

Falkirk Council - British Sign Language (BSL) Plan 2018-2024

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NB. Local authorities may wish to include actions on post-school education, transport, and justice. These have not been included in the guidance as the relevant actions in the national plan do not have implications for local authorities.

SECTION 2:

Introduction

This is the final BSL Plan for Falkirk, as required by BSL (Scotland) Act 2015.. It sets out actions that Falkirk will take over the period 2018-2024.

It follows the BSL National Plan 2017-2023, published 24 October 2017, which was developed through extensive engagement with D/deaf and Deafblind BSL users and those who work with them.

The Falkirk plan is framed around the same long-term goals as BSL national plan.

- Falkirk Council have a commitment to supporting BSL, including in its tactile form.
- This English version of the plan will be translated and period of consultation will take place for users of BSL/Tactile BSL. This will be through engagement events and social media
- Falkirk Council are committed to continued engagement around a) implementing actions and b) providing feedback on progress.
- The plan will be reviewed annually and will contribute to national progress report in 2020. and will be a live working document.
- The BSL plan version of this plan can be obtained by contacting the lead officer.

**BSL Users = D/deaf and or D/deafblind people (those who receive the language in a tactile form due to sight loss) whose first or preferred language is British Sign Language.*

Name of lead officer:

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British Sign Language (BSL) users can contact us via [contactSCOTLAND-BSL](#) **contactSCOTLAND-BSL**

SECTION 3:

Short summary

The BSL plan for Falkirk will adopt the long term goals for BSL in Scotland as set out in the Scottish Government British Sign Language National Plan 2017 – 2023. The plan for Falkirk will focus on:

- **Improving access to a wide range of information and public services in BSL**
- **Investigating the level of BSL in our organisation, focussing on frontline staff including teaching staff, escorts, receptionists**
- **Enabling BSL/BSL tactile users in decision making that affects their lives and the lives of their children**
- **Improve the experience of pupils who use BSL and Tactile BSL with their transition through school to college, university and/or into employment.**
- **Improve access to health and social care, including access to mental health services for those who use BSL**

SECTION 4:

BSL NATIONAL PLAN FOR FALKIRK COUNCIL

4.1: Across all our services

We share the long-term goal for all Scottish public services set out in the BSL National Plan, which is:

“Across the Scottish public sector, information and services will be accessible to BSL users”

Action <i>[*] refers to the related numbered action in the National Plan</i>	Sub Actions	Due date	Outcomes & Progress	Progress Notes	Expected outcome	Assigned to	Completed date
1. analyse existing evidence we have about BSL users in our organisation; identify and fill key information gaps so that we can establish baselines and measure our progress.[2]		Dec 2024					
2. Improve access to our information and services for BSL users, including making the council’s website more accessible		Dec 2024					

to BSL users. [3,4]							
3. promote the use of the Scottish Government's nationally funded BSL online interpreting video relay services called 'contactSCOTLAND-BSL' to staff and to local BSL users. This is a free service which allows BSL users to contact public and their sector services and for these services to contact them. [5]		Dec 2024					
4. Signpost staff who work with BSL users to appropriate BSL awareness training. [6]	Appropriate BSL Training and/or have training to be able to access online interpreting service at the single point of access. NHS online BSL Awareness Training to be used.	Dec 2024					

4.2: Family Support, Early Learning and Childcare

We share the long-term goal for all Scottish public services set out in the BSL National Plan, which is:

“The Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) approach will be fully embedded, with a D/deaf or Deafblind child, and their family offered the right information and support at the right time to engage with BSL”

Action	Sub Actions	Due date	Outcomes & Progress	Progress Notes	Expected outcome	Assigned to	Completed date
5. Improve access to early year's services for parents whose child is diagnosed as D/deaf of Deafblind by developing information about BSL and Deaf culture for service providers who support parents. [10]	<p>Continue to provide support to D/deaf child/family, from a qualified Teacher of the Deaf (ToD), from diagnosis.</p> <p>Provide funding and opportunities for Windsor Park staff to develop their BSL signing skills further, to achieve Level 3 and beyond.</p> <p>Continue to provide opportunities for parents/carers, extended families and multi-agency services to learn BSL from ToD or BSL Tutors.</p>	Dec 2024				Children's Services ASN Team, Windsor Park School and Sensory Support Service	

<p>6. Assist families of D/deaf and Deafblind children by ensuring that they have access to BSL resources as early as possible in their child's life. [11]</p>	<p>Continue to signpost families to the NDCS for projects such as 'Everyone Together'.</p> <p>Continue to provide opportunities for Early Years education staff to achieve qualifications in BSL.</p> <p>Continue to have a designated Early Years provision (Bantaskin Nursery) for BSL users, with Windsor Park staff facilitating/developing communication.</p> <p>Continue to provide 'deaf awareness' training for education to multi-agency services in a wide variety of formats.</p> <p>Continue to promote the use of the Forth Valley Sensory</p>					<p>Children's Services Additional Support Needs (ASN) Team, Bantaskin Nursery, Windsor Park School and Sensory Support Services</p> <p>Children's Services ASN Team, Windsor Park School and Sensory Support Service</p>	
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	<p>Centre to pupils and families as appropriate. Continue to provide information on BSL resources available on a variety of media platforms.</p> <p>Continue to provide or signpost to signing resources for literacy and numeracy.</p> <p>Continue to use media such as Twitter to share signs or information about BSL resources.</p> <p>Continue to ensure that BSL interpreting services are available throughout Falkirk Council for D/deaf parents.</p>					<p>Children's Services ASN Team, Windsor Park School and Sensory Support Service, Forth Valley Sensory Centre</p> <p>Children's Services ASN Team, Windsor Park School and Sensory Support Service,</p> <p>Falkirk Council</p>	
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<p>7. Develop BSL resources and advice within key programmes such a 'BookBug' so that parents can be supported to interact with their child during this critical developmental phase. [12]</p>							
<p>8. Work with partners to;</p> <p>Support families to communicate with their D/deaf D/Deafblind child in the crucial early years (0-8)</p> <p>Universal Newborn Hearing Screening (UNHS) identifies children with a hearing loss at birth and opportunities to learn BSL explored. [13, 14]</p>	<p>Continue to provide support to D/deaf child/family, from a qualified Teacher of the Deaf (ToD), from diagnosis.</p> <p>ToDs will continue to provide unbiased, accurate information as regards communication modes in order that families can make informed choices. Continue to provide opportunities for parents/carers, extended families</p>	<p>Dec 2024</p>				<p>Children's Services ASN Team, Windsor Park School and Sensory Support Service,</p>	

	<p>and multi-agency services to learn BSL from ToDs or BSL Tutors.</p> <p>Continue to signpost families to the NDCS.</p> <p>Re-establish the Windsor Park Toddler Group, providing a vital forum for parents/families to come together and share experiences on a regular basis</p> <p>Provide BSL story telling sessions at Falkirk libraries.</p> <p>Continue to develop a wide range of story bags with signed stories/resources.</p> <p>Child's Plans are devised/regularly reviewed and updated by ToDs and any other relevant agencies.</p>					<p>Falkirk Council</p> <p>Children's Services ASN Team, Windsor Park School and Sensory Support Service,</p>	
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<p>9. Test new approaches to support older D/deaf and D/deaffblind children (8+), young people and their families to learn BSL</p>	<p>Primary school children at Windsor Park will continue to have BSL receptive and productive skills supported by ToD and BSL Tutor and assessed accordingly.</p> <p>BSL 1 delivered and assessed in Windsor Park primary as appropriate.</p> <p>BSL Level 1/ 2 being delivered in Windsor Park secondary department.</p> <p>Provide opportunities for ToDs and support staff to attend relevant Continuous Professional Development events.</p>						
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4.3: School Education

We share the long-term goal for school education set out in the BSL National Plan, which is:

“Children and young people who use BSL will get the support they need at all stages of their learning, so that they can reach their full potential; parents who use BSL will have the same opportunities as other parents to be fully involved in their child’s education; and more pupils will be able to learn BSL at school”

Action	Sub Actions	Due date	Outcomes & Progress	Progress Notes	Expected outcome	Assigned to	Completed date
10.. Contribute to Scottish Government’s investigations into the level of BSL held by teachers and support staff working with D/deaf and Deafblind pupils in schools. [17, 18]	Contribute to a variety of ongoing research including those by the Education and Culture Committee and Consortium for Research into Deaf Education (CRIDE)	Dec 2024				Children’s Services ASN Team, Windsor Park School and Sensory Support Service,	
11. Take forward advice developed by Education Scotland to a) improve the way teachers engage with parents who use BSL	Schools (inc Windsor Park) will continue to use twitter and You Tube to communicate with BSL using parents/carers ie.	Dec 2024				Children’s Services ASN Team, Windsor Park School and Sensory Support	

<p>12. Ensure parents who use BSL know how they can get further involved in their child's education. [20,21]</p>	<p>newsletters, songs, hymns and general updates.</p> <p>Ensure that BSL and Tactile BSL Users know that they have a right to a qualified registered interpreter and how they access and use the service.</p> <p>Provide training for parents on how to use an interpreter.</p> <p>Schools (inc Windsor Park) will continue to host review meetings, Team Around the Child (TAC) meetings and a variety events for parents to attend, ensuring BSL interpreters are present where appropriate.</p>					<p>Service,</p> <p>Children's Services ASN Team, Windsor Park School and</p>	
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	Data stored centrally as regards non-WP pupils with BSL using parents so that we know which schools to target					Sensory Support Service,	
13. Work with Education Scotland to share advice and examples of good practice for education professionals and support staff about how to engage effectively with parents who use BSL. [20]	Explore whether a national forum will be in place or whether this needs actioned locally	Dec 2024					
14. Work with BSL users to develop information and advice about how parents who use BSL can get further involved in their child's learning. This work will be led by Education Scotland. [21]	BSL Glossary App – Science & Maths BSL Dictionary online.	Dec 2024				Education Scotland	
15. Contribute to the SCILT programme of work to support the	Formalise the BSL lessons for some hearing	Dec 2024					

learning of BSL in schools for hearing pupils as part of the 1+2 programme, including sharing best practice and guidance. [23]	pupils from various high schools who attend BSL lessons at Windsor Park after school. Also those offered BSL lessons in Falkirk High School						
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Post School Education

We share the long-term goal for school education set out in the BSL National Plan, which is:

“BSL users will be able to maximise their potential at school, will be supported to transition to post – school education if they wish to do so and will receive the support they need to achieve the potential in their chosen subject(s).”*

Action	Sub Actions	Due date	Outcomes & Progress	Progress Notes	Expected outcome	Assigned to	Completed date
16. Pupils should be supported to find a positive destination when leaving high school.	<p>Provide transition support for young people linking into college. Currently WP.</p> <p>Provide support for interviews/ work experience, preparation and attending.</p>	Dec 2024					

4.4: Training, Work and Social Security

We share the long-term goal for training, work and social security set out in the BSL National Plan, which is:

“BSL users will be supported to develop the skills they need to become valued members of the Scottish workforce, so that they can fulfil their potential, and improve Scotland’s economic performance. They will be provided with support to enable them to progress in their chosen career”

Action	Sub Actions	Due date	Outcomes & Progress	Progress Notes	Expected outcome	Assigned to	Completed date
17. Signpost pupils and students to a wide range of information, advice and guidance in BSL about their career and learning choices and transition processes. Part of Developing our Young Workforce (DYW) Strategy [28]							
18. Work with partners who deliver employment services, and with employer groups already supporting employability (for example the Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) Regional Groups) to promote more diverse recruitment, and							

<p>provide specific advice on the needs of BSL users so that they are clear about their responsibilities. [34]</p>							
<p>19. Raise awareness of the UK Government's 'Access to Work' (AtW) scheme with employers and representative organisations and with BSL users themselves, so that BSL users who are employed, (including those who are undertaking a Modern Apprenticeship) can benefit from the support available. [35]</p>							

4.5: Health (including social care), Mental Health and Wellbeing

We share the long-term goal for health, mental health and wellbeing set out in the BSL National Plan, which is:

“BSL users will have access to the information and services they need to live active, healthy lives, and to make informed choices at every stage of their lives”

Action	Sub Actions	Due date	Outcomes & Progress	Progress Notes	Expected outcome	Assigned to	Completed date
20. a) signpost BSL users to health and social care information available in BSL(to be produced by NHS Health Scotland and NHS 24), b) develop complementary information in BSL about local provision, as appropriate. [40]	Information developed to be available on social media platforms. Work in partnership with Corporate Communication to develop Falkirk Council Website.						
21. a)Through Integration Boards ensure that psychological therapies can be offered on a fair and equal basis to BSL users. [45]	Frontline staff to be prioritised for training in BSL Awareness. Clear referral pathway for Psychological services will be developed for BSL						

	users.						
22. Take steps to improve access to information about sport, and to local sports facilities and sporting opportunities. [48]	Frontline staff to be prioritised for training in BSL Awareness.						
23. Ensure that any local work to tackle social isolation and loneliness makes explicit reference to the experience and needs of BSL users. [49]	<p>A system is in place across NHSFV and Falkirk Council for accessing and booking interpreters. This information to be redistributed to all departments.</p> <p>Partnership work with Sensory Centre to engage those who feel socially isolated,</p> <p>Partnership work between Sensory Team and Community Care Teams</p>						

4.6: Culture and the Arts

We share the long-term goal for culture and the arts set out in the BSL National Plan, which is:

“BSL users will have full access to the cultural life of Scotland, an equal opportunity to enjoy and contribute to culture and the arts, and are encouraged to share BSL and Deaf Culture with the people of Scotland”

Action	Sub Actions	Due date	Outcomes & Progress	Progress Notes	Expected outcome	Assigned to	Completed date
24. Enable BSL users to take part in culture and the arts as participants, audience members and professionals. [54]	<p>Continue to book touring acts, shows and films that use BSL (e.g. Power in our Hands, Ray Bradshaw), whenever these are available.</p> <p>Provide BSL interpretation for in house theatre productions wherever possible.</p> <p>Make the process of booking tickets or enquiring about shows easier for</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Dec 2024</p> <p>Dec 2024</p>					

	<p>BSL users. Train staff in communication with BSL users; ensure they are confident and welcoming.</p> <p>Hippfest programme – continue to provide BSL interpretation at the annual Hippodrome Silent Film festival.</p>	<p>Dec 2024</p> <p>On-Going</p>					
<p>25. Support professional pathways to enable BSL users to consider a career in culture and the arts. [55]</p>	<p>Establish links with the BA Performance in BSL and English course at the Conservatoire, Glasgow to explore placement opportunities for students</p>	<p>Dec 2024</p>					
<p>26. Increase information in BSL about culture and the arts on websites and at venues.</p>	<p>All frontline staff to be trained and provided information about</p>	<p>Dec 2024</p>					

[56]	BSL. Welcome videos to be created in BSL for the cultural venues	Dec 2024					
27.Improve access to the historical environment, and cultural events, and performing arts and film for BSL users. [57]	<p>Work towards sign- integrated performances, in particular for panto.</p> <p>Hippfest programme and marketing – continue to provide BSL interpretation for promotion and presentation at the annual Hippodrome Silent Film Festival and ensure.</p> <p>The Callendar House development plan now includes providing BSL interpretation for visitors.</p>	<p>Dec 2024</p> <p>On-going</p> <p>This is a long term goal which will change with developments in house</p>					

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4.7: Democracy

We share the long-term goal for democracy set out in the BSL National Plan, which is:

“BSL users will be fully involved in democratic and public life in Scotland, as active and informed citizens, as voters, as elected politicians and as board members of our public bodies”

Action	Sub Actions	Due date	Outcomes & Progress	Progress Notes	Expected outcome	Assigned to	Completed date
28. Take opportunities to promote the Access to Elected Office Fund locally, which can meet the additional costs of BSL users wishing to stand for selection or election in local or Scottish Parliament elections. [65]							

NB None of the actions relating to post school education, transport and justice in the BSL National Plan have implications for local authorities. However, they may have local actions they could take to help contribute to the long-term goals.

Post school education has been included in this Falkirk Action Plan.