Equality and Diversity Statement

1. School Context

The school serves pupils with a wide range of special educational needs and disabilities. We recognise that many pupils experience multiple barriers to learning and participation. Our community includes pupils from diverse ethnic, cultural, and socio-economic backgrounds. We are committed to eliminating discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity, and fostering good relations for all members of our community, regardless of disability, race, sex, religion or belief, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, age, pregnancy or maternity, or marriage and civil partnership status.

Data

Number of learners on roll	19
Proportion of learners with SEND	19
Age range	Registered for learners between the ages of 8 – 19years. Currently we have x2 learners in KS2, x5 in KS3, x8 in KS4 and x4 in KS5.
Proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals	16
Language profile	19 with English as their first language
Sex/Gender	7 females and 12 males
Socio-economic factors	15 Section 20 or 31 2 Section 17
Language and Culture	All learners have been raised with English as their first language X4 Culturally diverse

2. Information about equality and inclusion at Overley Hall School

Overley Hall School is an independent specialist provision offering a holistic, person-centred education for children and young people aged 8 – 19 years with profound, severe and complex needs.

The school supports pupils whose needs cannot be met within mainstream or less specialist environments and who often require highly individualised educational programmes alongside integrated therapeutic support. Many pupils experience autism, attachment differences, sensory processing differences and learning disabilities, frequently in combination with associated communication difficulties, or social, emotional and mental health differences. These needs can create significant barriers to learning, including heightened anxiety, challenges with self-regulation, reduced readiness for learning and frustration linked to communication.

Learners typically join the school with a history of disrupted education, unmet need, or prolonged periods of high anxiety within previous settings. As a result, establishing safety, trust and emotional regulation is fundamental to enabling engagement and progress.

The school operates as a therapeutic community, where education, care and therapy are closely aligned to promote consistency, emotional security and positive relationships. Barriers to learning are identified through robust baseline assessment, ongoing formative assessment and multi-disciplinary collaboration, and how these barriers are reduced through a developmental, sequential & progressive curriculum.

The curriculum is delivered therapeutically, with learning carefully scaffolded to build regulation, communication, independence and resilience over time. Impact is evaluated through continuous assessment, review of individual outcomes and the monitoring of both academic and personal development progress. Overley Hall is committed to offering a holistic educational experience that reduces barriers to learning through flexible curriculum design, ongoing assessment, and precise target-setting focused on individualised life outcomes.

Our curriculum is delivered using a therapeutic approach that nurtures strengths, interests and individual needs within a person-centred framework. We value individuality and strive to make learning engaging meaningful and enjoyable by providing a safe and supportive therapeutic community that provides wellbeing, independence and aspiration. Through this approach, we enable pupils to develop the skills, confidence and resilience

needed to access increasingly meaningful and enriching learning opportunities both within school and beyond.

Overley Hall School currently educates 19 learners drawn from 14 different local authorities. All pupils have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). Of these, 12 are accommodated under Section 20, three are subject to Section 31 care orders, two are supported under Section 17, and one is a care leaver.

3. How school promotes equality, diversity and inclusion

Our school is committed to providing an **inclusive curriculum** that enables all pupils to access meaningful learning opportunities, achieve their potential, and develop the knowledge, skills and confidence needed for adult life. The curriculum is carefully designed and adapted to meet the diverse needs of our learners, ensuring that every pupil can participate fully and experience success. We place a strong emphasis on personal development, independence, communication, wellbeing and preparation for life beyond school. This commitment to inclusion was recognised in our recent Ofsted inspection, where the school received a 'Strong' judgement for this area of its provision. Further recognition of our work was achieved in 2026 when the school was awarded the Excellence in Personal Development Award, reflecting our dedication to nurturing the whole child and promoting equality of opportunity for all.

The school is fully committed to **promoting equality of opportunity** and ensuring that all pupils have access to a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum. We recognise, however, that true inclusion requires us to respond to individual strengths, needs and circumstances, and our curriculum is therefore adapted and personalised to enable every pupil to achieve success.

To support this commitment, the school maintains comprehensive **Equality and Accessibility Plans**, which are reviewed and implemented alongside the School Improvement and Development Plan. Together, these strategic documents ensure that equality, inclusion and accessibility remain at the heart of all aspects of school development and decision-making.

Equality, diversity and inclusion were key considerations in the development of the '**Bud to Bloom' Curriculum**. The curriculum has been carefully designed to ensure that all pupils see themselves reflected in their learning and are given opportunities to develop an understanding and appreciation of the diverse society in which they live. Through the selection of inclusive texts, the celebration of different cultures, beliefs and family structures, and explicit teaching about respect, tolerance, where appropriate and individual differences, pupils are encouraged to value diversity and develop positive attitudes towards others. The curriculum is also adapted to meet individual needs, ensuring equitable access to learning and enabling every pupil to participate, achieve and thrive.

The school is committed to **making reasonable adjustments** to ensure that pupils with disabilities are able to access all aspects of school life and participate fully in learning. These adjustments may include adaptations to the learning environment, specialist equipment, modified teaching approaches, alternative methods of communication, and additional support where required, enabling pupils to achieve the best possible outcomes and experience equality of opportunity.

Reasonable adjustments are an integral part of our inclusive practice and are made wherever necessary to reduce barriers to learning and participation for pupils with disabilities. Through personalised support, adapted resources, accessible environments and flexible approaches to teaching and learning, we strive to ensure that all pupils can engage fully in school life and access the opportunities available to them.

The school places a strong emphasis on **communication support** and ensuring that information is accessible to all pupils, families and stakeholders. We recognise that many of our pupils experience significant challenges in expressing themselves, communicating their needs, or engaging with others. As a school, we are committed to supporting the **development of communication** skills for all learners, regardless of their cognitive abilities or preferred methods of communication.

We meet pupils at their **individual starting points** and provide progressive, personalised pathways that build on prior knowledge, experiences and existing skills. Through the use of **visual supports, symbols, assistive technology, alternative and augmentative communication systems**, and adapted teaching approaches, we enable pupils to develop

confidence, independence and increasingly effective ways of communicating. Our aim is to ensure that **every pupil has a voice**, can participate meaningfully in school life, and is supported to achieve the best possible communication outcomes throughout their learning journey.

The Bud to Bloom Curriculum actively promotes **anti-bullying** and **anti-discriminatory** practice through its emphasis on personal development, relationships, communication, and understanding of the wider world. Pupils are taught, at a level appropriate to their age, stage and individual needs, about respect, kindness, empathy, fairness and the value of diversity. Through carefully planned learning experiences, stories, discussions, role-play, community engagement and celebration of different cultures, identities and family structures, pupils develop an understanding that everyone should be treated with dignity and respect.

The curriculum also supports pupils to recognise unkind, prejudiced or discriminatory behaviour and to develop the skills to seek support, express their views and build positive relationships where appropriate and within cognitive ability. By creating opportunities for pupils to understand themselves and others, the Bud to Bloom Curriculum fosters an inclusive school culture where differences are celebrated, individual strengths are valued and bullying and discrimination are challenged.

In addition to curriculum-based learning, incidents relating to bullying, prejudice or discrimination are identified, monitored and addressed through the school's **safeguarding systems**. The school maintains robust **recording and reporting** procedures, with detailed **behaviour analysis** undertaken through Behaviour Watch to identify patterns, trends and areas requiring further support or intervention. This enables **leaders to respond proactively**, implement targeted strategies, and ensure that all pupils learn and thrive in a safe, respectful and inclusive environment.

The school is continually seeking to further develop and **strengthen pupil voice** across all areas of school life. We are committed to creating meaningful and accessible opportunities for pupils to express their views, influence decisions, and actively shape their learning experiences in ways that reflect their individual communication needs and abilities.

The school is committed to providing ongoing staff training in equality, diversity, inclusion and SEND, recognising the vital importance of developing staff knowledge, skills and

confidence in these areas. This ensures that practice across the school continues to be inclusive, informed and responsive to the diverse needs of all pupils.

4. Evidence and impact

Focus Area	Outcomes across 2025/2026 Autumn and Spring
Attendance	Autumn 25 = 99% Spring Term 26 = 98%
Exclusions or suspensions	There have been **no** exclusions or suspensions during this period
Behaviour incidents	There has been a **decline** in the number of incidents as reported in the Behaviour Analysis Reports Spring Term 2026
Participation in enrichment activities	**All**, 100%, of learners actively take part in enrichment work weekly.
Achievement and progress	**All** (100%) of learners are making progress across the **curriculum and needs-based** learning; it is measured through the quality of their engagement, the prompt reductions for success that are required, the extending of the generalisation of newly attained knowledge and skills (CPG)
Prejudice-related incidents and how they are addressed	No prejudice-related incidents have been recorded across 2025/2026 for learners

5. Accessibility

The School Accessibility Plan sets out how the school will continue to improve access to the curriculum, the physical environment, and information for all pupils, particularly those with disabilities or additional needs. It identifies practical actions to reduce barriers to learning and participation, including adaptations to teaching and learning, improvements

to the school environment, and the use of accessible communication methods and resources. The plan is regularly reviewed and implemented alongside the School Improvement Plan to ensure that accessibility and inclusion remain central to the school's ongoing development and provision.

6. Engagement

The school actively engages with pupils, parents, carers, staff and governors to ensure a collaborative and inclusive approach to school life. We value open communication and regularly seek feedback through a range of methods, including questionnaires, school council activity, SWOT analyses, emails, telephone calls, multidisciplinary meetings, interactive review meetings, and opportunities for targeted or specific feedback on key areas of provision. We also maintain an open-door policy wherever possible, encouraging informal and timely communication alongside more structured processes. We actively welcome external and internal quality assurance processes, using these as opportunities to reflect on practice, celebrate strengths and identify areas for further development. This multi-layered approach ensures that all stakeholders are able to share their views in ways that are accessible and meaningful to them, helping to inform decision-making and support continuous school improvement.

7. Equality Objectives set June 2026

Objective 1: Monitoring and Accountability

To regularly monitor the impact of policies and practices to ensure fairness and equality.

Success Indicators:

An annual equality report is produced and shared with stakeholders

At least two equality-related data reviews are conducted each year

Feedback from pupils, parents and staff informs development

Actions taken are documented and evaluated

Objective 2: Equality of Access and Experience

To ensure all learners, particularly those with protected characteristics, have equitable access to curriculum, enrichment and wider school experiences.

Success Indicators:

Reduction in any identified gaps in participation in trips, clubs or enrichment

Positive feedback on inclusion and belonging

Evidence of adaptations improving access

Equality Objective 3: Communication and Pupil Voice

To improve equality of opportunity by ensuring that all learners, including those with complex communication needs, are able to express their views and participate meaningfully in decisions that affect them.

Success measures:

By July 2028, all learners will have access to an appropriate communication method to contribute to their annual review, target-setting, and pupil voice activities.

Participation in pupil voice activities will increase across all communication profiles, as evidenced through school records and pupil feedback.

Staff will receive training in communication approaches and the use of assistive and augmentative communication systems as required.

Equality Objective 4: Behaviour, Inclusion and Participation

To reduce barriers to learning and participation by developing inclusive approaches to behaviour that recognise the impact of communication needs, sensory differences, and disability.

Success measures:

By July 2028, behaviour support plans will include communication, trauma-informed strategies and more detailed sensory considerations, strategies and interventions where appropriate.

The number of behaviour incidents linked to communication frustration or unmet sensory needs will reduce over the four-year period.

Pupils and/or parents will report feeling safe, understood, and supported through pupil voice activities and annual review processes.