

Writing a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) for children or young people with a physical disability: A Toolkit for mainstream schools.

Introduction

A well-constructed PEEP needs to be effective in supporting the safe evacuation of children and young people with a physical disability.

The '**Writing a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan for children or young people with a physical disability: A Toolkit for mainstream settings**' aims to support you and your colleagues to:

- enable you to consider how physical disability affects someone in an emergency.
- guide you through the process of understanding your school's legal duties and responsibilities
- effectively write a robust PEEP for children and young people with a physical disability in your setting considering methods of assistance, use of emergency evacuation aids, procedures, safe routes.

Although the focus of the toolkit is on children and young people with a physical disability it should be stressed that all types of disability should be considered.

A Definition of Physical Disability

Legal Definition of Disability:

- '**A person has a disability, if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on the ability to carry out normal day to day activities**'. (Equality Act 2010)

The term Physical Disability:

- describes how a medical condition or injury impacts on an individual in terms of physicality.
- includes those who may be non-ambulant or temporarily disabled through injury.
- is an umbrella term, covering a range of impairments which can impact on an individual's ability to carry out tasks and participate in the activities of everyday life.
- covers a wide range of situations and the extent of the impact may be perceived as mild to severe.
- is not just a health issue: It is often complex and includes a person's medical, physical social and emotional needs. A person may also have other associated conditions e.g. autism.

Disability Evacuation and the Law

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 places a legal duty on those with '**responsibility**' over the management and operation of premises to:

- provide adequate means for emergency escape in the event of fire for all building occupants including members of staff or visitors who suffer from some degree of impairment that puts them at a disadvantage in the event of an emergency.

- Undertake a fire risk assessment as the means by which a 'responsible person' can identify and manage fire risks. The provision of facilities for the safe emergency evacuation of those with impairments should be considered an important part of the fire risk management process.

Head teachers and governors are classed as '**responsible persons**' and so have a duty to comply with legislation and follow relevant fire safety guidance of school.

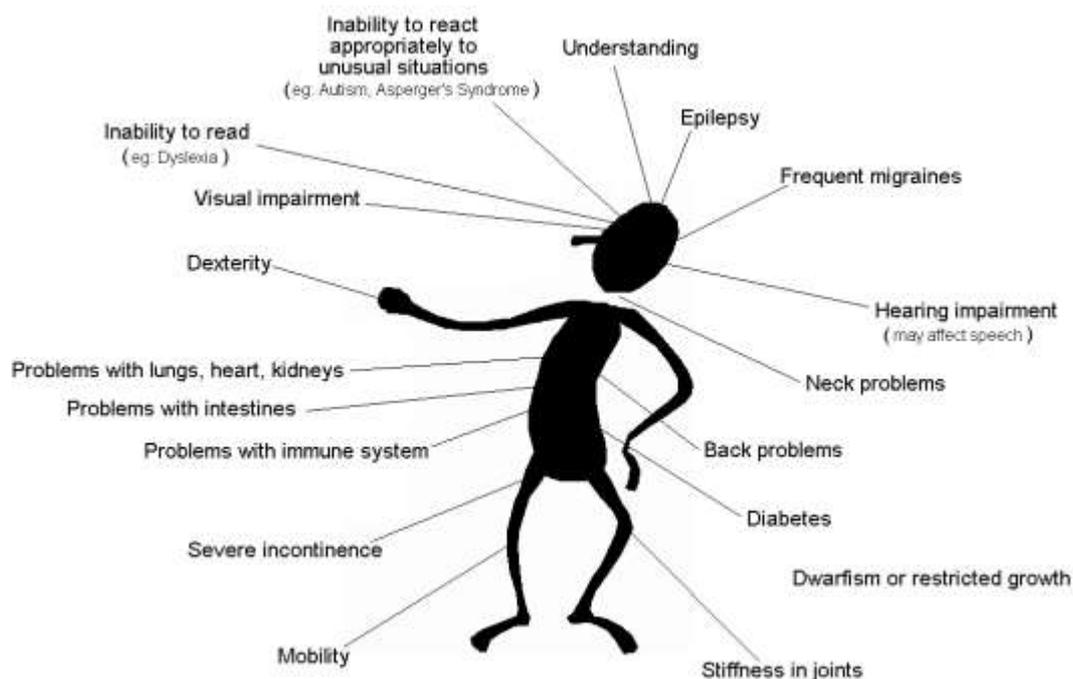
The responsible person must where necessary safeguard the safety of relevant persons by ensuring that:

- Emergency routes and exits:
 - are indicated by signs and those requiring illumination are provided with emergency lightening of adequate intensity in normal lightening fails
 - lead as directly as possible to a place of safety
 - should be clear at all times
- Emergency doors are not locked, instead should be easily opened by any person who may require to use them in an emergency
- Emergency doors open in the direction of escape so that it is possible for persons to evacuate the premises as quickly as possible.

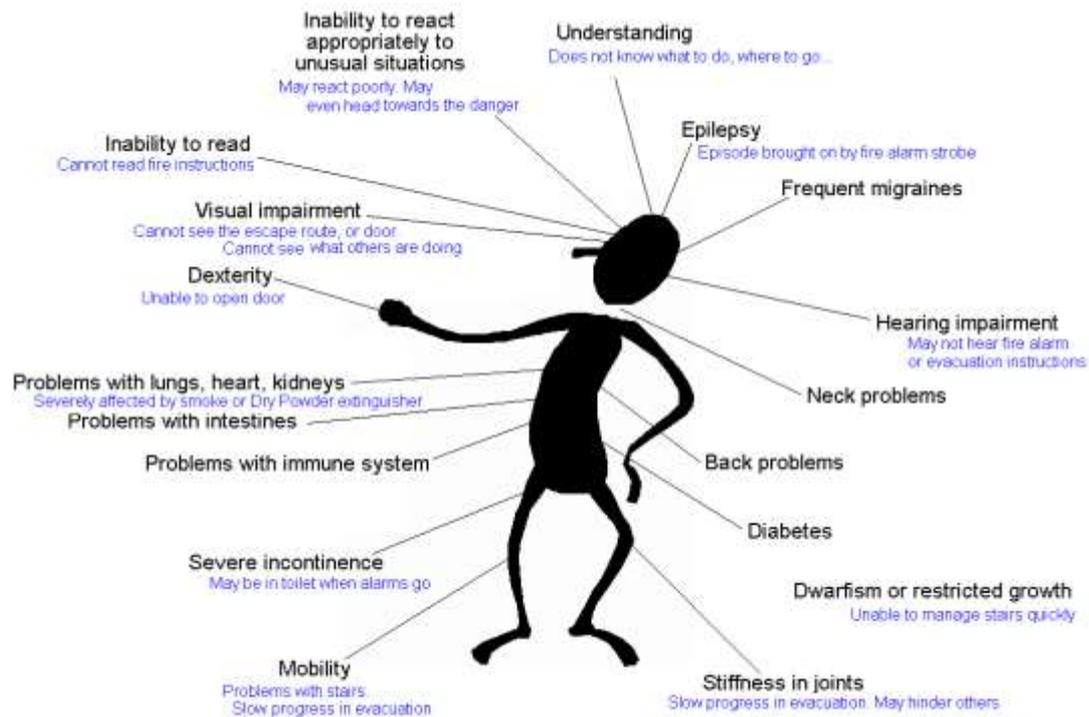
Employees must cooperate with the responsible person/employer to ensure that the work place is safe from fire and its effects and must not do anything that will place themselves or other people at risk.

How could a Physical Disability affect somebody in an emergency?

Some types of difficulties that may affect an evacuation



How could these affect somebody in an emergency?



Individuals with physical disabilities have unique needs and capabilities that may put them at risk from performing even the most basic fire safety practises. They may also have other needs e.g. underlying health conditions, medical needs, learning needs, hearing impairment or visual impairment.

These limitations include:

Mobility conditions

- wheelchair user,
- unable to access the physical environment
- stiffness in joints-
- unable to walk with support of equipment e.g. walking aids: walker, crutches
- totally reliant on the actions of others e.g. to propel wheelchair,
- restricted growth and unable to use stairs, or manage stairs quickly
- slow pace, frequent stops, slow progress in evacuation,
- unable to open the door (Dexterity)

Medical Conditions:

- problems with lungs, heart, kidneys- severely affected by smoke
- may be connected to medical equipment, O2,
- seizures brought on by the sight of a strobe (Epilepsy)

Learning Needs:

- may not have an understanding of the danger, does not know what to do, where to go, may react by going in any direction, even towards the danger,
- inability to read- cannot read fire instructions,
- inability to communicate verbally

Hearing Impairment:

- may not hear fire alarm or evacuation instructions

Visual Impairment:

- unable to see escape route, fire exit door or obstacles in the way,
- cannot see what others are doing

Examples of Emergency Evacuation Aids

Emergency Evacuation aids can be used following appropriate training as using incorrectly could lead to injury to the evacuee or persons carrying out the evacuation.

Evacuation Chairs:

- enables moving an individual downstairs/upstairs
- minimises the risk of manual handling and associated injuries which could occur if an individual were to be physically carried out of the building.
- come in different shapes and sizes with different functions and capabilities.
- all evacuation equipment will require full chair training and regular practice - contact the provider of the equipment to arrange training. If a manual handling issues arises following this training e.g. how to transfer the individual in/out of the evacuation chair contact the Physical and medical team.

Evacuation sheets, sledges and Slip mats

- can be used for individuals with physical difficulties/mobility impairment.
- can be used through corridors as well as on stairs. (the size of door and corridors on the escape route need to be checked to ensure this will fit through).
- have straps and buckles so that the individual is securely strapped to whilst moved to safety.

Writing a PEEP?

What is a PEEP ?: A PEEP is a **Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan** personal to the needs of an individual who may need assistance to evacuate a building or reach a place of safety in the event of an emergency. Its aim is to provide an individual who can't get themselves out of a building unaided with the necessary information and assistance to be able to manage their escape to a place of safety.

Writing a PEEP:

- Assess the needs of the individual taking into account their physical disability, their capabilities and identify what assistance is required (including the extent of such assistance) in order to evacuate a building or reach a place of safety in the event of an emergency.
- From the information gathered a PEEP should be developed.

- It needs to be written with active participation of the child/young person, parents/carers, school staff/specialist staff and other agencies e.g. health.
- Input from health and safety officers and others may be necessary to ensure adaptations are in place for safe evacuation from the building.

What should be included ?:

- how the alarm will be raised
- identify and name individuals responsible for assisting the individual ensuring their safe removal from the building
- outline the method of assistance e.g. transfer procedures to be used for the individual in each area of the building
- identify what equipment will be used
- outline the step by step evacuation procedure
- outline the safe route to be used
- named additional personal needs to be included to cover possible staff absence.

Responsibilities MUST be clearly communicated to persons responsible for assisting and a copy of the PEEP given to the individual, all staff named in the document as well as parents. A copy also needs to be retained in the pupil Profile record.

Training:

To be effective, any Emergency Plan depends on the ability of staff to respond efficiently. Staff will therefore need to receive instructions, practical demonstrations and training appropriate to their responsibilities.

This may include some/all of the following elements:

- Fire drills
- Specific training/instruction for nominated members of staff e.g. Fire Wardens

Methods of Assistance

Methods of assistance/guidance needs to include:

- details of transfers procedures outlining how transfers procedures will be made to enable safe evacuation to take place speedily and safely
- details of methods of guidance
- outlines what equipment will be used

Equipment provided

- list equipment provided
- equipment should be listed in connection with safe evacuation e.g. if a child is in a standing frame, hoist or classroom chair that equipment may be suitable for immediate evacuation. If not, use of evacuation aids for removal downstairs must be considered and recorded as required. (see above examples of evacuation aids)

Considerations-Provision of evacuation chairs or comparable equipment and staff trained in the correct and safe techniques for using this equipment.

Evacuation Procedure

The exact procedure needs to:

- provide a step by step account beginning from the alarm being activated and finishing at the point when the individual reaches the assembly point outside the building.
- must be detailed for each type of evacuation e.g. evacuation using a wheelchair, from a height adjustable bed, classroom floor, sensory room, swimming pool, etc.
- include the details of the named persons assisting the individual
- outline what safe route is to be used considering individual's time table, access to different areas of the building, different buildings
- Given the unique characteristics of buildings and the need for a PEEP to take account of an individual's capabilities, individuals with physical disabilities who regularly use different buildings may have to have a separate PEEP for each building.
- A list of the safe escape routes out of the school building should be made for each pupil requiring a PEEP, considering their timetable and access to rooms/areas of the building.
- In the event of a wheelchair user accessing an upper floor of a building, a method of evacuation needs to be identified as the lift cannot be used unless it is an 'evacuation lift'.
- If an 'Evacuation chair' or other evacuation aids are not suited for an individual with a physical disability/wheelchair user to use from an upper floor, advice can be sought from the Fire safety officer or Fire and Rescue Service regarding an agreed procedure.
- In the case of a swimming pool consideration must be made to provision of silvered emergency blankets near to the exit for collection on the way out of the building.

A map of the school site with highlighted fire exits and safe routes is very useful.

Lifts: Most lifts cannot be used in an emergency. Any lift used for the evacuation should be an "evacuation lift." The individual lift servicing contractor, or a Specialist Fire Safety Advisor, will be able to tell you if, and in what circumstances, a lift may be used in the event of a fire.

Temporary refuges: Some school buildings have a designated 'temporary refuge'. Anyone staying put in the building could be subject to possible prosecution unless there is a specific 'Stay Put Policy' that has been agreed with the West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue service.

Fire Drills:

Ensure a fire drill is practiced using the PEEP as least termly to ensure safe and swift evacuation. Review the PEEP following the fire drill and reflect on any changes that need to be made and identify further arrangements as required. Practising of a routine at a time without a fire alarm sounding may be very beneficial to children with hearing/visual impairments and those with auditory/ other sensory hyper/hyposensitivity.

Review and update

Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans must be reviewed:

- at least annually
- or earlier if there is a change to the individual's health, mobility needs, equipment, or timetable.
- or following a request from parent, carer, child/young person, school staff or health

professionals.

Example of a PEEP

Name	
Building	
Floor	
Room	
Department	

AWARENESS OF PROCEDURE:

The child/ young person is informed of a fire evacuation by:

Existing alarm system	Visual alarm	Staff member	Other

DESIGNATED ASSISTANCE:

The following people have been designated to give the pupil assistance to get out of the building in an emergency.

Name	
Contact details	

METHODS OF ASSISTANCE: E.g. transfer procedures, methods of guidance etc. Include a diagram of escape routes of the building if possible.

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EQUIPMENT PROVIDED including means of communication

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EVACUATION PROCEDURE: A step by step account beginning from the alarm being activated

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SAFE ROUTE (S):

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SENDCO's signature	
Date of initial assessment	
Date of PEEP	
Date of REVIEW (minimum annually)	

Copied to

Pupil Profile Record	
Class folder for all staff (including subject teachers)	
visiting specialists and supply teachers	
Parents/Carers	
Site manager	

Example of a completed PEEP

Name	Pupil Z
Building	X Primary School
Floor	All on level ground floor
Room	Mr Smith's Y2 Classroom
Department	n/a

AWARENESS OF PROCEDURE:

The child/ young person is informed of a fire evacuation by:

Existing alarm system	Visual alarm	Staff member	Other
		x	

DESIGNATED ASSISTANCE:

The following people have been designated to give the pupil assistance to get out of the building in an emergency.

Name	Mr Smith / Classroom teacher / Mrs Lee / Ms Zolt / Ms Ryan
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Contact details	Insert internal phone numbers / work mobiles
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METHODS OF ASSISTANCE: E.g. transfer procedures, methods of guidance etc.

- Pupil Z to be assisted in her wheelchair to the KS1 playground via the rear exit or ramped classroom exit
- Pupil Z to be assisted out of the building in her standing frame / walker
- Pupil Z to be evacuated out of the building using an evacuation cushion / pod / mat from the therapy bench or the floor
- If the walker / standing frame are difficult to manoeuvre then Pupil Z to be assisted rapidly to the floor and the equipment above will be used

EQUIPMENT PROVIDED: including means of communication

- manual wheelchair
- standing frame (wheeled)
- walker (Kaye walker)
- mobile toilet frame (on wheels)
- mat (gym mat) for playground / floor
- communication is verbal.

EVACUATION PROCEDURE: A step by step account beginning from the alarm being activated

- When the fire alarm sounds, the class teacher will designate a TA or leave what he is doing and go straight to Pupil Z. (Other children in the class will receive verbal instruction to line up at the class door)
- The class teacher/TA will push Pupil Z in her wheelchair out of the school building using the nearest and safest route.
- When Pupil Z is in her walker, standing frame, the class teacher/TA will push the equipment out of the nearest fire exit.
- When Pupil Z is on the floor the class teacher/TA will assist her to the evacuation cushion, beanbag or mat to evacuate her out of the classroom and through the nearest fire exit.
- If in the toilet, Pupil Z will be assisted out having first ensured clothes are in place, using the mobile toilet frame.
- Ramps are in position from every exit in the school, and once outside the building Pupil Z will be taken to the assembly point for her class in the KS1 playground. If at the back of the building an adult will remain with her as moving over the grass area is difficult if in the wheelchair/walker/standing frame. However, Pupil Z will be removed away from the building.

SAFE ROUTE(S)

- Pupil Z will leave the school building via the rear entrance and be assisted around to the front of the building to the class assembly point.
- If the rear exit is blocked, then Pupil Z will be assisted by an adult to leave the school building via the classroom fire exit and down the ramp to the assembly point.
- If Pupil Z is in the library, she should be assisted out through the rear door as this entrance is the nearest fire exit.
- If Pupil Z is in the IT suite the fire exit and ramp should be used to leave the building.
- If in the dining hall or in PE lesson in hall, Pupil Z will be assisted to leave through the nearest ramped exit, and join other pupils at the assembly point.

SENDCO's signature	
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Date of initial assessment	
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Date of PEEP	
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Date of REVIEW (minimum annually)	
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Copied to

Pupil Profile Record	
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Class folder for all staff (including subject teachers)	
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visiting specialists and supply teachers	
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Parents/Carers	
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Site manager	
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Links to relevant websites

<http://bts.bradford.gov.uk>

www.uws.ac.uk

