CAREERS EDUCATION, INFORMATION, ADVICE AND GUIDANCE POLICY

Raising aspirations. Exploring opportunities.
Preparing for adulthood.



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 Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG), including Work-Related Learning, employer encounters, experiences of workplaces and transition planning. It establishes the expectations and arrangements through which pupils are supported to understand their strengths, explore future possibilities and prepare for adult life.

At Riverside Bridge School, Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) and Work-Related Learning are central to preparing pupils for adult life.

We recognise that careers education for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities must be ambitious, personalised and rooted in meaningful experiences. It is not limited to preparation for paid employment. It supports pupils to understand themselves, develop aspirations, recognise their strengths, experience the world of work, make informed choices and prepare for the widest possible range of future opportunities.

We have high expectations for every pupil. We do not assume that disability, communication need, learning profile or level of support determines what a young person can achieve in adulthood. Some pupils may progress towards paid employment, supported employment, apprenticeships, further education or vocational training. Others may require significant ongoing support but should still experience purposeful opportunities to develop communication, participation, independence, responsibility and contribution within adult-life contexts.

CEIAG and Work-Related Learning therefore begin well before pupils reach Key Stage 4. Early experiences of choice, responsibility, community participation, enterprise, interaction with different adults and awareness of occupations provide foundations that become increasingly explicit and future-focused as pupils mature.

Careers provision is closely connected to the school's Preparing for Adulthood approach. Learning becomes progressively more age-appropriate and relevant to future education, employment, independent or supported living, community participation and health and wellbeing.

Pupils are entitled to high-quality and impartial careers information, advice and guidance that reflects the full range of pathways available to them. Information must be accessible through pupils' personalised communication approaches and responsive to their individual understanding.

Meaningful experiences of workplaces are an important part of this provision. At Riverside Bridge School, these experiences are carefully matched to the pupil and may be organised flexibly, including through regular attendance over an extended period rather than a continuous block. Appropriate support, including support from staff where required, enables pupils to participate safely, successfully and with increasing confidence.

Through a progressive careers programme, employer encounters, workplace experiences, enterprise, personal guidance and strong partnerships with families and external organisations, Riverside Bridge School seeks to enable every pupil to develop a positive and ambitious sense of their future.

Our responsibilities to pupils

At Riverside Bridge School, we will:

- maintain high aspirations for the future of every pupil;
- provide a progressive careers programme that reflects the Gatsby Benchmarks and current statutory careers guidance;
- ensure careers education is accessible to pupils across all curriculum pathways;
- begin developing awareness of the world of work and adult life from an early stage and increase the explicit careers focus as pupils mature;
- provide careers learning that is age-appropriate and responsive to individual communication and developmental needs;
- support pupils to recognise their strengths, interests, preferences and aspirations;
- provide accessible and impartial information about education, training, employment and other future pathways;
- ensure pupils have opportunities to receive appropriate personal careers guidance;
- enable pupils and families to understand the range of post-16 and post-19 opportunities available;
- challenge stereotypes and assumptions about disability, gender, culture, background or other characteristics in relation to future opportunities;
- provide meaningful encounters with employers and people in different occupations;
- provide meaningful experiences of workplaces that are carefully matched to individual pupils;
- adapt the timing, structure and level of support for workplace experiences according to individual need;
- provide Riverside Bridge School staff support within workplace experiences where this is necessary to enable safe and meaningful participation;
- identify appropriate reasonable adjustments and support with employers;
- develop pupils' employability skills through practical and authentic experiences;
- provide opportunities for enterprise, responsibility and contribution;
- connect curriculum learning appropriately to future life and employment;
- involve pupils in decisions about their future as far as possible;
- work collaboratively with parents and carers during careers and transition planning;
- fulfil statutory provider access requirements;
- work with employers, further education providers, careers professionals and relevant community partners;
- monitor destinations and use this information to improve careers provision;
- evaluate the quality and impact of the careers programme regularly.

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Section 01

CAREERS EDUCATION AT RIVERSIDE BRIDGE SCHOOL

Recognising strengths. Developing aspirations. Broadening horizons.

Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance enables pupils to develop the knowledge, understanding, skills and experiences needed to consider their future and participate as fully as possible in adult life.

At Riverside Bridge School, careers education is understood broadly. It includes learning about employment and occupations, but also developing the communication, independence, decision-making, confidence and practical skills that enable pupils to participate successfully within future education, training, workplaces and communities.

Careers education for every pupil

Careers education is an entitlement for every pupil.

A pupil's curriculum pathway, level of cognition or communication method should not determine whether they receive careers education. Instead, these factors influence how careers learning is made accessible.

For some pupils, early careers learning may involve:

- recognising different people and roles;
- participating in simple responsibilities;
- making choices;
- completing purposeful tasks;
- following familiar routines;
- developing communication with different adults;
- participating within community environments;
- experiencing the satisfaction of contributing to a shared outcome.

As pupils develop, learning may become increasingly focused upon:

- strengths and interests;
- different occupations;
- workplace expectations;
- employability skills;
- enterprise;

- career aspirations;
- work experience;
- further education and training;
- supported employment;
- apprenticeships;
- vocational pathways;
- job seeking;
- decisions about future destinations.

The complexity of learning differs, but every pupil should have opportunities to develop a sense that they have a future in which they can participate and contribute.

Careers as a developmental journey

Careers development does not begin when pupils are old enough to undertake work experience.

Early experiences of independence, responsibility, communication, problem-solving and participation establish foundations for later careers learning.

As pupils mature, these foundations are revisited through increasingly age-appropriate contexts. Pupils may begin to connect what they enjoy, what they can do, what support they require and what they would like for their future.

Careers education therefore develops progressively throughout the school journey and becomes increasingly personalised as pupils approach significant transition points.

Connecting strengths, interests and aspirations

Careers planning begins with understanding the individual pupil.

Staff consider:

- strengths;
- interests;
- communication;
- motivations;
- skills;
- preferred environments;
- support needs;
- sensory and physical requirements;
- independence;
- previous experiences;
- EHCP outcomes;
- aspirations expressed by the pupil and family.

This information helps ensure that future experiences and opportunities are relevant rather than determined by assumptions about disability or diagnosis.

Aspirations should be ambitious while remaining informed by the individual learner and the support that may enable them to succeed.

Careers education and impartiality

Pupils and families should have access to appropriate and impartial information about the range of future opportunities available.

Careers information and guidance should not promote one particular institution or pathway above another.

Depending upon individual circumstances, future options may include:

- further education;
- specialist further education;
- vocational learning;
- technical education;
- apprenticeships;
- supported internships;
- supported employment;
- paid employment;
- voluntary activity;
- community participation;
- other forms of meaningful adult occupation and contribution.

The purpose is to enable pupils and families to understand realistic possibilities without unnecessarily narrowing options.

Careers and the wider curriculum

Careers education is supported through planned careers provision as well as meaningful connections across the curriculum.

Teachers should help pupils understand where curriculum knowledge and skills connect to adult life and the world of work when this connection is genuine and useful.

This does not mean attaching a career to every lesson. Careers links should add purpose and relevance rather than becoming tokenistic.

Communication, literacy, numeracy, technology, problem-solving, teamwork, independence and self-management all contribute to future participation and employability.

A future-focused culture

Careers education is ultimately about establishing a culture in which pupils are encouraged to think about what their future might hold.

For the pupils, that future will not look the same for everyone.

Success may include progressing into employment or training, but it may also include greater independence, contributing through supported activity, participating within the community, exercising greater choice or developing skills that increase the pupil's involvement in adult life.

The school's responsibility is to ensure that future possibilities are explored with ambition, dignity and an understanding of the individual learner.

Section 02

A PROGRESSIVE AND PERSONALISED CAREERS PROGRAMME

Building awareness. Developing skills. Expanding opportunities.

Riverside Bridge School provides a careers programme that develops progressively throughout a pupil's school journey and becomes increasingly focused on future destinations as pupils mature.
The programme recognises that career development will look different for individual pupils. Progress is not measured by whether every pupil moves towards the same employment outcome, but by whether they are developing the knowledge, skills, experiences and understanding that will enable them to participate as fully as possible in their future lives. The careers programme is appropriately sequenced and underpinned by intended learning outcomes so that careers learning develops progressively rather than operating as a series of isolated activities.

Building the foundations

For younger pupils and those at earlier developmental stages, careers-related learning is embedded within meaningful experiences that establish foundations for later employability and adult participation.
These may include developing:

- communication and interaction;
- choice-making;
- awareness of different people and roles;
- participation in purposeful activities;
- responsibility within familiar routines;
- problem-solving;
- independence;
- perseverance;
- cooperation with others;
- awareness of the wider community.

These experiences are not presented artificially as employment preparation. They provide the developmental foundations upon which more explicit careers learning can later be built.

Increasing careers awareness

As pupils mature, careers learning becomes increasingly explicit and connected to the world beyond school.

Pupils are supported, at an appropriate level, to explore:

- their strengths and interests;
- different jobs and occupations;
- people who work within their community;
- different workplace environments;
- the purpose and value of work;
- skills and behaviours used within workplaces;
- education and training opportunities;
- their own aspirations;
- the support or adjustments that may help them participate successfully.

Direct experiences, visits, encounters with employers and practical activities are particularly important in making these concepts meaningful.

Personalisation

Careers experiences are personalised according to the pupil's strengths, interests, aspirations and support needs.

Personalisation does not mean lowering expectations. It means identifying experiences that provide an appropriate level of challenge and genuine opportunities for development.

For example, one pupil may be preparing to travel independently to a workplace, while another may be developing confidence entering an unfamiliar workplace alongside familiar staff. Both may be making meaningful progress towards greater participation in adult life.

Pupil voice

Pupils should be involved in decisions about their future as far as possible.

Staff use each pupil's personalised communication approaches to support them to express preferences, interests, aspirations and views about experiences and future options.

Pupil voice may be demonstrated through choices, communication, engagement, preference, refusal or responses to different experiences as well as through spoken or written discussion.

Families and professionals may contribute important information, but this should not replace efforts to understand the pupil's own preferences and aspirations.

Section 03

CAREERS ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

Connecting learning. Developing independence. Applying skills.

Careers education is both planned explicitly and reinforced through meaningful connections across the wider curriculum.

Curriculum learning provides pupils with knowledge and skills that may contribute to future education, employment, community participation and adult life. Staff should make these connections visible where they add relevance and purpose to learning.

Curriculum connections

Careers-related learning may arise through areas including:

- communication and literacy;
- mathematics and financial understanding;
- computing and technology;
- science;
- creative subjects;
- practical learning;
- personal and social development;
- independence;
- community learning;
- enterprise;
- Preparing for Adulthood.

For example, mathematics may be applied through money, time, measurement or stock management, while communication skills may be developed through interacting with customers, colleagues or unfamiliar adults.

These connections enable pupils to understand that skills developed within school can have purposes beyond the classroom.

Employability skills

Employability is broader than learning how to apply for a job.

Depending upon the individual pupil, relevant skills may include:

- communicating with others;
- making choices and decisions;
- following instructions or routines;

- completing a purposeful task;
- working alongside others;
- problem-solving;
- managing time;
- organising equipment;
- responding to feedback;
- asking for help;
- developing resilience;
- adapting to change;
- travelling within the community;
- taking increasing responsibility.

These skills should be developed through authentic experiences rather than taught only as abstract concepts.

Enterprise

Enterprise provides pupils with practical opportunities to experience planning, creating, contributing, decision-making and, where appropriate, financial activity.

Enterprise may support pupils to develop communication, teamwork, problem-solving, creativity, responsibility and understanding of how goods or services are produced and exchanged.

The purpose of enterprise is not simply to raise money or produce an end product. Its educational value lies in the knowledge, skills, independence and experience developed through participation.

Section 04

CAREERS AND PREPARING FOR ADULTHOOD

Building confidence. Increasing independence. Preparing for adult life.

Careers education forms an important part of Riverside Bridge School's wider approach to Preparing for Adulthood.

The four Preparing for Adulthood outcomes of Employment, Independent Living, Community Inclusion and Health and Wellbeing are interconnected. Successful participation in employment or meaningful adult occupation may depend upon communication, travel, relationships, health, self-advocacy, personal care and community independence as much as upon occupational skills.

Employment and meaningful adult occupation

Riverside Bridge School maintains ambitious expectations regarding employment while recognising that adult outcomes will vary.

Pupils may progress towards:

- paid employment;
- supported employment;
- supported internships;
- apprenticeships;
- further education or vocational training;
- voluntary work;
- structured occupational opportunities;
- other meaningful forms of participation and contribution.

Pupils should not have future possibilities unnecessarily restricted because of assumptions about their disability or support needs.

At the same time, careers planning should be individual and purposeful. Experiences should contribute meaningfully to the pupil's future rather than pursuing a particular destination simply because it represents a conventional employment pathway.

Developing independence for future participation

Preparing for employment includes developing the wider independence required to access and sustain future opportunities.

Depending upon the pupil, this may include:

- travelling to and from a placement;
- managing belongings;

- communicating with unfamiliar adults;
- following workplace routines;
- managing breaks;
- making choices;
- communicating when support is required;
- managing aspects of personal care;
- understanding appropriate workplace boundaries;
- developing stamina and confidence;
- adapting to different environments.

For some pupils, these may initially require significant adult support.

The purpose is not to remove support prematurely, but to identify what enables the pupil to participate successfully and where independence can develop safely over time.

Careers within EHCP and transition planning

Careers and future aspirations should contribute appropriately to transition planning and Education, Health and Care Plan reviews.

As pupils approach adulthood, planning should increasingly consider their aspirations, strengths, support needs and likely future opportunities across education, employment and wider adult life.

Information from careers experiences, employer encounters, workplace experiences and personal guidance should contribute to this process where relevant.

Careers planning should therefore form part of a coherent approach to the pupil's future rather than operating separately from their wider Preparing for Adulthood journey.

Section 05

THE GATSBY BENCHMARKS

Establishing expectations. Ensuring access. Evaluating provision.

Riverside Bridge School uses the Gatsby Benchmarks as the framework for developing, reviewing and evaluating its careers provision.

The Benchmarks provide a whole-school structure for high-quality careers education while allowing provision to be personalised to the needs of pupils with SEND. Riverside Bridge School recognises that the way a benchmark is achieved may look different within a specialist setting, but this does not reduce the entitlement or ambition for pupils.

The eight Gatsby Benchmarks are:

1. A stable careers programme
2. Learning from career and labour market information
3. Addressing the needs of each young person
4. Linking curriculum learning to careers
5. Encounters with employers and employees
6. Experiences of workplaces
7. Encounters with further and higher education
8. Personal guidance

Applying the Benchmarks at Riverside Bridge School

The Gatsby Benchmarks are interpreted through the context of our pupils and their individual learning and communication profiles.

This means that careers provision should:

- be progressive and appropriately sequenced;
- be accessible through personalised communication approaches;
- reflect pupils' strengths, interests and aspirations;
- address barriers associated with disability and disadvantage;
- involve parents and carers appropriately;
- provide meaningful encounters rather than tokenistic experiences;
- enable pupils to experience workplaces with appropriate adjustments and support;
- provide access to information about different future pathways;
- support informed transition planning; and
- maintain high expectations for future participation and employment.

The school does not regard the Benchmarks as a checklist of isolated activities. They are used collectively to evaluate whether pupils experience a coherent careers programme that develops throughout their education.

Evaluating progress against the Benchmarks

The school regularly reviews its careers provision against the Gatsby Benchmarks using appropriate national careers evaluation tools, including Compass+ where applicable.

Evaluation is used to identify strengths, gaps and priorities for development and to inform the school's careers programme and improvement planning.

Detailed evidence against individual Gatsby Benchmarks is maintained through the school's careers monitoring and evaluation processes rather than reproduced within this policy.

Section 06

CAREERS INFORMATION AND LABOUR MARKET INFORMATION

Exploring opportunities. Accessing information. Informing choices.

Pupils and their families should have access to appropriate, current and impartial information that helps them understand future opportunities and make informed decisions.
Careers and labour market information should be presented in ways that are accessible and meaningful to the individual pupil.

Accessible careers information

Traditional written careers information will not be accessible or meaningful for every pupil.
Information may therefore be provided through:

- photographs and symbols;
- accessible digital resources;
- video;
- practical demonstrations;
- visits;
- encounters with employers and employees;
- workplace experiences;
- conversations with familiar adults;
- personalised careers guidance;
- direct experience of different environments and occupations.

Staff should consider what information a pupil needs and how it can best be communicated rather than simply providing information that the pupil cannot meaningfully access.

Labour market information

Where appropriate, pupils are supported to understand information about employment opportunities, sectors, skills and the local and wider labour market.
For some pupils this may involve exploring particular industries, qualifications, earnings, vacancies and employment trends.
For others, labour market information may become meaningful through direct experiences of different workplaces, meeting people who perform different jobs and developing an understanding of the types of employment available within their community.

Information should be relevant to pupils' interests and future planning and should not unnecessarily restrict aspirations to occupations traditionally associated with people with SEND.

Supporting families

Parents and carers play an important role in decisions about pupils' futures and should have access to appropriate information about education, training, employment and support.

Where relevant, this includes information about:

- further education;
- specialist provision;
- vocational and technical routes;
- apprenticeships;
- supported internships;
- supported employment;
- employment;
- available support and reasonable adjustments;
- other appropriate post-16 and post-19 opportunities.

Information should support families to explore possibilities and make informed decisions alongside the young person.

Section 07

EMPLOYER ENCOUNTERS

Meeting employers. Exploring occupations. Broadening aspirations.

Encounters with employers and employees enable pupils to develop their understanding of the world of work and encounter people, roles and workplaces beyond their immediate experience.
Riverside Bridge School provides pupils with meaningful opportunities to engage with employers and employees as part of its progressive careers programme.

Meaningful encounters

Employer encounters may include:

- employers visiting school;
- workplace visits;
- careers events;
- talks and demonstrations;
- practical workshops;
- enterprise activities involving employers;
- mentoring;
- virtual encounters where appropriate;
- work-related projects;
- direct interaction during workplace experiences.

The format should be selected according to the needs and intended learning of the pupils involved.
An encounter should provide meaningful interaction rather than simply exposing pupils to an employer or workplace without an identifiable learning purpose.

Preparing pupils for encounters

Pupils may require preparation to benefit fully from employer encounters.
This may include:

- becoming familiar with the person or environment;
- understanding the purpose of the encounter;
- preparing questions or communication;
- using photographs, symbols or other accessible information;
- identifying sensory or physical adaptations;
- preparing for unfamiliar routines;

- establishing the support required.

Following an encounter, pupils should have appropriate opportunities to revisit, communicate about or apply what they have experienced.

Building employer partnerships

Riverside Bridge School seeks to develop positive and sustainable relationships with employers who understand the value of inclusive employment and meaningful workplace experiences.

Partnerships should benefit pupils by increasing their understanding of work, widening their experiences and creating opportunities to develop relevant skills.

The school also seeks to support employers to understand the strengths, potential and contribution of young people with SEND and the reasonable adjustments that can enable successful participation.

Employer engagement should therefore contribute not only to individual experiences but also to raising expectations about what the pupils can achieve.

Section 08

EXPERIENCES OF WORKPLACES

Experiencing workplaces. Developing skills. Building confidence.

Experiences of workplaces are an important part of careers education at Riverside Bridge School and provide opportunities for pupils to apply learning within authentic working environments.

The school recognises that a meaningful workplace experience will not look identical for every pupil. The structure, duration, environment and level of support are therefore carefully considered according to individual need.

Flexible and meaningful workplace experiences

Workplace experiences may take place as a concentrated block or through regular attendance over a longer period.

For many pupils, attending a placement for one day each week over a number of weeks may be more appropriate than completing consecutive full-time weeks. This approach can enable pupils to develop familiarity, relationships, confidence, stamina and employability skills while supporting their communication, sensory, physical, health and emotional wellbeing needs.

The organisation of an experience should be determined by what enables the pupil to participate meaningfully and make progress, while meeting applicable statutory careers expectations.

Matching the placement to the pupil

Workplace experiences are selected carefully rather than simply according to placement availability.

Planning takes account of:

- the pupil's interests and aspirations;
- strengths and developing skills;
- communication needs;
- sensory profile;
- physical and health needs;
- emotional wellbeing and regulation;
- level of independence;
- accessibility of the environment;
- suitability and purpose of proposed tasks;
- safeguarding;
- risk assessment;
- travel arrangements;

- reasonable adjustments;
- the support required for successful participation.

Where possible, pupils should contribute to decisions about their workplace experiences using their personalised communication approaches.

All workplace experiences are planned in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures and current statutory safeguarding requirements. Safeguarding arrangements, including any required checks and supervision arrangements, are considered as part of placement planning and risk assessment.

Support within workplace experiences

Some pupils will require support from Riverside Bridge School staff to access a workplace successfully. Staff support may include helping the pupil to understand routines, communicate with colleagues, manage sensory or emotional needs, complete tasks, travel safely or respond to unfamiliar situations.

The presence of school staff does not make the experience less meaningful. Appropriate support can be the reasonable adjustment that enables a pupil to access an authentic workplace.

Where appropriate, support should be reviewed over time so that opportunities for increasing autonomy and independence can be developed safely.

Progression through workplace experiences

Workplace experience should have a clear purpose and contribute to the pupil's wider careers and Preparing for Adulthood journey.

Progress may include:

- tolerating or becoming comfortable within an unfamiliar environment;
- interacting with unfamiliar adults;
- following workplace routines;
- communicating with colleagues or customers;
- completing purposeful tasks;
- developing stamina;
- working with increasing independence;
- solving problems;
- asking for support;
- understanding workplace expectations;
- identifying preferences and interests;
- developing occupational or employability skills.

For some pupils, progression may involve experiencing several different workplaces to identify preferences and strengths. For others, sustained participation within a familiar placement may enable deeper development of skills, relationships and independence. The quality and impact of the experience are more important than creating identical experiences for every pupil.

Section 09

TECHNICAL EDUCATION, APPRENTICESHIPS AND PROVIDER ACCESS

Exploring pathways. Accessing providers. Understanding opportunities..

Riverside Bridge School ensures that pupils receive appropriate information about the range of education, training and employment pathways available to them as they prepare for adulthood.
Pupils should have opportunities to understand different routes and should not be directed automatically towards a particular pathway because of their SEND, level of attainment or current support needs.

Technical and vocational pathways

As pupils mature, they are supported to explore pathways that may include:

- further education;
- specialist further education;
- vocational programmes;
- technical education;
- apprenticeships;
- supported internships;
- supported employment;
- employment;
- other appropriate training and adult-life opportunities.

Information is adapted to pupils' communication and developmental understanding so that encounters are meaningful rather than simply provided to meet a requirement.
Where a particular pathway is not currently appropriate for an individual pupil, this should not prevent them from developing awareness of the opportunities that exist or unnecessarily restrict future aspirations.

Provider access

Riverside Bridge School meets its statutory provider access duties for pupils in Years 8 to 13, including the required opportunities for pupils to encounter providers of approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships. These encounters are planned across the relevant key phases in accordance with current statutory requirements and the school's published Provider Access Policy Statement.
Relevant pupils are provided with opportunities to hear directly from providers so that they can understand the range of routes available and how these may support future education, training or employment.

Provider encounters should be planned so that they are accessible and meaningful for the pupils. The school may work with providers in advance to identify appropriate communication, presentation, environmental or other reasonable adjustments.

Provider access policy statement

The school maintains and publishes a separate Provider Access Policy Statement in accordance with statutory requirements.

This sets out the arrangements through which providers may request access to pupils, the opportunities available within the careers programme and the school's approach to organising provider encounters.

The Provider Access Policy Statement is reviewed and updated in accordance with statutory requirements.

Section 10

PERSONAL CAREERS GUIDANCE

Recognising strengths. Exploring options. Supporting decisions.

Personal careers guidance enables pupils to explore their aspirations, strengths, interests and future options with appropriate individual support.

Riverside Bridge School ensures that pupils receive independent and impartial careers guidance in accordance with statutory requirements, with personal guidance provided at appropriate stages of each pupil's careers journey.

Accessible and impartial guidance

Careers guidance should be impartial and focused upon the best interests of the individual pupil.

Guidance should support pupils to explore the range of opportunities available rather than directing them towards a particular provider or pathway.

For the pupils, the process must also be accessible.

This may require:

- personalised communication systems;
- visual or symbol-supported information;
- familiar staff supporting communication;
- information presented over more than one session;
- direct experience of options before decisions are discussed;
- involvement of parents or carers where appropriate;
- collaboration with professionals who understand the pupil's needs.

The need for communication support does not remove the importance of the pupil's own voice.

Understanding the individual

Effective guidance takes account of the pupil's:

- interests;
- strengths;
- aspirations;
- communication;
- independence;
- learning profile;
- sensory, physical and health needs;
- previous careers and workplace experiences;

- EHCP outcomes;
- support needs;
- potential reasonable adjustments.

Guidance should help pupils and families understand both the opportunities available and the support that may enable those opportunities to become achievable.

Recording and using careers guidance

Significant careers guidance and agreed actions are recorded appropriately so that they can contribute to ongoing careers and transition planning.

Relevant information may inform:

- EHCP reviews;
- Preparing for Adulthood planning;
- workplace experiences;
- transition planning;
- discussions with families;
- applications to future provision;
- decisions about post-16 and post-19 destinations.

Careers guidance should therefore contribute to an ongoing process rather than being treated as an isolated interview.

Section 11

TRANSITION AND POST-16/POST-19 PATHWAYS

Planning transitions. Exploring destinations. Securing continuity.

Transition planning is a significant part of careers provision at Riverside Bridge School.

As pupils approach key transition points, careers education becomes increasingly personalised and focused upon identifying appropriate next steps and ensuring that pupils and families understand the options available.

Planning for transition

Transition planning should begin sufficiently early to enable pupils to explore different possibilities rather than making decisions only when they are preparing to leave.

Depending upon the individual pupil, this may include:

- visits to colleges or other providers;
- supported transition activities;
- encounters with education and training providers;
- workplace experiences;
- personal careers guidance;
- discussions with pupils and families;
- contribution from relevant professionals;
- exploration of transport and travel;
- consideration of support and reasonable adjustments;
- opportunities to become familiar with potential future environments.

Where a pupil requires significant preparation for change, transition arrangements should reflect this.

Post-16 and post-19 opportunities

Pupils and families are supported to understand the range of appropriate opportunities available beyond Riverside Bridge School.

These may include further education, specialist provision, vocational and technical programmes, apprenticeships, supported internships, supported employment, employment and other appropriate adult-life pathways. The school recognises that national education, training and employment pathways continue to develop. Careers information should therefore reflect current opportunities rather than relying upon outdated assumptions about available routes.

Supporting successful destinations

The purpose of transition planning is not simply to secure a destination but to support a destination that is appropriate, ambitious and sustainable for the individual young person.

Planning should consider whether the proposed destination can meet the pupil's learning, communication, health, sensory, physical and support needs while providing meaningful opportunities for continued development.

Pupils should be involved in transition decisions as far as possible, and their views should be sought using communication approaches accessible to them.

Information sharing

Relevant information should be shared appropriately with receiving providers to support continuity and successful transition, in accordance with data protection and safeguarding requirements.

This may include information about:

- communication;
- successful teaching and support approaches;
- reasonable adjustments;
- sensory and physical needs;
- health needs;
- independence;
- careers aspirations;
- workplace experiences;
- strategies that enable successful participation.

The aim is to enable the receiving setting to understand what helps the young person succeed rather than requiring the pupil and family to begin again.

Destination information

Riverside Bridge School monitors the destinations of pupils leaving the school and uses this information to evaluate the effectiveness of careers and transition provision.

Where appropriate and practicable, the school considers the sustainability of destinations as well as the initial destination secured.

Destination information contributes to identifying strengths, gaps and future priorities within the school's careers programme.

Section 12

PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS, CARERS, EMPLOYERS AND PROVIDERS

Building partnerships. Sharing expertise. Creating opportunities.

Effective careers education depends upon strong partnerships between pupils, families, the school and organisations beyond Riverside Bridge School.

Parents and carers

Parents and carers have important knowledge of their child's strengths, interests, support needs and aspirations and are important partners in future planning. The school works with families to:

- share information about careers and future pathways;
- explore aspirations;
- understand available education, training and employment options;
- consider support and reasonable adjustments;
- contribute to transition planning;
- support informed decision-making.

Families should be encouraged to maintain ambitious expectations while having access to clear and realistic information about the support that may be required.

Employers

Employers play an important role in providing pupils with authentic understanding of workplaces and employment. The school seeks to build relationships with employers that can provide meaningful encounters, workplace experiences and opportunities for pupils to develop employability skills. Partnership working also provides opportunities to increase employer understanding of SEND, inclusive employment and reasonable adjustments.

Education, training and careers providers

Riverside Bridge School works with further education settings, specialist providers, training organisations, careers professionals and other relevant organisations to broaden pupils' understanding of future opportunities. Partnerships are selected and developed according to the value they add to pupils' careers learning and transition rather than simply the number of external organisations involved.

The school remains responsible for ensuring that external contributions are appropriate, impartial where required, accessible and consistent with safeguarding expectations.

Section 13

EQUALITY, SEND AND HIGH ASPIRATIONS

Challenging assumptions. Removing barriers. Raising aspirations.

Riverside Bridge School is committed to ensuring that every pupil has access to ambitious careers education regardless of disability, learning profile, communication need, sex, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment or socio-economic background.
SEND should not be regarded as a reason to narrow aspirations or exclude pupils from opportunities to experience the world of work.

High aspirations for every pupil
Staff should maintain high expectations while recognising that successful adult outcomes will look different for individual pupils.
Careers planning should begin with the question of what may be possible with appropriate teaching, support, reasonable adjustments and opportunity rather than making assumptions based upon diagnosis or current levels of independence.
For some pupils, the long-term aspiration may be paid employment, an apprenticeship, supported internship or supported employment. For others, meaningful adult outcomes may include voluntary activity, supported occupational opportunities or greater participation and contribution within their community.
All of these require purposeful preparation.

Removing barriers
The school seeks to identify and reduce barriers that may prevent pupils from accessing careers learning, employer encounters, workplace experiences or future opportunities.
This may include consideration of:

- communication;
- accessibility;
- transport;
- sensory needs;
- physical access;
- health and medical needs;
- emotional wellbeing;
- personal care;
- assistive technology;
- adult support;

- reasonable adjustments;
- attitudes or assumptions about disability.

Adjustments should enable meaningful participation without unnecessarily reducing challenge or opportunity.

Challenging stereotypes

Careers education should actively challenge stereotypes and restricted expectations.

Pupils should have opportunities to encounter a diverse range of occupations and role models and should not be directed towards particular careers because of disability, gender, background or other characteristics.

Staff should also recognise that assumptions about what pupils with complex SEND can achieve may themselves become a barrier to aspiration.

Individual needs and disadvantage

The school considers whether individual circumstances create additional barriers to careers participation or successful transition.

Careers provision should be responsive to these barriers and, where appropriate, additional support or targeted experiences should be provided to ensure that pupils are not disadvantaged in accessing information, guidance or opportunities.

Section 14

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Defining responsibilities. Coordinating provision. Ensuring accountability.

High-quality careers provision is a whole-school responsibility, supported by clear leadership and appropriate specialist expertise.

The Governing Board is responsible for ensuring that the school meets its statutory responsibilities for careers guidance and provider access. Governors provide strategic oversight and ensure that careers provision supports the school's wider ambitions for pupils' future outcomes.

The Headteacher and Senior Leaders are responsible for ensuring that:

- careers education has appropriate strategic priority;
- statutory careers duties are met;
- the careers programme is appropriately resourced;
- careers provision is integrated with the wider curriculum and Preparing for Adulthood;
- staff understand their contribution to careers education;
- appropriate partnerships are developed;
- pupils have access to appropriate personal careers guidance;
- employer and workplace experiences are appropriately planned and supported;
- the quality and impact of provision are monitored.

The Careers Leader provides strategic and operational leadership for careers provision. Responsibilities include:

- developing and coordinating the careers programme;
- supporting implementation of the Gatsby Benchmarks;
- coordinating employer and provider engagement;
- supporting the organisation of workplace experiences;
- ensuring appropriate careers information is available;
- coordinating access to personal careers guidance;
- supporting transition activity;
- working with parents and carers;
- maintaining appropriate careers records and systems;
- monitoring provision through Compass+ and other appropriate tools;
- evaluating the impact of the careers programme;

- identifying priorities for continued development.

The Careers Leader works closely with senior leaders, curriculum leaders, teachers and relevant external partners to ensure that careers provision forms part of a coherent whole-school approach. The school publishes information about its careers programme on the school website, including the name and contact details of the Careers Leader, and ensures that information about the programme is accessible to pupils, parents and carers, staff, employers and other relevant partners.

Teachers and the subject lead contribute by:

- identifying meaningful connections between curriculum learning and future life;
- developing relevant transferable and employability skills;
- maintaining high aspirations;
- supporting pupils to recognise strengths and interests;
- contributing to careers and transition planning where appropriate;
- preparing pupils for employer encounters and workplace experiences;
- sharing relevant information about pupils' progress, interests and support needs.

Careers links should be purposeful and should not be added artificially to curriculum learning.

Co-educators and other staff play an important role in supporting pupils to develop the communication, independence, confidence and practical skills that contribute to future participation.
Where staff support pupils within employer encounters or workplace experiences, they should enable participation while seeking appropriate opportunities for pupils to develop increasing autonomy.

Pupils are encouraged and supported to participate in careers planning as far as possible.
Their interests, preferences, experiences and aspirations should inform future planning, with personalised communication approaches used to ensure that pupil voice is meaningful.

Parents and carers are encouraged to contribute their knowledge of the pupil, participate in transition planning and engage with information about future pathways and opportunities.

Section 15

STAFF KNOWLEDGE AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Developing expertise. Strengthening practice. Improving provision.

Staff need appropriate knowledge and confidence to support pupils' careers development effectively. Professional development should enable relevant staff to understand the school's careers programme, the Gatsby Benchmarks, Preparing for Adulthood and the range of education, training and employment pathways available to young people.

Developing staff knowledge

Depending upon role, professional development may include:

- careers education and the Gatsby Benchmarks;
- current education, training and employment pathways;
- supported internships and supported employment;
- apprenticeships and technical education;
- labour market information;
- employer engagement;
- workplace experiences;
- reasonable adjustments;
- transition planning;
- pupil voice and accessible careers communication;
- challenging stereotypes and low expectations associated with SEND.

The Careers Leader provides advice and support to colleagues and identifies where additional knowledge or training is required.

Staff are not expected to act as qualified careers advisers unless appropriately trained to do so. Where personal careers guidance requiring professional careers expertise is required, the school ensures access to an appropriately qualified careers professional.

Section 16

MONITORING, EVALUATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Monitoring delivery. Evaluating impact. Driving improvement.

Riverside Bridge School evaluates its careers programme to ensure that provision is ambitious, progressive, accessible and having a meaningful impact upon pupils' preparation for adulthood.
Evaluation considers both whether careers opportunities are being provided and the difference those opportunities make to pupils.

Monitoring provision

The school may consider evidence including:

- progress against the Gatsby Benchmarks;
- Compass+ information;
- curriculum planning;
- participation in employer encounters;
- experiences of workplaces;
- access to personal careers guidance;
- provider encounters;
- pupil voice;
- parent and carer feedback;
- employer and provider feedback;
- transition information;
- EHCP and Preparing for Adulthood outcomes;
- destination information.

The school reviews its progress against the Gatsby Benchmarks regularly and uses the findings to identify priorities for development.

Evaluating impact

Evaluation should go beyond counting activities. For example, the number of workplace experiences provided does not by itself demonstrate the quality of careers provision. Leaders should consider whether experiences were meaningful, appropriately matched and whether pupils developed knowledge, confidence, skills, aspirations or independence as a result. Similarly, employer encounters should be evaluated according to their relevance and impact rather than simply whether they occurred.

Pupil and family voice

Pupils should have opportunities to communicate their views about careers experiences and future aspirations using approaches accessible to them.

Parents and carers also provide valuable information about pupils' developing aspirations, confidence and transition needs.

This feedback contributes to evaluating and improving provision.

Destinations

Destination information is used to understand where pupils progress after leaving Riverside Bridge School and to evaluate whether careers and transition provision is supporting appropriate and sustainable outcomes.

Leaders consider patterns within destination information alongside individual pupil journeys rather than using a single type of destination as the measure of success.

Continuous improvement

Evaluation informs the ongoing development of the careers programme, staff professional development, employer partnerships, workplace opportunities and transition planning.

The careers programme is reviewed in response to changes in statutory guidance, national careers expectations, local opportunities and the changing needs of the pupils attending Riverside Bridge School.

Section 17

RELATED POLICIES AND FRAMEWORKS

Connecting practice. Strengthening consistency.

This policy should be read alongside:

- Curriculum Policy;
- Teaching & Learning and Assessment Policy;
- Preparing for Adulthood Policy;
- PSHE Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education Policy;
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy;
- Total Communication Policy;
- Equality Information and Objectives;
- Accessibility Plan;
- SEND Information Report;
- Online Safety Policy;
- Provider Access Policy Statement.

The policy should also be read alongside the current statutory careers guidance and the Gatsby Benchmarks.

Careers education at Riverside Bridge School is about enabling every pupil to recognise that they have a future in which they can participate, contribute and continue to develop.

Through progressive careers learning, meaningful employer encounters, carefully matched and appropriately supported workplace experiences, impartial guidance and strong transition planning, pupils are supported to understand their strengths, explore possibilities and develop the knowledge, communication, confidence and independence required for adult life.

Success will not look the same for every pupil. Riverside Bridge School's responsibility is to ensure that expectations remain ambitious, barriers are actively addressed and every young person is given meaningful opportunities to discover what their future can hold.