

Accessibility Budget – guidance for Richmond community schools

The Accessibility Budget exists to improve access to mainstream community schools for pupils with disabilities. The grant is available to Richmond's community schools only - voluntary aided schools should approach their diocese for funding; while for academies SEN funding is included in their General Annual Grant. Richmond's PFI schools should contact the PFI officer in the first instance, as this may be a variation to the PFI contract.

Please note; the Accessibility Budget is part of the Education Planned Maintenance budget set aside by the Council each financial year. This budget can be subject to change.

Community schools can apply for capital funding for building works to adapt and improve the school building, or buy specialised equipment to make the school more accessible to a child with disabilities. Schools may need to fund items considered revenue expenditure or to make a contribution to a project cost.

Funding is allocated, based on the needs of a specific child, to schools that currently have, or are due to admit, one or more disabled pupils on roll.

As set out in AfC's *Accessibility Strategy Action Plan 2015-2018*, we aim to deal with your requests quickly, by informing the school of dis/agreement of funding as soon as possible. Bids from schools are assessed by a panel, the *Access Liaison Group*, which includes officers from Richmond Council and AfC, and includes members of the Health and Safety, SEN and Disabilities teams and a sensory impairment teacher. Applications are assessed throughout the academic year, on a first come, first served basis.

Examples of previous building projects funded:

Accessible toilets
Wet rooms
Lift/platform lifts
Widening of doors

Ramps
Acoustic adaptations to classrooms
Automatic doors
Handrails, fencing and gates

Examples of equipment funded:

Blinds	Changing tables
EVAC chairs	Height adjustable desks
Hoists	Soundfield systems
Special chairs	

Examples of past bids where funding was declined:

- Painting of lines on ground or walls (as panel agreed that this work could be completed by the school's caretaker at minimal cost);
- ICT equipment, wheelchairs and standing frames (as the panel felt it was reasonable to expect a school to pay for such relatively low cost items themselves).

Please also note that we do not provide any additional ongoing revenue funding for equipment that is purchased; the ongoing maintenance of hoists and lifts, for example, will be the responsibility of the school.

How to apply:

Your bid should be sent to:

building-development@achievingforchildren.org.uk

Subject line: "Accessibility budget bid"

Although this is not an exhaustive list, the following information will support your bid and assist with decision making:

- Brief details of the pupil and their specific needs;
- Brief details of the barriers to their accessing the curriculum;
- A letter of support from the school's SENco; or an occupational / speech and language therapist, paediatrician, doctor or physiotherapist currently working with the child;
- A scope of works or list of equipment required;
- For projects that involve building works - supporting site photographs or an annotated floorplan showing where the works are to be undertaken;
- One quote or estimate from a building contractor and/or specialist equipment provider (if an estimate, please state what additional

allowance the contractor advises may be needed to deal with any abnormal conditions associated with the project);

- Phone number / email address for person leading on behalf of the school (usually the school's SENco or Inclusion Manager).