7 Bath Road
Ashcott
Bridgwater
Somerset
TA7 9QS

01458 211014

www.thelevelsschool.co.uk
info@thelevelsschool.co.uk
The Levels School
Etonhurst

FIRE PREVENTION POLICY

Mission Statement

The Levels School exists to provide a nurturing environment in which students with specific learning difficulties and co-occurring diagnoses can develop their self-esteem and aspire to be independent young adults who value the rights, responsibilities and rules that exist to promote and support their future welfare. Our approach toward establishing this ideology is predicated on trauma-informed practice and an obligation to develop the social skills required to build their future aspirational communities. We exist to help them find their level.

This policy covers all premises known as The Levels School.

Date of policy	September 2026
Next review date	September 2027
Frequency of policy review (annually, every two years)	Annually
Policy owner	C Cook / N. Phillips
Published policy	Yes ☒ No ☐
List of connected policies	Health and Safety Policy, Guide to writing a PEEP, PEEP Blank form, PEEP exemplars for evac chair, visually and hearing impairments, PEEP for individual students
Approved	Governing Body

Contents

Mission Statement 1
Key Personnel 3
Fire Prevention Policy 4
Fire Assessment 5
Fire Prevention 5
Evacuation 7
Maintenance check of alarms and fire detection system 11
Fire Fighting Equipment 11
Fire Training 12

The Board of Governors acknowledge their responsibility to ensure that this policy is effective and follows regulatory requirements. Governors undertake a review to satisfy themselves that the implementation of this policy is effective.

The Board of Governors ensures the establishment of familiarity with and the effective operation through monitoring, of school policies, approving those requiring GB sign-off in line with a regular cycle of school policy reviews. This occurs through a cycle of governor committee meetings and full board meetings.

Key Personnel

Role	Name	Contact Details
Fire prevention Officer	Mr Nigel Phillips	Nigel.phillips@thelevelsschool.co.uk
Deputy Fire Prevention Officer	Mr Nick Hainsworth	Nick.hainsworth@thelevelsschool.co.uk
Fire Wardens (Etonhurst site)	Andrew Kelleher (ground floor) Victoria Billany (middle floor) Rachel White (Top Floor)	Andrew.kelleher@thelevelsschool.co.uk Victoria.billany@thelevelsschool.co.uk Rachel.white@thelevelsschool.co.uk
Fire Wardens (Ashcott House Site)	Nicky Wood (Top floor and through building) Lorna Brimson (First Floor - Science) Kim Cinicola (Ground Floor - Prep)	Nicky.wood@thelevelsschool.co.uk Lorna.brimson@thelevelsschool.co.uk Kim.cinicola@thelevelsschool.co.uk

Responsible Persons	Nigel Phillips – for arranging all external assessments Educating Safely Caroline Cook – Head teacher	Nigel.phillips@thelevelsschool.co.uk sam@educatingsafely.co.uk caroline.cook@thelevelsschool.co.uk
Nominated Governor/s for Fire prevention (Compliance Governor) **Proprietor**	Anthony Greenhalgh Gian Floris	Anthony.greenhalgh@thelevelsschool.co.uk Gian/floris@thelevelsschool.co.uk

Fire Prevention Policy

- The Fire Prevention Policy's aims are to:
- Reduce the likelihood (as far as is reasonably practicable) of a fire occurring at The Levels School
- Keep the staff, students, visitors and property in The Levels School safe in the event of a fire.
- The Levels School conducts and maintains a Fire Risk Assessment in accordance with the Fire prevention Risk Assessment for Educational Premises. Initially this was completed via an external consultant, Acorn Health and Safety Ltd (For Etonhurst site). All subsequent Fire Risk Assessments are completed by Educating Safely.
- This will assist in meeting its obligations under the statutory requirements as specified under:
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- The Regulatory Reform (Fire prevention) Order 2005.
- Educating Safely are our advisors for Fire and Health and Safety. They

support us with Risk Assessments and fire-fighting equipment checks.

- The school is not currently let out at evenings/weekends. If this occurs, a contingency plan will be put into place to ensure the safety of those individuals.

Fire Assessment

- The initial completion of the Fire Risk Assessment by Acorn Health and Safety Ltd and subsequent annual review shows that The Levels School buildings are adequately protected from the risk of fire and that staff, students and visitors are adequately safeguarded and can escape in the event of fire. Yearly checks will be made through Educating Safely (Last completed September 2024). The significant findings are recorded and kept on file in the Fire prevention folder in reception.

- The Levels School also engages with any advice offered by Avon and Somerset Fire brigade. A full visit and guidance was completed in academic year 2025/2026

- Any deficiencies identified by the fire risk assessment process will be prioritised and rectified accordingly. Fire hazards will always be eliminated, or the risk reduced to the minimum level practicable by always implementing control measures and safe systems of working.

Fire Prevention

- As part of its obligations in respect of the Regulatory Reform (Fire prevention) Order 2005, The Levels School will:

- Eliminate or reduce risks from flammable substances by suitable storage and safe use procedures. Storage areas (shed in the grounds, and the Science Preparation room) will be checked as part of an annual risk assessment via Educating Safely. Only trained staff are expected to use these flammable materials, and keys to the storage cupboards will be kept safely by appropriate staff (Nigel Phillips as Estates Manager and Lorna Brimson as Science technician under the guidance of Dr Joseph Knight.

Records of the nature of these flammable materials will be kept in the Science preparation room.

- Staff will ensure that combustible materials, such as cardboard boxes, paper, packaging etc will be disposed of safely. Any such materials which need to be kept for any length of time will be stored safely and

tidily in designated storage areas.

- Rubbish bins will be emptied daily. Wheelie bins will be kept away from the building, yet not next to the perimeter. These areas should be kept tidy and emptied regularly.
- Display boards should be kept away from sources of heat. Notices should be secured well and not be able to flap about.
- Staff should avoid use of extension leads where at all possible. If they must be used, they should not be overloaded, or 'daisy chained' with multiple extension leads.
- Staff should switch off all electrical equipment at the socket at the end of their working day. Timer plugs are used if required.
- The boiler room will be kept tidy, clear, and locked.
- Provide staff training, updated regularly (2 yearly) using the IAMCOMPLIANT training package. Training is revisited annually at INSET with refreshers completed annually using the Fire training module on the Educating Safely (EEC) platform. It is expected that all staff will adhere to safety expectations highlighted in their training, reporting immediately any concerns over the integrity of fire doors, incorrect storage of flammable materials, etc). Constant evaluation of practice with regard to fire prevention is expected from all staff.
- The following staff undertook training on how to use a Fire Extinguisher in September 2026 run by Ball Fire Protection – Nigel Phillips, Nick Hainsworth, Victoria Billany, Nicky Wood. Andrew Kelleher, Kim Cinicola, Lorna Brimson, Rachel White, Debbie Williams, and Tabi Anderson (in her role as Cover Supervisor).
- The Levels School is a non-smoking site. Signage on entry to reception states this.
- Hot works contractors will be briefed as to areas containing flammable materials to ensure they don't inadvertently endanger the staff and students at The Levels School.
- All gas appliances are checked yearly by a Gas Safe registered engineer (Oakfield Services), and a copy of the testing certificate kept in the Fire prevention folder (Service completed in January 2025). All electrical wiring will be checked every 5 years, and a copy of certification kept in the Fire prevention folder (last check was completed September 2025).

- Ensure that portable appliances are PATS tested (Volta Electricians) to avoid fires due to electrical faults. This occurs in accordance with labelling on each item (3 years for most items, 5 years for IT items).
- If a fire related incident or near miss occurs, this will be investigated by The Fire Prevention Officer and a report made to the Head Teacher to allow improvements to be made to the operating procedure immediately. All staff will be expected to follow improvements to procedures as they are identified.
- Carry out fire drills at least once a term and contact emergency services where necessary. The Fire Prevention Officer supported by the Deputy will be responsible for checking the fire alarm panel, which is positioned in the reception area at Etonhurst Building and on the ground floor at the rear door into the courtyard at the Ashcott House building, and also for calling the emergency services as needed. They will also work with the Fire Wardens to check full evacuation of the building has occurred in the case of a fire alarm.

Evacuation

- Evacuation drills are undertaken at least once per term during the day and the results recorded and reviewed by the Fire Prevention Officer (Nigel Phillips) and documented in the Fire Prevention folder held in the Estates Mangers office. The assembly point of the Etonhurst building is at the front of the school building, on the bank on the right hand side as exiting the main front door. The assembly point at the Ashcott House building is at the front of the school building adjacent to the main black gates.
- Simon Scarborough or any other PE staff, will take a walkie-talkie to the tennis courts at all times in case of any issues, including fire/fire drills. Although hearing the alarm in the tennis courts has not been a problem, the walkie-talkie gives extra opportunity to give warning as needed.
- Staff and students using the Forest School area will sign out during these activities and would not be expected to enter the school grounds for evacuation purposes or during a fire. Should a student need to re-enter the building during these sessions they will enter by the front door, signing in and out at reception. Students in Prep will be accompanied by a teacher. If the alarm sounds when they are in the building, teacher and student should register with students at the evacuation area as usual.
- Staff and students using Ashcott House will sign out of Etonhurst as they

leave and sign into Ashcott House as they arrive. If a fire alarm sounds at Etonhurst as they transition between buildings staff and students have been instructed to walk away from the building, they have signed out of and towards the other building. If the fire alarm is sounding as they approach the building and they have not yet signed in, they are to make their way to the relevant assembly point.

- In the case of a fire, the Fire Prevention Officer or trained staff will be responsible for checking the Fire panel in the relevant building to determine any potential areas affected by fire. They will pass all information to the emergency services by phone.

Process for Etonhurst - the person on the front desk will unlatch the other front door to allow them both to swing open, giving plenty of room for personnel to evacuate. Caroline Cook (Head teacher) or person in the Acting Head position will collect register tray and take them to the assembly point with a walkie talkie. Emma Lovell (Assistant SENDCo) or person allocated this responsibility in Emma's absence will bring the registers for staff and visitors and a walkie talkie. Student registers will be issued to individual tutors. Tutor groups line up in year order so if any tutor is absent the remaining tutor will take a register for the year group (Max 16 students). Once registers are taken, and all personnel are accounted for, Caroline Cook and Emma Lovell (or designated responsible person) will inform the Fire Prevention officer and/or Front desk staff via walkie-talkie, arranging for return to the building when safe. A Senior member of staff acting as Head Teacher in the absence of Caroline Cook will assume this role. In the absence of Emma Lovell, her role is undertaken by Claire Thomas (Head of therapy/ Assistant Head).

- All staff should familiarise themselves with the nearest available evacuation route from the rooms where they work. They should also be aware of other evacuation routes should one become blocked by fire. Fire evacuation orders are displayed in every room.
- There is a trained Fire Marshall on each floor of the building to assist in fire evacuation. They wear a fluorescent jacket to help their visibility. They are responsible for ensuring that all individuals have descended towards the main emergency exit (the front doors of the school). The Fire Marshalls 'sweep' their floor, checking all rooms are cleared of personnel, and closing the doors afterwards. Fire Marshalls advise the Fire Prevention Officer on their way out of the building to confirm their floors are clear.

- Simon Scarborough, Deputy Head is responsible opening the front gates for the fire services. He will stand next to the gates to ensure the safety of the students.

  Students or staff with disabilities have a PEEP (Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan). These are kept on the staff One Drive. Staff are aware of the named students that have these and what is required.

- Disabled individuals will be supported appropriately to aid their evacuation, including by using an evac chair if suitable for their needs. The evac chair will be kept on the top floor, and the Fire Marshall and her assistant on the top floor will be responsible for using it and moving it to the first floor if needed there. This will be done after all other students and staff have been evacuated from the top floor. There are no staff or students who have a PEEP which recommends using an evac chair presently, but it may be needed in the future for visitors, or if anyone's physical ability changes. **September 2025 – We currently do not use the EVAC chair. However, should we be in a position to use it again we will review this policy.**

- Those with PEEPs will be evacuated according to their individual evacuation plans. Currently this applies to four students. The students with a PEEP become dysregulated with loud sounds, so are prompted to use ear defenders while the warning bell is ringing. One student has a visual impairment and has a 1.1 TA with her at all times. All staff are aware that the PEEPs are located in the H&S, Fire Safety folder labelled Student PEEPs 26/27.

- Staff should close windows as they leave their rooms, but not the doors. These will be closed by the Fire Wardens once the room has been checked for personnel. No one should take any personal belongings with them.

- Staff should direct students in silence to the assembly point. Individuals should walk, not run. Staff and students should follow instructions from the Fire Warden on their floor.

- Students will gather at the assembly point. They must stand with their tutor, irrespective of whether it is break, lunch or a lesson. Students will form a line with their tutor. This will occur in age order – Prep School nearest the tree/furthest from the building, through to KS4 nearest the path and picket fencing. Students must stay silent and, in their line.

- The tutor will be responsible for checking their students are present. The Head teacher will bring registers to the assembly point. Once all staff

and visitors are accounted for the Assistant SENDCo will inform the Head teacher. Once all students are accounted for and the Head teacher has received notification re: staff and visitors, the Head teacher, will inform the Fire Prevention Officer via walkie-talkie.

- Staff not taking a register should stand in silence with the Assistant SENDCo who will register those staff and any visitors.
- No one should return to the building, or move from their assembly point positions, unless they have been told by the Head teacher, Mrs Cook, (or Acting HT in her absence) following confirmation from the Fire Prevention Officer via walkie-talkie.
- Nigel Phillips as Fire Officer and/or Nick Hainsworth in his absence operate the Fire panel. Additional staff members are trained in this role and will act if both are absent from the building.
- **Process for Ashcott House –** the first staff member to exit the building will unlatch the other front door to allow the doors to both swing open, giving plenty of room for personnel to evacuate. This staff member will also collect the sign in/out folders for staff, students and visitors. Nicky Wood will collect the post 16 sign in folder and any other remaining registers should they not have already been collected. Alison Hood will do this in Nicky Woods absence.
- All staff and students will make their way to the assembly point. Students and staff gather at the assembly point. The staff member with the sign in/sign out folder will register students and staff at the assembly point. Head of Post 16, Nicky Wood will register the Post 16 students. Due to the nature of the use of Ashcott House there will not be more than 50 personnel (staff and students) in the building at any one time.
- All members of staff regularly based in Ashcott House are trained in the operation of the Fire Panel. The most senior member will check the Fire Panel to determine any potential areas affected by fire. This will usually be Caroline Cook (Head Teacher), Ben Bridger (Deputy Head). Nigel Phillips (Estates Manger), Debbie Williams (Prep Head), Nicky Wood (Post 16 Lead), Alison Hood (PA to HT), They will pass all information to the emergency services by phone. Senior staff have a walkie talkie so that the main Etonhurst building can be updated.
- All staff should familiarise themselves with the nearest available evacuation route from the rooms where they work. They should also be aware of other evacuation routes should one become blocked by fire. Fire evacuation orders are displayed in every room.

- **Procedure during exams** (applicable for both buildings) - For those students sitting an exam, JCQ have regulations surrounding instructions around the exam itself, which are copied for every invigilator. For evacuation purposes, the lead invigilator will bring the register and lead the students in silence to the assembly point. The lead invigilator will be responsible for taking a register of the students, invigilators and scribes, and reporting those present to the receptionist. Some students will have an individual invigilator in a separate room – those students and their invigilator should gather at the assembly point with the lead invigilator ready for registration.

Maintenance check of alarms and fire detection system

- The Levels School will maintain a suitable system for the maintenance of clear emergency routes and exits, signs, notices, emergency lighting, fire detection systems, alarms and fire-fighting equipment. Signage, firefighting equipment and emergency lighting were initially provided by the contractor, Andromeda and J. Norris electricals and are now monitored by Nigel Phillips. Any replacements are supplied by Volta Electricians. Andromeda provide replacements as and when required.
- All fire call points are identified, and weekly call point tests undertaken and recorded (different call point every week) by Nigel Phillips.
- Adequate means of escape are provided and maintained and checked weekly. The main fire escape is the front doors. There is also an escape route out of the back, ground floor of both buildings, and the first floor at Etonhurst if needed in a fire. The aim will be for all staff and students to leave via the front door if possible.
- Heat detectors are present in the kitchen and Science labs. These are linked to the fire alarm system and are checked twice a year by Mendip Fire and Security.
- Emergency lighting is provided for escape purposes. This is tested monthly internally by Nigel Phillips, the Fire Prevention Officer and annually by Volta (Electrical Contractor), and the testing is reported in the Fire prevention folder.

Fire Fighting Equipment

- Suitable fire extinguishers and fire blankets are provided throughout The Levels School by the contractor Andromeda. They will be checked

every month for defects by the Fire Prevention Officer, Nigel Phillips. They will be checked annually by Andromeda and the date recorded for these checks on the equipment itself. Records of this will be kept in the Fire prevention folder.

- Whilst all staff will have had online fire prevention training (Reviewed annually in INSET with a refresher completed using the EEC platform and 2 yearly using IAMCOMPLIANT certified CPD), it is not expected that they should try to fight a fire themselves, unless it is very small. Priority will be to raise the alarm first, use a blanket or extinguisher if appropriate, and evacuate the building. If a staff member is in any doubt of their ability to fight a fire, they should not attempt to do so.
- Suitable signs designating firefighting equipment and means of escape are provided by Gian Floris, Proprietor and maintained by Nigel Phillips, Estates Manager.

Fire Training

- Fire training is provided to employees at induction and through annual refresher training at INSET sessions and using EEC platform as well as using IAMCOMPLIANT (2 yearly). Staff will know how to activate the fire alarm and what action to take in the case of a fire.
- Staff, students and all others on site will be provided with fire prevention information. Students are made aware of fire prevention information through display in classrooms and through planned fire drills. Every student will be shown how to sound the fire alarm in the case of fire.
- Visitors/contractors are made aware of fire prevention information by their host on arrival. Any event involving large numbers of visitors will need an announcement of evacuation procedures at the start of the event.

Policy reviewed by C. Cook and N.Phillips October 2026