

Accessibility planning that drives inclusion, not just compliance



Aaron King

Inclusion Advisor

9000 Lives

w: 9000Lives.org
LinkedIn: Aaron King



Session outline

- How accessibility is misunderstood and plans can often fail.
- How to use your accessibility plan to drive real change for inclusion.
- Examples of accessibility plans helping learners to achieve, belong and thrive.

Please stand

“In England’s schools, accessibility plans are done well.”

Do you agree?

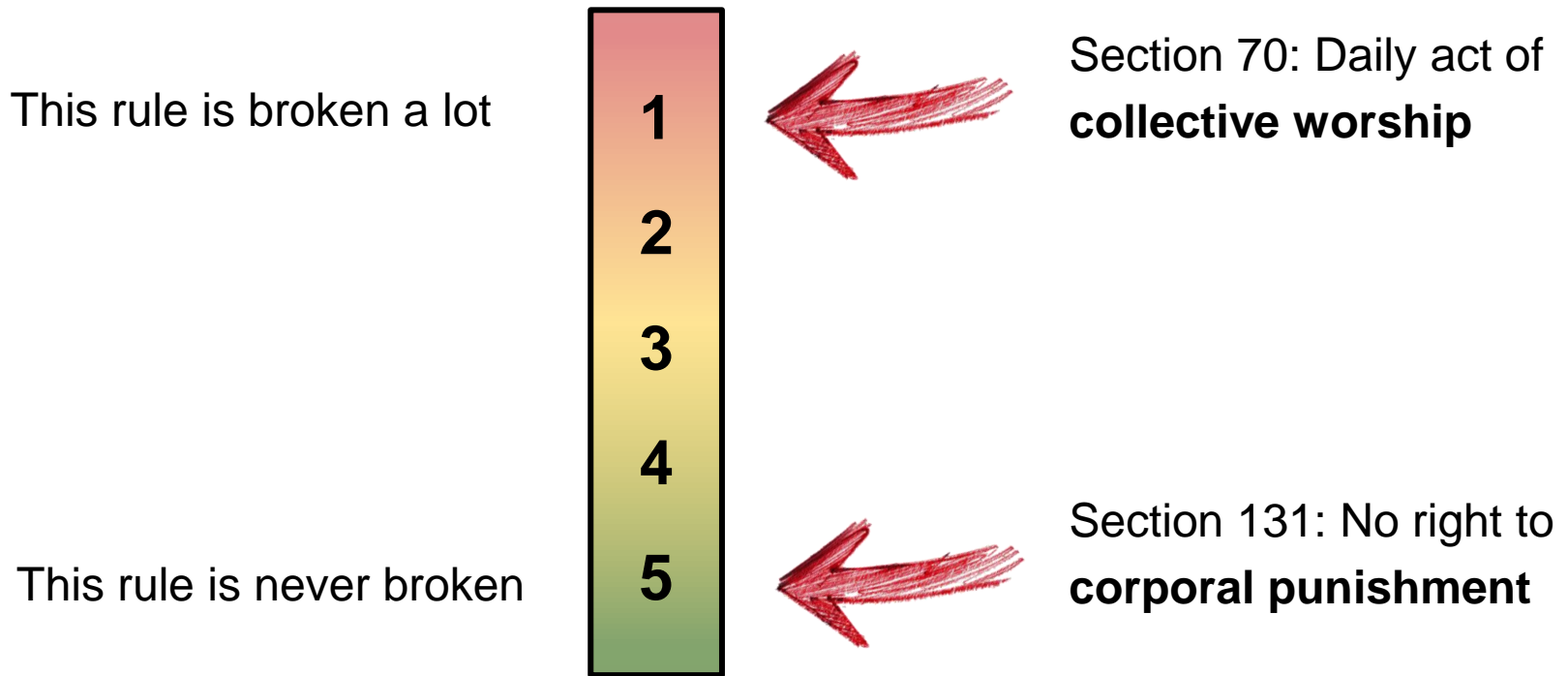
Think of a school – ideally yours:

“The previous accessibility plan had an excellent impact on outcomes.”

Do you agree?

Do school leaders and staff break rules?

School Standards and Framework Act 1998



What does the Equality Act say?

1

The governing body must make sure the school has an accessibility plan.

2

Must must cover three things:

3

1. Increasing curriculum access

4

2. Improving physical access

5

3. Improving written information



What does the Equality Act say?



Schools must make sure:

1. It is **implemented**
2. It is kept under review.
3. It is allocated **adequate money**.



Five steps to an accessibility plan

1 Go onto a website

2 Download a template

3 Put your school name in

4 Upload it to your website

5 In three years, repeat steps 1 - 4

Six alternative steps

1 Choose our reader

2 Choose our vision

3 Choose our goals

4 Check our inputs

5 Write our action plan

What's our vision?

It's your legacy for a single child.

Let's say that on Haggstones Road, a mum gives birth early. It's a difficult birth. The baby is born at 26 weeks and is very unwell in their first few days of life. The birth complications damage to the baby's fragile brain.

We want our school to be better by the time that child joins our school than if he joined us today.

Choose our goals (mainstream)

Examples of improving **curriculum access**:

- Every pupil leaves with a reading age that is at least their chronological age.
- Every pupil with SEND makes safe choices when online.
- Every pupil participates in a sport.
- Every pupil treats disabled people with respect and dignity, including those with mild disabilities.
- There is no bullying of other pupils because of their SEND.
- Every autistic pupil can identify positive autistic role models.



Choose our goals (mainstream)

Examples of improving **physical environment**:

- All displays and classroom labels can be read from 4m away.
- Display is more limited so that it does not risk overstimulating or distracting pupils.
- All 'cloakroom bottlenecks' have been removed or mitigated.
- All pupils with SLCN can speak and hear in the dining hall (because acoustic panels will reduce the noise).



Choose our goals (mainstream)

Examples of improving **written information**:

- All fire signs are written with symbol supported text.
- All safeguarding information for pupils has a reading age of 11 or below.
- Every pupil has a way to give their views (without relying on adult support).

1. Ofsted Survey

Children are well behaved in lessons.

What I think about School? (page 1)

Name: _____ Class: _____

Read the sentences. An adult can help with the reading.

Tick the picture that matches best what you think.

	Yes	No	Not Sure
I like school.			
My work is not too hard and not too easy.			
I know what my targets are.			
I learn lots at school.			
Adults at school help me.			

Page 1/20

2. How to improve school Pupils with SLD

Draw something that you want to change about school.

3. Preferences (pre-verbal pupils).

My favourite things are:

- books
- apples
- ice cream
- toy cars
- toy trains
- toy blocks
- toy trucks
- toy cars
- toy trains
- toy blocks
- toy trucks

4. Pupil views (N36)

What do you like doing?
You can include things at home and at school.

My Views for my Annual Review Meeting

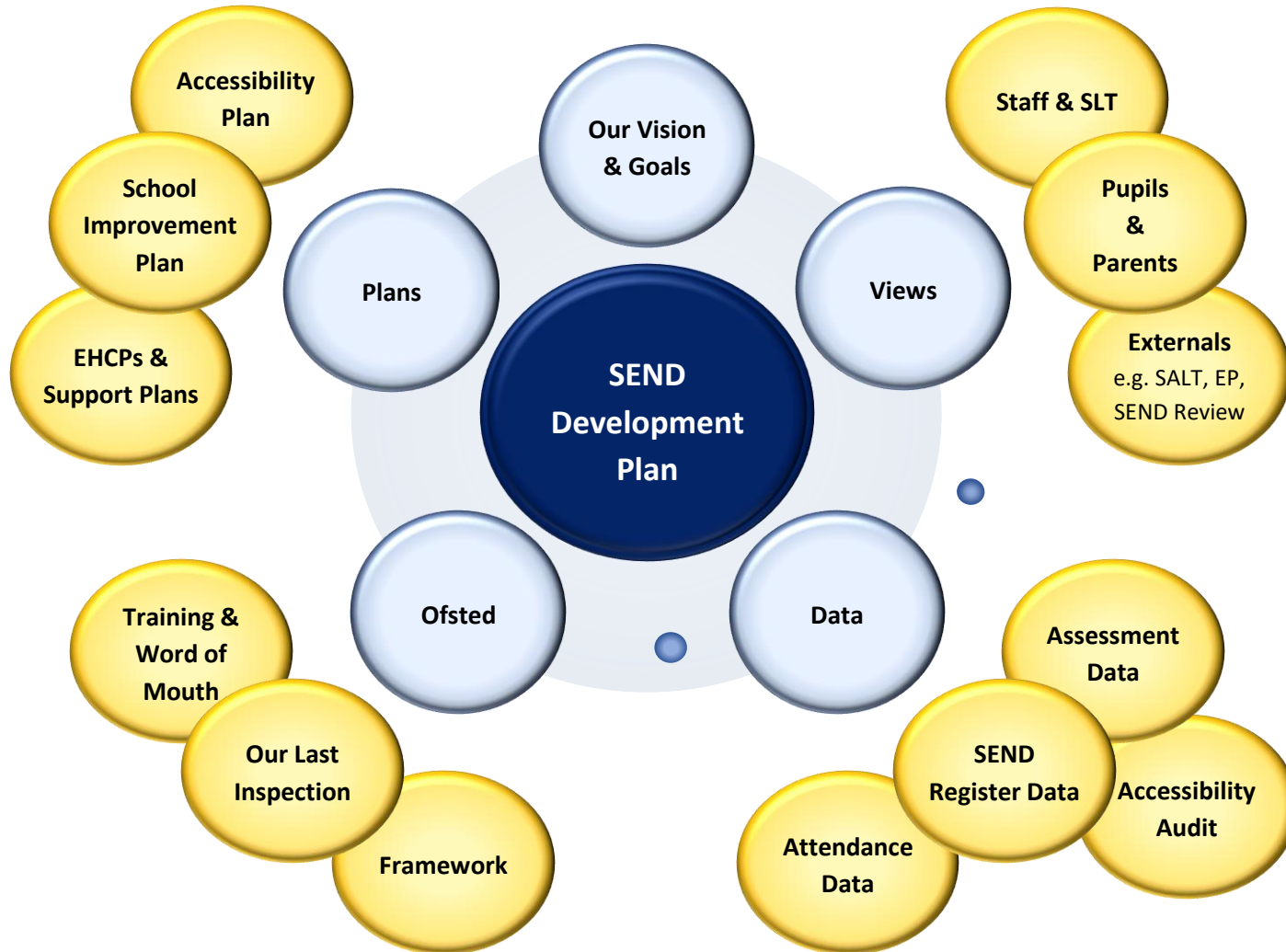
Name	
Class	
Date	

Choose our goals (special SEMH)

Examples:

- All pupils, who have been with us for more than 12 months, express positive feelings about reading.
- No pupil, who has been with us for a term or more, ever brings a vape or drug paraphernalia into school.

What are our inputs?



1. Write actions (access to the curriculum)

Core subjects

- In maths, we will check that PowerPoints are not being overused or used without tailoring. *This is so that* learning is sufficiently active and tailored.
- We will train Y4-Y6 teaching assistants in using MS Word's speech to text. *This is so that* dyslexic pupils can **complete** longer tasks without adult support.

Foundation curriculum

- We will review how we deliver the outdoor and adventurous activities in PE. *This is so that we enhance* our provision for social and emotional development.

Wider curriculum

- We will add an after-school badminton club for older pupils (Y7/Y8). *This is so that* more SEND pupils are more active.

Curriculum for pre-verbal pupils...

Curriculum for SEMH...

Access to curriculum for pupils with EBSA...

2. Write actions (physical environment)

Think physical disability, but also neuro diversity and social, emotional and mental health (SEMH). For example:

1. Inclusion Base environment C&I, SEMH, C&L,
2. **Acoustics** C&I, SEMH, Deaf
3. Signs and labels C&I, C&L
4. Display C&I, SEMH, C&L, VI
5. Cloakrooms C&I, SEMH
6. **Bottlenecks around school** C&I, SEMH, PD
7. Playgrounds and fields All
8. Step out areas C&I, SEMH, C&L
9. Blinds All
10. Changing rooms? All

3. Write actions (written information)

So that every child can access information about themselves, without over reliance on an adult:

- We will adapt our SEND plans to be more concise (e.g. removing LAC status, DOB, address).
- We will write individual support plans in language that children can understand.
- We will simplify plans so that

So that every child can give their views without relying on 1:1 support:

- We will adapt our pupil voice templates so that every child can independently access a way of having their voice heard (includes Ofsted questionnaire, Annual Review views, What I wish my teacher knew).

So that we maximise engagement for our pupils who are reluctant to read:

- We will buy graphic novels to improve engagement of weaker readers in KS3.
- We will review and update our football stock (e.g. Ultimate Football Heroes series – Mo Salah, Phil Foden etc).

3. Write actions (written information)

So that we maximise progress for our free readers:

- Teachers will monitor the appropriateness of free-readers book choices and check how often they change their book.
- We will train free readers to choose books at instructional level (e.g. 3 steps to a great read: 1. Does it interest me? Can I read a page and use the five finger rule? Did I understand what I read?).
- We will display the *3 Steps to a Great Read* in the Library.
- We will refer to the *3 Steps to a Great Read* in assembly.

So that we maximise progress in for our pupils who are on the reading scheme:

- Each April, we will audit our reading scheme books (e.g. appeal, condition and number of books at each level).
- We will update training for teachers and support staff in the most effective ways to support children when reading 1:1.

3. Write actions (written information)

So that our presentation is as accessible as possible, do the school use:

- ✓ 1.2 line spacing?
- ✓ Good contrast?
- ✓ Non-cursive font?
- ✓ Clear backgrounds?
- ✓ No text over images?
- ✓ Margins that avoid crowding text?

Or not?



3. Write actions (written information)

Core subjects

- In maths, we will check that PowerPoints are not being overused or used without tailoring. *This is so that* learning is sufficiently active and tailored.

It's your legacy for a single child.

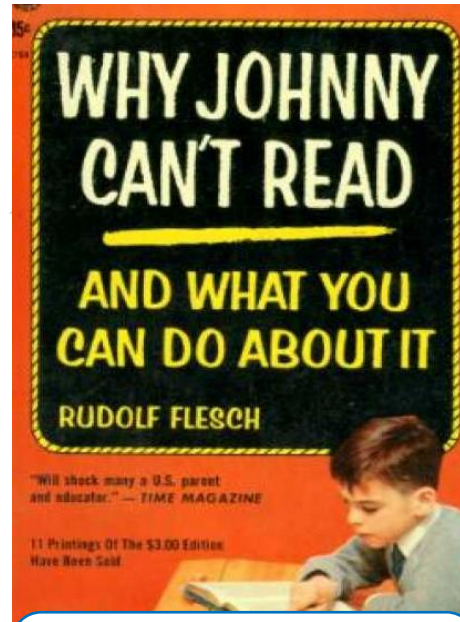
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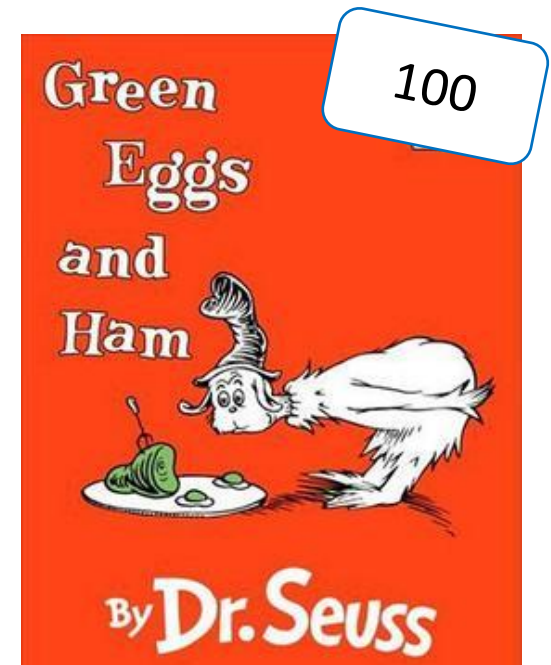
From Austria to Green Eggs



Rudolf Flesch



1955



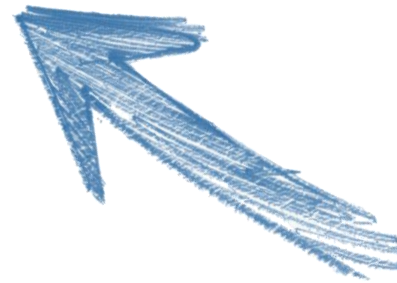
R readable

Flesch Reading Ease

$$206.835 - 1.015 \left(\frac{\text{total words}}{\text{total sentences}} \right) - 84.6 \left(\frac{\text{total syllables}}{\text{total words}} \right)$$


From Austria to Green Eggs

Readability Statistics		?	×
Counts			
Words	2,370		
Characters	13,833		
Paragraphs	248		
Sentences	61		
Averages			
Sentences per Paragraph	3.2		
Words per Sentence	15.5		
Characters per Word	5.4		
Readability			
Flesch Reading Ease	32.8		
Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level	12.4		
Passive Sentences	22.9%		
<input type="button" value="OK"/>			



Clarity	4
Conciseness	1
Formality	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Inclusiveness	1
Punctuation Conventions	2
Resume	2
Sensitive Geopolitical References	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Vocabulary	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Similarity

 Check for similarity to online sources.

Insights

Give feedback to Microsoft

Ofsted

Ofsted's planning call

Inspectors will explore:

- Leaders' recent and ongoing priorities and challenges, the actions they have taken to maintain or improve standards.
- Steps the school has taken to meet the duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils.

Taken from the School inspection operating guide for inspectors, 2025

Gathering evidence about inclusion

- “The published school accessibility plan meets the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, is implemented effectively and is reviewed regularly.”

Taken from the State-funded school inspection toolkit, 2025

Help me get started

CDC / DfE published a handbook for you.

Supported by



**Accessibility plans and the Equality Act 2010:
a handbook for schools**

Philippa Stobbs OBE

Council for Disabled Children

July 2025



Five final tips

1. Right person, right money, right title.
 - Give it to the right person (SENCo or line manager)
 - Give it money (SEN budget or capital)
 - Call it a Inclusion Action Plan.
2. Can you stop writing a SEND development plan?

Stop press!

In autumn term, some of your accessibility plan can be copied into your Inclusion Strategy.

Dear Alex...



Accessibility planning that drives inclusion, not just compliance



Aaron King

Inclusion Advisor

9000 Lives

www.9000Lives.org
Linkedin: Aaron King

