POSITIVE SUPPORT POLICY

Understanding need. Removing barriers.

Enabling success.



RIVERSIDE BRIDGE SCHOOL

INSPIRE, EMPOWER, ACHIEVE

This policy forms part of the Riverside Bridge School Policy Framework
and should be read alongside any related policies, procedures and guidance.

RIVERSIDE BRIDGE SCHOOL
INSPIRE, EMPOWER, ACHIEVE

OUR COMMITMENT

At Riverside Bridge School, every policy reflects our commitment to creating a safe, inclusive and ambitious school community in which every pupil is valued, every voice matters and every family is respected and supported.

Our policies translate our values into consistent practice. They support high expectations, clear responsibilities, effective partnership and informed decision-making, ensuring that the needs, rights, wellbeing and future outcomes of our pupils remain at the heart of our work.

We work collaboratively, act with integrity and continually reflect upon and improve our practice to achieve the best possible outcomes for every pupil.

POLICY PRINCIPLES

Our Policy Principles underpin how we work together and guide the decisions and actions we take to support every pupil and their families.



POLICY PURPOSE & FRAMEWORK

Riverside Bridge School policies set out the expectations, responsibilities and approaches that support safe, consistent and high-quality practice across the school. They translate our values, statutory responsibilities and professional expectations into clear guidance for everyday decision-making and practice.

Each policy forms part of the Riverside Bridge School Policy Framework and should be read alongside any related policies, procedures, statutory guidance and school frameworks referenced within the document.

Policies apply to the members of the school community identified within each document, including staff, governors, parents and carers, volunteers, contractors and other professionals where relevant. Everyone is expected to understand and apply the requirements appropriate to their role and to seek further guidance where clarification is required.

CURRICULUM DRIVERS



Our Drivers provide a shared golden thread across curriculum, school life, policy and leadership, helping ensure that our decisions and practice remain focused on the experiences and futures we want for every pupil.

STATEMENT OF INTENT

This policy sets out Riverside Bridge School's approach to Positive Support. It explains the principles, expectations, responsibilities and arrangements through which the school seeks to understand individual pupils, identify and remove barriers to communication, participation, learning and emotional regulation, and provide personalised support that promotes dignity, wellbeing, independence and positive outcomes. It also establishes the school's graduated approach to providing additional support where pupils experience persistent or increasingly complex barriers.

At Riverside Bridge School, we believe that every pupil wants to belong, communicate, participate, learn and succeed. When this becomes difficult, our responsibility is not simply to respond to what we observe, but to understand what the pupil may be communicating, experiencing or needing and to consider what changes to relationships, communication, teaching, environment or support may enable successful participation.

Positive Support is therefore not a behaviour management programme or a collection of reactive strategies. It is a whole-school philosophy that informs everyday relationships, teaching, communication, emotional regulation, environmental design, therapeutic practice and preparation for adulthood. Through high-quality universal provision and a graduated approach to additional support, we aim to identify barriers early and respond in ways that are proportionate, person-centred and increasingly preventative.

Communication is central to this approach. We recognise that pupils may communicate need, discomfort, anxiety, preference, refusal or distress through speech, AAC, signing, symbols, gesture, facial expression, movement, changes in regulation or other individual forms of communication. Staff are expected to understand how each pupil communicates and to remain professionally curious rather than making assumptions about what an observable response means.

Our approach also recognises the importance of relationships, co-regulation and equitable support. Pupils are most able to communicate, participate and learn when they feel safe, understood and valued and when reasonable adjustments are made to reduce barriers arising from communication, sensory processing, emotional regulation, physical or medical needs, learning demands or the environment. Support is therefore personalised to the individual rather than based upon a standard response to a particular need or circumstance.

Where pupils require additional support, the school's Positive Support Framework provides a structured and graduated response through Universal Support, Targeted Support and Specialist Support. Pupil Profiles, the Communication Development Protocol where appropriate, and the Communication, Participation and Regulation Panel support assessment, planning, review and coordinated decision-making within this framework.

Restrictive practice sits outside routine Positive Support and is only considered where necessary to maintain immediate safety, in accordance with the school's Restrictive Physical Intervention Policy.

Positive Support is continually reviewed and developed through observation, pupil voice, family partnership, multi-disciplinary working, professional reflection and quality assurance. Our aim is not merely to reduce incidents or difficulties, but to improve the conditions in which pupils can communicate effectively, participate meaningfully, develop increasing independence and experience genuine belonging and success.

Our Responsibilities to pupils, families and the school community

Riverside Bridge School has a responsibility to provide a consistent, equitable and person-centred approach that understands pupils in context, removes barriers to participation and ensures that support remains proportionate to individual need.

In delivering our Positive Support approach, we will:

- recognise communication, participation, emotional regulation, learning and independence as interconnected;
- understand each pupil's individual strengths, communication needs and approaches, regulation needs and barriers to participation;
- prioritise prevention, communication, relationships and environmental adaptation before reactive intervention;
- provide high-quality Universal Positive Support as an entitlement for every pupil;
- identify emerging barriers early and use professional curiosity to understand their possible causes;
- make reasonable adjustments and personalise support according to individual need;
- use the Communication Development Protocol where a more structured understanding is required;
- maintain personalised Pupil Profiles that provide clear and consistent guidance for adults working with each pupil;
- work collaboratively with pupils, families, therapists and other professionals;
- ensure additional support is introduced proportionately and reviewed regularly;
- minimise restrictive practice and use it only where necessary, lawful and proportionate to maintain safety;
- use recording, reflection and quality assurance to identify patterns and strengthen future support; and
- continually seek to increase each pupil's communication, participation, independence and preparation for adulthood.

Through these commitments, we aim to create a school culture in which every pupil experiences dignity, belonging and high expectations and is supported to communicate, participate, learn and achieve increasing independence.

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APPROVED BY: Governing Board

APPROVED ON: September 2026

REVIEWED DUE ON: September 2027

Section 01

VISION AND PURPOSE

Setting direction. Promoting belonging. Enabling success.

At Riverside Bridge School, our vision is simple to **Inspire • Empower • Achieve**

This vision is realised through our commitment to inspiring communication, empowering independence and achieving brighter futures. We believe that every pupil has the right to communicate, participate, learn and develop the skills, confidence and independence needed to live a meaningful and fulfilling life.

As a specialist school for pupils with complex learning, communication, sensory, physical and medical needs, we recognise that every pupil follows their own unique developmental journey. Success therefore looks different for every individual. For some pupils, success may be communicating a choice for the first time, developing a trusted relationship or participating confidently within their class. For others, it may involve achieving accredited qualifications, accessing employment, travelling independently or contributing actively within their community.

Our responsibility is not to define success for our pupils, but to create the conditions in which every pupil can communicate, participate, learn and achieve success from their own individual starting point.

This policy reflects that commitment by describing how Riverside Bridge School creates safe, nurturing, structured and communication-rich environments in which every pupil can thrive.

The purpose of this policy is to explain how Riverside Bridge School promotes communication, participation, emotional regulation, learning and independence through a whole-school Positive Support approach.

Whilst this document fulfils the school's statutory duty to publish a behaviour policy, its purpose extends beyond meeting legislative requirements. It sets out Riverside Bridge School's philosophy for understanding pupils, removing barriers to participation and providing the right support at the right time.

Observable actions, responses and interactions provide valuable information about a pupil's communication, emotional regulation, sensory processing, physical health, environmental demands and overall wellbeing. Whilst an observable response may indicate that a barrier exists, it is never viewed in isolation or interpreted without understanding the wider context. Rather than focusing solely on responding to what we observe, we seek to understand why a pupil may be experiencing difficulty and what adjustments, teaching or support are required to enable them to succeed.

Our focus is therefore not on controlling responses or securing compliance, but on promoting positive outcomes through understanding, communication, relationships and equitable support.

This policy provides a consistent framework for staff, governors, families and external professionals, ensuring that every pupil experiences a coordinated, compassionate and evidence-informed approach throughout their time at Riverside Bridge School.

The Riverside Bridge School's philosophy

At Riverside Bridge School, we believe that every pupil wants to belong, communicate, participate and succeed. When barriers prevent this from happening, it is our responsibility to understand those barriers and work collaboratively to remove or reduce them.

Our philosophy is underpinned by several key principles.

- **Communication is the foundation.**

  Every pupil communicates, regardless of the method they use. Communication may be spoken, signed, symbolic, technological, expressed through movement or changes in regulation or other individual responses, or communicated through sensory responses. It is through communication that pupils express their needs, develop relationships, make choices and engage with learning. Supporting communication is therefore the starting point for all Positive Support.

- **Participation creates opportunity.**

  Meaningful participation enables pupils to develop confidence, relationships, knowledge and skills. We therefore seek to remove barriers that prevent pupils from participating fully in school life, recognising that participation may look different for every individual.

- **Learning develops independence.**

  As pupils communicate and participate more successfully, they develop the knowledge, skills and confidence required for increasing independence. This includes independence in communication, learning, emotional regulation, personal care, community participation and preparation for adulthood.

- **Relationships build trust.**

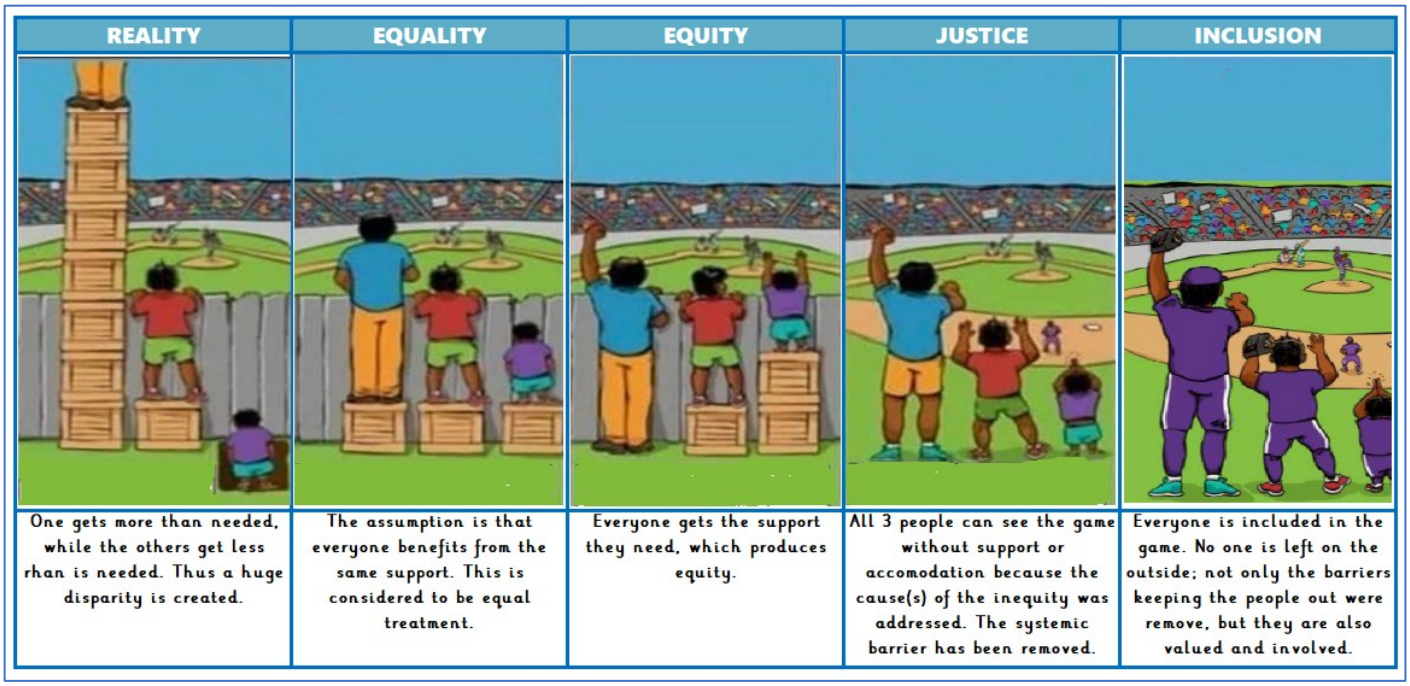
  Relationships are at the heart of everything we do. We recognise that pupils learn best when they feel safe, respected, understood and valued. Positive relationships provide the emotional security that enables pupils to take risks, develop resilience and engage in new experiences.

- **Equity enables inclusion.**



Equality means ensuring that every pupil has the same rights, dignity and opportunity to succeed. However, equal opportunities do not always result in equitable outcomes because every pupil begins from a different starting point and experiences different strengths, needs and barriers.

Equity means providing the personalised support, reasonable adjustments and resources that enable every pupil to access learning, participate meaningfully and achieve success. At Riverside Bridge School, we recognise that fairness is not achieved by treating every pupil identically, but by providing each pupil with the support they need to thrive.



Our commitment extends beyond equity towards justice and inclusion. Justice requires us to identify and remove the barriers within our environments, systems and practice that prevent pupils from participating fully. Inclusion is achieved when every pupil not only has access to learning, but also feels that they belong, their voice is heard, their individuality is respected and they are valued as a full member of the school community.

This philosophy underpins every decision we make. It shapes our curriculum, our learning environments, our relationships and our Positive Support Framework, ensuring that support is proportionate, personalised and responsive to the individual needs of every pupil.

Communication → Participation → Learning → Independence

The Positive Support Framework is built around one simple principle:

- **Communication enables participation.**
- **Participation creates learning.**
- **Learning develops independence.**
- **Independence prepares pupils for adulthood.**

This progression forms the golden thread that runs through every aspect of school life and underpins our curriculum, therapeutic approaches, environmental design and Positive Support practices.

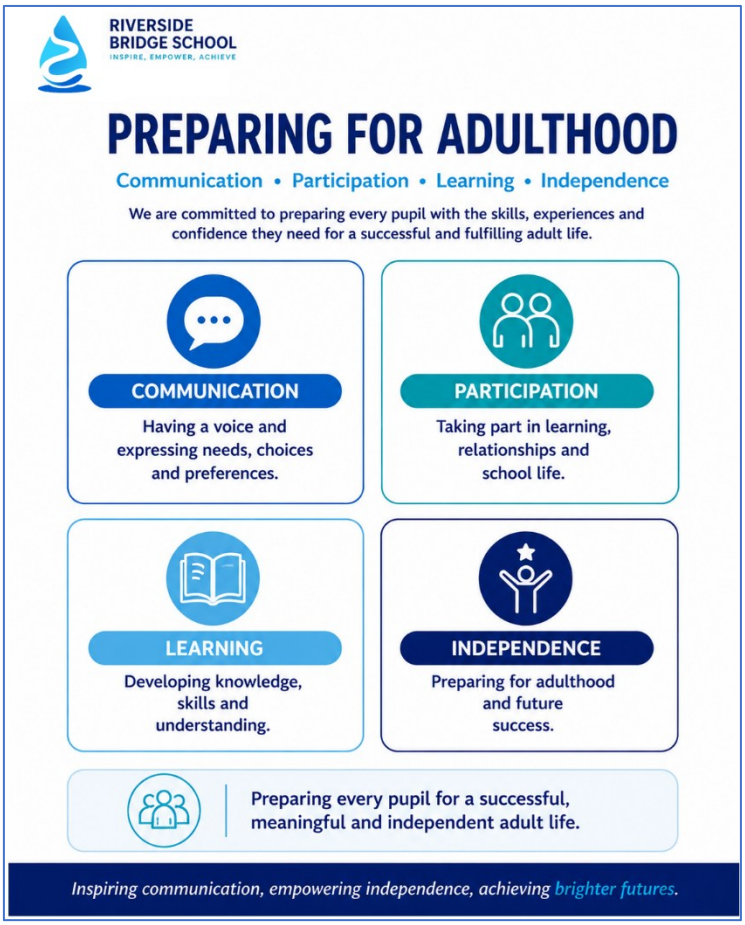
When pupils experience barriers at any stage of this journey, our role is to identify those barriers promptly, understand their underlying causes and provide appropriate support before difficulties become more significant.

Support therefore focuses on enabling pupils to access communication, participate successfully and develop increasing independence rather than simply responding to isolated incidents.

Preparing for Adulthood

Preparation for adulthood is not viewed as a separate programme or phase of education. It is the intended outcome of everything we do.

Every interaction, adaptation, learning opportunity and support strategy should contribute towards developing the skills pupils need to participate confidently within their communities and live meaningful adult lives.



For some pupils this may involve developing spoken language, literacy, employment skills or independent travel. For others, it may mean communicating choices through AAC, developing trusted relationships, increasing self-advocacy or participating more independently in daily routines.

Regardless of the pathway followed, our aspiration remains the same: to maximise every pupil's communication, participation, learning and independence so they are prepared for their own successful future.

This policy sits within Riverside Bridge School's wider Bridging Communication Framework and should be read alongside the related policies, procedures and operational documents identified in Section 16. Together, these documents provide a consistent and shared approach that ensures every member of the Riverside Bridge School community works towards the same goal of inspiring communication, empowering independence and achieving brighter futures.

Section 02

LEGISLATIVE AND STATUTORY FRAMEWORK

Understanding duties. Protecting rights. Applying proportionate support.

This policy has been developed in accordance with current legislation, statutory guidance and recognised best practice relating to behaviour, special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), safeguarding, equality and the use of reasonable adjustments.

As a specialist school, Riverside Bridge School recognises that statutory guidance relating to behaviour cannot be considered in isolation. Effective Positive Support requires the integration of legislation relating to education, safeguarding, disability, equality, human rights and children's welfare. This policy therefore reflects a whole-school approach that places communication, participation, inclusion and preparation for adulthood at the centre of decision-making.

While national guidance refers to a school's behaviour policy, Riverside Bridge School has adopted a Positive Support approach that fulfils these statutory expectations through the principles set out within this document. Our approach reflects the understanding that promoting positive outcomes requires us to understand pupils, remove barriers to participation and provide equitable support rather than relying solely upon reactive responses to what is observed.

The implementation of this policy is guided by the following principles.

- Every pupil has the right to learn within a safe, supportive and inclusive environment.
  We are committed to creating an environment where pupils feel physically and emotionally safe, where relationships are built upon trust and respect, and where communication, participation and learning are promoted through Positive Support.
- Every pupil has the right to equitable support.
  The school recognises its responsibilities under equality legislation to make reasonable adjustments and remove barriers that may disadvantage disabled pupils. Support is therefore personalised to meet individual needs whilst maintaining high aspirations and expectations for every pupil.
- Every pupil has the right to have their voice recognised.
  Pupil voice extends beyond spoken language. Riverside Bridge School recognises that pupils communicate in many different ways, including speech, AAC, signing, symbols, gestures, facial expression, movement, changes in regulation and sensory communication. Staff seek to understand these forms of communication and ensure that pupils are supported to express preferences, make choices and participate in decisions affecting them.

- Every decision should promote safeguarding and wellbeing.
  Safeguarding is central to all aspects of Positive Support. Where concerns arise regarding a pupil's welfare, presentation, attendance, health or family circumstances, staff will respond in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures and work collaboratively with families and external professionals where appropriate.

Positive Support should always be proportionate and least restrictive.
All interventions should be reasonable, proportionate and appropriate to the individual circumstances. Riverside Bridge School is committed to reducing the need for restrictive practices through proactive planning, communication support, environmental adaptations and co-regulation. Where restrictive interventions become necessary to maintain safety, these will always be implemented as a last resort and in accordance with the school's Restrictive Physical Intervention Policy.

Statutory guidance

This policy has been informed by, and should be read alongside, current legislation and statutory guidance including:

- Education Act 2002
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0–25 years
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (current edition)
- Behaviour in Schools: Advice for Headteachers and School Staff (current Department for Education guidance)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (current edition)
- Human Rights Act 1998
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)

The school will review this policy regularly to ensure it continues to reflect changes in legislation, statutory guidance and emerging evidence-informed practice.

Section 03

A POSITIVE SUPPORT PHILOSOPHY

Understanding first. Building relationships. Supporting participation.

3.1 Understanding Positive Support

At Riverside Bridge School, Positive Support is not a behaviour management programme or a collection of intervention strategies. It is the philosophy that underpins every interaction, every learning opportunity and every relationship within our school community.

We believe that all pupils are doing the best they can with the communication, emotional regulation, sensory processing, physical wellbeing and life experiences available to them at that moment. When barriers arise, our role is not simply to respond to what we observe, but to understand why the barrier exists and what support will enable the pupil to participate, learn and succeed.

Positive Support is therefore proactive rather than reactive. It focuses on creating environments, relationships and learning experiences that reduce barriers before they become difficulties, whilst providing timely and proportionate support when additional needs arise.

Our approach recognises that meaningful and lasting progress is achieved through understanding, consistency and collaboration rather than through punishment or control. Every interaction provides an opportunity to teach communication, develop independence and strengthen relationships.

3.2 Core principles

Our Positive Support approach is built upon a number of fundamental principles that guide every aspect of practice across Riverside Bridge School.

- ✓ **Communication before correction**

Communication is at the heart of Positive Support. Before responding to any presenting difficulty or barrier, staff first seek to understand what the pupil may be communicating and whether adjustments are required to support successful participation.

- ✓ **Relationships before consequences**

Positive relationships provide the emotional safety from which learning, resilience and independence develop. Staff prioritise trust, consistency, empathy and co-regulation, recognising that pupils learn best when they feel understood, respected and secure.

- ✓ **Prevention before intervention**

The most effective support is often the support that prevents difficulties from occurring. Riverside Bridge School places significant emphasis on environmental adaptations, structured teaching, communication supports, predictable routines and proactive planning to reduce barriers before they escalate.

✓ **Understanding before judgement**

Observable responses provide information but rarely explain the whole picture. Staff consider communication, sensory processing, emotional regulation, physical health, learning needs, environmental demands and previous experiences before deciding how best to respond.

✓ **Strengths before difficulties**

Every pupil has strengths, interests and abilities that should be recognised and built upon. Positive Support seeks not only to reduce barriers but also to identify opportunities for pupils to experience success, develop confidence and become increasingly independent.

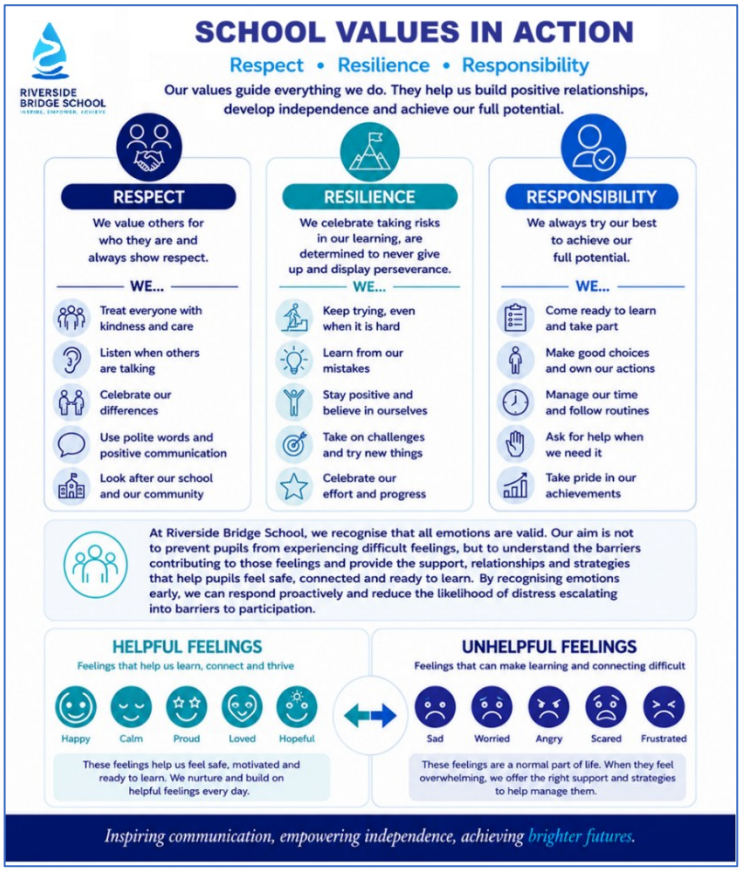
✓ **Co-regulation before self-regulation**

Many pupils require repeated experiences of sensitive adult support before they are able to regulate independently. Staff therefore model emotional regulation, provide predictable support and gradually develop pupils' ability to recognise, understand and manage their own emotions.

✓ **Least restrictive practice**

Support should always be the least intrusive necessary to enable success whilst maintaining the safety and dignity of everyone involved. Restrictive practices are used only when absolutely necessary, are proportionate to the level of risk presented and are always viewed as a last resort.

3.3 A culture of belonging



Positive Support extends beyond responding to barriers. It is about creating a school culture in which every pupil experiences belonging, feels valued and is supported to contribute meaningfully to school life.

At Riverside Bridge School, we believe that pupils flourish when they experience genuine acceptance, trusted relationships and high expectations. Staff therefore work to create environments in which differences are understood, individuality is celebrated and success is recognised in all its forms.

Our school values of Respect, Resilience and Responsibility provide a shared language that helps pupils develop positive relationships, confidence, self-belief and increasing independence.

These values are explicitly taught, consistently modelled and personalised to reflect each pupil's developmental stage, communication needs and approaches as well as individual strengths.

- **Respect** - we value others for who they are and always show respect.
- **Resilience** - we celebrate taking risks in our learning, are determined to never give up and display perseverance.
- **Responsibility** - we always try our best to achieve our full potential.

At Riverside Bridge School, we recognise that all emotions are valid. Our aim is not to prevent pupils from experiencing difficult feelings, but to understand the barriers contributing to those feelings and provide the support, relationships and strategies that help pupils feel safe, connected and ready to learn. By recognising emotions early, we can respond proactively and reduce the likelihood of distress escalating into barriers to participation.

3.4 Positive Support is everyone's responsibility

Positive Support is not the responsibility of one individual or one team. It is the responsibility of every adult working within Riverside Bridge School.

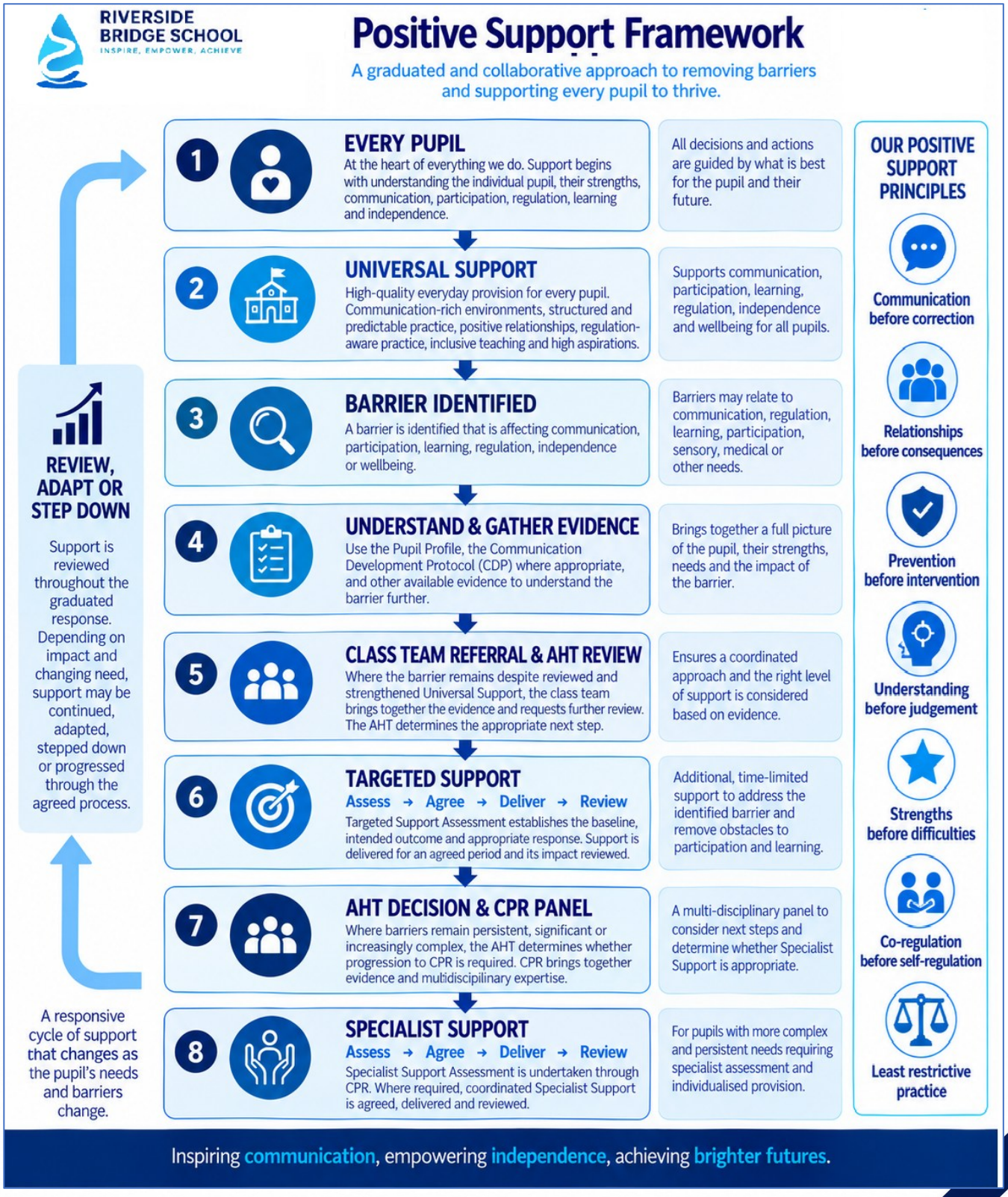
Teachers, support staff, therapists, leaders, governors, families and external professionals all contribute to creating environments where communication is valued, barriers are understood and pupils are supported to achieve positive outcomes.

Consistency across the school community enables pupils to experience predictable expectations, secure relationships and coordinated support. By working together, we create the conditions in which every pupil can communicate, participate, learn and develop increasing independence.

Section 04

THE POSITIVE SUPPORT FRAMEWORK

Identifying need. Graduating support. Increasing independence.



4.1 Positive Support framework

The Positive Support Framework provides a structured, graduated and evidence-informed approach to promoting communication, participation, emotional regulation, learning and independence for every pupil. Rather than viewing Positive Support as a series of isolated interventions, Riverside Bridge School uses an integrated framework that brings together classroom practice, therapeutic approaches, specialist expertise and collaborative decision-making into one coherent model. This ensures that support remains consistent, proactive and responsive throughout a pupil's journey.

The framework is underpinned by the principle that pupils are most successful when barriers are identified early, understood thoroughly and addressed through timely, proportionate and personalised support. Our approach therefore places equal importance on high-quality universal provision, early identification, targeted intervention and specialist planning.

Positive Support is not delivered by one individual or one team. It is embedded within every classroom, every learning environment and every interaction across the school community. All staff share responsibility for recognising emerging barriers, adapting practice and working collaboratively to ensure that every pupil can communicate, participate and achieve success.

4.2 A graduated approach to Positive Support

Positive Support at Riverside Bridge School follows a graduated approach in which support increases in response to the nature, complexity and persistence of identified barriers.

This approach recognises that the majority of pupils benefit from consistently delivered universal practice within high-quality learning environments. Where barriers begin to emerge, additional assessment, planning and intervention are introduced in a proportionate manner. Only a small number of pupils require highly individualised or specialist support beyond the school's universal and targeted provision.

Movement through the framework is not linear or permanent. Pupils may move between different levels of support as their needs change, new strengths develop or barriers reduce over time. Regular review ensures that support remains appropriate, responsive and focused on promoting increasing independence rather than creating unnecessary dependency.

The framework therefore promotes early intervention whilst ensuring that specialist support is available whenever required.

4.3 The principles of the framework

The Positive Support Framework is built upon five key principles.

- ✓ **Universal first**

Every pupil is entitled to high-quality universal provision that promotes communication, participation, emotional regulation and independence.

- ✓ **Early identification**

Emerging barriers are recognised and explored as early as possible through professional observation, collaboration with families and ongoing assessment.

- ✓ **Proportionate support**

Support should always be matched to the individual needs of the pupil. The level of intervention should be sufficient to remove barriers whilst remaining proportionate and promoting independence.

- ✓ **Collaborative decision-making**

Positive Support is strengthened through collaboration between school staff, families, therapists and external professionals. Decisions are informed by multiple perspectives to ensure that support reflects the whole child.

- ✓ **Continuous review**

Support is regularly reviewed to celebrate progress, evaluate effectiveness and ensure that provision continues to meet the changing needs of the pupil.

4.4 The framework in practice

The Positive Support Framework operates through a series of interconnected processes that ensure pupils receive the right support at the right time.

These include:

- Universal Support;
- personalised Pupil Profiles;
- the Communication Development Protocol (CDP);
- Targeted Support Assessment;
- Targeted Support and intervention;
- Targeted Support Review;
- the Communication, Participation and Regulation (CPR) Panel;
- Specialist Support Assessment undertaken through the CPR Panel;
- Specialist Support and intervention where required;
- Specialist Support Review;
- ongoing review, adaptation and step-down of support.

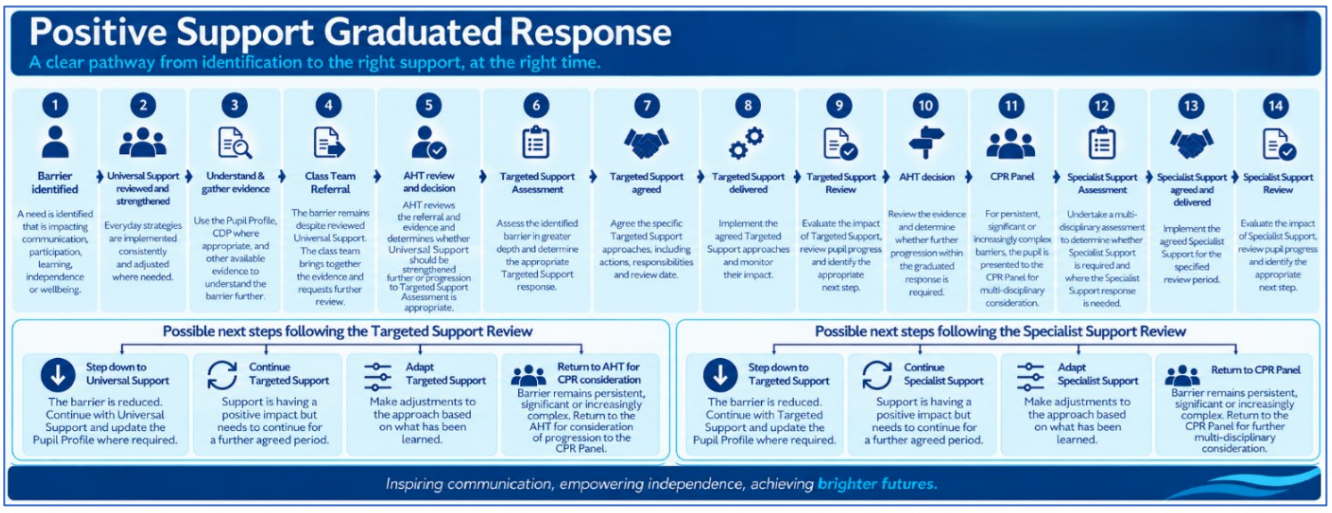
These processes do not operate independently. BridgeWorks provides the structured learning environment in which pupils communicate and participate successfully. Universal Support establishes the consistent approaches experienced by every pupil, while the Pupil Profile brings together the personalised information and agreed approaches adults need to understand and support the individual pupil.

Where barriers emerge, the Communication Development Protocol (CDP) supports staff to develop a structured understanding of need, review Universal Support and identify appropriate adaptations or additional support. Relevant information and agreed day-to-day approaches are incorporated into the Pupil Profile to ensure consistency in practice.

Where Universal Support alone is insufficient and the barrier persists, the Assistant Headteacher may agree progression to a Targeted Support Assessment. This assessment develops a more detailed understanding of the barrier, establishes a baseline and determines the appropriate Targeted Support response. Targeted Support is implemented for an agreed period and evaluated through a Targeted Support Review. The review considers progress against the agreed outcome, the impact of the support provided and whether the pupil should step down to Universal Support, continue or adapt Targeted Support, or whether further progression should be considered.

Where the Targeted Support Review identifies that barriers remain persistent, significant or increasingly complex, the review is returned to the Assistant Headteacher for a decision on progression to the Communication, Participation and Regulation (CPR) Panel. Where progression is agreed, the CPR Panel undertakes the Specialist Support Assessment, bringing together existing evidence and multidisciplinary expertise to determine whether Specialist Support is required and, where appropriate, agree the Specialist Support response.

Specialist Support is implemented for an agreed period and evaluated through a Specialist Support Review. The review considers the impact of the Specialist Support, progress against the agreed outcome and the appropriate next step, including stepping down to Targeted Support, continuing or adapting Specialist Support, or returning the pupil to the CPR Panel for further multidisciplinary review where required.



Together, these interconnected elements form Riverside Bridge School's graduated Positive Support Framework, ensuring that every pupil receives the right support at the right time.

Section 05

UNIVERSAL SUPPORT

Creating consistency. Removing barriers. Preventing escalation.

5.1 Our universal offer

Universal Support forms the foundation of the Positive Support Framework. It represents our commitment to ensuring that every pupil experiences high-quality provision from the moment they enter Riverside Bridge School, regardless of their diagnosis, communication needs, developmental pathway or level of need.

At Riverside Bridge School, we believe that the most effective Positive Support begins long before additional intervention becomes necessary. Whilst some pupils will require targeted or specialist support during their school journey, every pupil benefits from environments that are predictable, communication-rich, emotionally safe and designed to maximise participation. Universal Support is therefore not viewed as an intervention for a small number of pupils; it is the entitlement of every pupil, every day.

This universal approach reflects our belief that communication, participation, emotional regulation and learning are interconnected. When pupils understand what is expected, can communicate successfully, feel emotionally secure and experience success within their environment, they are more able to participate meaningfully in learning and develop increasing independence. By investing in high-quality universal provision, we reduce barriers before they become significant and create the conditions in which pupils can thrive.

Our classrooms are therefore designed not simply to deliver learning, but to enable pupils to understand their environment, develop trusting relationships, regulate successfully and experience achievement from their own individual starting point. Positive Support is woven throughout every interaction, every routine and every aspect of school life.

Universal Support also reflects our commitment to equity. Whilst every pupil receives the same high-quality foundation of care, teaching and support, this universal provision is delivered flexibly to recognise individual strengths, communication preferences, sensory needs/preferences and learning needs. High-quality universal practice therefore provides consistency whilst remaining responsive to the needs of each pupil.

5.2 The principles of Universal Support

Universal Support is built upon a number of interconnected principles that shape everyday practice throughout Riverside Bridge School.

- ✓ **Communication-rich environments**

Communication is the foundation of learning and participation. Every classroom provides opportunities for pupils to communicate through the approaches that best meet their individual needs, including speech, signing, symbols, AAC, objects of reference, visual supports, gesture and responsive adult interaction.

Communication is not viewed as a separate intervention but as a continuous part of everyday teaching and learning. Adults model communication, provide appropriate waiting time, recognise all forms of pupil expression and create environments in which every pupil has opportunities to make choices, express preferences, initiate interaction and develop meaningful relationships.

- ✓ **Structured and predictable environments**

Pupils learn most successfully when their environments reduce uncertainty and promote understanding. Riverside Bridge School therefore uses the principles of BridgeWorks to create structured classrooms where routines, expectations, transitions and learning activities are presented in ways that are clear, consistent and accessible.

Structure is not intended to restrict pupils but to increase understanding, reduce anxiety and enable greater independence. Predictable environments allow pupils to focus their energy on communication, participation and learning rather than attempting to interpret uncertain situations.

- ✓ **Positive relationships**

Positive relationships sit at the heart of Universal Support. Staff recognise that trust, consistency and emotional safety provide the foundation upon which learning and development are built.

Relationships are characterised by warmth, respect, high expectations and genuine curiosity about each pupil's individual strengths, interests and communication. Staff seek first to understand pupils before attempting to change what they are experiencing or how they are responding, recognising that secure relationships promote confidence, resilience and willingness to engage in new experiences.

Families are recognised as essential partners in developing these relationships, contributing valuable knowledge of their child's communication, preferences, routines and aspirations.

- ✓ **Regulation-aware practice**

Many pupils require support to understand, recognise and manage their emotions, sensory experiences and levels of alertness. Riverside Bridge School therefore adopts a regulation-aware approach in which adults proactively consider how environmental, sensory, communication and emotional factors may influence participation throughout the school day.

Staff use co-regulation strategies, environmental adaptations and responsive teaching to support pupils before distress escalates. Regulation is viewed as a shared responsibility, with adults modelling calm, providing reassurance and gradually developing each pupil's capacity for increasing independence.

- ✓ **Inclusive teaching and high aspirations**

Universal Support is underpinned by the belief that every pupil can learn, develop and make meaningful progress.

Learning is therefore carefully adapted to reflect individual strengths, developmental pathways and communication needs, whilst maintaining ambitious expectations for every pupil.

High aspirations are demonstrated not through identical expectations but through personalised opportunities that enable every pupil to experience challenge, achievement and success. Whether pupils are developing early communication, engaging with sensory experiences or working towards accredited qualifications, our ambition remains the same: to maximise participation, independence and preparation for adulthood.

5.3 Universal Support in practice

Universal Support is not delivered through a single programme or intervention. It is achieved through the integration of Riverside Bridge School's evidence-informed approaches into one coherent framework.

These include:

- the Bridging Communication Framework;
- BridgeWorks structured teaching;
- Total Communication approaches;
- SCERTS;
- relational practice;
- co-regulation;
- sensory-informed practice;
- environmental adaptations;
- therapeutic advice embedded within classroom practice;
- Preparation for Adulthood;
- collaborative partnership with families.

These approaches are not implemented in isolation. Together they create a shared language and consistent approach that enables every pupil to experience communication, participation, learning and increasing independence across all aspects of school life.

Universal Support therefore provides the platform upon which all targeted and specialist support is built. When every classroom consistently delivers high-quality universal practice, pupils are more likely to experience success and less likely to encounter barriers that prevent them from participating fully.

Every pupil has a personalised Pupil Profile, which brings together the information and agreed approaches needed to support their communication, participation, learning, regulation and independence.

The regulation section of the Pupil Profile identifies personalised indicators, likely triggers, preferred co-regulation strategies, environmental adaptations and effective methods of support. This is informed by the school's regulation-aware practice, including the Zones of Regulation where appropriate.

5.4 Recognising when additional support is required

Whilst high-quality universal provision meets the needs of many pupils, Riverside Bridge School recognises that barriers may still emerge or change over time. These barriers may relate to communication, emotional regulation, sensory processing, physical health, learning, environmental demands or wider contextual factors.

The emergence of barriers should never be viewed as a failure of the pupil or of universal provision.

Instead, it provides an opportunity to develop a deeper understanding of the pupil's needs and determine whether additional support, adaptation or assessment is required.

Staff are therefore encouraged to remain professionally curious, recognising emerging patterns, listening to family perspectives, considering the pupil's voice and using evidence to understand what may be influencing participation. Early identification enables support to be introduced before difficulties become more persistent or complex.

The following section explains how Riverside Bridge School identifies, understands and responds to emerging barriers, including use of the Communication Development Protocol (CDP) where appropriate.

Universal Support is the entitlement of every pupil and creates the foundation for communication, participation, learning and increasing independence.

Section 06

UNDERSTANDING AND IDENTIFYING BARRIERS

Looking beyond what we observe. Exploring need. Informing support.

6.1 Understanding what we observe

At Riverside Bridge School, we recognise that barriers to participation rarely have a single cause. Observable responses provide valuable information, but should never be viewed in isolation or assumed to explain the underlying reason for a pupil's experience.

When a pupil encounters difficulty participating, communicating, learning or regulating their emotions, staff are expected to adopt a professionally curious approach. Rather than asking, *"What is wrong with this pupil?"* we ask, *"What might this pupil be communicating, experiencing or needing?"*

Understanding barriers requires staff to consider the whole child, recognising that communication, learning, emotional regulation, sensory processing, physical health, medical needs, relationships and environmental factors are often interconnected. By developing a shared understanding of these influences, we are better able to provide support that is meaningful, proportionate and effective.

This approach reflects Riverside Bridge School's commitment to early intervention. Identifying barriers promptly allows support to be introduced before difficulties become more persistent or begin to affect participation, learning or wellbeing. Participation is influenced by many interconnected factors. Understanding these factors enables staff to identify barriers early and provide the right support at the right time.



6.2 Understanding barriers to participation

Every pupil experiences barriers differently. For some, barriers may arise from changes in routine, unfamiliar environments or sensory demands. For others, barriers may be linked to communication differences, emotional regulation, physical health, learning needs or significant life experiences.

Barriers are therefore understood within the wider context of each pupil's individual strengths, needs and circumstances rather than through isolated incidents or individual responses. Examples of barriers may include:

Communication

- Difficulty understanding language.
- Limited opportunities to express needs.
- Changes in communication systems.
- Breakdowns in interaction.

Regulation

- Anxiety.
- Frustration.
- Uncertainty.
- Difficulty recognising or managing emotions.

Sensory processing

- Noise.
- Lighting.
- Crowded environments.
- Sensory overload or under-responsiveness.

Learning

- Task demands.
- Cognitive load.
- Pace of learning.
- Understanding expectations.

Physical or medical needs

- Pain or fatigue.
- Illness.
- Medication.
- Mobility.

Environmental factors

- Changes in routine.
- Staffing changes.

- Transitions.
- Peer dynamics.
- Family circumstances.

These examples are not exhaustive and should always be considered alongside professional judgement and knowledge of the individual pupil.

6.3 Professional curiosity

Professional curiosity is central to Riverside Bridge School's Positive Support approach. Staff are encouraged to gather information from a range of sources before deciding how best to respond. This includes:

- direct observation;
- pupil voice, including AAC and non-verbal communication;
- family knowledge;
- classroom evidence;
- assessment information;
- therapeutic advice;
- attendance patterns;
- health information;
- environmental observations;
- previous successful strategies.

Developing a shared understanding enables staff to move beyond assumptions and identify the factors most likely to be influencing participation and learning.

6.4 From understanding to action

Identifying a barrier does not automatically mean that a pupil requires targeted or specialist intervention. Many barriers can be addressed through high-quality universal practice, minor environmental adaptations or adjustments to teaching approaches. Where barriers persist despite these adjustments, or where they become increasingly complex, the school undertakes a more structured process of assessment through the Communication Development Protocol (CDP). The CDP enables Riverside Bridge School to develop a shared understanding of the pupil's strengths, barriers and support needs before determining the most appropriate next steps.

The following section explains how the Communication Development Protocol is used to ensure that decisions remain collaborative, evidence-informed and centred on the individual pupil.

Section 07

COMMUNICATION DEVELOPMENT PROTOCOL (CDP)

Gathering evidence. Building understanding. Planning proportionately.

7.1 Understanding before intervention

At Riverside Bridge School, no significant Positive Support intervention should begin without first developing a shared understanding of the pupil's strengths, barriers and support needs. The Communication Development Protocol (CDP) provides the structured process through which this understanding is achieved.

The CDP reflects our commitment to evidence-informed practice and professional curiosity. Rather than responding solely to individual incidents or observable responses, the protocol encourages staff to gather information from multiple sources, identify emerging patterns and explore the factors influencing a pupil's participation. This enables decisions to be based on a comprehensive understanding of the whole child rather than assumptions or isolated events.

The purpose of the CDP is not to label pupils or allocate support automatically. Instead, it provides a collaborative framework for identifying barriers, recognising strengths and determining whether universal provision remains appropriate or whether additional support should be considered.

By ensuring that every significant decision is informed by evidence and shared professional understanding, the CDP promotes consistency, transparency and high-quality decision-making across the school.

7.2 When is the CDP used?

The CDP may be initiated whenever a pupil experiences persistent, recurring or increasingly complex barriers that are not fully addressed through high-quality universal provision.

This may include situations where staff observe:

- changes in communication or interaction;
- reduced participation in learning or school life;
- increasing difficulties with emotional regulation;
- emerging sensory or environmental barriers;
- changes in physical health or wellbeing affecting participation;
- repeated patterns of distress or dysregulation;
- concerns raised by families or professionals;
- situations where staff require a more structured understanding before determining next steps.

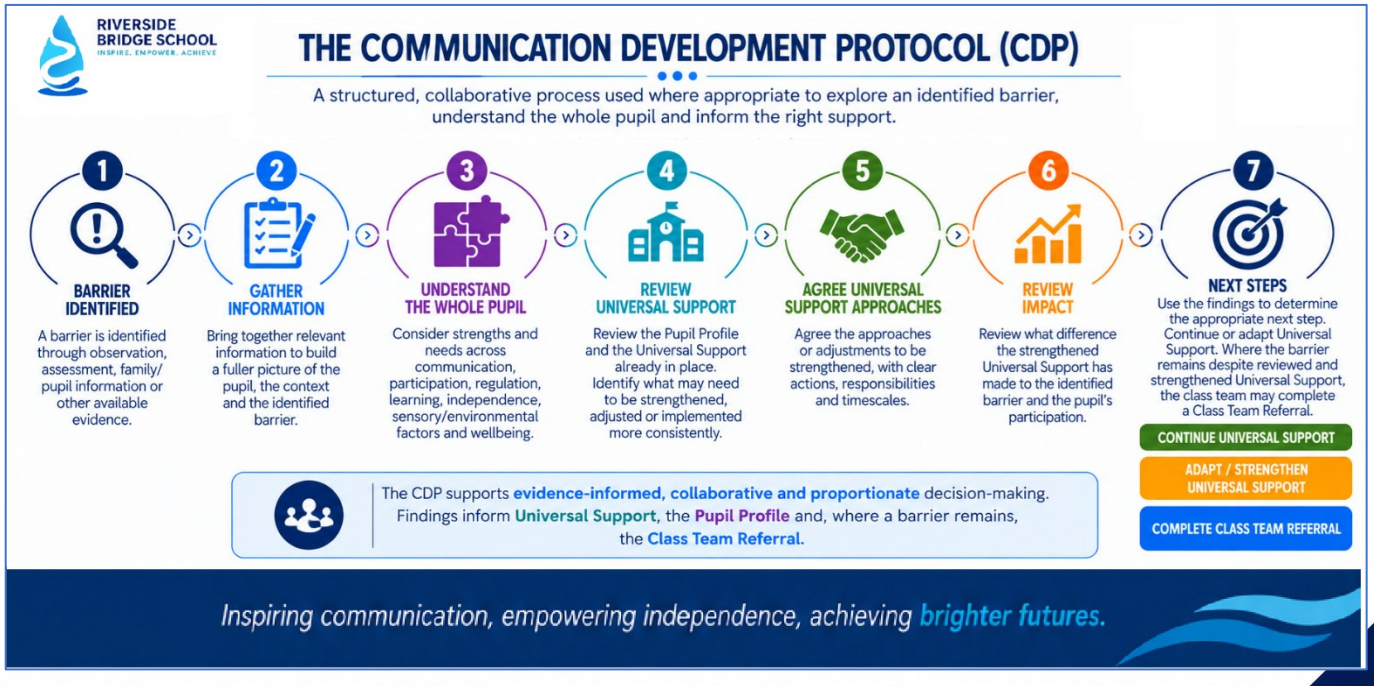
The decision to initiate the CDP does not imply failure or indicate that a pupil requires specialist provision. It simply reflects Riverside Bridge School's commitment to understanding pupils thoroughly before introducing additional support.

7.3 Principles of the Communication Development Protocol

The CDP is underpinned by several key principles.

- ✓ Strengths before barriers.
- ✓ Assessment begins by recognising the pupil's interests, abilities, successes and protective factors. Understanding strengths provides the foundation for effective support.
- ✓ Evidence before assumption.
- ✓ Decisions are informed by observations, assessment information, pupil voice, family perspectives and professional discussion rather than isolated incidents or assumptions.
- ✓ Collaboration before conclusion.
- ✓ Families, class teams, therapists and, wherever possible, pupils themselves contribute to developing a shared understanding of the barriers affecting participation.
- ✓ Understanding before intervention.
- ✓ Support is planned only after staff have developed a clear understanding of why barriers may be occurring and what adjustments are likely to be effective.
- ✓ Review before escalation.

The effectiveness of agreed strategies is reviewed before further intervention is considered, ensuring that support remains proportionate and responsive.



The Communication Development Protocol provides a structured process for understanding barriers, reviewing universal provision, agreeing proportionate strategies and evaluating their impact before further support is considered.

7.4 The Communication Development process

The CDP follows a structured sequence that ensures every pupil receives a consistent and proportionate approach.

- Barrier identified through professional observation, assessment, family discussion or pupil voice.
- Information gathered from relevant sources to develop a holistic understanding of the pupil.
- Strengths and barriers analysed across communication, participation, regulation, learning and wellbeing.
- Universal provision reviewed to determine whether further adjustments can be made within everyday practice.
- Agreed actions implemented and monitored over an appropriate period.
- Progress reviewed to evaluate the effectiveness of support.

Further planning undertaken where barriers remain or become increasingly complex, including referral to the Communication, Participation and Regulation (CPR) Panel where appropriate.

Throughout this process, staff remain focused on reducing barriers, promoting participation and increasing independence rather than simply responding to individual incidents.

7.5 Outcomes of the CDP

Completion of the Communication Development Protocol may result in a range of outcomes depending upon the needs of the individual pupil.

These may include:

- continuation of universal support with agreed adaptations;
- targeted classroom strategies;
- environmental adjustments;
- therapeutic advice or consultation;
- review and development of relevant sections of the Pupil Profile;
- referral to the Communication, Participation and Regulation (CPR) Panel;
- continued monitoring where no additional intervention is currently required.

The outcome will always reflect the least intrusive and most proportionate level of support required to enable the pupil to participate successfully.

Section 08

PUPIL PROFILES

Understanding the pupil. Personalising support. Building consistency.

8.1 Purpose of the Pupil Profile

At Riverside Bridge School, every pupil has a personalised Pupil Profile. The Pupil Profile is the school's primary day-to-day operational document for bringing together the information adults need to understand and support the pupil consistently.

The Pupil Profile provides a shared understanding of the pupil's strengths, interests and individual needs and identifies the approaches that enable them to communicate, participate, learn, regulate and develop increasing independence.

It brings together relevant information relating to communication, learning and participation, sensory and environmental needs, independence, Positive Support and regulation. It also incorporates relevant therapeutic recommendations, reasonable adjustments and agreed approaches arising from the Communication Development Protocol (CDP) or specialist involvement.

The Pupil Profile does not replace statutory plans, risk assessments, healthcare plans or agreed physical intervention documentation. Where these are required, the Pupil Profile should clearly identify and signpost staff to the relevant additional documentation.

The purpose of the Pupil Profile is to ensure that adults have one accessible and current source of personalised information, reducing reliance upon assumptions or inconsistent approaches and supporting continuity across different staff, environments and activities.

8.2 Personalising the Pupil Profile

Every pupil has a Pupil Profile, but the content and level of detail will reflect the pupil's individual strengths, communication, regulation, sensory needs, learning needs and level of support required.

The profile captures the personalised universal provision that enables the pupil to participate successfully in everyday school life. For some pupils, this may primarily consist of established communication approaches, environmental adaptations, structured teaching strategies and proactive support that are effective within Universal Support.

Where additional or changing barriers are identified, relevant sections of the Pupil Profile should be developed further. This may include additional personalised strategies, enhanced regulation support, therapeutic recommendations, environmental adaptations, reasonable adjustments and agreed adult responses.

Information should be specific to the individual pupil and based upon what is known to be effective. It should be informed by pupil voice where appropriate, family knowledge, staff observation, assessment,

professional discussion and relevant advice from therapists, healthcare professionals or other specialists. As the pupil develops and their needs change, the Pupil Profile should develop alongside them. Support should remain proportionate to need and should promote successful participation and increasing independence rather than creating unnecessary reliance upon adult support.

8.3 Communication, Learning, Participation and Independence

The Pupil Profile identifies the approaches that enable each pupil to understand, communicate, participate and develop increasing independence.

Communication information should identify how the pupil expresses choices, needs, preferences and ideas; how they understand information from others; and the approaches adults should use to support successful communication. This may include communication systems, symbols or visual supports, processing time, interaction approaches and personalised language or prompts.

Learning and participation information should identify the conditions and approaches that enable the pupil to engage successfully. This may include structured teaching approaches, visual organisation, environmental adaptations, adult modelling, repetition, sensory considerations and the level and type of support required.

The profile should also identify opportunities and approaches that promote independence across learning, personal care, daily routines and wider school life. Adults should provide sufficient support to enable success whilst continually considering how prompts, adaptations and adult involvement can be reduced as the pupil develops greater understanding, confidence and independence.

Communication, participation and independence should not be considered in isolation. Difficulties in one area may create barriers in another. Staff should therefore consider the pupil as a whole and seek to understand what may be preventing successful participation before increasing adult direction or intervention.

8.4 Positive Support and regulation

Positive Support and regulation form an integrated part of the Pupil Profile. This section provides adults with a personalised understanding of how the pupil experiences and communicates regulation and the proactive and responsive approaches that enable them to remain safe, regulated and able to participate.

It should identify, as appropriate:

- how the pupil presents when they are comfortable, regulated and ready to participate;
- early indicators that the pupil may be experiencing difficulty or becoming dysregulated;
- what changes in presentation may be communicating about the pupil's needs;
- known barriers, triggers or environmental factors that may affect regulation or participation;
- proactive strategies that support regulation and reduce the likelihood of distress;
- effective co-regulation, communication, sensory and environmental approaches;

- agreed adult responses when the pupil requires additional support;
- approaches, language or responses that should be avoided;
- strategies that support recovery, re-engagement and a successful return to participation;
- additional personalised strategies arising from the CDP, specialist assessment or CPR Panel where applicable.

Changes in presentation should be understood within the context of the whole pupil. Dysregulation may be influenced by communication barriers, sensory processing, environmental demands, relationships, physical or emotional wellbeing, learning demands or other contextual factors. Staff should seek to understand what the pupil may be communicating or experiencing rather than responding only to the observable behaviour.

Support should be proactive wherever possible. Predictable environments, accessible communication, positive relationships, appropriate sensory and environmental adaptations and effective co-regulation should be used to reduce barriers before distress escalates.

Where a pupil experiences increasing or persistent barriers despite effective Universal Support, the information within the Pupil Profile should contribute to further assessment and problem-solving through the Communication Development Protocol (CDP). Where barriers remain significant or complex, additional targeted or specialist support or consideration by the Communication, Participation and Regulation (CPR) Panel may be required.

Any response to significant distress or risk must remain proportionate, person-centred and least restrictive. Where separate risk management or physical intervention arrangements are required, these must be recorded within the appropriate documentation and clearly signposted within the Pupil Profile.

8.5 Implementing and reviewing the Pupil Profile

The Pupil Profile is a dynamic working document and should be regarded as the primary day-to-day reference for adults working with the pupil. Its effectiveness depends upon relevant staff understanding the information it contains and applying agreed approaches consistently across the school day.

All staff working regularly with a pupil are responsible for familiarising themselves with the Pupil Profile and implementing the approaches relevant to their role. Class teachers are responsible for ensuring that the profile accurately reflects the pupil's current presentation and support needs and that significant changes are communicated to those working with the pupil.

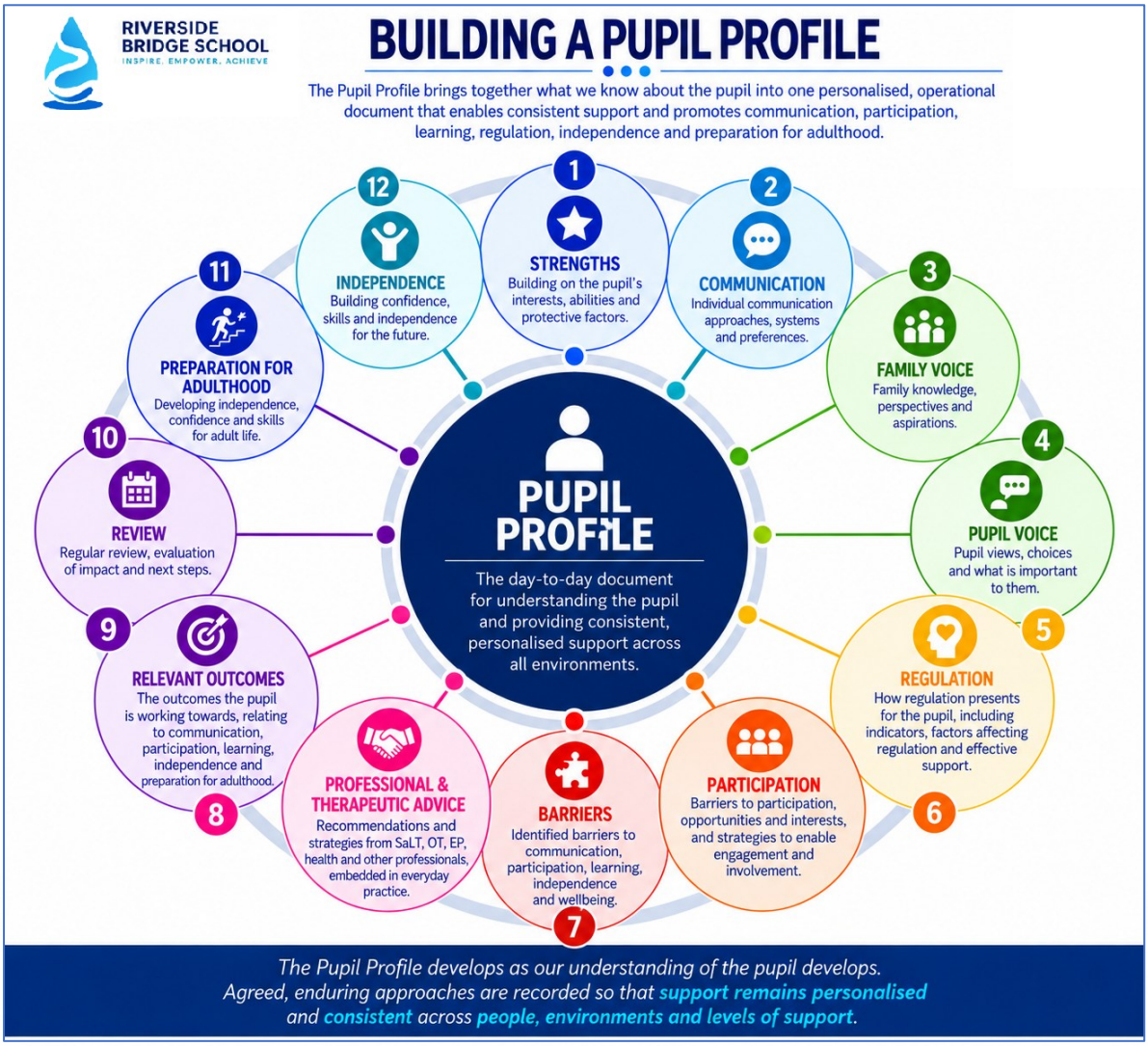
The Pupil Profile should be reviewed regularly and updated whenever there is a significant change in the pupil's communication, participation, regulation, independence, health, provision or support needs. Review should also take place following relevant professional advice, where new or emerging barriers are identified, following significant incidents where current approaches require reconsideration, or where agreed strategies are no longer effective. Review should consider both what is working successfully and what may need to change. Effective approaches should be retained and applied consistently.

Where barriers reduce or the pupil develops greater skills and independence, additional strategies or levels of adult support should be reduced or withdrawn where appropriate.

Where barriers persist or become more complex, relevant information within the Pupil Profile should be reviewed alongside available evidence. This may result in further assessment through the Communication Development Protocol (CDP), additional targeted support, therapeutic or specialist involvement, or referral to the Communication, Participation and Regulation (CPR) Panel where multidisciplinary consideration is required.

Updates arising from review should be recorded within the Pupil Profile and communicated to relevant staff. Where changes affect safety, healthcare or risk management, associated plans and risk assessments must also be reviewed through the appropriate school procedures.

The Pupil Profile therefore provides a consistent but evolving understanding of the pupil: capturing what adults need to know now whilst adapting as communication develops, barriers change and the pupil achieves increasing participation and independence.



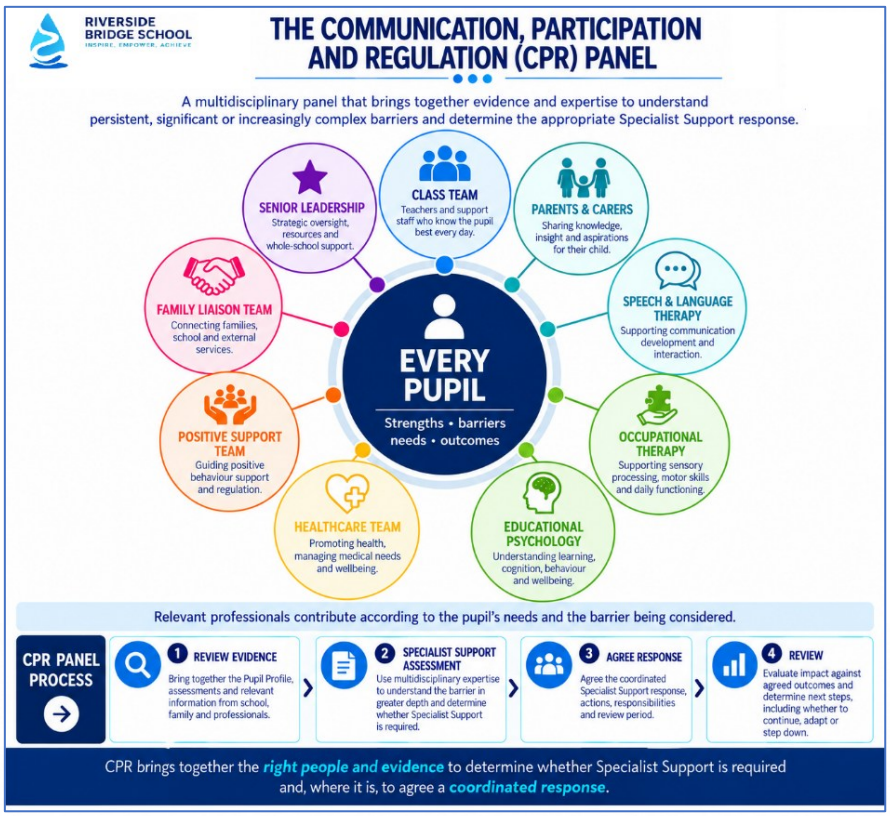
Section 09

COMMUNICATION, PARTICIPATION AND REGULATION (CPR) PANEL

Bringing expertise together. Coordinating support. Improving outcomes.

9.1 Purpose of the CPR Panel

The Communication, Participation and Regulation (CPR) Panel provides Riverside Bridge School's multi-disciplinary approach to reviewing pupils who require coordinated planning beyond high-quality universal provision and targeted classroom support. The panel ensures that decisions regarding additional Positive Support are informed by a comprehensive understanding of the pupil, drawing together educational, therapeutic, healthcare and family perspectives. Rather than focusing upon isolated incidents or individual responses, the CPR Panel considers the wider factors influencing communication, participation, emotional regulation, learning and independence. The purpose of the panel is not to create unnecessary intervention or increase dependency. Instead, it provides a structured forum for collaborative problem-solving, ensuring that support remains proportionate, evidence-informed and centred upon improving outcomes for the pupil. By bringing together professionals with different areas of expertise, the CPR Panel strengthens shared understanding, promotes consistent practice and supports coordinated action to remove barriers, strengthen participation and improve outcomes.



9.2 When is a referral made?

Referral to the CPR Panel is considered when the Communication Development Protocol indicates that additional multi-disciplinary discussion or coordinated planning is required.

A referral may be appropriate where:

- barriers remain despite well-implemented universal and targeted support;
- communication, regulation or participation difficulties become increasingly complex;
- there are multiple interacting barriers affecting the pupil's progress or wellbeing;
- therapeutic advice requires coordinated implementation across different teams;
- additional planning is required to reduce restrictive practice or increase independence;
- staff require specialist guidance to adapt provision further;
- significant changes in circumstances require a coordinated review of support.

Referral to the CPR Panel does not indicate failure or represent a disciplinary process. It reflects Riverside Bridge School's commitment to collaborative planning and early intervention.

9.3 Membership of the CPR Panel

Membership reflects the individual needs of the pupil and may include:

- Senior Leadership Team;
- class teachers and support staff;
- Speech and Language Therapy; Occupational Therapy; Educational Psychology; Play Therapist; and Counsellor
- Positive Support Team;
- Healthcare Team;
- Family Liaison Team;
- other relevant professionals;
- parents or carers where appropriate.

Additional professionals may be invited where their expertise will contribute to developing a more comprehensive understanding of the pupil's needs.

9.4 What does the CPR Panel consider?

The panel reviews a broad range of information to develop a holistic understanding of the pupil.

This may include:

- strengths and protective factors;
- communication needs and approaches;
- participation across different environments;
- emotional regulation;

- sensory processing;
- learning and curriculum access;
- physical or medical needs;
- attendance and engagement;
- pupil voice;
- family perspectives;
- therapeutic assessments;
- classroom observations;
- previous interventions;
- progress against agreed outcomes;
- wider contextual factors.

The panel seeks to identify patterns, understand barriers and agree practical recommendations that promote participation and independence.

9.5 Outcomes of the CPR Panel

Following discussion, the panel may recommend:

- continuation of current provision;
- refinement of universal strategies;
- review and development of relevant sections of the Pupil Profile;
- therapeutic consultation or intervention;
- environmental adaptations;
- staff coaching or professional development;
- additional assessment;
- referral to external agencies;
- increased multi-agency working;
- further review within an agreed timescale.

Recommendations are recorded clearly, shared with relevant staff and monitored to ensure that agreed actions are implemented consistently.

9.6 Reviewing impact

The work of the CPR Panel does not end when recommendations are made. Agreed actions are reviewed to evaluate their effectiveness, celebrate progress and determine whether barriers have reduced. The panel considers whether support should continue, be adapted or be stepped down as pupils develop greater confidence, communication and independence. This ongoing review ensures that Positive Support remains dynamic, responsive and proportionate, avoiding unnecessary intervention whilst maintaining appropriate support where required.

Section 10

RESPONDING TO DISTRESS AND BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION

Recognising distress. Responding calmly. Restoring participation.

10.1 Understanding distress

At Riverside Bridge School, we recognise that all pupils experience a wide range of emotions throughout their school day. Feelings such as excitement, frustration, anxiety, disappointment or uncertainty are a normal part of human experience and should not be viewed as problems that require elimination. Our role is to understand how these emotions influence participation and to provide the support pupils need to feel safe, connected and able to learn.

For many pupils with complex communication, learning, sensory, physical or medical needs, distress may be communicated in ways that differ from those typically expected. Some pupils may withdraw, become unusually quiet or disengage from learning, whilst others may communicate distress through increased movement, vocalisation, refusal, emotional dysregulation or other responses that create barriers to participation or safety.

At Riverside Bridge School, we do not assume what is observed explains the underlying need. Instead, we seek to understand what the pupil may be communicating and consider the wider factors that may be contributing to their experience.

This reflects our commitment to professional curiosity, evidence-informed practice and the belief that meaningful support begins with understanding rather than judgement.

Responding effectively to distress requires adults to remain calm, emotionally available and responsive. Our aim is always to reduce anxiety, preserve dignity and support pupils to return successfully to communication, participation and learning.

10.2 Responding through Positive Support

Whenever a pupil experiences distress or presents in ways that create barriers to participation, staff should respond using the least intrusive and most supportive approach appropriate to the situation. Responses should always seek to:

- maintain the safety and dignity of everyone involved;
- understand the factors contributing to the pupil's experience;
- reduce anxiety and emotional arousal;
- promote communication wherever possible;
- support emotional co-regulation;

- adapt the environment or learning demands where appropriate;
- maintain positive relationships;
- enable the pupil to return successfully to learning and participation.

Staff should avoid responses that may unnecessarily increase anxiety, confrontation or dependency. Instead, adults are expected to use their knowledge of the individual pupil, the agreed approaches within the Pupil Profile and evidence-informed practice to determine the most appropriate response.
Wherever possible, support should focus upon prevention rather than reaction, recognising that early intervention is often the most effective strategy for reducing escalation.

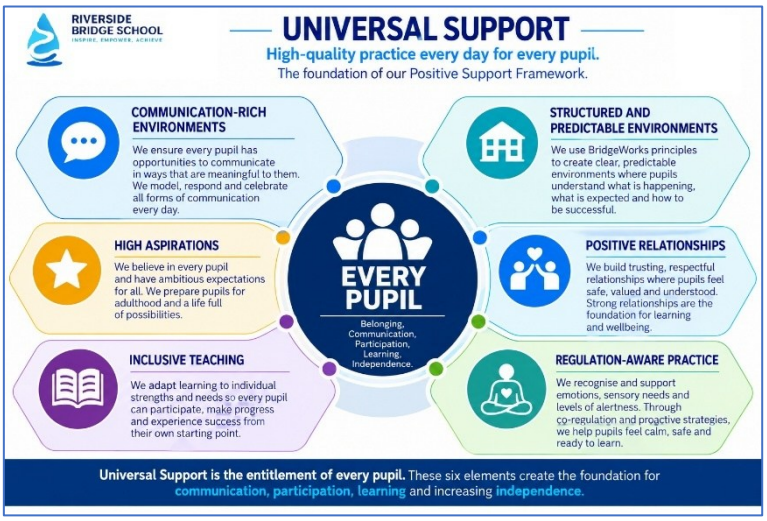
10.3 Levels of Positive Support response

Riverside Bridge School uses graduated Levels of Positive Support Response to ensure that the school's response remains proportionate to the barriers being experienced by the pupil and the level of support required.
These levels do not categorise pupils or label their responses. Instead, they describe the level of professional response required to maintain participation, reduce barriers and ensure safety.

➢ **Level 1 - Universal Support**

The majority of pupils are successfully supported through high-quality universal provision. This includes:

- communication-rich environments;
- structured teaching through BridgeWorks;
- positive relationships;
- regulation-aware practice;
- environmental adaptations;
- differentiated teaching;
- predictable routines;
- proactive classroom strategies.



Universal Support is the expectation for every pupil, every day.

➢ **Level 2 - Targeted Support**

Where barriers begin to emerge or participation becomes increasingly difficult, additional support may be required.

This may include:

- targeted classroom adaptations;
- increased observation;
- consultation with therapists;
- short-term support strategies;
- increased collaboration with families;
- additional monitoring;
- early review through the Communication Development Protocol.



The aim is to reduce barriers before they become more persistent or complex.

- **Level 3 - Specialist Support**

Where barriers continue despite targeted intervention, pupils may require coordinated planning involving several professionals. This may include:

- a review and enhancement of the Pupil Profile;
- Communication Development Protocol review;
- referral to the Communication, Participation and Regulation (CPR) Panel;
- therapeutic recommendations;
- environmental redesign;
- specialist assessment;
- coordinated multi-disciplinary support.



Support remains focused upon increasing participation and reducing the likelihood of future distress.

- **Immediate safety response**

Occasionally, pupils may experience distress that presents an immediate risk of harm to themselves or others. In these situations, staff will take reasonable, proportionate and necessary action to maintain safety whilst continuing to preserve the dignity of the pupil. Responses may include:

- immediate environmental adjustments;

- additional staff support;
- agreed de-escalation strategies;
- withdrawal from unsafe situations where appropriate;
- restrictive physical intervention only where lawful, reasonable, proportionate, necessary and in accordance with the school's Restrictive Physical Intervention Policy.

Following any significant incident, staff will review the circumstances to understand contributing factors, evaluate the effectiveness of support and identify opportunities to reduce the likelihood of similar situations occurring in the future.

10.4 De-escalation and co-regulation

Riverside Bridge School is committed to using preventative and de-escalation strategies before considering more restrictive responses. Staff are trained to recognise early indicators of distress and to respond using approaches that reduce anxiety, strengthen communication and support emotional regulation. Strategies may include:

- reducing demands or environmental stimulation;
- adapting communication;
- providing processing time;
- offering sensory support;
- changing activities or locations;
- using visual supports;
- providing reassurance through trusted relationships;
- co-regulation;
- offering choice where appropriate;
- implementing agreed strategies identified within the pupil's Pupil Profile.

These approaches aim to restore the pupil's sense of safety and support a successful return to learning.

10.5 Restrictive practice

Riverside Bridge School is committed to minimising the use of restrictive practices. Restrictive interventions are never used as a punishment, consequence or means of securing compliance.

Where restrictive practice becomes necessary to prevent serious harm, it will always be:

- lawful;
- reasonable;
- proportionate;
- necessary;
- for the shortest time possible;
- carried out by appropriately trained staff.

All restrictive interventions are recorded, reviewed and monitored to ensure that opportunities for learning, reflection and future prevention are identified.

Detailed guidance regarding restrictive physical intervention, recording procedures, post-incident support and governance is contained within the school's Restrictive Physical Intervention Policy, which should be read alongside this policy.

10.6 Learning from incidents

Every significant incident provides an opportunity to strengthen understanding and improve future support. Following incidents involving significant distress or responses that present barriers to participation or safety, staff reflect upon:

- the barriers that may have contributed to the incident;
- the effectiveness of preventative strategies;
- the pupil's communication and regulation needs;
- environmental factors;
- the appropriateness of adult responses;
- whether the approaches within the Pupil Profile remain effective;
- whether the Communication Development Protocol should be revisited;
- whether discussion at the Communication, Participation and Regulation (CPR) Panel is required.

Our aim is not simply to record incidents but to use them as opportunities to refine practice, reduce future barriers and improve outcomes for every pupil.

The Levels of Positive Support Response describe the school's graduated response to increasing barriers, ensuring that support remains proportionate, preventative and focused on enabling communication, participation, learning and independence.

RIVERSIDE BRIDGE SCHOOL
INSPIRE, EMPOWER, ACHIEVE

LEVELS OF SUPPORT

Support is graduated according to need.

Pupils may step up or step down as barriers and support needs change.

IMMEDIATE SAFETY RESPONSE

May be required at any level of support.

Safety first. Dignity always.

PURPOSE

To ensure immediate safety when a pupil presents an immediate risk of harm to themselves or others.

WHAT THIS LOOKS LIKE

- Immediate environmental adjustments
- Additional staff support where required
- De-escalation and co-regulation strategies
- Withdrawal from unsafe situations where appropriate
- Risk assessment / safety arrangements reviewed
- Restrictive physical intervention only where lawful, reasonable and proportionate, and in accordance with the RPI Policy

UNIVERSAL SUPPORT

High-quality provision.
Every pupil. Every day.
Belonging, participation, learning and independence.

PURPOSE

To provide high-quality everyday provision for every pupil that promotes communication, participation, regulation, learning and independence.

WHAT THIS LOOKS LIKE

- Communication-rich environments
- Structured and predictable environments (BridgeWorks)
- Positive relationships
- Regulation-aware practice
- Inclusive teaching
- High aspirations
- Pupil Profile
- Communication Development Protocol (CDP) where appropriate when a barrier requires further exploration

TARGETED SUPPORT

Additional support.
Focused intervention.
Building progress.

PURPOSE

To provide additional, time-limited support where a barrier persists despite strengthened Universal Support.

WHAT THIS LOOKS LIKE

- Targeted Support Assessment
- Clear baseline and intended outcome
- Targeted Support agreed and delivered
- Targeted communication / regulation strategies
- Additional classroom or environmental adaptations
- Staff coaching / modelling where required
- Family partnership where appropriate
- Targeted Support Review
- Pupil Profile updated with enduring and agreed approaches

SPECIALIST SUPPORT

Specialist expertise.
Removing complex barriers.
Achieving potential.

PURPOSE

To provide coordinated multi-disciplinary support for persistent, significant or increasingly complex barriers following Targeted Support.

WHAT THIS LOOKS LIKE

- Specialist Support Assessment through CPR Panel
- Multi-disciplinary assessment and planning
- Specialist communication / SaLT input where required
- Specialist sensory / OT input where required
- Enhanced environmental adaptations
- Enhanced staff coaching / modelling
- Multi-agency collaboration where required
- Specialist Support agreed and delivered
- Specialist Support Review
- Pupil Profile updated with enduring and agreed approaches

Support is graduated according to need.

Every pupil receives **Universal Support**. Where barriers persist, support may become increasingly

Section 11

RESTRICTIVE PRACTICE AND PHYSICAL INTERVENTION

Preventing restriction. Maintaining safety. Preserving dignity.

11.1 Our commitment to least restrictive practice

Our approach is underpinned by the principle that every pupil has the right to be treated with dignity, compassion and respect. Wherever restrictive practice becomes necessary, the least restrictive option will always be selected, used for the shortest time possible and discontinued as soon as it is safe to do so.

The school continually reviews practice to identify opportunities to strengthen communication, adapt environments, improve staff practice and reduce the future need for restrictive intervention.

11.2 Principles of restrictive practice

The use of restrictive practice is guided by the following principles:

- **Prevention before intervention** - every effort should be made to reduce barriers before situations escalate.
- **Least restrictive approach** - the minimum level of intervention necessary to maintain safety will always be used.
- **Proportionate response** - interventions must be appropriate to the level of immediate risk.
- **Respect for dignity** - pupils must be treated with compassion and respect throughout any intervention.
- **Time limited** - restrictive interventions should continue only for as long as they remain necessary.
- **Learning and reflection** - every intervention provides an opportunity to strengthen future Positive Support and reduce recurrence.

These principles apply to all decisions relating to restrictive practice and should inform professional judgement in every situation.

11.3 Restrictive physical intervention

On rare occasions, pupils may experience distress that presents an immediate and significant risk of harm to themselves or others. Where this occurs, appropriately trained staff may use restrictive physical intervention only when it is lawful, reasonable, proportionate and necessary to prevent serious harm.

Restrictive physical intervention is never used:

- as a punishment;
- to secure compliance;

- because of property damage alone unless there is an associated risk of serious harm;
- because a pupil refuses to follow instructions;
- for the convenience of staff.

The school expects staff to continue using calm communication, reassurance and de-escalation throughout any intervention, ensuring that restrictive physical intervention ends at the earliest safe opportunity.

All restrictive physical interventions are undertaken in accordance with the school's Restrictive Physical Intervention Policy, which contains detailed operational guidance, approved techniques, recording procedures, training requirements and post-incident processes.

11.4 Recording, reporting and review

Every restrictive physical intervention is recorded in accordance with the school's recording procedures.

Recording ensures that:

- the circumstances leading to the intervention are understood;
- the strategies attempted before intervention are identified;
- the intervention used is documented accurately;
- the duration of the intervention is recorded;
- injuries or welfare concerns are documented;
- parents or carers are informed where appropriate;
- opportunities for learning and improvement are identified.

Senior leaders regularly review restrictive practice records to identify patterns, evaluate effectiveness and ensure that interventions remain lawful, proportionate and consistent with the school's Positive Support philosophy.

11.5 Learning from restrictive practice

Restrictive practice should always lead to reflection rather than simply recording compliance with procedures.

Following any restrictive intervention, the school considers:

- whether barriers could have been identified earlier;
- whether communication or environmental adaptations should be strengthened;
- whether the Pupil Profile requires updating;
- whether the Communication Development Protocol should be revisited;
- whether discussion at the Communication, Participation and Regulation (CPR) Panel is appropriate;
- whether additional staff training or coaching is required;
- how future restrictive interventions can be reduced or avoided.

This reflective approach supports Riverside Bridge School's commitment to continuous improvement and reinforces the principle that restrictive intervention should become less necessary as understanding and Positive Support improve.

11.6 Relationship to other policies

This policy provides the strategic framework governing restrictive practice within Riverside Bridge School. Detailed operational guidance, including approved physical intervention techniques, staff training requirements, recording documentation, post-incident support and monitoring arrangements, is contained within the school's:

- Restrictive Physical Intervention Policy;
- Bridging Communication Framework;
- Pupil Profile;
- Communication Development Protocol (CDP);
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

These documents should be read together to ensure a consistent, lawful and therapeutic approach to supporting pupils.

Section 12

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Sharing responsibility. Maintaining consistency. Strengthening support.

Positive Support is the responsibility of every member of the Riverside Bridge School community. Creating an environment in which pupils can communicate, participate, regulate their emotions, learn and develop increasing independence requires a consistent whole-school approach built upon shared values, professional collaboration and high expectations.

Whilst individual roles carry specific responsibilities, no single person or team is solely responsible for Positive Support. Every adult contributes to creating safe, structured, communication-rich environments in which pupils can thrive. Working together ensures that support remains consistent, proportionate and centred on the needs of the individual pupil.

The Governing Board is responsible for ensuring that the school fulfils its statutory responsibilities relating to behaviour, safeguarding, SEND, equality and health and safety. Governors provide strategic oversight of the school's Positive Support Framework and monitor its effectiveness through regular reporting, policy review and quality assurance activities.

The Governing Board will:

- approve and review this policy;
- ensure statutory duties are fulfilled;
- monitor the effectiveness of the Positive Support Framework;
- receive reports relating to restrictive practice and significant trends;
- ensure appropriate resources are available to support implementation;
- promote a culture that reflects the school's values of inclusion, equity and high aspirations.

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for the implementation and effectiveness of the Positive Support Framework throughout Riverside Bridge School.

The Headteacher will ensure that:

- the principles within this policy are embedded across the school;
- sufficient staffing, resources and training are available;
- restrictive practice is appropriately monitored;
- statutory responsibilities are fulfilled;
- Positive Support remains aligned with the school's vision and strategic priorities;
- a culture of continuous improvement is maintained.

The Senior Leadership Team provides strategic leadership for the implementation, monitoring and continuous development of Positive Support across the school.

The Senior Leadership Team will:

- model the school's Positive Support philosophy;
- oversee implementation of the Communication Development Protocol (CDP);
- chair or contribute to the Communication, Participation and Regulation (CPR) Panel;
- monitor Pupil Profiles and graduated support;
- oversee incidents involving restrictive practice;
- support staff through coaching and reflective practice;
- analyse patterns, trends and outcomes;
- ensure Positive Support remains integrated with safeguarding, curriculum and therapeutic provision.

Teachers play a central role in delivering Universal Positive Support and ensuring that every pupil experiences consistent, high-quality provision.

Teachers are responsible for:

- creating communication-rich learning environments;
- implementing BridgeWorks consistently;
- developing positive relationships with pupils;
- recognising emerging barriers to participation;
- adapting teaching to meet individual needs;
- contributing to the Communication Development Protocol;
- maintaining and implementing Pupil Profiles;
- working collaboratively with therapists and families;
- maintaining accurate records;
- promoting increasing independence and preparation for adulthood.

Support staff are essential partners in delivering Positive Support and often have detailed knowledge of individual pupils through their daily interactions.

Support staff are expected to:

- implement agreed Positive Support strategies consistently;
- support communication using agreed approaches;
- promote independence rather than dependency;
- contribute observations that inform assessment and planning;
- participate in professional reflection and review;

- maintain positive relationships with pupils;
- contribute to a consistent team approach.

Therapists and specialist professionals contribute their expertise to the school's graduated approach to Positive Support. Their role includes:

- advising on communication, sensory, therapeutic and learning needs;
- contributing to assessment and planning;
- supporting implementation within everyday practice;
- providing professional consultation and coaching;
- contributing to the Communication Development Protocol;
- participating in the CPR Panel where appropriate;
- evaluating the effectiveness of specialist recommendations.

Families are recognised as experts in their child and valued partners within the Positive Support Framework. The school seeks to work collaboratively with families by:

- listening to their knowledge and experience;
- involving them in planning and review;
- maintaining open communication;
- sharing successes and concerns;
- supporting consistency between home and school where appropriate;
- respecting family aspirations and cultural diversity.

Wherever appropriate, **pupils** are encouraged and supported to contribute to decisions that affect them. Pupil voice may be gathered through spoken language; AAC; symbols; objects of reference; observations and communication; photographs; choices and preferences and other personalised communication methods.

Pupils are supported to develop increasing self-awareness, self-advocacy and independence, recognising that meaningful participation in decision-making looks different for every individual.

Positive Support is most effective when staff, families, therapists and pupils work together with shared purpose and mutual respect.

By maintaining consistent communication, valuing different perspectives and focusing upon strengths as well as barriers, Riverside Bridge School creates a collaborative culture in which every pupil is supported to communicate, participate, learn and achieve increasing independence.

Section 13

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND STAFF SUPPORT

Building expertise. Supporting reflection. Strengthening practice.

13.1 Our commitment to professional development

At Riverside Bridge School, we recognise that the quality of Positive Support experienced by pupils is directly influenced by the knowledge, confidence and wellbeing of the adults who work with them. Creating communication-rich, inclusive and emotionally safe environments requires more than policies and procedures; it requires skilled professionals who continually develop their practice through reflection, collaboration and evidence-informed learning.

Professional development is therefore viewed as an integral part of our Positive Support Framework rather than a separate training programme. We are committed to ensuring that every member of staff has access to the knowledge, skills and support required to understand pupils, reduce barriers to participation and respond confidently to complex situations. Learning is recognised as a continuous process. Staff are encouraged to reflect upon their own practice, learn from experience, engage with current research and work collaboratively with colleagues, therapists and families to strengthen outcomes for pupils.

13.2 Induction and ongoing training

All staff receive an induction appropriate to their role, ensuring they understand the school's Positive Support philosophy, expectations and operational procedures before working independently with pupils.

Induction and ongoing professional development may include:

- the Bridging Communication Framework;
- BridgeWorks;
- Total Communication approaches;
- SCERTS;
- communication and AAC;
- regulation-aware practice;
- sensory-informed practice;
- Pupil Profiles;
- the Communication Development Protocol (CDP);
- the Communication, Participation and Regulation (CPR) Panel;
- safeguarding;
- medical needs and healthcare procedures;

- restrictive practice and Team Teach; and
- other training identified through professional development or school improvement priorities.

Training is reviewed regularly to ensure that practice remains consistent with current legislation, research and the evolving needs of the school community.

13.3 Coaching, collaboration and reflective practice

Professional learning extends beyond formal training. Riverside Bridge School promotes a culture in which staff learn through coaching, collaborative problem-solving and reflective practice.

Staff are encouraged to:

- observe effective practice;
- participate in coaching and mentoring;
- contribute to professional discussion;
- share successful strategies;
- reflect on experiences following significant incidents;
- seek advice from therapists and specialist colleagues;
- engage with evidence-informed developments in specialist education.

Reflection is viewed as an opportunity for professional growth rather than judgement. By learning together, staff strengthen the consistency and quality of Positive Support across the school.

13.4 Staff wellbeing

Supporting pupils with complex needs requires emotional resilience, teamwork and professional support. Riverside Bridge School recognises that staff wellbeing is essential to sustaining high-quality Positive Support. The school is committed to promoting staff wellbeing through:

- supportive leadership;
- opportunities for supervision and reflection;
- access to coaching and professional guidance;
- collaborative team working;
- appropriate debrief following significant incidents. Following significant incidents, staff are provided with opportunities to participate in structured reflective discussions that focus upon understanding contributing factors, reviewing the effectiveness of support and identifying opportunities to strengthen future practice. These discussions are intended to promote professional learning, emotional wellbeing and consistent implementation of Positive Support rather than attributing blame. Where appropriate, outcomes may inform updates to the pupil's Pupil Profile, review through the Communication Development Protocol and wider staff development.

By supporting the wellbeing of staff, we strengthen our ability to provide calm, consistent and compassionate support for pupils.

13.5 Developing a culture of continuous improvement

Professional development at Riverside Bridge School is not viewed simply as compliance with mandatory training requirements. Instead, it forms part of our commitment to continuous improvement and excellence in specialist education.

We encourage all staff to remain professionally curious, reflect upon their practice and contribute to the ongoing development of the school's Positive Support Framework. Through shared learning, innovation and collaboration, we seek continually to improve the experiences and outcomes of every pupil.

Section 14

MONITORING, QUALITY ASSURANCE AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Evaluating impact. Identifying patterns. Improving provision.

At Riverside Bridge School, Positive Support is viewed as a dynamic and continually evolving framework rather than a fixed set of procedures. We recognise that pupils' needs change over time, research continues to develop and professional practice should evolve in response to new learning, reflection and evaluation.

Quality assurance is therefore an essential component of our Positive Support Framework. Through systematic monitoring, collaborative review and evidence-informed evaluation, we seek to ensure that every pupil continues to receive safe, effective and equitable support that promotes communication, participation, learning and increasing independence.

Monitoring is not undertaken solely to measure compliance with policy. Its purpose is to strengthen professional practice, celebrate success, identify opportunities for improvement and ensure that our provision remains responsive to the needs of our pupils and families.

The implementation and effectiveness of the Positive Support Framework are monitored through a range of quality assurance activities designed to evaluate both the consistency of practice and the impact upon pupil outcomes.

These activities may include:

- classroom learning walks and observations;
- BridgeWorks implementation reviews;
- Communication Development Protocol (CDP) audits;
- Pupil Profile audits;
- Communication, Participation and Regulation (CPR) Panel evaluations;
- reviews of therapeutic recommendations and implementation;
- analysis of incidents involving distress, dysregulation or restrictive practice;
- pupil progress information;
- attendance and engagement data;
- safeguarding information where relevant;
- family feedback;
- pupil voice, using personalised communication approaches where appropriate;
- staff feedback and professional reflection.

Information gathered through these processes enables the school to evaluate whether Positive Support is being implemented consistently and whether it is improving outcomes for pupils.
Information collected through monitoring activities is used to strengthen provision rather than simply report performance.
Where strengths are identified, successful practice is shared across the school through coaching, professional discussion and collaborative learning. Where areas for development are recognised, leaders work alongside staff to identify practical solutions, provide additional support and strengthen consistency.
This approach reflects Riverside Bridge School's commitment to a culture of continuous improvement in which evaluation is viewed as an opportunity for professional growth rather than judgement.
By regularly reviewing evidence from multiple sources, the school ensures that decisions remain informed by the lived experiences of pupils, families and staff.

The Senior Leadership Team has strategic responsibility for monitoring the implementation of the Positive Support Framework and ensuring that it continues to reflect current legislation, evidence-informed practice and the needs of the school community.
Governors receive regular reports that enable them to evaluate the effectiveness of the framework and fulfil their strategic responsibilities. These reports may include information relating to:

- implementation of the Positive Support Framework;
- outcomes from quality assurance activities;
- Communication Development Protocol activity;
- Pupil Profiles;
- Communication, Participation and Regulation (CPR) Panel activity;
- patterns and trends relating to incidents;
- use of restrictive practice;
- staff training and professional development;
- areas identified for further improvement.

This strategic oversight enables governors to provide appropriate challenge and support whilst ensuring that statutory responsibilities continue to be met.

Continuous improvement is central to the culture of Riverside Bridge School.
We recognise that improving outcomes for pupils requires ongoing reflection, collaboration and innovation.
Staff are therefore encouraged to remain professionally curious, evaluate the impact of their practice and contribute to the continued development of the school's Positive Support Framework.
Learning from incidents, celebrating success, listening to families, engaging with current research and reflecting upon pupil outcomes all contribute to the ongoing refinement of our approaches.

Through this commitment to continuous improvement, Riverside Bridge School seeks not only to maintain high standards of Positive Support but continually to strengthen the opportunities available for every pupil to communicate, participate, learn and achieve increasing independence.

This policy will be reviewed at least annually, or sooner where required, to reflect changes in legislation, statutory guidance, research, professional practice or the evolving needs of Riverside Bridge School.



Section 15

EQUALITY, INCLUSION AND POSITIVE SCHOOL CULTURE

Promoting equity. Strengthening belonging. Respecting individuality.

At Riverside Bridge School, Positive Support is founded upon the belief that every pupil has the right to be treated with dignity, respect and compassion. We are committed to creating an inclusive environment in which every pupil is valued as an individual and is supported to communicate, participate, learn and achieve increasing independence.

We recognise that equality does not always mean treating every pupil in the same way. Many pupils require personalised approaches, reasonable adjustments and specialist provision in order to access education and participate meaningfully in school life. Our Positive Support Framework therefore promotes equity by removing barriers, adapting provision and ensuring that support is responsive to individual strengths and needs.

15.1 Equality and reasonable adjustments

The school fulfils its duties under the Equality Act 2010 by ensuring that pupils are not disadvantaged because of disability or other protected characteristics.

Reasonable adjustments may include:

- adapting communication methods;
- modifying teaching approaches;
- providing specialist equipment or technology;
- adapting the learning environment;
- implementing sensory supports;
- providing therapeutic strategies;
- adjusting expectations where appropriate;
- developing and reviewing personalised approaches within the Pupil Profile.

These adjustments are intended to enable every pupil to participate as fully and independently as possible.

15.2 Human rights and dignity

Positive Support at Riverside Bridge School is underpinned by respect for the rights, dignity and individuality of every pupil.

We are committed to ensuring that pupils:

- are listened to through their preferred methods of communication;
- are treated with kindness, respect and empathy;

- are supported to express choice and preference wherever possible;
- experience safe, predictable and inclusive environments;
- are protected from discrimination, abuse and unnecessary restriction;
- are supported to achieve the highest possible level of independence and participation.

Decisions relating to Positive Support are always made with careful consideration of each pupil's rights, safety, wellbeing and best interests.

15.3 Inclusion and belonging

Inclusion is not viewed as a separate initiative but as an integral part of everyday practice.

Staff work collaboratively to remove barriers that may prevent pupils from participating fully in learning, relationships and school life. Through effective communication, structured teaching, therapeutic support and positive relationships, we seek to ensure that every pupil experiences belonging, achievement and success.

Our Positive Support Framework promotes participation in all aspects of school life and recognises that meaningful inclusion looks different for every individual.

15.4 Equality in practice

Through the implementation of this policy, Riverside Bridge School seeks to ensure that Positive Support remains:

- equitable;
- inclusive;
- person-centred;
- evidence-informed;
- trauma-informed where appropriate;
- communication-focused;
- responsive to the changing needs of every pupil.

These principles underpin every aspect of our Positive Support Framework and support our vision of enabling every pupil to communicate, participate, learn and prepare for adulthood.

15.5 Pupil voice and self-advocacy

At Riverside Bridge School, we recognise that every pupil has the right to be listened to, understood and involved in decisions that affect their education, wellbeing and future. Pupil voice is central to our Positive Support Framework and reflects our commitment to person-centred practice, inclusion and respect for individual rights.

We understand that pupils communicate in many different ways. For some, this may be through spoken

language, whilst for others it may be through augmentative and alternative communication (AAC), symbols, signing, objects of reference, facial expression, body language, movement, changes in regulation, eye gaze, assistive technology or other personalised communication systems. All forms of communication are valued equally and recognised as meaningful expressions of a pupil's thoughts, feelings, preferences and needs.

Staff have a responsibility to actively seek, interpret and respond to each pupil's voice using approaches that are appropriate to their communication needs and developmental stage. This requires patience, professional curiosity and an understanding that communication may be expressed in ways that are unique to the individual.

Pupil voice informs all aspects of Positive Support, including:

- identifying individual strengths, interests and aspirations;
- understanding communication preferences and support needs;
- developing and reviewing Pupil Profiles;
- identifying strategies that help pupils feel safe, regulated and ready to learn;
- contributing to Communication Development Protocol (CDP) assessments and reviews;
- participating, where appropriate, in Communication, Participation and Regulation (CPR) Panel discussions;
- setting personalised learning and independence goals;
- planning for Preparation for Adulthood outcomes.

As pupils develop, they are encouraged and supported to build increasing independence and self-advocacy skills. Opportunities are provided for pupils to make choices, express opinions, solve problems, evaluate their own progress and communicate their preferences in ways that are meaningful to them. Developing these skills enables pupils to become increasingly active participants in their own education and prepares them for greater independence beyond school.

Where pupils are unable to communicate their views directly, staff work closely with families, carers and professionals to develop the fullest possible understanding of the pupil's preferences, interests and likely wishes. Decisions are always made in the pupil's best interests, drawing upon observations, assessment information and the expertise of those who know the pupil best.

By placing pupil voice at the heart of Positive Support, Riverside Bridge School promotes dignity, autonomy, belonging and participation, ensuring that every pupil is recognised as an active partner in their own learning and development.



15.6. Recognising progress and positive participation

At Riverside Bridge School, we believe that Positive Support is strengthened by recognising success, celebrating achievement and recognising the skills, attitudes and personal qualities that enable pupils to communicate, participate and develop increasing independence.

Recognition is used to encourage confidence, motivation and a sense of belonging rather than as a means of securing compliance or directing pupils through reward alone. Our approach focuses on identifying strengths, celebrating progress from individual starting points and acknowledging the effort pupils make in overcoming barriers to learning and participation.

Celebration contributes to a positive school culture in which pupils feel valued, respected and motivated to engage in learning.

- ✓ **Personalised recognition**

We recognise that pupils respond differently to praise and recognition. Whilst some pupils enjoy public celebration of their achievements, others may prefer private acknowledgement or find public attention overwhelming.

Staff therefore personalise recognition to ensure that it remains meaningful, motivating and appropriate to the individual. Recognition may include:

- verbal praise;
- personalised feedback;
- celebration of individual milestones;
- communication with parents and carers;
- classroom recognition;
- certificates and awards;
- opportunities to share success;
- other personalised forms of positive acknowledgement.

Praise and recognition are always delivered in ways that promote dignity, confidence and emotional wellbeing.

✓ The House System

Riverside Bridge School promotes a strong sense of belonging through its House System, which encourages participation, teamwork and shared achievement across the school community.

Pupils and staff belong to one of four school houses:

- **Frost House**
- **Leonard House**
- **Moore House**
- **Solomon House**

House points are awarded to recognise a wide range of achievements, including kindness, perseverance, independence, teamwork, creativity, responsibility and personal progress. The House System encourages pupils to celebrate one another's successes while developing a shared sense of community and pride.

Awards and celebrations are designed to recognise effort and achievement rather than competition alone, ensuring that every pupil has opportunities to experience success.

✓ Recognition within Positive Support

Recognition is one component of Riverside Bridge School's Positive Support Framework and should always be used alongside positive relationships, effective communication, structured teaching and personalised support.

Whilst recognition can encourage engagement and reinforce positive experiences, lasting development is achieved through understanding each pupil's communication, emotional regulation, sensory needs and individual barriers to participation.

Positive Support therefore seeks to develop intrinsic motivation, confidence and increasing independence rather than reliance upon external rewards alone. This reflects our commitment to supporting meaningful, sustainable learning and personal development for every pupil.

15.7 Responding to bullying, discrimination and harmful conduct

Riverside Bridge School is committed to providing a safe, respectful and inclusive environment in which every pupil is protected from bullying, discrimination, harassment and harmful conduct.

All concerns are taken seriously and responded to promptly, proportionately and in accordance with safeguarding procedures. Our response seeks not only to protect those affected but also to understand the factors contributing to the incident or concern, repair relationships where appropriate and reduce the likelihood of recurrence.

- **Bullying**

Bullying is never accepted at Riverside Bridge School. We recognise that many of our pupils experience differences in communication, cognition and social understanding. Staff therefore carefully consider developmental stage, communication needs and individual understanding when determining whether the conduct meets the definition of bullying or reflects another form of conflict, distress or misunderstanding.

Where bullying is identified, the school will:

- act promptly to safeguard all pupils involved;
- investigate concerns thoroughly;
- provide appropriate support to the pupil experiencing bullying;
- work with the pupil whose actions have caused harm to develop understanding and alternative strategies;
- involve parents or carers;
- record incidents in accordance with school procedures;
- monitor for patterns or repeated incidents;
- implement additional support where required.

Where appropriate, restorative approaches may be used to rebuild relationships and strengthen understanding, provided this is safe and in the best interests of all pupils involved.

- **Discrimination and prejudice-related incidents**

The school will not tolerate conduct, language or actions motivated by prejudice or discrimination relating to any protected characteristic, including race, disability, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation or gender reassignment.

Incidents involving discriminatory language, conduct or actions, including racist, homophobic, sexist or disability-related incidents, are investigated promptly, recorded appropriately and managed in accordance with safeguarding requirements and relevant statutory guidance.

Where appropriate, educational opportunities are used to promote understanding, respect, inclusion and positive relationships.

➢ **Harmful sexual behaviour**

The school recognises that children and young people may display sexualised actions for a variety of developmental, communication, social or safeguarding reasons. All concerns are responded to with sensitivity, professional curiosity and a safeguarding-first approach.

Where sexualised behaviour causes concern, the school will:

- ensure the immediate safety of all pupils involved;
- respond calmly and without judgement;
- assess the behaviour in the context of the pupil's developmental stage and communication needs;
- record and investigate concerns appropriately;
- involve parents or carers where appropriate;
- consult safeguarding leaders and external professionals when required;
- provide education and support relating to personal boundaries, relationships and consent where appropriate;
- implement additional Positive Support, therapeutic or safeguarding interventions as necessary.

Where concerns indicate possible harmful sexual behaviour, child-on-child abuse or wider safeguarding risks, the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy will be followed immediately.

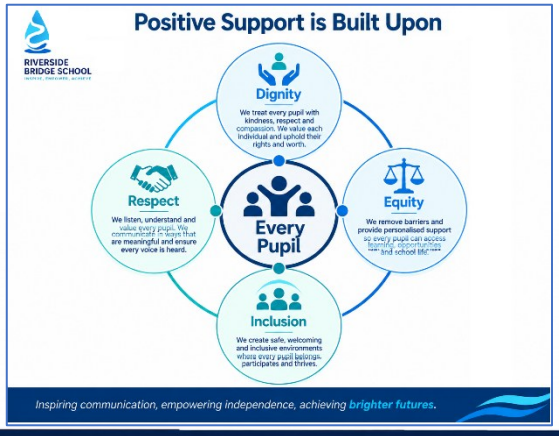
15.8 Restoring relationships

Following incidents involving bullying, discrimination or harmful conduct, Riverside Bridge School seeks to restore relationships wherever it is safe and appropriate to do so.

Restorative approaches focus on:

- rebuilding trust;
- promoting understanding;
- repairing relationships;
- supporting emotional wellbeing;
- developing empathy;
- reducing the likelihood of future incidents.

The emphasis is on learning, accountability and positive change rather than punishment, recognising that sustainable positive change is achieved through understanding, support and the development of appropriate social and communication skills.



Section 16

RELATED POLICIES & FRAMEWORKS

Connecting practice. Strengthening consistency.

This Positive Support Policy should be read alongside the school's wider policies, frameworks and procedures that collectively support pupils' communication, participation, learning, wellbeing and safety. Whilst this policy establishes Riverside Bridge School's strategic approach to Positive Support, the operational detail relating to specific areas of practice is contained within the documents listed below. Together, these documents ensure that Positive Support is implemented consistently across the school and reflects current legislation, evidence-informed practice and the individual needs of pupils.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

Curriculum and teaching

- Bridging Communication Framework
- BridgeWorks Framework
- Curriculum Policy
- Assessment Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy

Inclusion and SEND

- SEND Policy
- Accessibility Plan
- Equality Information and Objectives
- Inclusion Statement

Safeguarding and wellbeing

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Medical Needs, Medication and Allergy Safety Policy
- Intimate Care Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Online Safety Policy

Positive Support

- Restrictive Physical Intervention Policy
- Communication Development Protocol (CDP)

- Pupil Profiles
- Communication, Participation and Regulation (CPR) Panel Procedures

Health, safety and governance

- Health and Safety Policy
- Educational Visits Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Whistleblowing Policy

Where there is any inconsistency between this policy and statutory guidance, the relevant legislation and statutory guidance will take precedence.

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Positive Support response levels (How do we respond?)

The Positive Support Response Levels provide a consistent framework for responding when pupils experience barriers to learning, participation, wellbeing or safety**.** The levels do not describe the pupil; they describe the school's response to the level of support required at that time. A pupil may move between levels depending upon the circumstances, level of risk and effectiveness of the support provided. The emphasis throughout is on understanding communication, reducing barriers and restoring participation rather than responding to individual incidents in isolation.



Principles

The Positive Support Response Levels are based upon the following principles:

- ✓ the response should always be proportionate;
- ✓ observable responses may communicate need;
- ✓ prevention is preferable to intervention;
- ✓ restrictive practice is always a last resort;
- ✓ every incident provides an opportunity for learning and improvement;
- ✓ pupils move between levels according to need rather than being assigned a permanent level.

RIVERSIDE BRIDGE SCHOOL
INSPIRE, EMPOWER, ACHIEVE

POSITIVE SUPPORT RESPONSE GUIDE

A graduated approach to understanding barriers, responding safely and identifying the right level of support.

	UNIVERSAL SUPPORT High-quality provision for every pupil.	TARGETED SUPPORT Additional, time-limited support for emerging or persistent barriers.	SPECIALIST SUPPORT Coordinated multi-disciplinary support for complex needs.	IMMEDIATE SAFETY RESPONSE May be required at any level of support.
PURPOSE OF THE RESPONSE	To provide high-quality everyday provision that promotes communication, participation, regulation, learning and independence.	To provide additional, time-limited support where a barrier persists despite strengthened Universal Support.	To provide coordinated multi-disciplinary support for persistent, significant or increasingly complex barriers following Targeted Support.	To ensure immediate safety when a pupil presents an immediate risk of harm to themselves or others.
WHAT IS OBSERVED (this may include an exhaustive list)	• Needs additional time to complete tasks • Occasional low-level responses indicating a barrier • Sensory seeking or avoiding behaviours • Difficulty with transitions or changes • Requires additional adult support • May need visual structure • Minor barriers that can be supported through the Communication Development Protocol (CDP)	• Persistent responses or behaviours indicating an ongoing barrier • Withdrawal or reduced engagement • Communication barriers impacting learning • Difficulty following routines or instructions • Sensory processing needs with a higher level of impact • Increasing difficulty with regulation • Behaviours or responses beginning to impact on the safety of the pupil or others	• Persistent and significant responses or behaviours indicating complex barriers • Intense sensory or communication needs • Significant regulation difficulties • Significant impact on learning, participation, independence or safety • Complex health, medical or therapeutic needs • Need for specialist input from external professionals • Any situation requiring highly individualised and coordinated support	• Risk of immediate harm to self or others • Physical aggression or serious incident • Self-harming behaviour with immediate risk • Medical incident or significant deterioration • Sudden or significant change in presentation • Any situation requiring emergency measures to keep the pupil and others safe
WHAT SUPPORT MIGHT THIS INCLUDE?	• High-quality teaching and learning • Effective environments (BridgeWorks) • Positive relationships • Regulation-aware practice • Inclusive teaching • Consistent routines and visual structure • Reasonable adjustments	• Agreed targeted strategies and approaches • Additional adult support where required • Targeted communication / regulation strategies • Additional classroom or environmental adaptations • Staff coaching / modelling where required • Family partnership where appropriate	• Specialist communication input (e.g. SaLT) • Specialist sensory / OT input • Enhanced environmental adaptations • Enhanced staff coaching / modelling • Multi-agency collaboration • Support from external professionals • Specialist health or medical protocols where appropriate	• De-escalation and co-regulation strategies • Additional staff support • Follow the Pupil's Risk Assessment and individual arrangements • Restrictive physical intervention only where lawful, reasonable and proportionate, and in accordance with the RPI Policy • Follow emergency procedures and call 999 where required
IMMEDIATE RESPONSE	• Implement high-quality class practice and agreed approaches. • Make reasonable adjustments. • Use CDP, where appropriate, to explore and understand the barrier further.	• Implement the agreed Targeted Support approaches. • Ensure all relevant staff are informed. • Involve families where appropriate.	• Follow the advice and strategies from specialist professionals. • Implement agreed approaches and environmental adaptations. • Ensure all relevant staff are informed.	• Prioritise immediate safety. • Use de-escalation and co-regulation strategies where appropriate. • Follow the Pupil's Risk Assessment and individual arrangements. • Call 999 where required. • Follow the School's emergency procedures.
FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS	• Review the impact regularly. • Adjust strategies as needed. • Discuss with the class team and AHT if concerns persist. • Complete a Class Team Referral where the barrier remains despite reviewed and strengthened Universal Support. The AHT will determine whether a Targeted Support Assessment is appropriate.	• Complete a Targeted Support Assessment. • Agree Targeted Support approaches, including clear baseline and intended outcome. • Implement the agreed Targeted Support. • Review the impact through a Targeted Support Review. • Consider next steps, including whether a Specialist Support Assessment through CPR Panel is required.	• Present to CPR Panel for multidisciplinary consideration and Specialist Support Assessment. • Agree the coordinated Specialist Support response, actions, responsibilities and review period. • Implement the agreed Specialist Support. • Review through Specialist Support Review.	• Review the incident and identify any learning. • Update risk assessment and individual arrangements where required. • Seek advice from professionals if required. • Consider whether further assessment or adjustment to support is needed.
RECORDING & MONITORING	• Record on Sleuth. • Update the Pupil Profile with relevant information and agreed approaches. • Use CDP findings, where appropriate, to inform the Pupil Profile and next steps. • Review regularly in class team meetings.	• Record on Sleuth. • Update the Pupil Profile with agreed enduring approaches where appropriate. • Keep evidence of Targeted Support Assessment, outcomes and review on the pupil record. • Share with families and relevant professionals.	• Record on Sleuth. • Update the Pupil Profile with agreed enduring approaches where appropriate. • Keep evidence of Specialist Support Assessment, outcomes and review on the pupil record. • Share with families and relevant professionals.	• Record on Sleuth as a significant incident. • Complete required documentation (e.g. incident forms). • Review risk assessment and individual arrangements. • Share with families and relevant professionals.

Inspiring communication, empowering independence, achieving brighter futures.

Appendix B

Recording and reporting Positive Support

How do we record?

Riverside Bridge School uses Sleuth, an electronic recording and monitoring system, to record significant observations and incidents, identify patterns and inform Positive Support practice. Accurate and timely recording enables staff to understand the factors influencing a pupil's communication, participation and regulation and helps ensure that support remains proactive, consistent and responsive to individual needs. All members of staff are responsible for recording significant incidents and observations in accordance with this policy. Information recorded on Sleuth supports the identification of patterns, potential antecedents, environmental factors and approaches that have supported the pupil successfully. This enables class teams and leaders to make evidence-informed decisions about support and any appropriate next steps within the graduated response.

All incidents requiring recording must be entered onto Sleuth by 4.00 pm on the following working day. Where a Restrictive Physical Intervention (RPI) has taken place, the incident must be recorded by **4.00 pm on the same day**, in accordance with the school's Restrictive Physical Intervention Policy.

Recording requirements

When recording an incident or significant observation on Sleuth, staff should ensure that the record includes:

- ✓ the date and time;
- ✓ the location;
- ✓ what was happening immediately beforehand;
- ✓ any known antecedents or contributing factors;
- ✓ a clear, factual account of what was observed;
- ✓ the communication and support provided;
- ✓ any de-escalation, co-regulation or other supportive approaches used;
- ✓ what happened immediately afterwards and the outcome for the pupil and others involved;
- ✓ whether parents or carers were informed;
- ✓ whether injuries, property damage, first aid or medical attention were involved;
- ✓ any follow-up actions, reviews or further consideration identified.

Records must distinguish observation from interpretation. Staff should describe what they saw and heard, the actions taken and the outcome, avoiding assumptions about a pupil's intention, motivation or the meaning of their behaviour unless this is clearly identified as an interpretation requiring further exploration. The '**How to Record Accurately'** guidance at Appendix B should be used alongside Sleuth to support consistent, objective and high-quality recording.

Monitoring and quality assurance

Positive Support records are reviewed routinely to identify patterns, evaluate the impact of support and ensure that emerging or changing barriers are identified promptly. Sleuth information should be considered alongside the Pupil Profile, direct observation, pupil and family information and other relevant evidence.

Sleuth incident categories determine the level of monitoring and oversight required. These recording categories do not correspond to the school's Universal, Targeted and Specialist levels of Positive Support.

- **Level 1 Observations** are monitored by class teams as part of the ongoing review of Universal Support, classroom practice and pupil progress.
- **Level 2 Incidents** are reviewed weekly by the relevant Assistant Headteacher. The AHT works with the class team to identify patterns, review the effectiveness of Universal Support and determine whether further action or evidence gathering is required.
- **Level 3 Incidents** are reviewed weekly by the Positive Support Team alongside the relevant class team and AHT. Review considers patterns and contributing factors, the effectiveness of existing support and whether the graduated response should be progressed.
- **Level 4 Incidents** receive immediate review by the Positive Support Team and Senior Leadership Team. This will normally include consideration of immediate safety, safeguarding where relevant, post-incident review, the pupil's Risk Assessment and Pupil Profile, and whether further multidisciplinary input is required.

Where review identifies a persistent barrier despite strengthened Universal Support, the school's Class Team Referral and graduated-response process should be followed. Progression to Targeted or Specialist Support is determined through that process and is not determined by the Sleuth incident category alone.

Strategic oversight

The Deputy Headteacher and Headteacher undertake regular sampling of Level 3 and Level 4 records to provide strategic oversight and quality assurance.

This monitoring considers:

- the quality, accuracy and consistency of recording;
- whether responses are proportionate to the circumstances;
- whether agreed approaches are being implemented consistently;
- whether patterns or emerging barriers are being identified;
- whether appropriate follow-up action has taken place;
- whether Pupil Profiles and Risk Assessments are reviewed where required;
- whether there is evidence that support is reducing barriers and improving communication, participation, regulation, learning and independence.

Information from Sleuth forms part of the school's wider monitoring and quality-assurance arrangements and may inform class-team review, AHT oversight, Positive Support Team involvement, CPR Panel consideration, staff coaching and the ongoing development of whole-school practice.



Appendix C

RIVERSIDE BRIDGE SCHOOL
INSPIRE, EMPOWER, ACHIEVE

POSITIVE SUPPORT TOOLKIT

Examples of approaches that may be used to strengthen Universal Support and personalise provision.

The Pupil Profile informs how these approaches are personalised for each pupil.

COMMUNICATION
Helping pupils to express themselves and understand others.

- Total Communication
- AAC (Augmentative and Alternative Communication)
- Intensive Interaction
- Objects of Reference and real items
- Visual Supports (photos, symbols, objects, words)
- Choice Boards and Communication Books
- Social Stories
- Comic Strip Conversations
- Makaton and signing
- Attention Autism

PARTICIPATION
Creating opportunities for engagement, involvement and belonging.

- MRO Approach (Motivation, Recognition, Organisation)
- Attention Autism
- Wellbeing Activities
- Shared Attention and Joint Interests
- Peer Support and Interaction
- Adult Modelling and Scaffolding
- Meaningful Participation and Choice
- Routines and Transitions
- Positive Attention and Praise
- Community Inclusion Activities

REGULATION
Supporting predictable, calm and emotionally secure learning.

- Zones of Regulation (use as appropriate)
- Sensory Systems and Sensory Support
- Regulation Spaces (calm and quiet areas)
- Co-regulation and regulation strategies
- Deep Pressure (where appropriate)
- Calm Kits and Regulation Tools
- Physical strategies (e.g. movement breaks, sensory circuits)
- Thrive Approach
- Sensory Supports (noise reduction, alteration, visual distraction etc.)
- Predictable Routines and Transitions

ENVIRONMENT
Creating predictable, structured and supportive environments.

- Physical Structure
- Work Systems
- Visual Schedules (individual and whole class)
- Visual Supports (labeling, timetables, now/next)
- Low Arousal Environment
- Environmental Adaptations (e.g. lighting, seating, temperature)
- Sensory Spaces
- Clear and Predictable Routines
- Consistent Expectations
- Safe, Inclusive and Welcoming Environments

LEARNING
Making learning accessible, meaningful and achievable.

- Checking Information and Understanding
- First / Then
- Now / Next
- Wait Time and Processing Time
- Task Analysis and Breaking Down
- Errorless Learning
- Modelling and Demonstration
- Prompt Hierarchy
- Clear, Achievable Targets
- Scaffolding within the Zone of Proximal Development (BridgeWorks)
- Adult Support and Motivation

INDEPENDENCE
Building skills for life and preparing for the future.

- Visual Checklists
- Self-Management Strategies
- Independent Work Systems
- Daily Living Skills
- Community Inclusion
- Travel Training and Independent Travel
- Choice Making and Decision Skills
- Problem Solving and Thinking Skills
- Representing Choices and Contributing
- Self-Advocacy and My Views

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Appendix D

RIVERSIDE BRIDGE SCHOOL
INSPIRE, EMPOWER, ACHIEVE

POSITIVE SUPPORT DECISION-MAKING FRAMEWORK

A step-by-step guide to ensure the right support is provided at the right time, at the right level.
This framework supports professional judgement and should be used alongside the Positive Support Policy.

DECISION-MAKING FLOW

1. **BARRIER IDENTIFIED**
   A need is identified that is impacting communication, participation, learning, independence or wellbeing.
2. **UNIVERSAL SUPPORT REVIEWED AND STRENGTHENED**
   Everyday strategies are implemented consistently and adjusted where needed.
3. **UNDERSTAND & GATHER EVIDENCE**
   Use the Pupil Profile, CDP where appropriate, and other available evidence to understand the barrier further.
4. **CLASS TEAM REFERRAL**
   The barrier remains despite strengthened Universal Support. The class team brings together the evidence and requests further review.
5. **AHT REVIEW AND DECISION**
   The AHT reviews the referral and evidence and determines whether Universal Support should be further strengthened or progression to a Targeted Support Assessment is appropriate.
6. **TARGETED SUPPORT ASSESSMENT**
   Assess the identified barrier in greater depth and determine the appropriate Targeted Support response.
7. **TARGETED SUPPORT AGREED**
   Agree the specific Targeted Support approaches, including actions, responsibilities and review date.
8. **TARGETED SUPPORT DELIVERED**
   Implement the agreed Targeted Support approaches and monitor their impact.
9. **TARGETED SUPPORT REVIEW**
   Evaluate the impact of Targeted Support, review pupil progress and identify the appropriate next step.

STEP DOWN	CONTINUE	ADAPT	RETURN TO AHT
Return to Universal Support	Continue Targeted Support	Adjust and continue Targeted Support	Return to AHT for CPR consideration

10. **AHT DECISION**
    Review the evidence and determine whether further progression to the CPR Panel is required.
11. **CPR PANEL**
    For persistent, significant or increasingly complex barriers, the CPR Panel brings together multi-disciplinary expertise to determine whether Specialist Support is required and agree the response.
12. **SPECIALIST SUPPORT ASSESSMENT**
    Undertake a multi-disciplinary assessment through the CPR Panel to determine whether Specialist Support is required and where the response is needed.
13. **SPECIALIST SUPPORT AGREED AND DELIVERED**
    Implement the agreed Specialist Support for the specified review period.
14. **SPECIALIST SUPPORT REVIEW**
    Evaluate the impact of Specialist Support, review pupil progress and identify the appropriate next step.

STEP DOWN	CONTINUE	ADAPT	RETURN TO CPR PANEL
Return to Targeted Support	Continue Specialist Support	Adjust and continue Specialist Support	Return to CPR Panel for further assessment

The Pupil Profile is used and updated throughout this process to reflect agreed strategies, approaches and support.

ASK YOURSELF...

- **Have communication needs been considered?**
  Is the communication information in the Pupil Profile up to date?
- **Have sensory needs been considered?**
  Are sensory supports in place?
  Are sensory needs understood?
- **Have environmental adaptations been made?**
  Is the environment predictable, accessible and supportive?
- **Have BridgeWorks strategies been implemented?**
  Are visuals, routines and structure in place and consistent?
- **Have regulation supports been reviewed?**
  Are regulation needs understood?
  Is co-regulation required?
- **Have participation supports been implemented?**
  Are participation enablers in place?
  Are opportunities meaningful?
- **Has learning been made accessible?**
  Are tasks adapted?
  Are resources and teaching strategies effective?
- **Has pupil voice been considered?**
  What does the pupil want, like or need?
- **Has family voice been gathered?**
  What has the family shared?
  How can we work together?
- **Is information recorded accurately?**
  Are records clear, up to date and shared?
- **Has impact been reviewed before progressing support?**
  What is working? What needs to change?
- **Have we worked in partnership with families and professionals?**
  Are we collaborating and sharing information effectively?

KEY REMINDERS

- Support before escalation.
- Use the least intrusive response.
- Remain child-centred and relationship-based.
- Decisions informed by evidence, not assumptions.
- Review impact before progressing support.
- Communication, participation and regulation remain central.
- Work collaboratively with families and professionals.

LINKED DOCUMENTS AND PROCESSES

Communication Development Protocol (CDP)	Pupil Profile	Targeted Support Assessment	Targeted Support Review	CPR Panel / Specialist Support Assessment	Specialist Support Review	Recording & Monitoring Guidance	Restrictive Physical Intervention Policy	Positive Support Policy

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Appendix E

RIVERSIDE BRIDGE SCHOOL
INSPIRE. EMPOWER. ACHIEVE

DEVELOPING EFFECTIVE PUPIL PROFILES

Understanding the pupil. Removing barriers. Enabling participation.

PURPOSE

Pupil Profiles provide a structured and personalised approach to understanding the whole pupil. They ensure support is tailored to individual strengths and needs, bringing together communication, learning, regulation, participation, environment, independence, preparation for adulthood, professional advice and agreed approaches. They inform day-to-day practice and enable consistent support across people, environments and levels of support.

A LIVING DOCUMENT

Pupil Profiles evolve as pupils' needs and new information emerges. They should be regularly reviewed, updated and personalised, informed by observations, evidence, professional advice and family views. They reflect our shared commitment to high aspirations, positive outcomes and responsive support throughout the pupil's journey.

PUPIL PROFILE

The personalised, day-to-day operational document that brings together what we know about the pupil and the agreed approaches that enable consistent support.

1 UNDERSTAND THE PUPIL

- Strengths, interests and motivations
- Communication profile and preferences
- Regulation needs and approaches
- Health needs (where relevant)
- Sensory preferences and considerations
- Learning style and cognitive profile (where appropriate)
- Family views and priorities
- Pupil voice

2 BUILD THE PUPIL PROFILE

- Communication
- Regulation
- Participation
- Environment
- Independence
- Preparation for adulthood
- Professional & therapeutic advice
- Agreed approaches and strategies
- Reasonable adjustments
- Relevant outcomes
- Review arrangements

3 IMPLEMENT CONSISTENTLY

- Consistent practice across all adults
- Use clear and universal provision
- Follow agreed strategies and approaches
- Use tools and resources consistently
- Build independence
- Work in partnership with families and professionals
- Proactive and positive approaches

4 MONITOR AND GATHER EVIDENCE

- Ongoing observation and assessment
- Gather evidence across settings
- Use pupil and family views
- Use tools and strategies clearly
- Track progress towards relevant outcomes
- Reflect on what is working and what to change
- Identify next steps

5 REVIEW AND ADAPT

- Adapt provision based on evidence
- Step up support where needed
- Step down support where appropriate
- Celebrate progress and achievements
- Update the Pupil Profile as the pupil develops
- Agree next steps

BUILT ON EVIDENCE | REVIEWED REGULARLY | DEVELOPED COLLABORATIVELY

EVERY PUPIL PROFILE SHOULD INCLUDE

UNDERSTANDING THE PUPIL

- Strengths
- Communication profile
- Health needs
- Pupil voice
- Family views

PARTICIPATION AND LEARNING

- Barriers to participation
- Opportunities and interests
- Reasonable adjustments
- Learning approaches

REGULATION

- Regulation needs and approaches
- Sensory strategies
- Environmental adaptations
- Agreed adult responses

PROFESSIONAL & THERAPEUTIC ADVICE

- Therapeutic recommendations
- Strategies and approaches
- External advice (e.g. SaLT, OT, EP, health and other professionals)
- Embedded in practice

OUTCOMES

- Relevant outcomes
- Communication
- Participation
- Independence
- Preparation for adulthood

REVIEW

- Success indicators
- Review arrangements
- Key next steps

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Key definitions

Barriers to Participation - Factors that reduce or prevent a pupil's ability to communicate, engage, learn or participate successfully in school life. Barriers may arise from communication differences, sensory processing, regulation, the environment, health needs, learning needs or wider contextual factors. Positive Support focuses on identifying and removing these barriers rather than attempting to change the pupil.

BridgeWorks - Riverside Bridge School's structured teaching framework. BridgeWorks provides consistent approaches to the organisation of the physical environment, visual supports, communication, work systems and independence to enable pupils to understand expectations, participate successfully and access learning.

Bridging Communication Framework - Riverside Bridge School's whole-school framework for identifying, understanding and removing barriers to communication, participation, learning, regulation and independence. The framework brings together universal practice, BridgeWorks, personalised Pupil Profiles, the Communication Development Protocol (CDP) and the Communication, Participation and Regulation (CPR) Panel into one graduated system of support.

Communication Development Protocol (CDP) - A graduated, collaborative problem-solving process used to identify, understand and remove barriers to communication, participation and regulation. The CDP uses evidence-informed assessment to inform targeted support, intervention planning and referrals to the Communication, Participation and Regulation (CPR) Panel where appropriate.

Communication, Participation and Regulation (CPR) Panel - A multi-disciplinary panel that reviews persistent or complex barriers to communication, participation, learning and regulation. The panel coordinates specialist advice, intervention planning and review within the Bridging Communication Framework.

Co-regulation - The process by which a supportive adult helps a pupil understand and manage emotions, sensory experiences and levels of regulation through responsive relationships, modelling and shared regulation strategies.

Least Restrictive Practice - An approach that seeks to maximise a pupil's freedom, dignity, participation and independence by using the least restrictive intervention necessary to maintain safety. Preventative, environmental and communication-based strategies are always prioritised.

Participation - Meaningful engagement in learning, relationships, routines and wider school life. Increasing participation is viewed as a key indicator that barriers are being successfully removed.

Positive Support - A proactive, person-centred approach that seeks to understand the whole pupil and remove barriers to communication, participation, learning and independence. Positive Support promotes emotional regulation, positive relationships, skill development and preparation for adulthood through consistent, evidence-informed practice.

Preparation for Adulthood
The planned development of knowledge, skills, confidence and independence that enables pupils to achieve positive outcomes in adulthood across employment, independent living, community inclusion and health.

Pupil Profile - Riverside Bridge School's primary day-to-day operational document for each pupil. Every pupil has a personalised Pupil Profile that brings together the information adults need to understand and support them consistently, including their strengths, communication, participation, learning, sensory and environmental needs, independence, regulation and Positive Support. It incorporates relevant therapeutic recommendations, reasonable adjustments and agreed approaches, and is reviewed and developed as the pupil's needs, barriers and effective approaches change.

Reasonable Adjustments - Changes made to the environment, teaching, communication or organisation to reduce barriers and enable pupils with disabilities or additional needs to participate fully in school life, in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

Self-regulation - The developing ability to recognise, understand and manage emotions, sensory experiences and levels of regulation with increasing independence. Self-regulation develops through repeated experiences of effective co-regulation and supportive relationships.

Therapeutic Recommendations - Strategies, adaptations and advice provided by therapists or specialist professionals that are embedded into everyday practice to reduce barriers and support communication, participation, learning and independence.

Restrictive Practice - Any intervention that restricts a pupil's movement, liberty or freedom to act independently. Restrictive practices are used only when necessary, reasonable and proportionate to prevent harm and always form part of a wider preventative and supportive approach.