



GOVERNMENT OF GHANA

STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES



FOR PRACTICE OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN GHANA

Ministry of Education

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FOR PRACTICE OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN GHANA



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MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
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1.0 Introduction

Despite overall increases in school participation over the past three decades, some groups of children continue to be left behind. The Dakar Framework for Action acknowledges the major education conferences throughout the 1990s, such as the Salamanca World Conference on Special Needs Education (1994 Salamanca, Spain), and urges the international community to continue working on achieving the goals set (Dakar Framework for Action, Para 4.). The “Expanded Commentary on the Dakar Framework for Action” describes the broad vision of “Education for All” which needs to be adopted in order to achieve the Dakar Framework for Action goals. The vision places a special emphasis on those learners who are the most vulnerable to marginalization and exclusion and identifies Inclusive Education as one of the key strategies to address the question of marginalization and exclusion. Inclusive education guarantees a learning environment which is barrier free and enables all learners including those with disabilities to move about safely and freely, use facilities and participate in learning and all aspects of school life.

The Salamanca Statement (1994) also stressed the importance of inclusive education, calling on governments to “give the highest policy and budgetary priority to enable them to include all children regardless of individual differences or difficulties” and “to adopt as a matter of law or policy the principle of inclusive education”. It is in this vein that the Ghana Government recently endorsed an Inclusive Education Policy drafted jointly by several stakeholders involved in the provision of Education in Ghana. The overarching goal of Ghana’s Inclusive Education (IE) policy is to redefine and recast the delivery and management of educational services to respond to the diverse needs of all learners within the framework of Universal Design for Learning and Child Friendly School Concept. Ghana’s actions in promoting inclusive approaches in education will aim at:

- a. Forging a holistic approach to education which ensures that the concerns of marginalized and excluded groups are incorporated in all education activities, and cooperating to reduce wasteful repetition and fragmentation.
- b. Making education accessible to and functional for all learners with special

educational needs. A safer, easier and friendly environment for all learners benefits everyone.

2.0 What are the Standards and Guidelines about?

The standards and guidelines is the reference document that provides assistance and guidance to educational institutions in their provision of minimum access required in various types of school buildings, gadgets, learning equipment and materials, as well as curriculum and pedagogy for the practice of Inclusive Education. This document endorses the spirit of a barrier free learning environment for all learners in both public and private schools.

The fundamental principles which have been followed in developing the standards/guidelines are to guarantee standards for safety, convenience, usability and participation of all learners. Inclusive education standards shall satisfy anyone who is hindered from participating successfully in learning as a result of obstacles put in their way by the siting of the school, design of buildings, materials, arrangement of out- or inside space, attitude of staff, equipment and materials, as well content of instruction (curriculum) and pedagogy.

These standards/guidelines shall be a valuable document to exchange comments between parents, families, persons with disabilities, educational practitioners and other stakeholders interested in an environment which does not exclude individuals with disabilities from quality education. The document may also generate research activities to provide required knowledge base to improve provision of quality education for all.

These standards and guidelines shall be adhered to by all categories of educational institutions, private and public, early childhood centres, basic, senior and higher education. Despite the fact that the standards and guidelines focus exclusively on the requirements of learners with disabilities, learning environments will invariably become more convenient for all learners and persons suffering from any kind of physical and chronic diseases.

3.0 Who Are The Standards And Guidelines For?

These guidelines are relevant to everyone involved in providing support to early childhood centres, schools, colleges, universities and adult learning centres.

The primary targets for these guidelines are:

1. Teachers and specialist support providers in schools both private and public.
2. Members of the school/education/institution community itself, including:
 - a) educators and other members of staff.
 - b) the learners themselves, who can provide 'peer-support' to one another.
3. Specialist/professional education officials in Private and Public Schools/ Education/ Institutions. These include:
 - a) psychologists, specialised and general counsellors, therapists and other health and welfare workers employed by the Ministry of Education and the Ghana Education Service, and various learning support personnel, e.g. 'remedial' teachers and facilitators, language and communication teachers, and 'special needs' teachers.
 - b) Ghana Education Service officials providing administrative, curricular and institutional development support at district levels.

The secondary targets for these guidelines are:

1. Specialists/professionals from other government departments involved in supporting schools and other education institutions, e.g. health workers and social workers.
2. Community organisations and role players, including:
 - a) Parents, grandparents and other caregivers of learners at Early Childhood Day Care (ECD) centres and schools.
 - b) community organisations, e.g. non-governmental (NGOs) and community

based organisations (CBOs) directly and indirectly linked to education.

- c) Traditional rulers, opinion leaders or individuals within the community who have contributions to make on particular issues and challenges of education.

In addition, the standards and guidelines are also relevant to those both receiving and giving support such as early-childhood, schools, colleges, universities and adult-learning centres, their governing bodies and institution/school-level support teams in particular, and development partners.

4.0 STANDARD 1: PROVIDE ACCESS TO SCHOOLS

Guidelines

4.1 Site Planning

To accommodate all learners including those with disabilities each building and its site shall be planned and designed as an integral unit from the very beginning of the design process.

4.2 Walkways, Paths and Roads

- a. All entrance path/sidewalks and/or walkways shall be smooth, devoid of non slip materials and shall have a firm level surface suitable for walking and wheeling. It is important to note that irregular surfaces as cobble stones, coarsely exposed aggregate concrete, bricks etc. often cause bumpy rides.
- b. The minimum walk way width shall be 1200mm and a moderate two way traffic shall be 1650mm - 1800mm.
- c. Longitudinal walk gradient shall be 3 to 5% (30 mm - 50 mm in 1 meter). The cross-slope of walkways shall not be steeper than 1:40 (See Figure 4.3.1).
- d. When walks exceed 60meters in length, it is recommended a rest area is provided adjacent to the walkway at convenient intervals with space for bench seats. For comfort the seat shall be between 350mm - 425mm high but not over 450 mm.

- e. Texture change in walkways adjacent to seating will be desirable for blind persons.
- f. Avoid grates and manholes in walkways. If grates cannot be avoided then bearing bar shall be perpendicular to the travel path and no opening between bearings. Where gratings must be located in sidewalks, no opening should be wider than 13 mm and bars of gratings should be perpendicular to the path of travel (See Figure 4.2.1).
- g. Obstructions like manhole, tree or any other obstructions in the walkway shall be avoided.
- h. Guiding block at the start and completion of a walkway shall be provided. Guiding block can be of red chequered tile, smooth rubble finish, prima regina, naveen tiles or any other material with a different texture as compared to the rest of the area.
- i. Unit paving materials used in sidewalks, paths and walkways should be firm and level, with joints no greater than 6 mm wide (See Figure 4.2.2).

4.3 Ramps

- a. Ramps shall have a gradient, measured along the centre-line, not steeper than 1:12 where the difference in level of the ends of the ramp exceeds 400mm; or 1:10 where the difference in level of the ends of the ramp is less than 400mm.
- b. The ramp shall have a clear trafficable surface not less than 1100mm wide. The cross-slope of ramp runs shall not be

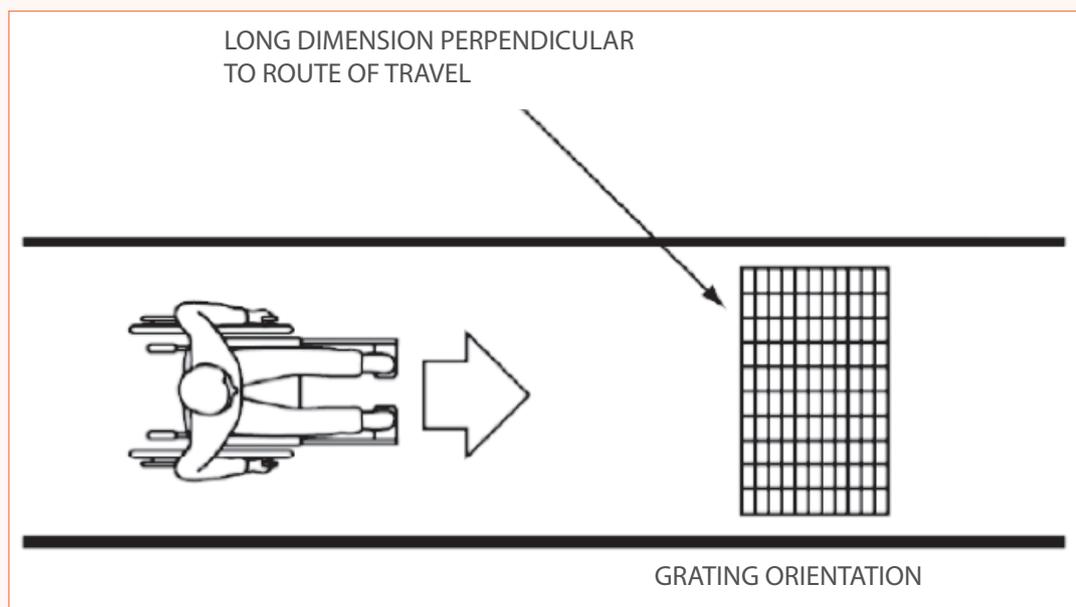


Figure 4.2.1

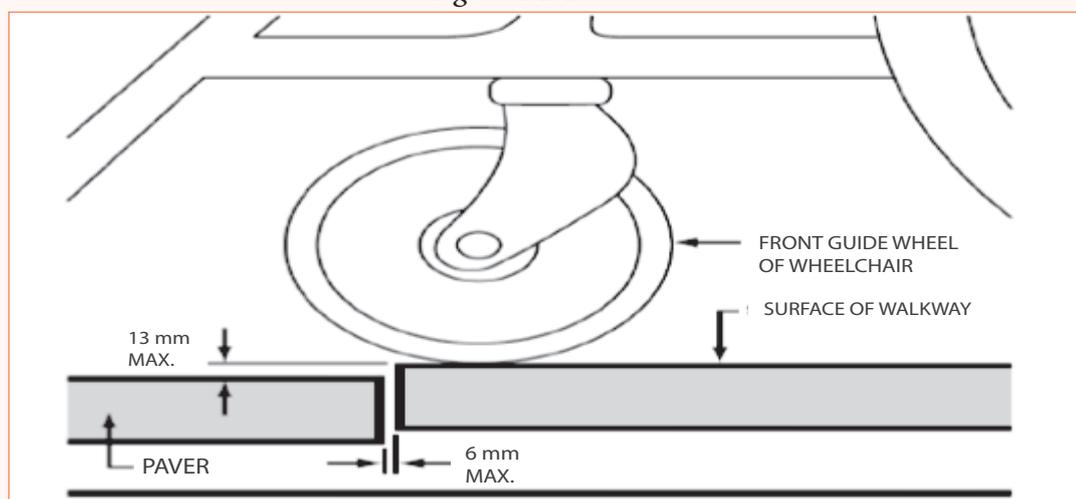


Figure 4.2.2

steeper than 1:40. A cross-slope shall not be provided unless absolutely necessary and then the cross-fall shall always be minimised (See Figure 4.3.1).

- c. An up-stand Kerb 50 mm high or a solid barrier is recommended on either side of ramps for persons using mobility aids, in order to act as a safety stop for the front wheels of wheelchairs and/or scooters.
- d. Where only a handrail is used for edge protection and no raised kerb is provided, the handrail shall have a horizontal rail set at a height no greater than 300mm from the surface of the ramp. Handrails ends must be turned down or curved into an adjacent wall as an aid to persons with visual disabilities.
- e. Outdoor ramps shall be designed so that water does not accumulate on walking surfaces.
- f. Where ramps with slope between 1:20 and 1:21 are designed, handrails must be provided on both sides as an aid to mobility.
- g. Ramps shall be designed to have landings at every 10m and at every change of

direction and at the top and the bottom of the ramp. The length of the landing area shall be between 1.3m and 1.5m and the width has to be equal to the length of the landing area thus between 1.3m and 1.5m (See Figure 4.3.2 & 4.3.3).

- h. Ramps that change direction between runs through 90 degrees at landings shall have a 1200x1100mm (minimum) landing. Where a ramp changes direction through 180 degrees, the landing at the switchback shall be at least 1200mm wide (See figure 4.3.2).
- i. In the case where ramps are required for use by persons with visual limitations only, ramps up to 1525 mm are preferred, in order to allow space for a companion.

4.4 Buildings

All school buildings shall be constructed with standard specifications for doorways, windows, ventilation, lightening etc. (Refer to Department of Public Works Standard Electrical, Mechanical and Architectural Guidelines for Design of Accessible Buildings).

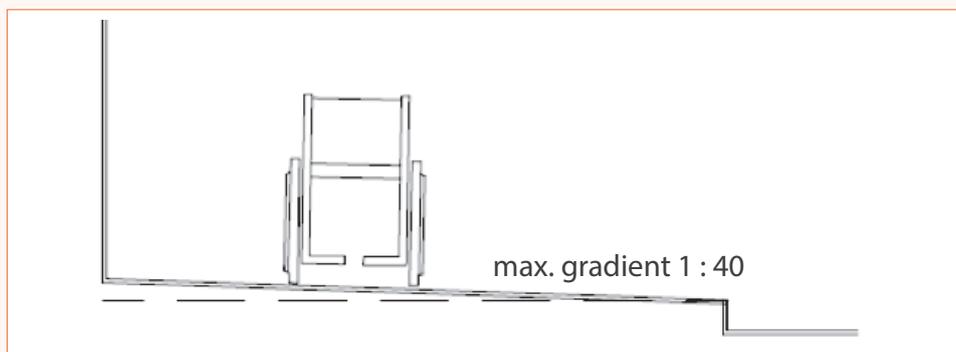


Figure 4.3.1 Camber on Ramps & Walkways

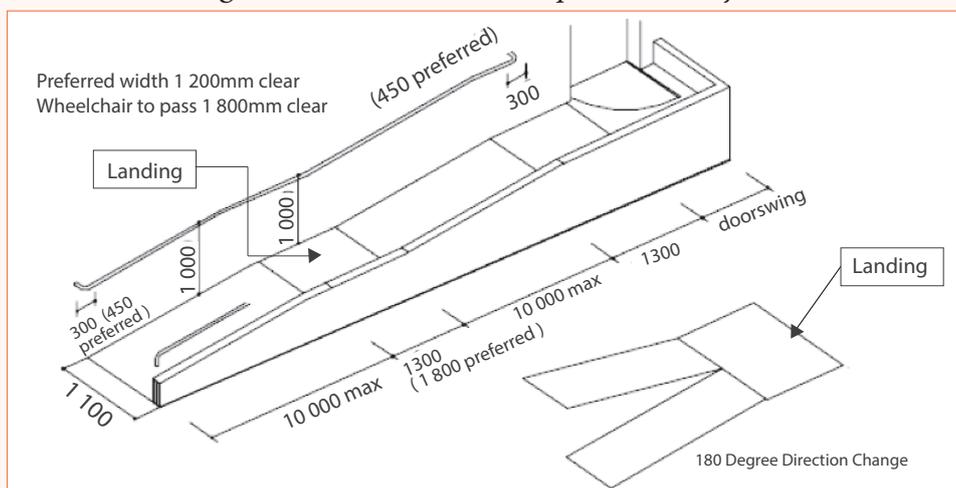


Figure 4.3.2

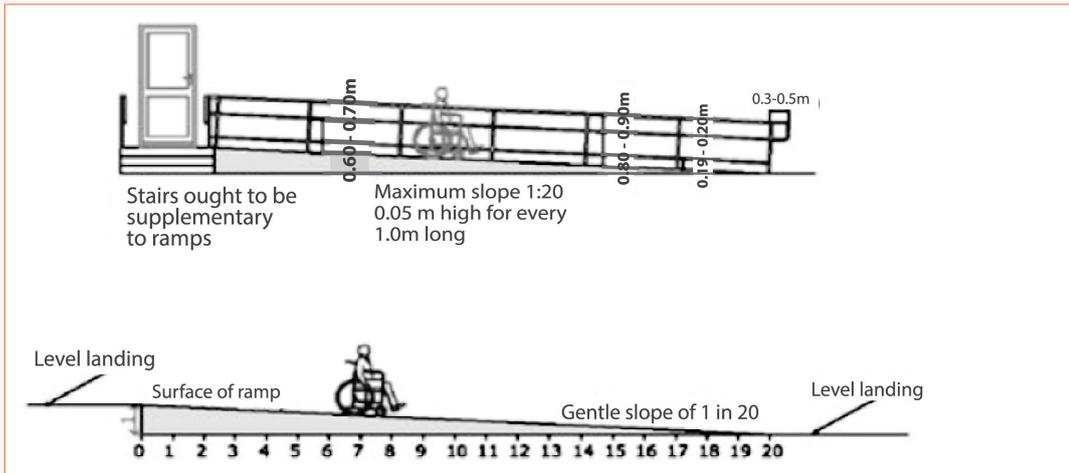


Figure 4.3.3

4.5 Doors and Doorways

- Each accessible entrance to a building or facility shall have at least one accessible door or doorway.
- Within a building or facility, at least one door or doorway serving each room or space shall be accessible.
- Revolving doors and turnstiles shall not be part of an accessible route.
- Main entrance doors and other accessible entrance and exit doors shall have a clear minimum opening width of 915mm from the most protruding edge of the door to the most protruding edge of the frame on the opposite side, regardless of whether the door is hinged, pivoted, sliding and double door type. This will allow safe passage of persons who use mobility aids.
- No door shall open onto any sloping section of a ramp.
- Where double leaf doors are provided, at

least one of the active leaves of doorways shall comply with the requirements for clear width and maneuvering clearances.

- Any handle fitted to a door leaf of any door in an emergency route or in a feeder route or in any compartment containing toilet facilities for use by disabled persons shall be of the lever type at least 100mm long, preferably in a "D" shape. All handles shall be installed at a height of between 800mm and 1200mm above the finished floor level. Where horizontal or vertical pull-bars are used, the bar (or a portion thereof) must be at a height between 800mm and 1200mm. (See Figure 4.5).

4.6 Stairways

Interior and exterior stairs that are part of a means of an outlet, regarded as an accessible route, and may be used by persons with limited mobility impairments or persons who have visual impairment shall comply with the following:

- Risers and treads of uniform heights and

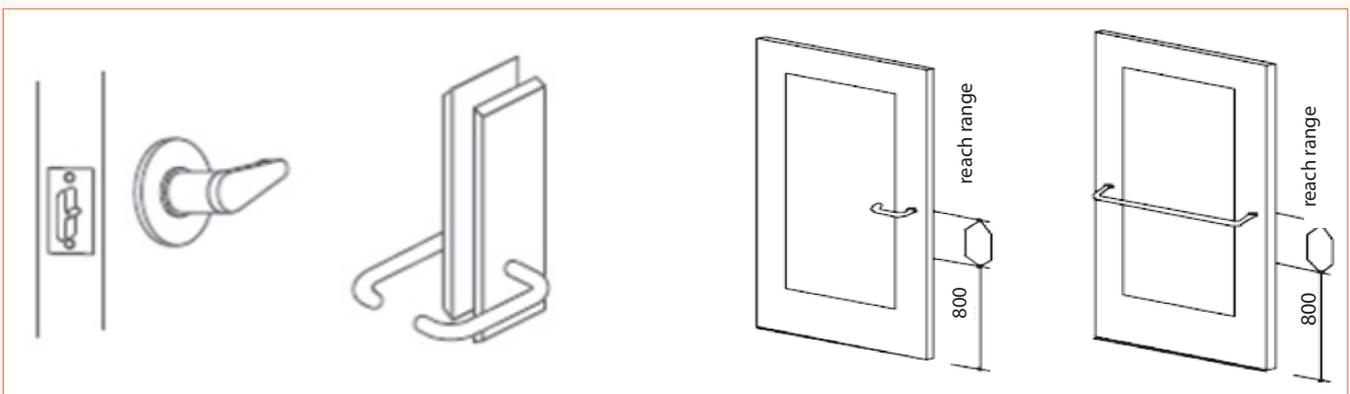


Figure 4.5

depths respectively and risers shall be between 100mm and 175mm in height, while treads shall have a minimum length of 230mm and a maximum length of 280mm, from riser to riser. Open risers are not permitted. Treads are to be stable, firm and slip-resistant. The radius at the leading edge of the tread shall be not greater than 10mm (See Figure 4.6).

b. Paving surfaces at the top and bottom of

all flights of stairs or steps shall include a cane-detectable and textured walking surface, a minimum of 915mm deep, (forward of the first riser and continuous from the top of stair), as an early warning of an impending level change to persons with visual limitations (See Figure 4.6).

c. Outdoor stairs shall be so designed so that water will not accumulate on walking surfaces.

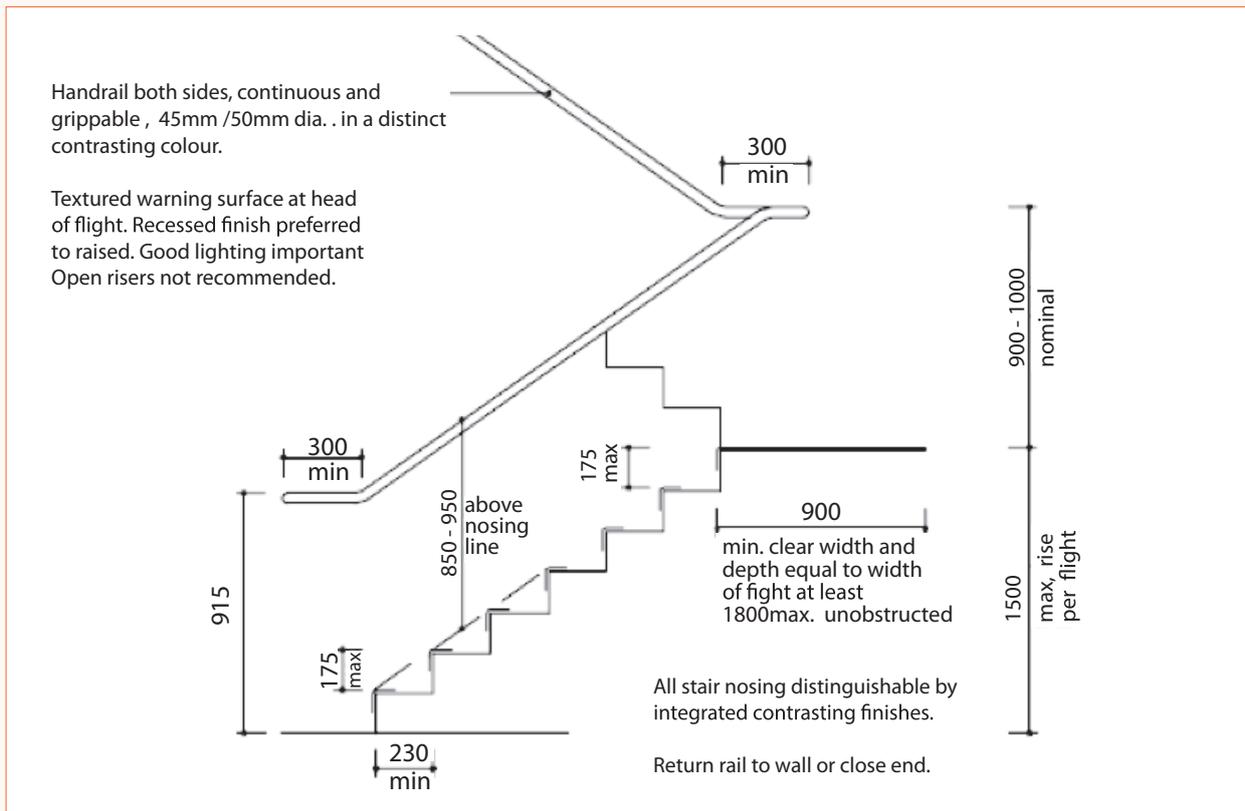


Figure 4.6

4.7 Handrails

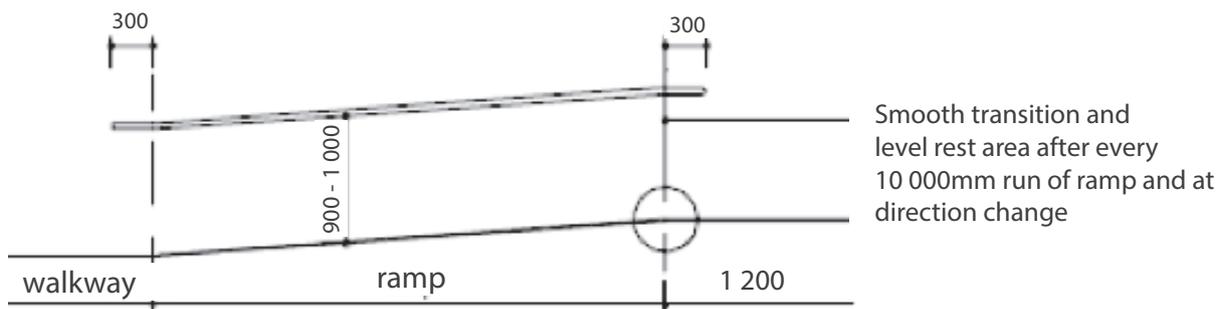
- For persons with limited walking abilities, visually impairments and intellectual disabilities, it is essential that there are grip-friendly handrails (marking the edge or border of the stairway) to support themselves.
- Handrails are to be provided on both sides of stairs and ramps, and are to be continuous along the full length of each flight or ramp run. The top of the gripping surface shall be at a height between 850-950mm, vertically above stair nosings or 850-1000mm above ramp surfaces and

900-1000mm above stair landings. This height shall remain consistent along the length of the stair / ramp.

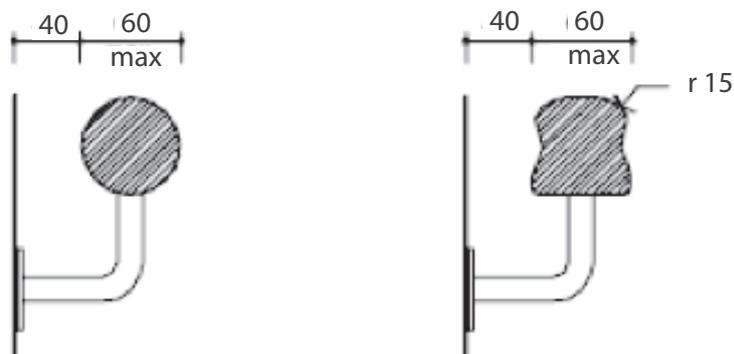
- Handrails shall have circular cross-section with an outside diameter between 40-60mm. If the cross-section is not circular, it shall have a perimeter dimension between 100-150mm and a horizontal cross-section dimension of 40-60mm in the top 40 % of the cross section of the rail (see figure 4.7.1b).
- The gripping surface of handrails shall be continuous, without interruption - the exception being handrail brackets or balusters attached to the bottom surface

of the handrail. The surface of the handrail and wall or any other surface adjacent to them shall be free of any sharp or abrasive elements, and the handrail shall be fixed firmly and not rotate within its supports or brackets.

- e. Handrails shall extend beyond the first and last stair risers on each flight and start end and landing lines of ramp runs, except on the inside turn of switchback or dogleg staircase and ramps. Top and bottom extensions of a ramp or staircase are to be 300mm minimum at a height between 900 and 1000mm on staircases
- f. There should be double handrails at different heights i.e. one at a height of 0.60m – 0.70m from the ground level for the use of the children and for the disabled and, one at a height of 0.80m - 0.90m for the use of other users (See figure 4.7.2).
- g. It is recommended that the handrail is made of a metal or any other approved strong and sturdy material. The handrail surface shall be neither too smooth nor rough.



a) Elevation of handrail



b) Typical profiles of handrail

Figure 4.7.1 Dimensions and Profiles of Typical Handrails

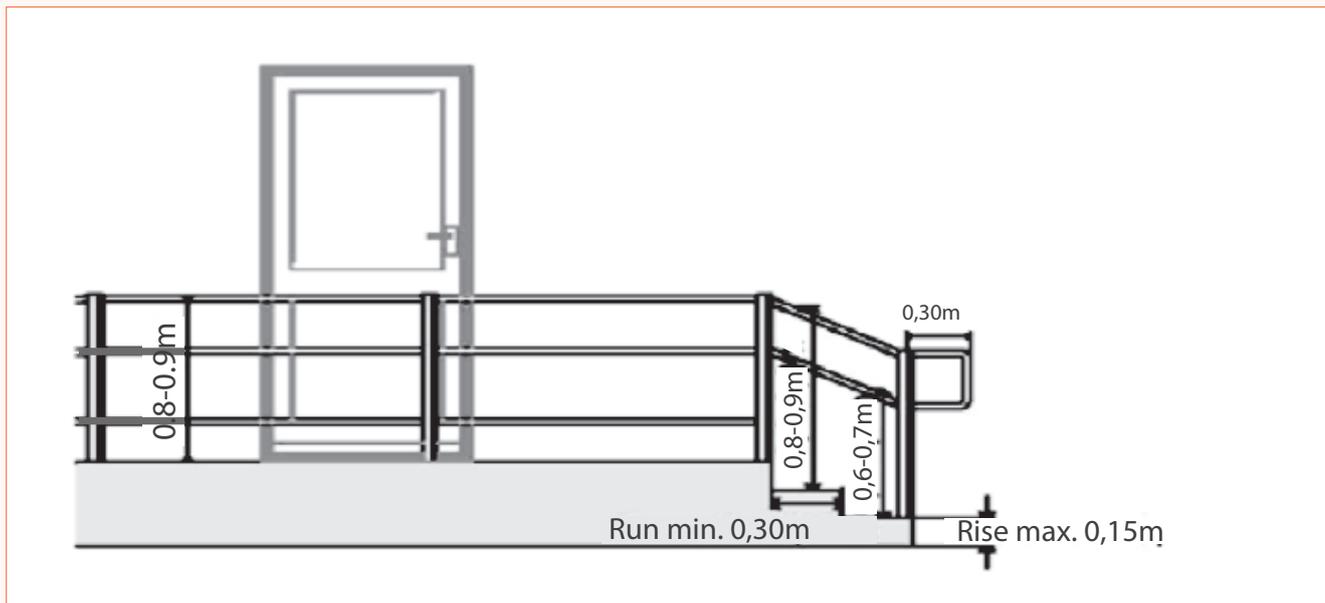


Figure 4.7.2

4.8 Water Closets and Toilet Compartments

- a. All schools shall provide separate toilets and urinals for boys, girls and individuals with disabilities.
- b. Where toilet facilities are accessible to wheelchair users, at least one toilet compartment in each bank of same-sex toilets shall be accessible.
- c. The preferred toilet facility is a separate unisex WC facility, incorporating water closet and hand-washing basin. The dimensions of this WC compartment are critical. The size of a cubicle shall be at least 1700mm x 1600mm, with a door that shall open outwards or a sliding door. An inward-opening door can be provided where there is a 1200mm internal diameter clear of all fittings, fixtures and the line of the door swing. The door shall be open from the outside in case of an emergency.
- d. Toilet paper dispenser shall be mounted so they are reachable from a seated position and capable of being operated with one hand without binding and located so that

the use of the toilet and grab bar is not obstructed (traditional roller to be used as an option).

- e. Where soap dispensers are provided, they shall be mounted within reach of all users, no higher than 1200 mm from floor.

4.9 Grab Bars

- a. All grab bars shall be constructed of stainless steel or other suitable non-corrosive metal tube with an outside diameter of 32mm, with a suitable brushed, polished or epoxy powder coated finish that can be easily cleaned. The correct back grab bar must be selected for external cisterns, flush-valve systems or under wall cisterns. The back and side grab-rail may be an integral unit. The cranked grab bar must be installed in the correct orientation as shown on the respective elevation (see figure 4.9)
- b. Grab bars shall be fixed to the wall such that they can support a vertical force of 1 Kilo Newton at any point on the grab bar.

less than 2000mm high. The leading edge of such guardrail or barrier shall be located 700mm maximum above the floor.

7. Classrooms shall be spacious (to allow movement), they shall well lighted and ventilated.
8. Furniture in every classroom shall be well arranged; all fixtures in classrooms shall be appropriately positioned to ensure safety.
9. Every classroom shall have adequate appropriate age-specific furniture such as tables, chairs, and lockers.
10. All electrical wiring in school premises shall be well protected covered.
11. Controls for locking and opening controls for window and doors shall not be more than 1400mm from the finished floor usable by one hand.
12. Switches for electric light and power as well as door handles and other fixtures and fittings shall be between 900 mm - 1200 mm from finished floor.
13. Power point for general purpose shall be fixed between 400-500 mm from the finished floor.
14. School playground shall be well maintained and free from obstacles. Provide appropriate and adequate play equipment and materials.
15. Toilets and urinals facilities shall be available and accessible to all learners; there shall be separate facility for male and females as well as those with disabilities. One toilet compartment for the disabled shall be provided, with minimum internal dimensions of 1.7 by 1.8m.
16. Toilets and urinals shall have rough floor surfaces and well ventilated. Always provide water and soap at washrooms.
17. Use bright markings and bold prints to label places such as laboratories, libraries, classrooms, washrooms etc.
18. All school buildings shall have fire escape exits and warning systems (smoke detectors) as well as alarms and fire extinguishers. Staff and learners shall know how to operate the alarm system as

well as exit school buildings and facilities during emergencies.

19. Make notices and signs to caution facility users visible to alert of potential dangers. Put signs and notices at appropriate points such as step, stairs exits.
20. Secure all doors and windows in schools.
21. Every school shall comply with the health and safety standards of the Ghana Education Service
22. Every school shall be fenced and secured where possible.
23. Every school shall have potable water, cleaned cups and napkins.

6.0 Standard 3: Every School (Private or Public) Should Provide All Learning Opportunities For Quality Learning

Guidelines

Provision of opportunities for quality learning involves focusing on four key areas namely: Process, Learner, Personnel and Resources.

1. The Process highlights the content and instruction and must address the following:
 - a. The National Curriculum should be made (tailored) suitable for every child. The curriculum should be broad and balance. Teachers should adapt the content of the national curriculum (teaching syllabi) to make them relevant and functional to all learners.
 - b. Teachers should set appropriate objectives and achievable targets for all learners, ensure learners can cope with the levels set for them; use appropriate pace for all learners, do not slow down or hurry some learners through the curriculum (syllabus).
 - c. Teachers should use diverse strategies in teaching. For example multi-sensory approaches, demonstration, project,

- fieldtrips, direct-teaching, differentiated teaching, individual teaching, peer teaching, small group teaching, role plays, scenarios. Teachers should also do co-teaching.
- d. Teachers should use different communication techniques (speech, sign language, braille light, ICT) while teaching.
 - e. Teachers should provide appropriate and adapted games and recreational equipment such as bell balls, show down, soft ball, among others.
 - f. Teachers should provide additional time for learners with SEN to complete learning activities/tasks and assignment.
 - g. Teachers should provide learners with SEN opportunities to participate in all activities, both within and without the schools.
 - h. Teachers should use IEC materials. IE monitoring toolkit/check list should be used to monitor schools during inspection
2. The focus on Learners should consider the following:
 - a. Teachers shall screen all learners for special educational needs. Families should be invited to witness and learn about the process and importance of screening and early intervention of special educational needs.
 - b. Teachers shall refer learners suspected of having special educational needs for further assessment by District Inclusive Education Team (DIET) and later by the District Assessment Team (DAT).
 - c. DIET shall organize case conferences and develop IEP for learners diagnosed with special educational needs. Parents, guardians and custodians shall be involved in all stages involving the screening and diagnosis of learners' needs.
 - d. Teachers shall complete school registers indicating the diverse learning needs in their classrooms.
 3. Personnel – All schools should have ways of satisfying themselves that staff involved with the teaching of learners are qualified and competent to do so:
 - a. All teachers should have the requisite qualifications and license.
 - b. All schools should ensure that their staff recruitment and appointment procedures include a means of making certain that all new staff have at least the minimum necessary level of competence in Inclusive Education.
 - c. All schools should have qualified special educational needs coordinator (SENCO).
 - d. All staff and learners should respect one another. Teachers should respect all learners including those with special educational needs (SEN), learners without SEN should respect their peers without SEN. Staff and learners should use appropriate language, teachers should avoid canning, teasing, and name-calling; there should be no bullying.
 - e. All forms of discipline should take cognizance of the needs of learners. Teachers should not isolate or learners who are hyperactive or introverted.
 - f. Every school should provide continuous in-service training for the teachers/staff.
 - g. Teachers/staff who provide services outside the normal working hours should be remunerated- additional time for examination, remedial teaching.
 - h. All schools should have qualified supporting staff (Attendants/Learning support assistants) for lower primary classes (KG – P3).
 - i. All schools should provide learners with complex needs such as deaf- blindness, autism, attention deficit hyperactivity disorders, with support assistant.
 - j. Every school should have adequate qualified related services staff such as Guidance and Counselling Coordinator, Social Workers, and Speech therapist etc.

4. Material Resources – Ensure that material resources available for the support of the learner shall be adequate and appropriate for each programme and subjects offered.
- Appropriate requisite learning materials shall be accessible to all learners, eg. Braille and hand writing frames, stylus, sign language guides, tactic maps, adapted materials.
 - Schools shall adopt relevant computers software and hardware in teaching and learning (screen readers and braille light).
 - Every school shall provide appropriate and adequate assistive devices and related materials for all learners, for example hearing aids, screen readers, and magnifiers.
 - Libraries/e-libraries in schools shall be stocked with adequate, relevant and current books in accessible formats.
 - Every school shall have adequate space which is secured for recreational activities where appropriate.

7.0 Standard 4: Monitor And Conduct Periodic Review Of Programmes And Learners' Progress

Guidelines

- Classroom monitoring shall be a continuous activity of every school and diverse means (e.g. observation, projects, pen and paper-based, etc.) shall be adopted to assess and document pupils/learners' performance.
- The school based assessment shall include IEP.
- Extended time (1/2 of the original time) must be given to learners of SEN for completion of work and examination where needed.
- Schools shall generate evidence from available documents [eg. school registers, school report cards (SRC)] for monitoring and evaluation purposes by Ghana Education Service/National Council for Tertiary Education/National Inspection Board.
- Use IE monitoring tool to track the progress of learners.
- Conduct periodic review meeting of all stakeholders on school performance targets at national, regional, district and schools.
- Provide and disseminate requisite information on school performance.

ANNEX: GLOSSARY OF TERMS

(Interpretation and Definitions)

In this standards and guidelines, the following words and expressions shall have the meanings assigned to them respectively:

Baluster - Railing at the side of a staircase or balcony to prevent people from falling.

Bearing Bar - A supporting bar for a grating or a wrought-iron bar used in masonry to offer a level support for floor joists.

Boulder - Rock fragments which are normally larger than cobble stones.

Braille – A system of raised dots that can be read with the fingers by people who are visually impaired.

Chequered Tile – A tile that has a pattern consisting of squares of different colours, textures, or materials.

Cistern - A catch basin on a roof or an enlargement at the end of a gutter for catching and storing rainwater.

Cobble Stone - A naturally rounded stone, larger than a pebble and smaller than a boulder, formerly used in paving.

Dogleg Staircase - A configuration of stairs between two floors of a building, often a domestic building, in which a flight of stairs ascends to a half-landing before turning 180 degrees and continuing upwards.

Epoxy Powder - Powder coating that is widely used to protect steel pipe.

Feeder Route - A route that leads to the main hallway.

Fixture - Something securely fixed in place.

Flush-Valve – A self-closing valve usually located at the bottom of a water closet tank designed to release a large volume of water when activated.

Grab Bar - A safety device designed to enable a person to maintain balance, lessen fatigue while standing, hold some of their weight while maneuvering, or have something to grab onto in case of a slip or fall.

Gradient - The ratio of the vertical distance between two points on a slope to the horizontal distance between them.

Grate - A type of screen made from sets of parallel bars placed across each other at right angles in approximately the same plane. A grate allows water to flow to drainage, while covering the area for pedestrian or vehicular traffic.

Guardrails - A system designed to keep people or vehicles from (in most cases unintentionally) straying into dangerous or off-limits areas. It is more restrictive than handrails.

Handrail - A bar of wood, metal, or PVC, or a length of wire, rope, or cable, supported at intervals by upright posts, as on a stairway, by brackets from a wall or partition, so as to provide a handhold.

Kerb - A line of stone or concrete forming an edge between a pavement and a roadway, so that the pavement is some 15 cm above the level of the road.

Landing - The floor area at the top of a flight of stairs or between two flights of stairs.

Naveen Tile – A type of ceramic floor or wall tile.

Ramps - A short concave slope or bend, as one connecting the higher and lower parts of a staircase railing at a landing or any extensive sloping walk or passageway.

Risers - The vertical face of a stair step.

Stylus - A computer accessory that is used to assist in navigating or providing more precision when using touch screens.

Switchback – A pathway, trail, or road that has sharp turns for climbing a steep slope or hill.

Trafficable Surface - A surface intended to withstand pedestrian traffic.

Tread - The horizontal part of a step in a staircase.

Turnstiles - A barrier rotating on a vertical axis, usually allowing movement in one direction only and admitting one person at a time.

Valve - A device for controlling the passage of fluid through a pipe or duct.

Walkway - The front walk of a house, leading from the door to the sidewalk or road.

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