

Disability, Discrimination and Accessibility plan 2025-2028

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Introduction

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA) extended the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) to cover education. Since September 2002, under Part 4 of the DDA, which is now encompassed in the Equality Act 2010, The Guildhouse School holds three key duties towards disabled children and young people:

- not to treat disabled students less favourably for a reason related to their disability.
- to make reasonable adjustments for disabled students, so that they are not at a substantial disadvantage.
- to plan to increase access to education for disabled students.

This plan sets out how The Guildhouse School will continue to increase access in line with current statutory duties, including the Equality Act 2010, SEND Code of Practice (2020), Independent School Standards (DfE, 2024), National Minimum Standards for Boarding (2022), and Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE, 2025).

Purpose, Vision and Values

The Guildhouse School subscribes fully to the concept of inclusion. This plan demonstrates our commitment to ensuring equality of opportunity and access for all students, regardless of disability or additional need. All students are entitled to a broad and balanced curriculum, to participate in extracurricular activities, and to benefit fully from the life of the school.

We recognise our responsibility to meet the individual needs of all of our students, and the need to maximise every student's opportunity to realise their potential. It is the responsibility of all members of the school community to ensure that this is achieved by removing as many barriers to learning and development as is possible. The School monitors carefully the academic performance and personal development of students with protected characteristics and do whatever is necessary to provide them with effective support when it is reasonably practicable to do so.

We regularly examine all areas of our educational provision, and this includes the campus within which that provision is delivered. We examine any measures that will improve school life for the school community as whole and/or for any individual within that community, including any structural changes where these are possible, permissible, and necessary. The ambition of this work is to provide the correct environment for all our students to thrive and progress.

Through the supportive environment provided at the School and in partnership with parents and the wider organisation of CGS, the School aims to maximise the self-possession and esteem of all of their students. This, in turn, helps students to realise their potential.

Student Information

Examination Access Arrangements

Access to internal and external examinations is available to all students. Anyone with identified difficulties could, dependent on need, use a laptop, have an amanuensis, a reader, an oral language modifier, a prompt, modified papers, extra time, rest breaks, have exams completed at home or in hospital, provided that their need is proven and approved by appropriate means.

SEND and Able Students

Students and families are encouraged to disclose disabilities during the admissions and onboarding process. Confidentiality is respected and information is managed by the ALS Coordinator and DSL in line with safeguarding and GDPR requirements.

Staff, parents or agents can refer students for testing, or students may be referred through the admissions process. The SENCO (ALS Coordinator) will meet with the student to assess potential barriers to learning, referencing the referral, and will explore the student's wider context to decide on the appropriate course of action, including testing if appropriate. The SENCO will record the outcome onto iSAMS (MIS system), where appropriate, write a Student Learner Profile (SLP) and share it with the relevant staff. The SLP will be agreed with parents and student, and is a live document reviewed regularly. If necessary, the SENCO will train the staff on specific needs if necessary.

Medical Conditions (SLP)

Appropriate members of staff are kept advised of students who have medical conditions that may have a direct or indirect effect upon the student's education, and/or that may impact on their education due to the medicines or therapies employed to treat the medical condition. Where appropriate, staff members receive appropriate guidance and/or training in how the students' needs can be best accommodated in the activities for which the member of staff is responsible.

Mental Health for staff and students

The Guildhouse School recognises that positive mental health underpins academic and personal success. In 2025, twelve staff Mental Health Champions were trained. From 2025, a Student Mental Health Champion programme is being introduced. Both will be expanded and reviewed over the three years of this plan. Provision is aligned with DfE guidance on mental health in schools (2018).

Bullying

Students at our School enjoy a safe and secure environment. We treat bullying as a serious matter. There is a clear section in the Student Handbook about bullying, setting out our policy with guidelines about how bullying is addressed at the School. Any incidents of bullying are dealt with immediately and students are encouraged to say if they are aware of any bullying incidents. The School's anti-bullying policy is available on both the school's website and the School's internal MIS, iSAMS. Students of all ages and backgrounds are encouraged to socialise together and support each other. Our house system and pastoral policies are designed to help prevent bullying issues.

Racism

Racism is not tolerated by the school and students are encouraged to report such incidents where they will be dealt with immediately. The school's diversity committee (run by students) aims to educate and support all students to grow awareness for anti-racism and support diversity within a multicultural environment. Personal tutors and the tutor RSHE programme also aim to educate students on anti-racism along with our school's expectations.

Child Protection

Child protection arrangements are in place and regularly reviewed by the School's Boards and the School's Pastoral Care Team. The designated members of staff have been trained for their roles in this area, and the training is regularly reviewed to ensure that this is kept up to date.

Pastoral Care

We have a strong pastoral system. All students belong to a year group, including the students' Personal Tutors and Pastoral Director. As well as the academic, boarding and pastoral staff, admin and operational staff are also supportive and know that any student may approach them to talk to them at any time. However, we also recognise that we need to provide alternative effective options for students wanting to raise concerns with us and ask for help when needed but who may have difficulties expressing themselves or approaching adults. As an international school, some of our students have emerging levels of English language, including lower levels of emotional literacy, hence having the competence and confidence to verbally explain to an adult that they are struggling is very difficult. The school recognises how a wide range of cultures requires somewhere for mental health and / or wellbeing to be regularly practised, so as not to create potential barriers for students who need support. Our wellbeing counsellor is available three times per week for one-to-one support and students can reach out confidentially by emailing any concerns to concern@guildhouseschool.com

Access

The access requirements for any students/staff are identified during the recruitment and onboarding process and then formally discussed, identified and implemented where required before the student/staff member starts to enable them to access the campus. Other access requirements are regularly reviewed in line with changing legislation and implemented where required and where feasibly possible considering the age / suitability of the buildings and individuals access needs.

Health and Safety

The School's Business Manager and other appropriately qualified members of staff, along with external contractors, complete regular health and safety checks and audits. The School's Governing Body meets regularly to review the actions taken to address issues identified in those checks and audits. All staff are aware of the need to report issues of health and safety immediately. As part of the Health and Safety policy, students as well as staff are regularly involved in risk assessments, e.g., practical subjects, outdoor activities and school visits.

Gathering Views

There is a clear line management system to gather feedback from members of staff in addition to which all members of staff are free and encouraged to provide their thoughts to any member of the SLT or Governing body. There is a general staff briefing once per week at which all academic staff are present. When we have students with EHC plans we receive feedback from their parents via the Annual Review process in place for those plans. When we receive complaints from parents or students, we are always keen to learn from parents' and students' experiences and where appropriate these learning points will be fed into the development of this plan.

Priorities

The Schools' DDA plan is structured to align with the duties set out in the relevant legislation to:

- Increase the extent to which disabled students can participate in the school curriculum.
- Improve the delivery to disabled students of information that is provided in writing for students who are not disabled.

- Improve the physical environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled students can take advantage of education and associated services.

Details of the planned activities in each of these areas are available in the schedule provided in Appendix 1.

Management, Coordination and Implementation

The School's DDA plan is owned by the Principal of The Guildhouse School, London and the Business Manager. The Accessibility Plan will be reviewed bi-annually (end of Term 1 and Term 2) by the SLT and ELT. Progress will be reported to the Governing Body. Student and parent feedback will be formally gathered through surveys, focus groups, and Annual Reviews, and incorporated into revisions of the plan. The School will implement changes as required by their students and staff needs, insofar as it is reasonably practicable to do so.

The Schools' Boards review this policy statement annually, and update, modify or amend it, as they consider necessary to ensure that the School continues to meet its legislative duties with respect to legislation relating to Equality and, also, to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all staff and students taking into account any managerial and legislative changes.

Related Policies

Equality and Diversity Policy

SEND Policy

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Health and Safety Policy

Fire Safety and Evacuation Policy

Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

Anti-Bullying Policy

Appendix 1 DDA Plan 2025-2028

The duties to which each target contribute is indicated in the final three columns:

1. increase the extent to which disabled students can participate in the school curriculum.
2. improve the delivery to disabled students the information that is provided in writing for students who are not disabled.
3. improve the environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled students can access and be involved in day-to-day operations of the school.

Ref	Objective	Action Steps	Lead	Monitoring	Review Date	Progress
1.1	Ensure all staff understand Equality Act duties and implications for teaching & learning	Annual INSET training and updates in staff handbook	Principal / Operations Manager / SENCO	Staff feedback, INSET records	Annually	
1.2	Screen all students on entry to identify SEND/EAL needs	Initial ALIS testing (or equivalent), SENCO oversight of outcomes, referral for ALS as needed	SENCO / Student Services	Testing results, ALS referrals	Sept & Jan intakes	
1.3	Identify students with emerging needs not picked up at entry	Half-termly monitoring of reporting cycles, SENCO meetings with Curriculum Directors	SENCO / ALT	Reporting cycle analysis	Half-termly	
1.4	Maintain updated SEND register and strategies for staff	Regular liaison meetings, SENCO guidance circulated to teaching staff	SENCO	SEND register, staff feedback	Termly	
1.5	Use iSAMS to track SEND, learning support, and wellbeing concerns	All staff trained to log and access records; parent portal launch in due course	SENCO / Operations Manager	iSAMS usage reports, parent feedback	Ongoing	
1.6	Support staff to adapt teaching for range of learning needs	INSET on differentiation, learning styles, neurodiversity	SENCO / Deputy Head Academic	Lesson observations, staff appraisal	Ongoing	

1.7	Ensure disabled students access full curriculum and co-curricular life	Adjustments made to teaching, trips, and activities	SENCO / DSL / Trip Leaders	Trip risk assessments, SEND reviews	Ongoing	
1.8	Ensure admissions processes are compliant with Equality Act	Annual training for Admissions staff on responsibilities and adjustments	Head of Admissions / Principal	Admissions audit	Annual	
1.9	Ensure accessible boarding provision	Review accessibility in Premier House and Independent Accommodation; compliance with NMS 2022	Operations Manager / Boarding Lead	Boarding inspections, NMS audit	Annual	
1.10	Ensure physical environment remains accessible	Review use of lifts, doorways, signage; purchase equipment where needed	Operations Manager	Estates review, H&S checks	Annual	
1.11	Ensure accessible communication and information formats	Provide alternatives (large print, audio, digital tools); staff trained in inclusive communication	SENCO / Student Services	Parent/student surveys	Ongoing	
1.12	Support student wellbeing and mental health	Part-time school counsellor (M/T/Th); staff trained as MHFA; updated PSHE programme	Counsellor / DSL / PSHE Lead	Counselling records, PSHE review	Annual	

