UNLOCKING POTENTIAL

LEVELLING THE SOCIAL AND ACADEMIC ARENA

ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

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 to 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.

Date of policy	September 2024
Next review date	September 2026
Frequency of policy review (annually, every two years)	Every 2 years
Policy owner	Caroline Cook – Head teacher Gian Floris – Proprietor
Published policy	Yes ☒ No ☐
List of connected policies	Equality and Dignity at Work Policy, Curriculum Policy, Premises Plan, SEND policy, Therapy Policy, Social and Fine Motor Skills policy, Risk Management Policy, Health and Safety Policy, Supporting Children with Medical conditions Policy
Approved / Date	Approved by Governors

This policy covers all premises known as The Levels School.

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.

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Introduction

Schools are required to have an **accessibility plan**.

The Equality Act 2010 came into force on 1 October 2010 and updated May 2014, replaced all existing equality legislation, including the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA).

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/315587/Equality_Act_Advice_Final.pdf

The effect of the law is the same as the previous legislation, in that **"schools cannot unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief and sexual orientation".**

An accessibility plan is listed as a statutory document in the DfE's guidance on statutory policies for schools. The guidance also requires that the policy be:

- Reviewed and reported on annually and drawn up/updated every three years.
- Approved by the Board of governors, who are free to delegate this to a committee of the governing body, an individual governor or the Head teacher.

Legislation and guidance

This document meets the requirements of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the Department for Education (DfE) guidance for schools on the Equality Act 2010.

The Equality Act 2010 defines an individual as disabled if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' adverse effect on his or her ability to undertake normal day-to-day activities.

Under the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice, 'long-term' is defined as 'a year or more' and 'substantial' is defined as 'more than minor or trivial'. The definition includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy and cancer.

Schools are required to make 'reasonable adjustments' for students with disabilities under the Equality Act 2010, to alleviate any substantial disadvantage that a Disabled student faces in comparison with non-disabled students. This can include, for example, the provision of an auxiliary aid or adjustments to premises.

The Levels School also takes its guidance from the SEND Code of practice, 0-25 years, Updated Jan 2015:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/398815/SEND_Code_of_Practice_January_2015.pdf

This refers to Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014 and associated regulations.

The regulations associated with the Children and Families Act 2014 are:

- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014.
- The Special Educational Needs (Personal Budgets) Regulations 2014.
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability (Detained Persons) Regulations 2015.
- The Children and Families Act 2014 (Transitional and Saving Provisions)(No 2) Order 2014.

The School's Aims

The Levels School has high ambitions for all its students and expects all to be able to participate and achieve in every aspect of school life. We have a caring, inclusive and supportive ethos that seeks to value all individuals and treat them fairly and with respect. Our school promotes equality of opportunity for all. By promoting a positive attitude towards all individuals, we aim to eliminate discrimination and harassment related to disability and thereby fulfil an essential component of our ethos.

This plan will be made available online on the school website, and paper copies are available upon request. The Levels School is also committed to ensuring staff are trained in equality issues with reference to the Equality Act 2010, including understanding disability issues. The school supports any available partnerships to develop and implement the plan.

The Levels School is committed to providing an environment that enables full curriculum access, valuing and including all students, staff, parents and visitors regardless of their education, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional and cultural needs.

Compliance with the Equality Act is consistent with our setting's aims, ethos and Equal Opportunities and Dignity at Work policy, and SEND policy.

Our staff recognise their duty under the Equality Act:

- Not to discriminate against Disabled students in their admissions and exclusions, and provision of education.
- Not to treat Disabled students less favourably.
- To take reasonable steps to avoid putting Disabled students at a substantial disadvantage.
- To publish an accessibility plan.

In performing their duties our Board of governors have regard to the Equality Act 2010. The Board of governors at The Levels School will:

- Recognises and values the young person's knowledge/parents' knowledge of their child's disability.
- Recognises the effect their disability has on his/her ability to carry out activities.
- Respects the parents' and child's right to confidentiality.

This plan sets out the proposals of the Board of governors of The Levels School to increase access to education for Disabled students in the three areas required by:

- Increasing the extent to which Disabled students can participate in the school curriculum.
- Improving the environment of the school to increase the extent to which Disabled students can take advantage of education and associated services.
- Improving the delivery to Disabled students of information that is provided in writing for students who are not disabled.

The School's Context

The Levels School is an independent specialist day school offering high quality education and exemplary pastoral care to students with a range of complex, specific learning differences that may include speech, language, and communication needs.

We have an overview through the admissions process of all the challenges our learners face. As a specialist school, a bespoke curriculum will be in place, differentiated to suit the needs of the individual. Each individual with an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP) will have an outcomes document that tracks the progress made against the outcomes dictated by the ECHP. All students will have an Individual Passport that outlines the learning needs and strategies needed to help support those learning needs.

Students that have medical needs that require support in school will have an Individual Health Care Plan (IHCP). All students subject to an IHCP will also have this signposted on their passport to serve as a reminder to all teaching staff and therapists of that child. Where a disability requires a safety plan or risk assessment, these will be completed on the EEC (European Education Consultants) system with copies placed in student files and flagged for staff. The purpose of these documents is to ensure that the whole school environment is inclusive and favourable to all students. This includes the physical environment, as well as social, emotional, sporting and educational activities.

The Levels School has an onsite therapist team that advises all staff with regard of Speech and Language Therapy (SALT) and Occupational Therapy (OT) needs. External specialist support will be available as dictated by the need within the school. For example, we have previously had specialist external support from a physiotherapist, the visual impairment team and teacher of deaf (ToD).

Current good practice

We aim to ask about any disability or health condition in early communications with new parents and carers as part of our school admission procedure.

We support students with both physical disabilities and learning needs to access areas of the curriculum they find difficult. Where PE is a challenge for physically impaired pupils, we seek expert advice for identified individual needs.

We consult with experts when new situations regarding students with disabilities are experienced.

The school's accessibility plan will be resourced, implemented, reviewed and revised as necessary and reported on annually.

Financial Planning and control

The Board of governors, guided by the Directors/Proprietors and the Head teacher, will review the financial implications of the accessibility plan as part of the normal budget review process.

1. Improving Access for Disabled students to the school curriculum					
Priority	**Lead**	**Strategy / Action**	**Resources**	**Timescale**	**Success Criteria**
Needs of all students are considered when writing and planning the curriculum	Head teacher	Teachers experienced and qualified in delivering education to students with SEN all have an input into the curriculum planning CPD is conducted and a culture of sharing good practice promoted throughout the team through regular staff meetings allowing groups to collaborate Outside agencies are contacted for specialist support EG: Autism Outreach team, visual impairment team, physiotherapists, support from Educational Psychologists Areas of the curriculum are shared with supportive peers from a range of different school settings where feedback shaped improvements and developments	Training time Use of National College Use of Local Authority training resources	In place, ongoing and reviewed annually	Curriculum is accessible and meets the needs of all. Students are supported and extended Progress to outcomes is made by all
Adaptations of the curriculum to meet the needs of individual leaners	Head teacher/ SENCo/ Individual teachers	Pastoral support, timetable adaptations Therapy team and therapy provided within EHCP OT programmes – Fine Motor Skills Speech and language therapy programmes – Talk, Listen, Communicate Programme to address Social skills delivered weekly for all Specific training in word processing skills like a touch-typing program Use of access arrangements for assessment/National tests	Therapy team on site Touch typing software Training in Access arrangements	In place, ongoing and reviewed annually	Needs of all learners met enabling positive outcomes Progress to outcomes is made by all
Accessibility of individuals to physically practical subjects – Sport/PE/Drama/	Relevant subject teachers Therapy team SENDCo	Space provided where required Modified equipment provided where needed Support provided by Onsite OT therapists – direct 1.1 support, advice to teaching staff and lessons observations are advice Teachers experienced and qualified in delivering education to students with SEND differentiate accordingly offering accessible alternatives	Cost of resources	In place, ongoing and reviewed annually	Curriculum planned is accessible and meets the needs of all. Students are supported and extended

					Progress to outcomes is made by all
Appropriate use of specialised equipment to benefit individual pupils and staff	SENDCo/Head of therapy	ICT/Lap top use to support children with difficulty recording. Sloping boards for pupils with fatigue problems or a physical disability Coloured overlays for pupils with visual difficulty (Reading Rulers) Specially shaped pencils and pens for pupils with grip difficulties Use of wedge/wobble cushions Use of weighted blanket, fiddle toys, sensory diet toys Use of therapy balls	Specialist equipment as listed	In place, ongoing and reviewed annually	Increased access to the Curriculum Needs of all learners met. Progress to outcomes is made by all
Developed and embed increased provision to increase access to the curriculum for all pupils	Head teacher/ SENDCo/Head of Therapy	Speech and Language and Occupational therapy assessments for any students where a need is identified by relevant staff Early identification of students not making progress and requiring intervention Identify students that would benefit from increased 1.1, up to 1.3 intervention	Allow the therapy team time on caseload for assessments Reporting and recording process with regular data drops that allows early intervention Specialist L7 and L5 staff that can deliver Literacy/Numeracy intervention	In place, ongoing and reviewed termly	Positive impact on pupil progress Students are supported and extended Progress to outcomes is made by all
Training for staff on increasing access to the curriculum for all pupils	Head teacher/ SENCo/ Therapy team/ First aid lead	Epipen training Training from SENCo and therapy team Access to courses, CPD Online resources for CPD shared with staff Ongoing guidance from outside specialists e.g. sensory support team for children with visual or hearing impairment, physiotherapists,	Use of National College Training Costs NC subscription Training time Therapy time for liaison	In place, ongoing and reviewed termly Regular visits from outside professionals	Increased access to the curriculum Needs of all learners met Progress to outcomes is made by all

		Identify any needs for whole staff INSET	Use of Local Authority training resources	Book external CPD where required	Maintain records of staff trained on TLS training Matrix
To support students with significant sensory issues	Head of therapy/OT	OT trained in Sensory integration OT disseminates training information to all staff Sensory informed uniform and Uniform expectations Identify and develop sensory friendly spaces within school Develop Sensory friendly outside spaces Develop Sensory rooms for therapy team Develop and resources sensory spaces within school (Etonhurst and Ashcott House)	Time for training Training Costs Time for INSET/CPD In place – review regularly Establish working party Research resources and cost Identify and prioritise work areas	In place and ongoing In place From Sept 24 – in place Sept 25	Increased access to the curriculum Positive impact on pupil progress Maintain records of staff trained Needs of all learners met Progress to outcomes is made by all
Improve educational experiences for visually impaired students and those with multi-sensory impairments	SENDCo/Head of therapy	Use of magnifiers/Braille keyboard/enlarged reading materials, Radio Mics etc. as required based on identified needs Staffing resource and appropriate curriculum in demands	Cost of equipment Cost of TAs and time to recruit and train	In place and ongoing In place when required – arrange visits from specialist as and when required	Teaching aids, white boards etc, more easily seen and learning experiences of students enhanced. Progress to outcomes is made by all
Improve educational experiences for	SENDCo/ Head of therapy	Consult Hearing Impairment team – working with Teacher of Deaf for any students that require it Daily maintenance and use of radio aids when required	Installation of equipment if required	In place when required - regular visits from	Staff know how to operate/maintain hearing technology and learning

hearing impaired pupils		Consider hearing loop/sound field systems if recommended		sensory support team. Future plan if required	experiences of pupils enhanced. Progress to outcomes is made by all
To support the behavioural needs of all students	Head teacher / Deputy Head Student development/SEMH Lead/ SLT and Middle Leaders	Network of key support staff in place for each student – tutor, therapist, keyworker, Deputy Head Student development Supervision policy that outlines level of supervision required at less structured times A positive behaviour, trauma informed relational policy and practice in place Early intervention established under Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy Development of PSP as and when required Use of HUBMiS to monitor and track Use of EEC behaviour model for behaviours that present a H&S implication Creative therapies available if relevant All staff trained in Level 1 Positive handling Supervision in place for Senior Leaders – Increase provision through the rest of the staff team. Develop and embed The Levels School Alternative Provision for relevant students	Time allocated for induction process for new staff INSET time to maintain culture of The Levels School Costs associated with EEC and HUBMiS Therapy time for research and liaison Time for regular meetings Training costs and CPD linked to new training and regular review In place for SLT Increased availability – through 24/25 Staffing costs to develop and oversee	In place and ongoing Increased availability – through 24/25 From September 2024	Positive impact on pupil progress Needs of all learners met Progress to outcomes is made by all

Enrichment activities, Lunch times Clubs and any out of school activities ensure reasonable adjustments are made to enable the participation of the whole range of students	Head Teacher/ Deputy Head Student development and PE Lead	Risk assessments will be undertaken where appropriate Providers will comply with all legal requirements	Any specialist equipment needed to allow a child to access an enrichment activity or club	In place when required	Access for all students to the extra-curricular and enrichment activities
School visits are made accessible to all students irrespective of attainment, regulation and impairment	Head teacher Prep Head/EVC Coordinator Teaching staff/Trip Leads	All students have access to all school visits	Time for research and enquiries Any resources required	In place when required	Curriculum access for all visits for all students
2. Improving Physical Environment					
Priority	**Lead**	**Strategy / Action**	**Resources**	**Time**	**Success Criteria**
Accessible access to Etonhurst site	Proprietor/Head teacher	Access from Bath Road through Front gates Drop off and parking facility at front of school – clear to pull up at front door and access through Performing Arts room if required Metal ramp at side of front door to remain in situ all year Double doors can open wide enough to allow wheel chair/walking frame access List of students that are required to use front entrance as accessibility entrance	Staff time to oversee and enforce at drop off and pick up	In Place	Physical accessibility to front of school increased
Provision of wheelchair accessible toilets	Proprietor	Maintain wheelchair accessible toilets with clinical waste Downstairs – shared toilet with staff	Storage of First Aid equipment next door in utility area	In place	Physical accessibility to accessible toilet provided First aid provision provided on ground floor if required

Provision of ground floor changing rooms, shower and accessible toilet	Proprietor	Increased wheelchair accessible toilets, shower and change rooms	Cost of maintaining, cleaning and updating when not in regular use	In place	Physical accessibility of school increased
Provision of ground floor meeting area	Proprietor	Area provided downstairs for meeting and quiet discussion Planned adjustments to ground floor teaching areas in line with increased accommodation	Cost of moving, cleaning and change of use Staff resource cost	From Jan 2025	Provision of ground floor meeting area Office space situated on ground floor increasing physical accessibility of school
Improvements to help the visually impaired	Proprietor/Head teacher/ Estates Manager	External areas that have potential for trips due to uneven ground are made good/decking installed Any external steps highlighted in yellow/non-slip paint if required	Cost of materials and labour Cost of materials and labour	In place, ongoing and reviewed termly	Hazards highlighted to increase safety for visually impaired people. All areas monitored and maintained.
Improvements to help the hearing impaired	Head Teacher / SENDCo	At point of Admissions check requirements through parental meeting and Medical Questionnaire Install hearing loop/sound field when necessary, Alarm linked to fire alarms	Cost of equipment/ installation	Future plan if required	Learning experiences of pupils with hearing difficulties enhanced.
Safe evacuation of disabled students	Head Teacher/Fire Officer SENCo	Write PEEP for all relevant students EVAC chair in place if required Installation of increased internal emergency signage and ensure escape routes are clearly marked Teach and Practise procedure with students outside of drills on a year group basis Run regular drills	Time for PEEP writing EVAC Chair maintenance and training Staff resource time for checking and monitoring Teaching time	In place, ongoing and reviewed termly	Physical accessibility of school increased Time for safe evacuation of all students decreased PEEPs evident in student files

					Maintain records of staff trained on TLS Training Matix Record of Fire drill practices Fire Evacuation Plan monitored annually or as needs change
Improve signage to indicate access routes around school	Proprietor	Signs indicate disabled parking bay	Cost of signs	From Jan 25	Disabled people aware of wheelchair access
Maintain safe access around exterior of school	Head Teacher/Estates Manger	Ensure that pathways are kept clear of vegetation and any other potential obstacles	Grounds person duties	In place, ongoing and reviewed termly	People with disabilities can move unhindered along
Improve accessibility of second and third floor areas	Proprietor	Install stair left to rear stairs	Cost of stair lift, contractors and installation Maintenance costs	Future plan if required	Physical accessibility of whole school increased
Improve ease of access and safety of rear stairs top floor	Proprietor	Install increased stair guard and rail to upper landing and where required	Cost of materials and contractor time	In place and reviewed regularly	Safety and ease of accessibility of the top floor increased
Improve access between both school buildings	Proprietor / Head Teacher / Estates Manager	Fob access for side gate with linked electric barrier CCTV for path to rear of buildings Clear vegetation and make safe	Cost of materials and contractor time Grounds person duties	From Jan 25	Safety and ease of accessibility for main student entrance to school increased
Improved access from Kings Lane to rear of Ashcott House	Proprietor / Head Teacher / Estates Manager	Grounds work required to clear and make paths good Parking area marked with additional parking and disabled space allocated – front and/or rear Ramp access created to Ashcott House	Cost of materials and contractor time Grounds person duties	From Jan 25 to front of building September 2025 – rear of building	Safety and ease of accessibility for main student entrance to school increased at Ashcott House

Improve access around outside ground floor of Etonhurst site so all children and adults in wheelchairs can access all parts of the school	Proprietor / Head Teacher	Provide pathways to travel around the ground floor of site inside and outside. No areas in school on ground floor outside building to be only accessible by steps – all outside ground floor areas ramped	Feasibility study carried out Contractors in where appropriate Works carried out	Develop through 2024 with a view to be in place by academic Year 25/26	All children and adults in wheel chairs can access all parts of the school

3. Improving the delivery to Disabled pupils of information that is provided in writing for students who are not disabled:					
Priority	**Lead**	**Strategy / Action**	**Resources**	**Timescale**	**Success Criteria**
Up to date database of needs within school	SENDCo/Head of Therapy	Create an accurate database of pupils, staff and parents/ carers with identified disabilities	Time	In place for students Develop for parents/carers From Sept 24	An up-to-date SEND register cataloguing need for each student A database will exist that includes parents and staff needs
To ensure that parents/ carers who have a disability can receive information and reports by an alternative method	Head teacher/Head of Therapy Admissions Coordinator	All parents / carers have appropriate access to the information the school shares Seek the views of parents/ carers on preferred method of communication Ensure all information is made available in a suitable format in a reasonable time e.g. translated into appropriate language, available in large print Specific arrangements made to meet identified needs	Develop new website Develop method to collect data from parents	Nov/Dec 24 From Sept 24	Copies of information kept on database Feedback indicates delivery of school information to parents/ carers /school community is accessible to all
Effective communication and engagement with parents	Head teacher All staff	Termly meetings with parents/carers – Termly consultations Termly IEP meetings with SENCo Communications made through a variety of formats – Email, Social media, telephone, face to face Enquiring and using parents preferred method of communication Develop and embed information evenings – remote delivery due to large catchment area	Time allocated	In place, ongoing and reviewed termly Initiated Sept 23 Revisit and embed Sept 24	Parents/carers fully informed about progress engage with their child's learning Parents/Carers educated in specialist areas

Increased access and support to use ICT as Assistive technology	Proprietor/ Head teacher / ICT Lead / ICT Consultant	Use of ICT – Initially Bring your own device' (BYOD) Effective software researched, training in, and then installed Research test and source most effective device and software Curriculum time provided to enable relevant teaching and practice to occur Working party to research and prioritise works required and cost implications Explore and finance own data line/cable into building to facilitate increased Wi-Fi	Time – Research and training Budget implications and ICT infrastructure Time Costs of implementing	In place From September 2024 As part of dev plan when finances allow	Positive impact on pupil progress Students are supported and extended Progress to outcomes is made by all
Adaptations of the resources provided to meet the needs of individual leaners	Head teacher/ SENCo/ Individual teachers	Visual timetable adaptations Therapy team and therapy provided within EHCP Speech and language therapy programmes – Talk, Listen, Communicate developed as a Social skills weekly for all Use of access arrangements for assessment/National tests Specific training in word processing skills like a touch-typing program	Therapy team on site Time Touch typing software	In place, ongoing and reviewed termly Reviewed regularly – time and ICT resources required to embed Academic year 24/25	Positive impact on pupil progress Students are supported and extended Progress to outcomes is made by all
Improve Website access	Website development coordinator	Information to be shared can be found on website and in a range of formats Research if Specialist resources and support from outside agencies is required	Develop new website Potential cost for resources/software	Nov/Dec 24 From Jan 25	Feedback indicates delivery of school information to parents/ carers /school community is accessible to all