



DANES HILL SCHOOL
STRONG & SAGACIOUS

DATE: 1 SEPTEMBER 2021

REVIEW DATE: 1ST SEPTEMBER 2022

AUTHOR: BURSAR

ACCESSIBILITY POLICY

THIS POLICY APPLIES TO THE MAIN SCHOOL, THE EARLY YEARS
FOUNDATION STAGE AND THE PRE-PREPARATORY SCHOOL (BEVENDEAN)

Reviewed Summer 2021
Accessibility Committee (29/6/21)

Sonal Chatrath (Chair)
Ruth Samson
Tiffany Callis
RQ

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1 ETHOS AND AIMS OF DANES HILL SCHOOL

1.1 Danes Hill School aims to offer the highest quality teaching, learning and support of all pupils in the pursuit of academic and personal excellence. We have high expectations of all our pupils, and we strive to ensure that every pupil can access the whole school curriculum.

1.2 We value the diversity of our school community and appreciate the contribution that all children make including EAL pupils (English as an Additional Language) and those with special educational needs (SEND). An extensive program to extend our able children is in place.

1.3 We have an admissions policy which seeks to remove barriers to entry to our school for pupils with special needs and/or disabilities. We are a fully inclusive and welcoming school and this is reflected in our admissions policy.

1.4 Our mission is to develop young people with active and creative minds, a sense of understanding and compassion for others and the courage to act on their beliefs. We stress the total development of each child: spiritual, moral, intellectual, social, emotional and physical.

1.5 We regularly review and take steps to improve the physical environment of the school and provision of facilities during school trips in order to increase the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and associated services offered by the school.

1.6 Our staff regularly review their teaching strategies to ensure that any potential barriers to learning and participation by disabled pupils are removed, enabling all children to access the curriculum and resulting in an inclusive ethos.

1.7 We support specific members of teaching and non-teaching staff with training designed to raise their awareness of disabilities when required and to enable them to minimise any potential difficulties for pupils.

1.8 We promote the importance of using language that does not offend amongst both our staff and our pupils and ensure that, wherever possible, positive examples of disability are portrayed in teaching materials.

2 CONTEXT

2.1 Details of additional provision made for all pupils can be found on SIMS and on the SEND register that is maintained by the Learning Support department. These pupils range from those supported with an EHCP (Educational Health Care Plan) and as well as those who require individual and/or group support.

2.2 We fully integrate all these pupils into school life and enable them to participate in the whole curriculum including extra-curricular activities (such as school trips) by making necessary adjustments. We take an inclusive approach to our staff recruitment and aim to appoint the best person based on their skill set and qualifications, regardless of any disability he/she might have.

2.3 We actively implement the school's equal opportunities policy for staff in the day-to-day management of Danes Hill School. Any staff with medical issues are provided with the necessary support for their role. We regularly review the needs of our staff to ensure adjustments are made accordingly.

ACTION PLAN 2021-22

A. IMPROVING ACCESS TO THE CURRICULUM

Action	Implementation and Timescale
<p>A1. Identify all new pupils with SEND and draw up individual plans, (IEP'S) to address their special needs so that they have full access to the curriculum and staff are informed of their needs.</p> <p>A2. Written information is accessible in a range of different ways for disabled pupils. Large print materials, different colour paper that text is printed on, additional words lists and prompt cards are made available to pupils with SEND and EAL children to enable them to fully access and participate in the curriculum.</p> <p>A3. Provision for pupils who need technology to help access the curriculum e.g. laptop. Pupils with visual impairment, have access to individual personal iPads/laptops for downloading reading material and curriculum notes. Curriculum materials are loaded on to the iPad and a laptop to allow for easier accessibility for visually impaired.</p> <p>A4. Educational materials such as exercise book with bold lines/squares are provided.</p> <p>A5. Where appropriate stairs and uneven surfaces marked by high visibility strips.</p> <p>A6. Arrangements are made by the SENCO in each part of the school to ensure that pupils taking examinations, board or internal, receive the special access arrangements to which they are entitled such as extra time, use of computers, providing a scribe and or a separate quiet room.</p>	<p>The school SENCO, along with learning support staff, draws up the IEP's and all teaching staff briefed during each academic year.</p> <p>Continual review for individuals.</p> <p>Continual review for individuals.</p>
<p>A7. Teaching staff of the school monitor pupils and inform the SENCO using an Expression Of Concern form, of any pupils who display learning difficulties so that this may be investigated and any specific needs appropriately met.</p>	<p>Continual review.</p>

<p>A8. The SENCO and or the Assistant Head Academic addresses all NQT staff as part of the whole-school meeting on induction/inset days to ensure that pupils with SEND have appropriate access to the curriculum.</p>	<p>During initial induction period for each new teacher.</p>
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B. IMPROVING PROVISION OF INFORMATION

Action	Implementation and Timescale
<p>B1. As more communications and materials are transmitted electronically to pupils, parents and staff, ensure that it is available in an appropriate format for those with special needs and/or disabilities.</p>	<p>As technology changes there is a continuous review of the way to deliver electronic comms and materials to those pupils with SEND.</p>

C. IMPROVEMENTS TO THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

As and when all school infrastructure is refurbished or redeveloped, due consideration and compliance with Accessibility regulations are included in any design solution.

Examples of recent relevant developments:

C1. Widened bell-mouth junction at the entrance to the school – this work was completed by Surrey Highways in the [summer 2018](#) and the development significantly improved road safety outside the school, to make it easier for all local children, and their parents, to walk or cycle to and from school.

C2. Peanut/fountain development at front of Old School House – this work was completed in [summer 2019](#) and has improved visibility in the quadrangle; all maintenance vehicles have been moved out of the area improving safety and accessibility for all; the space is also now used by pupils for playtime and outdoor learning opportunities.

C3. New fleet of Peugeot 17-seater minibuses with full disability access/functionality were leased from [Autumn 2018](#).

C4. A new transport company was appointed in [Autumn 2019](#) and has significantly improved the school bus service and safety, at considerable cost, for all pupils through use of tracking technology.

C5. New sports hall. The sports hall opened in [Autumn 2020](#) and the design of the building is compliant with prevailing accessibility regulations; all the facilities, including the climbing wall are safely accessible for all pupils and staff. There are plans to allow 3rd parties to use the facilities from the Autumn of 2021 (eg Esher Girls Cricket)

C6. New layout of school carpark – this was redesigned in the [summer 2020](#) to allow school coaches to be in pole position to exit the school at peak times.

C7. Improved lighting – all lighting continues to be reviewed and replaced with new brighter LED lights which are more sustainable, and safer. Sound and lighting systems were significantly improved in Studio Theatre and the Ark from 2019-2021 which enhanced the performing arts spaces and allowed more multi-functional use of those spaces

C8. The revolving doors at main Reception continue to pose accessibility challenges for all pupils, parents, staff and visitors to the school. The redesign of Reception/Admin took place in summer 2020. The revolving doors as a discreet project will be considered in summer 2021.

C9. Masterplan ideas – subject to Board approval and funding

Not in any order of priority, and will be revisited when new Head arrives September 2022

- a) New mini-trannie classroom at pre-prep
- b) New kitchen/dining room for Bevendean
- c) New sports offices
- d) New junior farm at Paddock farmland
- e) New 3-storey STEM building to replace Rookery
- f) New performing arts centre to replace the Ark

D. IMPROVEMENTS IN TECHNOLOGY SERVICES

D1. Classroom interactivity

We have upgraded all interactive smartboards with considerable improvement in backlighting and touchscreen functionality, which has exponentially improved the classroom teaching experience for all pupils and teaching staff. We will consider further development in AV classroom technology.

D2. Classroom devices

We are investing in replacing old and obsolete iPads with new SurfaceGo devices in a bank of computers for use in the classroom by all pupils.

D3. MS Teams and Surface Pro devices for all teachers

During the Covid19 lockdown we accelerated the digital transformation of the teaching experience by investing in, and deploying, MS Surface Pro devices for all teachers, and we implemented MS Teams; this provided the platform to seamlessly transition to the online learning for all pupils.

D4. Conferencing facilities

We invested in new high-tech conferencing facilities to allow parent-interviews to take place online in the main boardroom, and small conference room upstairs in the Old School. There was also a marked improvement in governor attendance at sub-committee meetings and board meetings because it removed the need for travelling long-distances to and from the school; it means improved access to becoming a school governor, not constrained by location/distance which broadens the net in the search for the next generation of governors to lead the school with the new Head (Maxine Shaw).

D5. CCTV for enhanced safety & security

We have upgraded CCTV from analogue to digital, and provided more cameras, which has improved safety and security for all pupils, staff and visitors for both the main school site and Bevendean pre-prep.

E. OTHER RELEVANT MATTERS

E1. **Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPS)** are in place for all children with long or short-term physical disabilities and are available on the SIMS.

E2. There has been an **increase in the number of international pupils** who require additional English-language teaching and learning support staff have been given additional ELT training.

E3. Acting Deputy Head (Sonal Chatrath) continues to develop more **analytical reporting tools within SIMS [student management information system]** to be able to monitor and assess the impact of teaching on all children.

E4. The school is committed to meeting its statutory duties outlined by the Equality Act 2010 and appropriate funding will be made available in any design solution. The committee has reviewed government guidelines at:

<https://www.gov.uk/rights-disabled-person/education-rights>

E5. Visitors with disabilities – see below.

E6. The Accessibility Policy is formally reviewed as required by the Accessibility Committee. The Accessibility Committee is formed of the following personnel who have jointly collaborated on this policy document:

- Acting Deputy Head – Sonal Chatrath, chair
- Head of Pre-Prep Bevendean – Ruth Samson
- Health & Safety Officer – Tiffany Callis
- Bursar – RQ

E7. The school is working with new Health & Safety advisers (Carstens & Robinson) with effect from September 2020 and a new Accessibility review took place in May 2021 and is included as supporting information to this policy.

APPENDIX A

Accessibility for visitors with disabilities

A1. Induction loop – located in reception on RH desk

The hearing aid wearer simply switches their hearing aid to the “T” position and the background noise is significantly reduced. Now they are able to hear the assistant’s voice clearly. The signal radiates for approximately 1m from the installed position reducing the risk of other customers hearing the conversation and interference from the positions either side.

A2. Accessibility for all Visitors

A2.1 If a visitor needs to access the Main School building we have a ramp that can be fitted over the steps into the Main Hall from the Fountain. Please arrange with site management in advance if possible.

A2.2 Please make sure disabled bays are kept free for their purpose

A2.3 Visitors with a disability should be met outside Reception and directed through the gates to avoid having to come into Reception unnecessarily and avoid revolving doors. Please point out location of disabled toilets if required.

A2.4 If you are inviting parents to an event, letters should ask politely if there are any accessibility requirements, they should make Reception/event manager aware.

A2.5 For drinks in the dining room or terrace, provision must be made for parents to enter via Ravens Entrance beside kitchen door. A sign is to be fitted to this door.

A2.6 If the alarm bell sounds in the disabled toilet please see if the person requires assistance as quickly as possible. The bell can be deactivated by pressing the button inside the toilet.

Policy reviewed: Summer 2021

Next review date: September 2021, and at 12-month intervals thereafter

Accessibility Audit

for

Danes Hill School

carried out on

19th May 2021

Purpose

C&R have been instructed by Danes Hill School to undertake a review of its accessibility arrangements. The school have undertaken a number of actions following a previous audit by Assurity Consulting Ltd on the 9th of April 2018. The purpose of this audit was to both assess the progress against the last accessibility audit and to undertake a new review of the school management and physical arrangements. The review will focus on the impact on staff, students, visitors, and others that may require the use of the building.

Scope

The review will focus on the school's holistic management of accessibility, taking input from relevant Building Regulation standards and the school's overall duties under the Equalities Act.

In terms of types of accessibility issues to be discussed and covered within the context of this review, the below types of accessibility needs will be covered.

- ✦ **Ambulatory disabilities** – this includes pupils who use a wheelchair or mobility aid.
- ✦ **Visual disabilities** – this includes those with visual impairments and sensitivities, so lighting, glare, contrast, and colour should be considered.
- ✦ **Auditory disability** – this includes those with hearing impairments and sensitivities, so induction loops, visual signals and acoustics should be considered.

Danes Hill School is set over 55 acres in Oxshott, Surry. The building ranges from early 19th Century to modern construction, with the school operating since 1947. Over the years there have been several developments, new structures, and adaptations, with the newest being the sports hall. The developments complement each other, with the linking of old and new structures working well to provide level access and clear lines of sight. There are certain constraints within the older building, typically designed with changes in level as a default design feature.

Limitations

The audit is aimed at addressing aspects of physical accessibility and covers wider management of accessibility, however it does not cover the school's IT accessibility, such as software systems or third party systems used by teaching and administration staff. In addition the audit does not cover accessibility in relation to the curriculum delivery, such as teaching techniques and support plans.

Report details

Objective	To audit physical accessibility and management arrangements across the Danes Hill and Bevendean sites
Audit reference	CRAA/DHS/2101
Organisation	Danes Hill School
Date of audit	19 th May 2021
Report prepared by	Nic Carstens
Report reviewed by	Jon Robinson
Suggested review date	N/A
Persons consulted	✦ Tiffany Callis, Health and Safety Officer

Management arrangements

Following the previous audit, the school has undertaken a number of actions to bolster its management of accessibility, including training for front of house staff, improvements to the reception layout and physical enhancements to the parking facilities. The levels of knowledge demonstrated by the staff during the audit was exceptional, with a high degree of attention to inclusivity.

The school has established a dedicated Accessibility Committee, allowing for issues related to access and inclusion to be discussed.

The reception was inviting and well laid out, with level access from the parking area. The school have an induction loop in place, via a mobile unit and through the site where are clear signposts to key locations.

Policy

The school has a dedicated Accessibility Policy dated September 2020, which is due to be reviewed by Summer 2021. The policy refers to key areas of support, addressing both the learning needs of students and aspects of the physical work environment. The policy contains commitments for accessibility, of which all have been met. The policy is available on the school web site in addition to their local intranet. No issues were identified with the policy during the review, with the school being able to demonstrate its management controls via the review process.

The school approach

Due to the variations in the building stock and through being a split site campus the school have had to respond with a managed approach to accessibility. Whilst IT systems and software are a constant, the age of the buildings has presented challenges to day-to-day movement around the site. Working with the appointed architects the school have established a master plan that looks to envelope aspects of accessibility into its strategic planning, this is evident in the new Sport Hall that has a very considered approach to inclusivity.

Where previously, audits may have focused on wide scale changes to physical aspects, the school have approached it in a risk-based fashion, looking at adaptation as and when needed and based on needs. This is supplemented with a high staff ratio and in the case of students with high dependence a 1:1 managed approach. This is appropriate given the size and complexity of the site, enabling student's freedom whilst ensuring that their basic safety needs are accounted for. Fire safety aspects are catered for within specific Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) and at the time of the visit there was only one student who required one. In this case the school had managed the risk by the relocation of classrooms to accommodate accessibility and has provided a support worker.

The approach is in line with the requirement for reasonable adaptation, ensuring access to education in a safe and well managed manner. The managed approach does lessen the impact on certain physical site limitations, which will be covered within the report. However, there are limitations that must be considered. The reliance on any managed approach is only achievable with competent staff and works well for students, however the approach is harder for staff and visitors who may need unescorted free access to the site. In considering this approach the school must consider those parts of the school that visitors and the public may require access, such as for events and lettings.

The school grounds

Set of 55 acres the site has a blend of hard standing, multi-use games areas, gravel paths and fields. The paths were generally found in a good state of repair, with limited damage. External facades and windows were in a good state with film covering used where required. Colour contrast between building fabric elements was good, with building entrances clear and visible. There are some areas where site vehicles have access, but this is limited and controlled and not presenting any immediate risk to site users.

Welfare facilities were located throughout the school, and accessible from each building location. Internal floor finishes were in a good state with no obvious damage or defects, except for a single step tread to Bevendean, please see action plan for further details.

It was not clear at the time of the review if there is a formal documented inspection programme for paths. Whilst there is no statutory requirement to record inspections, it may assist the school in the evidencing of checks to critical paths across the school.

Fire safety

The school has good alarm coverage with sounders located in all occupied areas, with no issues noted on alarm auditability. In areas likely to be noisy, such as DT, there are visual beacons as well. The school has a clear process for the management of PEEPs and routinely tests its evacuation arrangements. Fire Warden coverage is in place and all areas occupied covered within their fire checks. Consideration has been given at policy level to students with cognitive issues, and teaching support is in place. No issues have been raised with regards to fire safety, with exit routes functioning well to accommodate the numbers using them.

Previous audit review

The audit undertaken on the 9th of April 2018 was reviewed as part of the site visit. The associated action plan has been annotated to show both progress and to overlay the school managed approach to accessibility. The school are advised to review this action plan alongside the below additional points. Please see the attached copy of the Assurity Consulting Ltd action plan which has been updated with supporting comments. For ease of reference, recommendations from this review have also been included within the action plan under a separate tab.

Action plan

The action plan has been prioritised as below:

- ✦ **Priority 1** – Breach of legislation with a higher potential for legal action to be taken against the organisation; or significant health and safety failing having the potential for immediate or serious injury or harm to persons. Action to address these issues must be a priority for the organisation.
- ✦ **Priority 2** – Breach of legislation or significant health and safety failing, but not considered to constitute an immediate risk of injury or harm. Action to address these issues is important to manage the health, safety and welfare of all persons affected by the organization.
- ✦ **Priority 3** – Area identified where improvement is required, but existing situation unlikely to constitute a serious or immediate risk of injury or harm. Typically, these issues will be of a best practice nature, but will contribute to the effective management of health, safety, and welfare in the organisation.

In addition, a suggested timescale has been included to further help prioritise the remedial actions identified. This approach recognises that some actions will require capital investment or other longer-term programmes to address, whilst others can be remediated through “quick wins”.

Suggested Timescale:

- A.** Immediately or as soon as reasonably practicable. In the case of items that require capital work, steps should be taken as soon as reasonably practicable to progress the work.
- B.** Short term. In the case of items that require capital expenditure, steps should be taken in the short term to progress the work. (Suggested timeframe, within 3 months.)
- C.** Medium term. (Suggested timeframe, within 6 months.)
- D.** Long term (e.g. at time of upgrading or refurbishment).

1	Emergency pull cords in bathrooms	The school is equipped with a number of emergency pull cords in the bathrooms. It was unclear how the alarm is managed, with alarms sounding locally. The school is recommended to review this arrangement to allow for alarms to be routed to a dedicated location or to a mobile alarm, with a person(s) nominated with responsibility to respond.	2	C	Tiffany Callis
2	Evac+ Chairs	Where the school has purchased Evac+ Chairs it must be ensured that they are subject to regular maintenance and inspection. A contract of maintenance is recommended. Further to this requirement, where chairs are not required the school may consider storing them in a location where they will not be subject to any accidental damage until needed.	3	D	Tiffany Callis
3	Evac+ Chairs	<p>Where the use of Evac+ chairs is identified, the school will need to ensure that suitable refresher training is provided to staff. For staff that have previously undertaken training they can access the online refresher information on the web site. The school will need to keep staff updated, as such a termly session with trained staff to keep their knowledge up to date will ensure they are confident to use the chair through the year.</p> <p><i>Note: For some cognitive conditions that cause students to 'freeze' in an alarm situation the chairs may be a viable way to enact escape, as such consideration should be given to disabilities beyond the immediately noticeable.</i></p>	2	D	Tiffany Callis

4	Handrails (various locations)	The school has in place a risk-based approach to physical adaptations, responding as and when required. The school are advised to make any contrast change to handrails based on their assessment. In addition, it is recommended that the school add handrail colour contrasting to any longer term property development plan, such as a 5 year building condition programme or as a subset to the campus master plan.	3	D	Tiffany Callis
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5	Robins steps	Within Robins building there are several steps, it is recommended that the top and lower step nosing is colour contrasted, due to the evenness of the step colours.	2	C	Tiffany Callis
6	Steps (general)	The school is a mix of old and new property. The design of steps is varied, with some steps having full nosing colour contrast and others not. It is recommended that the school harmonise its approach to step marking, adding the application of uniform nose markings as part of its longer term (5 year) accessibility plan, or sooner if the needs justify.	3	D	Tiffany Callis
7	Bevendean Hall	The hall is located on the ground floor. The lower lip to the hall door protrudes, presenting a trip hazard, which may present an increased risk to those with visual impairments. It is recommended that as part of the longer-term estates plan that the door is either adapted to reduce the lip or replaced when it reaches the end of its service life with a low threshold option.	3	D	Tiffany Callis

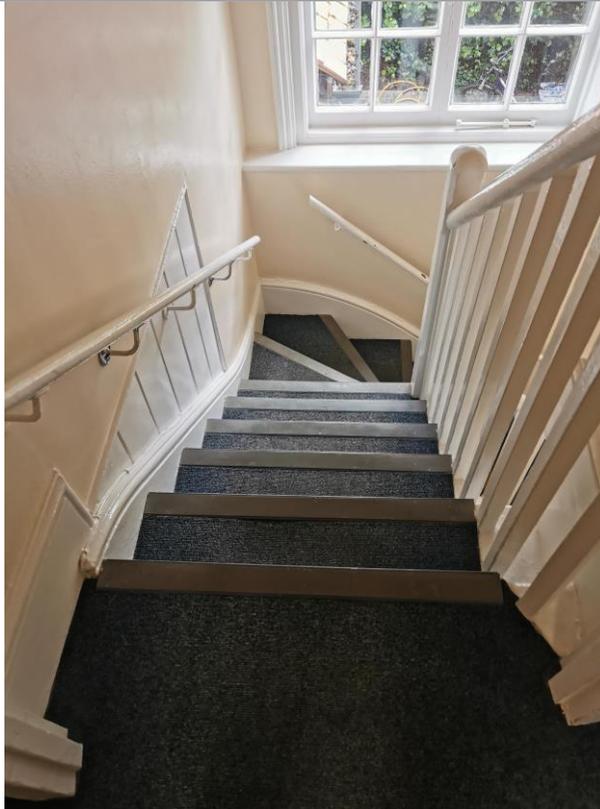


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Pic: Bevendean top step



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10	Swimming Pool	The pool is accessed via level access path, with changing areas. The school has reviewed access equipment into the pool, but no equipment has been purchased to date. It is recommended that equipment is reviewed at the point of there being an identified need, due to the wide variety of equipment available. It is likely that any student starting with a mobility issue to an extent that access equipment is needed will have had advise on the specifications required as part of their support package.	3	D	Tiffany Callis
		Whilst there is no action to take at this time, it is recommended the school review any access needs as part of any future refurbishment, including any associated accessible toilet within the pool area.			

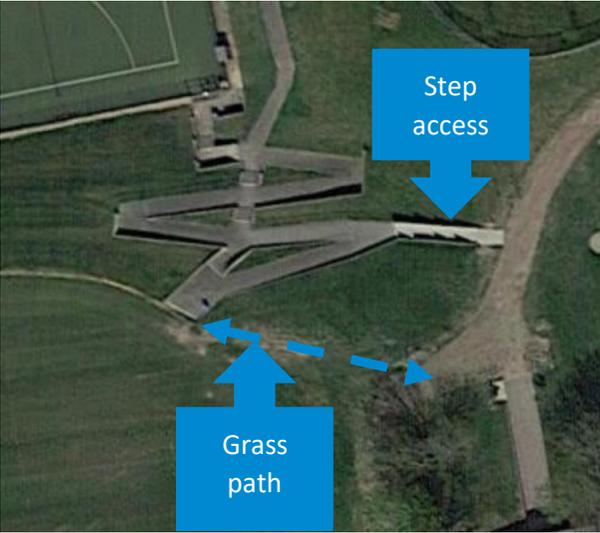


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11	External paths	<p>There is an external path leading to the lower tier sports pitches. The school have installed hard standing paths that tier down from the upper-level access level. It is however not possible to access the ramp via level access, as the first level change is accessible via steps only, or to walk around the path on the grass path. It is recommended that the path is extended to provide accessible access to the tiered ramp path.</p> 	2	D	Tiffany Callis



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12	School strategy	<p>Within the previous audit report and subsequent re-visit there are a number of items that have the potential to improve the facility, such as colour contrast. The school through its Accessibility Policy will be managing these adaptations on a case by case basis. However there is merit to the school drawing together a 5 year strategy, potentially linking to the campus master plan that set out the role the Accessibility Committee and Estates Team will play in longer term improvements, pro-active measures to supplement the reactive. Issues that the school may want to consider include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✦ The monitoring of paths, lighting, and equipment provided to aid accessibility. This may be a formal documented termly inspection to provide assurance to the Senior Leaders that arrangements are fit for purpose.✦ A design specification for future redecoration works. The school may consider the use of its corporate colours to form a colour pallet for colour contrasting walls, including the use of murals and other artwork to pick up changes in direction and level. <p>Training refreshers, whilst training has been undertaken the school may want to consider the allocation of an annual training budget for staff refresher training, to account for staff changes.</p>	3	D	Tiffany Callis
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