Record of Officer Decision

Education Accessibility and Inclusion Strategy

Decision Taker and Date Decision Taken:

Director of Children's Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children's Services, on 16 November 2026

Summary of Matter or Issue Requiring Decision:

Torbay Council is required by Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 to prepare and keep under review a written accessibility strategy for the schools it maintains. The new Education Accessibility and Inclusion Strategy provides the Council's strategic framework for increasing disabled pupils' participation in the curriculum, improving the physical environment of schools and improving access to information.

Decision Taken:

To approve and adopt the Education Accessibility and Inclusion Strategy attached to this Record of Decision and authorise its publication and implementation across maintained schools, with the framework also promoted to academy trusts and other education settings.

Summary of Reason(s) for Decision Taken:

The Strategy fulfils the Council's statutory accessibility planning duty and establishes a clear, evidence-informed approach to removing barriers for disabled children and young people. It aligns accessibility activity with Torbay's wider education, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) improvement and inclusion priorities and provides clear expectations for partnership working, school accessibility planning, monitoring and annual review.

Summary of Alternatives or Options considered and rejected and Background Papers:

Option 1, approve the Strategy: selected because it meets the statutory duty and provides an updated framework for coordinated action.

Option 2, retain the previous strategy: rejected because it would not reflect current local evidence, the 2025 SEND inspection findings, Torbay's current education and SEND priorities or the revised delivery arrangements.

Option 3, defer approval: rejected because delay would extend the period without an up-to-date strategic framework and weaken assurance that accessibility duties are being addressed systematically.

Background papers: Education Accessibility and Inclusion Strategy; Equality Impact Assessment; Equality Act 2010, Schedule 10; Children and Families Act 2014; SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years; Torbay Education Strategy; Torbay SEND Priority Impact Plan; Torbay Local Offer; school accessibility plans and evidence reviewed during development.

Details of any conflict of interest and dispensation granted to the Officer taking the decision or by any Member of the Council in delegating responsibility for any specific express delegation:

None

Implementation:

The Strategy will take effect following approval and publication. Children's Services will coordinate implementation with maintained schools and partners, monitor delivery through existing education and SEND governance arrangements and produce an annual report on progress, impact and future priorities.

A copy of this decision and any supporting documentation considered by the Officer taking this decision may also be available for inspection by the public at the Council's officers or posted upon payment of any copying and postage charges. Any member of the public wishing to take up either of these options is asked to please ring (01803) 207087 or email governance.support@torbay.gov.uk

Signed: _____ Date: 16 November 2026

Director of Children's Services