



Most Inclusive Practice Across a School St Phillip's C of E Primary School, Southport

Background

B, a bubbly and excitable 4 year old, suffers from the degenerative condition Ullrich's Muscular Dystrophy. I was approached by B's parents in the February of 2014, before B was due to begin school. His parents were committed to the idea that B should be able to attend the same school as his older brother and sister. They had been advised by the Local Authority that B's needs would be better catered for at another local primary school but were determined that he should be educated in the same school and in same way and by the same team of teachers and teaching assistants as his siblings. There were many reasons why it would have been very difficult for St Phillips to meet the needs of such a special little boy, but just like his parents we were determined to ensure that our commitment to equality was upheld and decided that we would make whatever adaptations B needed, meeting the challenges of funding head on.

We invited B's parents into school and in consultation with an advisor from the Local Authority assessed the whole school environment to identify challenges which would need to be addressed.

Challenges included

- The reception outdoor area
- The reception toilets
- The playground surface

- The layout of the reception classroom
- The accessibility to continuous provision
- The cloakroom area
- The taps on the sink
- The inaccessible computer suite
- The doors into the main building
- Challenging stereotypes
- Practitioner understanding of the condition.
- P.E lessons
- Concerns around parking as we have no disabled space
- The ratio of adults to children
- The doors inside the main building
- Arranging additional visits to school and spending time with B in his current setting.
- Interviewing for 1 -1 support
- Application for High Needs Funding
- Building relationships between parents and staff

Where we began

We applied to the Liverpool Diocese for a Disability Grant and were delighted to be told that they had agreed to fund some of the work that needed to be completed. The original school building dates back to 1894 and this presented many access challenges.

The Governing board and I decided that the approach that we would take would be to address each classroom, year on year, as B moved up through the school. By altering and adapting our approach, in line with B's needs at the time, we would address specific needs in the most appropriate way. The focus initially was the reception classroom, outdoor area and ensuring a really positive start.

Alterations and adaptations that occurred to ensure B was able to fully integrate with his peers

Ramps and decking to the outdoor area.

Raised activities to enable easier access to the Early Years Outdoor provision.

Training for all staff but most specifically the class teacher, teaching assistant and newly appointed 1 -1 Learning Support Assistant and a new dinner time supervisor.

Adaptations to the toilet area including specialised taps and soap dispensers. Additional grab rails.

Newly appointed fitted furniture to enable B to access continuous provision either seated in his wheelchair or standing.

Parking space for wheelchair in school.

Named parking space created in the car park.

Purchase of 20 iPads to enable teaching of ICT in the classroom without the need to go to the ICT suite currently situated upstairs.

Staff sent on specialist PE course to enable adaptations to teaching and learning in PE.

Specialist advice sought from both Occupational Therapists and Physiotherapist to ensure both environment and Curriculum continue to meet B's needs.

Raising awareness for whole school population – Go Orange Day – Children and staff carried out activities, sold cakes, wore orange and listened to a speaker from the Muscular Dystrophy UK.

You tube clip <https://t.co/7sq1zUzkY5>

The situation currently

B is now past the half-way point on his reception learning journey. He is settled, happy and completely included. In a recent review meeting held with staff at school, B's parents and specialist support team, it was noted that the

support and excellent practice provided by the school was ensuring that B had fully inclusive access to the primary curriculum.

B enriches the lives of everyone that he comes into contact with and as a school we feel blessed to have him here. B has taught us so much and enabled us to make many adaptations. He has opened our eyes to the difficulties that disability brings. As a school we are committed to continuing this journey with B and will carry on doing all that we can to make sure that he is completely and utterly immersed in an education that enables him to develop high self-esteem, meets his academic needs and is a totally inclusive, joyful experience. The open and honest dialogue between home, school and Health professionals and B's own opinions has been at the heart of everything that we have done.