

Information for Parents and Carers

Reasonable Adjustments

What does 'reasonable adjustments' mean?

Under the Equality Act 2010 schools are required to make 'reasonable adjustments' so that all children can access their facilities and services.

The Equality Act 2010 replaced a number of different pieces of discrimination legislation, including the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 ('DDA'). It provides people with legal protection from discrimination in a variety of circumstances. Part 6, Chapter 1 of the Act addresses education specifically and talks about the protections offered to children in schools.

Who is responsible?

With regard to disabled pupils in particular, in order to meet this duty, the 'Responsible Body' of a school (such as the Governing Body) must prepare, implement and review a written 'Accessibility Plan', after having regard to the resources required to implement the plan.

The Accessibility Plan is designed to do a number of things:

- To increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school's curriculum
- To improve the physical environment of the school in order to help disabled pupils to take advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the school; and
- To improve the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is readily accessible to pupils who are not disabled. In addition, schools must take steps to ensure that disabled pupils receive the same quality of education as their peers. The school has a duty to make 'Reasonable Adjustments', where typical provision might put a disabled pupil at a 'Substantial Disadvantage'.

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What is reasonable?

An example of a 'Reasonable Adjustment' might simply be arranging for a student who uses a wheelchair or has a physical difficulty to have classes on the ground floor of the building, or ensuring that a teacher faces a hearing impaired student to enable them to lip-read.

These adjustments may already be provided for in a child's Education, Health & Care plan (EHCP) but, in the case that they are not, or the pupil does not have an EHCP, the school or Local Authority (LA) still has a duty to provide them.

Examples of an auxiliary aid or service could be the provision of an interpreter or note-taker, producing documents in Braille, or the provision of assistive listening devices.

However it is still not guaranteed that an 'Auxiliary Aid or Service' will be provided by the LA or school, as the law only says that they must determine whether or not it is 'reasonable' for them to provide it.

The term 'reasonable' is also not explicitly defined in the Act, which leaves it up to the discretion of the school or LA to determine this. Some (but not all) of the factors that may influence a decision are:

- Financial resources of the school
- Cost of the aid or service
- Effectiveness of the aid
- Effect on other pupils
- Health and safety requirements
- Provisions already made by the SEN Framework

Reasonable adjustments could include;

- A child wearing ear defenders or a slightly different piece of uniform to accommodate sensory sensitivities
- Starting and finishing lessons at slightly different times so that your child can avoid busy and crowded corridors
- Have support, or make alternative arrangements, for assemblies, school plays and sports days if you feel this would be in your child's best interests
- Having access to a 'quiet' area or separate work station
- Arranging support so your child can take part in school trips
- A child having movement breaks if they find sitting still difficult

Reasonable adjustments can take many forms and should be discussed with your child's school.

Further information [Rassets.publishing.service.gov.uk > attachment_data > file](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/attachment_data/file)

<https://network.autism.org.uk/knowledge/insight-opinion/reasonable-adjustments-autistic-pupils%E2%80%99-sensory-differences>

<https://www.disabilityrightsuk.org/adjustments-disabled-students>

If you would like help or want to discuss how we can support you to resolve any problems please call:

If you need to ask any questions or for further advice, please contact:

Barnardo's SENDIASS on **0191 4784667**

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