the SENCO or teaching assistant/mentor. You should also think about the questions you will ask different groups and individuals and the ways you will check that pupils understand. Some pupils with SEN and/or disabilities will show they understand in different ways from
	their peers, so you should look at a range of opportunities for pupils to demonstrate what they know and can do.

Audit Findings	Churchward School's lesson planning and support for pupils with disabilities and special educational needs (SEN) are designed to ensure inclusivity, accessibility, and personalized learning. **Lesson Planning** 1. **Differentiated Instruction**: Lessons are tailored to meet the diverse needs of students, with activities and materials adapted to suit various learning styles and abilities. Teachers use multi-sensory approaches, incorporating visual, auditory, and kinesthetic elements to enhance engagement and understanding. 2. **Individualized Learning Plans (ILPs)**: Plans are created for each student, outlining specific goals, strategies, and accommodations to support their learning journey. 3. **Collaborative Planning**: Teachers work closely with support staff, therapists, and parents to ensure lesson plans address the holistic needs of each student. 4. **Use of Assistive Technology**: Tools such as communication devices, screen readers, and adaptive software are integrated into lessons to support accessibility. **Support for Pupils with Disabilities and SEN** 1. **Specialist Staff**: Trained staff, including SEN coordinators and teaching assistants, provide targeted support during lessons. 2. **Therapeutic Interventions**: Programs like the Thrive Approach are used to support emotional regulation and social development alongside academic learning. 3. **Small Group or One-to-One Support**: Students may receive additional help in smaller settings to focus on specific skills or overcome challenges. 4. **Regular Assessment and Feedback**: Progress is monitored frequently, and lesson plans are adjusted based on each student's evolving needs.
Grade 2025	**Exemplary**
Suggestions to improve/resolve	Maintain existing action and processes.

10.3.8	**Access to Educational Visits and Extra Curricular Activities**
Best Practice	Ensuring accessibility of any activities or events that involve travelling outside School grounds will help all students to participate fully in School life. This would include educational trips, such as, visits to museums or theatres, visits to other Schools, sports events, or work experience. It is also important to review the accessibility of the destination, and the transport to and from the destination, as part of the planning of any such activities. If a visit is to cater for pupils with special needs, a suitable venue should be selected. Additional safety measures to those already in place in the school may be necessary to support pupils with medical needs during visits. All teachers supervising visits should be aware of a pupil's medical needs and any medical emergency procedures. Summary sheets held by all teachers, containing details of each pupil's needs and any other relevant information provided by parents, is one way of achieving this. If appropriate, a volunteer teacher should be trained in administering medication, if they have not already been so trained, and should take responsibility in a medical emergency. If the pupil's safety cannot be guaranteed, it may be appropriate to ask the parent or a care assistant to accompany a particular pupil. If teachers are concerned about whether they can provide for a pupil's safety or the safety of other pupils on a trip because of a medical condition, they should seek general medical advice from the School Health Service or further information from the pupil's parents. (For further DfE guidance see Supporting Pupils with Medical Needs: A Good Practice Guide) Schools will already be familiar with the nature of a pupil's special educational needs. Any limitations or problems the pupil may have should be taken into account at the planning stage and when carrying out the risk assessment. Offsite visits may pose additional difficulties for a pupil with SEN and the behaviour of some pupils may prove challenging. Enquiries should be made at an early stage about access and facilities for securing wheelchairs on transport and at residential centres etc., if appropriate. If ramps are not going to be available in certain places, the organiser may wish to arrange to take portable ramps with them. The group leader should at an early stage assess whether manual handling skills will be needed and, if so, whether training should be sought.
Audit Findings	Churchward School is committed to ensuring that all students, including those with autism spectrum conditions and social communication difficulties, have access to educational visits and extracurricular activities. These opportunities are designed to enhance learning, build social skills, and promote personal development. 1. **Inclusive Planning**:

	Educational visits and activities are carefully planned to accommodate the needs of all students. This includes considering sensory sensitivities, mobility requirements, and individual preferences. 2. **Risk Assessments**: Comprehensive risk assessments are conducted to ensure the safety and wellbeing of students during off-site visits or activities. 3. **Support Staff**: Trained staff members accompany students to provide support and ensure that everyone can participate fully. 4. **Variety of Activities**: The school offers a range of extracurricular activities, such as sports, arts, and clubs, tailored to the interests and abilities of the students. Educational visits may include trips to museums, nature reserves, or vocational training centres, providing real-world learning experiences. 5. **Parental Involvement**: Parents and carers are often involved in the planning process to ensure that activities align with the needs and preferences of their children. 6. **Focus on Life Skills**: Activities are designed to help students develop independence, teamwork, and confidence, preparing them for life beyond school. Recent visits have included cities such as Bristol, Oxford and London. Activities have included trampolining, ice skating and horse riding.
Grade 2025	**Exemplary**
Suggestions to improve/resolve	Maintain existing action and processes.

10.3.9	**Outcomes**
Best Practice	According to the Department for Education and Skills (DfES), about 3/5 of children with Statements of SEN are currently placed in Maintained (i.e., State) Mainstream Schools. However, whilst the number of pupils with Statements of SEN continues to increase, the number of children for whom a Statement is issued for the first time is slowly decreasing. The number of pupils in Special Schools has remained fairly constant but the number of pupils in Mainstream Maintained schools has increased sharply with over 75% of children with statements of SEN for the first time being placed in Mainstream schools now.

Audit Findings	Churchward School has achieved remarkable outcomes for its students with special educational needs (SEN), focusing on both academic and emotional development.
	1. **Academic Progress**: Many students, including those who had been out of education for years, are now actively participating in classes and making academic progress. Some are even studying for GCSEs and A-Levels. 2. **Emotional Well-Being**: The school prioritizes emotional well-being as a foundation for learning. Through the Thrive Approach, students have shown significant improvements in emotional regulation and social development. 3. **Transition Success**: A notable 91% of students are ready to transition to less specialist environments ahead of time. This includes moving to mainstream schools, colleges, apprenticeships, or employment. 4. **Recognition**: Churchward School has been awarded the Thrive School of Excellence status, reflecting its commitment to holistic development and effective implementation of the Thrive Approach.
Grade 2025	**Exemplary**
Suggestions to improve/resolve	Maintain existing action and processes.

10.3.10	**Staffing & Leadership**

Best Practice	SEN leaders play a critical role in supporting children, establishing the ethos and approach to SEN within the school and ensuring that SEN has a high profile. Without strong leadership in this area, the individual needs of all children are not recognised and listened to. Have high expectations and ambition for all children. The purpose of collating these strategies is not to highlight weaknesses in SEN provision in UK schools but to promote the positive and easily accessible routes to improvement that, in the main, already exist in the system. We are currently ignoring our greatest resource in raising standards for children with SEN – teachers and school staff. We must quickly realise the opportunity for teachers, SENCOs and inclusion leads to share their knowledge and good practice through school-to-school collaboration. Changes in SEN provision is coming but schools are struggling to engage with this because of the massive overhauls taking place in the wider education system. Interventions used in SEN should be measured by their impact on children's attainment, just as they are for all children. Wellbeing, happiness, attendance, low exclusion rates and freedom from bullying are, of course, all important measures, but we must place emphasis on attainment levels also. We have to start aspiring for each and every one of our children and young people.

Audit Findings	Churchward School has a dedicated and experienced team of staff and leaders who are committed to supporting students with autism spectrum conditions and social communication difficulties. **Senior Leadership Team** 1. **Dave Dearsley (Headteacher)**: Dave has extensive experience in special education, having worked in various roles, including teaching assistant, teacher, and senior leader in special schools and pupil referral units. His expertise spans pastoral care, safeguarding, teaching and learning, and therapeutic interventions. 2. **Leslea Thomas (Deputy Headteacher)**: Leslea specializes in sociology and religious studies and has a strong background in SEN education. She has held leadership roles in behavior management and safeguarding and has completed several National Professional Qualifications (NPQs). 3. **Alex Foster (Deputy Headteacher)**: Alex brings additional leadership expertise to the team, focusing on curriculum development and student outcomes. 4. **Brendan Palmer (Assistant Head - Pastoral and Safeguarding)**: Brendan oversees pastoral care and safeguarding, ensuring the well-being of all students. 5. **Thomas Chalmers (Assistant Head - Bridges Lead)**: Thomas leads the Bridges program, which supports students with specific needs. 6. **Lorna Dickson (SENDCo)**: Lorna coordinates the provision for students with special educational needs, ensuring they receive tailored support. **Teaching and Support Staff** The school has a team of subject-specialist teachers, including experts in science, English, maths, computing, art, and more. Pastoral and academic intervention leads, as well as a school counsellor, provide additional support to students. Administrative staff, including a PA to the Headteacher, ensure the smooth running of the school. The leadership team works collaboratively to create an inclusive and supportive environment where every student can thrive.
Grade 2025	**Exemplary**
Suggestions to improve/resolve	Maintain existing action and processes.

11. Accessibility Plan for Churchward School

19/02/2025

Policy Title:	
Date adopted:	
Date of next review:	
SLT Lead:	
Committee:	
Statutory requirement:	Yes

1. Introduction/Context

1.1 The Accessibility Plan addresses the statutory requirements of the Equality Act 2010 (which replaced the Disability Discrimination Act 1995) and the SEND Code of Practice of September 2015. These acts place a responsibility on the Governing Body to ensure that the school is socially and academically inclusive. In particular, the Equality Act requires the school to develop a plan to show how it will develop services in the following three areas:

a) To increase the extent to which disabled students can participate in the school's curriculum.

b) To improve the physical environment of the school to ensure disabled students are able to take advantage of education and other benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the school.

c) To improve the delivery of information to disabled students, so information is as available as it is for students who are not disabled.

2. Purpose/Aims

2.1 The school's diverse and inclusive community will be a centre of excellence in learning, where all students, including those with disabilities, are supported and challenged to fulfil high ambitions.

2.2 All students will have access to appropriate qualifications and will develop the skills and resilience to meet the demands of working, family and community life. Students will demonstrate the empathy and confidence to work with others to achieve a better future.

2.3 To ensure all disabled students are fully involved in school life and are making at least expected progress.

2.4 To identifying barriers to participation and find practical solutions to overcoming these.

2.5 To work collaboratively with disabled students and their parents/carers to create appropriate provision, including robust EHCPs where appropriate.

2.6 To increase the confidence, sensitivity and expertise of teachers and support staff when teaching or supporting a wide range of disabled students.

2.7 To meet the requirements of the Equalities Act and the SEND Code of Practice in respect of disabled students.

3. Definitions

3.1 Definition of Disability (Equality Act 2010)

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

3.2 Definition of Special Educational Needs (SEND Code of Practice September 2015)

A child or young person has special educational needs if he or she has a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her. A child or young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she:

a) has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or

b) has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of the kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools. This will include students with medical needs.

4. The Accessibility Plan

4.1 This plan summarises our development priorities in the three areas specified by the Equality Act (see context above). The school is also committed to making reasonable adjustments for individual students to ensure all students are able to be involved in every aspect of school life, in partnership with their families, and that barriers to learning are removed.

a) Increase the extent to which disabled students can participate in the school's curriculum

4.2 Students with SEND (special educational needs or disability) are given access to the curriculum supported by the school's specialist SEND provision and in line with the needs of the individual and the wishes of their parents. Every effort is made to educate students with SEND alongside their peers in a mainstream classroom setting. Where this is not possible, the SENCO consults the student and parents about proposed flexible arrangements.

4.3 The school curriculum is regularly reviewed to ensure that it is accessible to students of all levels and abilities and supports the learning and progress of all students as individuals. This includes learning outside the classroom.

4.4 Our Special Educational Needs Policy, Local Offer and SEN Report outline the provision the school already has in place to support students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). This includes:

a) Identification of SEND at a very early stage through meticulous liaison with appropriate feeder schools such as nursery schools, primary schools or high schools, supported by individual provision maps and the SEND register.

b) Keeping staff fully informed of the special educational needs/disability of any student in their charge, including sharing progress reports, medical reports and student/parent feedback.

c) Listening to students' and parents'/carers' views and taking them into account in all aspects of school life.

d) Awareness raising programmes for all students about the range of disabilities in the school, in particular creating a very supportive base for each disabled pupil.

e) Regular training opportunities for staff on SEND and appropriate teaching and learning strategies.

f) Increasingly specialised in-class support or guidance from trained TLAs (Teaching and Learning Assistants) and Additional Educational Needs Teachers (AEN Teachers).

g) Specific specialist intervention to build skills (particularly for literacy and numeracy) in small groups and/or adapted timetables.

h) Specialist advice from other professionals (e.g., Speech and Language Therapist, School Nurse, Occupational Therapist, hearing impaired service, physiotherapist) on how to adapt the curriculum and teaching strategies for individuals.
i) Special access arrangements for internal and external exams.
j) Specific target setting and monitoring to ensure all students with SEND make at least expected progress and accelerated progress in intervention groups.
k) Ready access for parents to staff, with partnerships supported by planned structured conversations and ongoing home-school liaison.
l) A structured and dedicated transition programme for vulnerable students
m) Specialist advice and guidance to support transition
n) Multi-agency support coordinated by the school's Inclusion teams in each year group.
o) Training for all staff from specialist autism provision staff on teaching and learning strategies for students with autism.

Further development

4.5 The School Development Plan sets out additional development priorities in this area. These include:

a) Create an inspiring curriculum model which meets the needs of all students.
b) Broaden choices to construct personalised pathways.
c) Develop high quality curriculum for lower ability students.
d) Develop more complex curriculum model.
e) Conduct annual curriculum reviews.
f) Reorganise non-classroom-based support staff to ensure effective context for continuing professional development.
g) Improve the physical environment of the school for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled students are able to take advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services, provided or offered by the school

b) The school environment already incorporates many features to ensure accessibility to students with disabilities.

4.6 These include:

a) Lifts
b) Ramps
c) Specialist SEND areas, with small, quiet and calm learning spaces
d) Accessible toilets
e) Features that improve acoustics
f) Customised furniture and/or equipment
g) Specialist resources, including digital technologies
h) Guiding in emergency evacuation.
i) Any automatic doors

4.7 In addition, teachers are given advice on how to move and arrange furniture, how to manage lighting, noise and visual stimulus, how to create visual timetables etc., so that individual students' needs are met. Similar attention is given to how students' needs can be met on school journeys and visits.

Further development

4.8 The school carries out an accessibility audit every three years in advance of reviewing this policy. The last audit was undertaken by EA Audits Ltd.

4.9 The school is also committed to ensuring full accessibility in any future new build.

c) Improve the delivery to disabled students of information which is readily accessible to students who are not disabled

4.10 Teachers and TLAs consider the needs of each SEND student and provide accessible learning resources for them. The increasing use of Interactive Whiteboards and other digital technologies have diversified the ways in which information is presented to all students. Visual and audio information is now as common as written information.

4.11 In addition, the school makes the following available as appropriate:

a) Differentiated resources with particular attention to reading age, plain English, images and layout.
b) Laptops and other digital technologies.
c) Coloured overlays for text.
d) Tactile resources.
e) Readers and/or scribes in exams, where appropriate

Further development

4.12 The following opportunities to improve further will be explored:

a) Opportunities provided by digital technologies.
b) Regular clear and relevant information to parents in home language if required.

5. Responsibilities

5.1 All staff are responsible for removing barriers to learning for disabled pupils.

5.2 All leaders are responsible for improving accessibility within their area of responsibility.

5.3 The Governing Body is responsible for the approval of this plan.

5.4 The Head teacher is responsible for ensuring the resourcing, implementation and updating of this plan.

5.5 The SENCO is responsible for ensuring that all current students' needs are covered by this plan and for monitoring the effectiveness of the plan in meeting disabled students' needs.

6. Review

6.1 This Accessibility Plan has the status of a policy of the Governing Body and is reviewed every 3 years. The views of disabled students and parents will feed into the review.

12. Key to Action Plan

12.1. Priority Ratings

It is unlikely that you will be able to implement all the recommendations in the near future and we do recognise this. To this end a priority rating is given to each recommendation, which is designed to guide you in the formulation of the accessibility plan, which then can be incorporated into the school accessibility strategy and your School Improvement Plan (SIP).

Priorities for action may be dependent upon a range of factors including, for example:

- Compliance to AD M (Part M of The Building Regulations)
- Client's policy and objectives
- Current use of the building
- Costs involved and available budget and resources
- Plans for refurbishment
- Maintenance programmes
- Agreement of outside agencies (such as a free holder or local highway authority, planning permission)

It is for the schools' senior leadership and management to take ownership of actions to improve accessibility, in the context of the many competing demands schools face. The priorities suggested below may be helpful in that regard.

It is suggested that the schools' own development and improvement plan (SIP) contains targets linked to this Accessibility Action Plan, to encourage allocation of staffing and budget resource to support further improvements to accessibility.

Priority A:

Where there are potential health and safety risks or where failure to implement changes would be highly likely to attract legal implications. Immediate action is recommended to put changes into effect.

Priority B:

Where action is recommended within the short term to alleviate an access problem or make improvements that will have a considerable impact.

Priority C:

Where action is recommended within 12 - 24 months to improve access.

Priority D:

Where the recommendation involves excessive costs or should be implemented as part of a long-term plan.

12.2. Budget Implications

Potential budget costs have been suggested. Especially in the case of higher budget suggestions, it is recommended that quotation and tender exercises are undertaken in compliance with the schools and funding bodies financial regulations and appropriate budget allowed for at the point of preparing the school's annual expenditure budget.

N - None

Such recommendations are likely to be achievable with no revenue cost to the school.

OG - Ongoing Maintenance

Such recommendations are likely to be achievable within annual revenue budgets for annual maintenance as part of the annual planned preventative maintenance programme.

L - Low

Such recommendations are likely to be achievable for a budget of less than £1000

I - Intermediate

Such recommendations are likely to be achievable for a revenue budget of between £1000 & £5000. Such action may need allowing for at annual budget planning time.

H - High

Such recommendations are likely to be achievable for a capital budget cost above £5000. Such action will probably need allowing for at annual budget planning time.

ST - Structural Change

Such recommendations are likely to require a budget exceeding £15,000. Strategic Budget and Project planning at a professional level of support are likely to enhance delivery of the desired change.

13. Action Plan

13.1. Access to Information

Audit Ref	Audit Item	Suggested Actions	Priority	Budget Implications	Target date for completion	Ownership of Task (School to insert name)	Date Completed
		Maintain existing action and processes.					

13.2. Access to Site and Facilities

Audit Ref	Audit Item	Suggested Actions	Priority	Budget Implications	Target date for completion	Ownership of Task (School to insert name)	Date Completed
10.2.2	Disabled Parking	Ask if UTC Swindon will mark out an accessible bay in their car park, close to your entrance.	C	N	2026		
		Place a sign at the entrance to the Tadpole site carpark showing that	B	L	2025		

		there is accessible parking available and where it is located. For example: Erect a sign in front of the bays at a height of 1 metre (this is in case of snow on the ground). For example: Mark out a safe walkway in the Tadpole site carpark. For example: 	B B	L L	2025 2025		

10.2.5	Reception Facilities	Install portable hearing loops at UTC and Bagbury Park sites and clearly display the signs. 	B	L	2025		
		Provide either signage or instructions from the reception areas to the visitor's accessible toilets. For example:	B	L	2025		
		Provide a seat with high back and arms at Tadpole and Bagbury sites. For example: 	B	L	2025		

		  Provide signage next to the intercoms at the main entrances at each site. For example: Attention is needed to the reception area at UTC to make it more accessible to wheelchair users.	B C	L I	2025 2027		

10.2.6	External Areas	Install handrails to the outside steps at the Churchward site. All steps with 3 or more risings should have handrails fitted on both sides.	C	L	2026		
		Mark the edges of the steps with nosings. Nosings should be 2-inch strips which are painted or attached to the front and top of each step. Usually, yellow is used as it is a good contrasting colour. Re paint at the first sign of wear.					

10.2.9	Internal movement – Stairs and Lifts	Install B.S. compliant handrails to the missing sides of the stairwells at Bagbury. They need to be 50mm diameter and should be located 1000mm above the risers. They need to extend 300mm at the top and bottom of the steps. Highlight these steps with nosings. Arrange training in emergency release procedures if lifts break down, e.g., between floors for staff at UTC site.	C B	L L	2026 2025		
10.2.10	Accessible Toilets	All accessible toilets to have coat hooks, shelf for belongings and a mirror at an accessible height.	B	L	2025		

		All accessible toilets to be fitted with flashing fire alarms for deaf users. All accessible toilets to have emergency alarms with cords which are loose and can be reached from the ground.	B B	L L	2025 2025		
10.2.13	Internal Signage	Review internal signage and ensure it is all in both uppercase and lowercase lettering. Consider adding options in Braille. For example: 	B	L	2025		
10.2.18	Doors	Change non-compliant door handles to the D style of handle: Example:	C	L	2027		

		 Handles which do not contrast in colour to the door should either be changed or painted to a different colour. Example: 	B	L	2025		
10.2.20	Staff Facilities	Provide at least one high backed chair in the staff rooms. Provide an alternative accessible space for use by staff requiring accommodations at the Bagbury site.	B C	L L	2025 2026		

13.3. Access to Education							
Audit Ref	**Audit Item**	**Suggested Actions** Maintain existing actions and processes.	**Priority**	**Budget Implications**	**Target date for completion**	**Ownership of Task** **(School to insert name)**	**Date Completed**
10.3.5	Pupils with temporary, Emerging or Ongoing Health Care Needs	Install defibrillators at Bagbury and UTC sites. Contact The Oliver King Foundation https://theokfoundation.wixsite.com/theokfoundation/ourteam They will be able to give you advice and more information on the government's roll out scheme of providing defibrillators in schools.	B	N	2025		

13.4. Signatures

TITLE	NAME	SIGNATURE	DATE
Head Teacher			
SENCo			
Governor/Board Member			

Summary

14. Guidance and Support

14.1. Sources of general advice and information

Listed below are some documents that have been utilised for this report.

- The Equality Act 2010 and Schools – Departmental Advice for school leaders, school staff, governing bodies and local authorities, Department for Education (May 2014) (*quotes used under Open Government Licence V2.0*)
- Building Regulations Approved Document M - Access to and Use of Buildings (2004)
- British Standard BS8300:2009 - Design of Buildings and their approaches to meet the need of disabled people.
- DDA 1995 Code of Practice 'Rights of Access to Goods, Facilities, Services and Premises' 2005.
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and 2005, HMSO.
- British Standard BS9999:2008 - Code of practice for fire safety in the design, management and use of buildings.
- JMU Access Partnership & Sign Design Society - Sign Design Guide- A Guide to Inclusive Signage (2004).
- The Access Manual, by Anne Sawyer and Keith Bright, Blackwell, 2003.
- Access Audit Price Guide, Building Cost Information Service, 2002.

14.2. Links to Legislation & Codes of Practice

- https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25
- https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/398815/SEND_Code_of_Practice_January_2015.pdf
- https://schoolleaders.thekeysupport.com/pupils-and-parents/sen/managing/the-sen-code-ofpractice-a-summary/

14.3. Links to DfE Advice

- https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-guide-for-parents-and-carers
- https://www.gov.uk/topic/schools-colleges-childrens-services/special-educational-needs-disabilities

14.4. Links to Support organisations

Disability Rights Commission
DRC helpline
Freepost MID 020164
Stratford-upon-Avon CV37 9BR
Telephone (0845) 762 2633
Fax (0845) 777 8878
Text phone (0845) 762 2644

Radar – Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation
12 City Forum
250 City Road
London EC1V 8AF
Telephone (020) 7250 3222
Fax (020) 7250 0212
Minicom (020) 7250 4119

National Institute for the Blind
RNIB Customer Services
PO Box 133
Peterborough PE2 6WS
Telephone (0845) 7023153
Minicom (0845) 585691

Royal National Institute for Deaf People
19 - 23 Featherstone Street
London EC1Y 8SL
Telephone (020) 7296 8000
Text phone (020) 7296 8001
Fax (020) 7296 8199

Disabled Living Foundation
380-384 Harrow Road
London W9 2HQ
Telephone (0845) 130 9177 Minicom
(0870) 603

British Dyslexia Association
Switchboard: 0333 405 4555
Helpline**:** 0333 405 4567 Training**:**
0333 405 4565
https://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/

14.5. Links to Medical information

- https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions--3

14.6. Links to Suppliers of solutions

NB Equality Act Audits do not act for or on behalf of any suppliers or contractors. The suppliers listed here are merely indicative of the types of services available. School should undertake procurement of supplies and services with due regard to their own finance and procurement policies and procedures.