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Equipment and furniture

Our target settings are looking at how furniture and equipment can help to create a more inclusive childcare environment.



Auditing process

Using a self-assessment audit tool, the settings are asking themselves questions about their existing furniture and equipment, such as:

- Is the furniture accessible for all the children (eg height adjustable, accessible for wheelchair)?
- Can all children access equipment independently – inside and outside the setting (eg via ramps)?
- Can lighting be adjusted?
- Is there a hearing loop?
- Is the space well organised and clutter free?
- Can furniture be folded away to increase floor space, where needed?
- Are hazard/warning signs in place outside and inside the setting?
- Is there a suitable changing station and hoist, if necessary?
- Are the outside play spaces fully accessible to all children?

With support from Family Action, settings are also looking at possible areas for improvement, such as:

- using rubber silencers to reduce noise levels (eg on chairs and tables)
- developing a sensory area (eg inside the setting or in the garden)
- choosing a colour to paint the inside walls of the setting that is more 'calming' (eg for children with autism)
- providing accessible play frames that are wheelchair-friendly.

Some examples of changes that target settings have made include:

- installing raised beds in the outside area, to enable children using walking frames or wheelchairs to take part in gardening activities more easily
- setting up a soft furnished area (eg den with cushions and soft toys)
- purchasing height adjustable tables and water trays
- using Makaton symbols on furniture and equipment.

Further information

- Family Action is funded by the Department for Education (DfE) to support school-based childcare providers with developing high-quality and inclusive childcare for 0-5s with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Find out more about the project, and download a wide range of free resources from: www.learning-exchange.org.uk
- Our Learning Exchange Facebook page gives links to events, suppliers, equipment, training and venues that might be of interest to school-based childcare providers: www.facebook.com/pages/Learning-Exchange/904749822892733?sk=timeline

Produced by Family Action: Unit 24 Angel Gate, City Road, Islington, London EC1V 2PT
www.family-action.org.uk

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