
Advice Sheet E

Environmental questions to consider regarding vision

Schools are regularly changing and classrooms/corridors are reconfigured/re-painted. The following list is a series of questions that the school might like to bear in mind and possibly include in the school Accessibility Plan for the future as ongoing changes are made to the decor and fabric of the building and outside environment:

- Are the levels of lighting generally good throughout the school (i.e. no dark areas at all)?
- Are lighting levels consistent?
- Are doors clearly labelled at pupils' eye level?
- Are doors hinged so they cannot be left half open?
- Is there sufficient space without obstructions to move easily within rooms, corridors etc?
- Is the flooring plain without confusing patterns?
- Is the flooring a matt finish to avoid glare?
- Are changes in surfaces clearly defined? (e.g. between carpet and lino)
- Is furniture set out in an orderly way? Is furniture kept in the same place?
- Does the colour of the furniture clearly contrast with the floor and walls?
- Steps/stairs/ramps – are edges clearly defined in a contrasting colour? Do they have handrails on both sides that are the same length as the steps?
- Are computer monitors at pupils' eye level?
- Are computer monitors positioned to avoid glare on the screen?
- Is the ceiling a pale colour lighter than the walls (eg matt white)?
- Are walls painted in a matt, plain, pale colour (to avoid glare and provide contrast with the furniture)
- Are the doors, doorframes, skirting and floor well contrasted?
- Are doorknobs, light switches, power points etc. highlighted in a contrasting colour to doors and walls?
- Is natural light through windows controlled by blinds, curtains or tinted glass?
- Do the blinds/curtains fit and operate properly?
- Is playground equipment (e.g. a basketball net/stand) surrounded by soft textured cushioning in a contrasting colour to the background surface?
- Does playground equipment/furniture (eg benches, bins, signposts) stand out from the ground surface and background?
- Are there tactile/visual clues to mark the boundary between outside and inside (e.g. metal grids, rubber/bristled mats)?
- Are the school site boundaries clearly identified by colour or texture?