CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND COACHING POLICY

Developing expertise. Strengthening practice. Improving outcomes.



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 continuing professional development (CPD) and coaching. It explains the principles, expectations, responsibilities and arrangements through which the school develops a skilled, reflective and confident workforce with the knowledge and expertise required to provide consistently high-quality education, care and support for pupils.

At Riverside Bridge School, we recognise that the quality of provision experienced by pupils is closely connected to the knowledge, confidence, judgement and expertise of the adults who work with them. Professional development is therefore an essential part of school development and an ongoing expectation throughout every stage of an employee's career.

Effective professional development is more than attendance at training courses or designated INSET days. It should be purposeful, sustained and connected to professional practice. Staff need opportunities to develop knowledge, observe and discuss effective approaches, practise and refine skills, receive constructive feedback and apply learning within the context of their everyday work.

Our specialist context makes this particularly important. Working effectively with pupils with complex SEND requires a developing understanding of communication, cognition and learning, sensory and physical needs, regulation, health, safeguarding, curriculum, independence and Preparation for Adulthood. Staff should understand not only what approaches are expected but why they are appropriate and how they should be adapted to the individual pupil.

Professional development is both an entitlement and a professional responsibility. Riverside Bridge School has a responsibility to provide appropriate opportunities, resources and support for staff to develop, while employees have a responsibility to engage constructively with professional learning, reflect upon their practice and apply relevant learning within their role.

A central element of our approach is instructional coaching. Coaching provides sustained opportunities for staff to examine aspects of professional practice, recognise what is working effectively, identify manageable areas for development, experience or observe effective approaches, practise development s and revisit their implementation over time.

Coaching is developmental rather than evaluative. It is not, in itself, an appraisal or capability process. Staff should be able to use coaching to reflect openly upon practice, rehearse approaches and receive constructive challenge without every coaching interaction becoming a formal judgement of performance. Normal professional accountability remains in place and concerns requiring formal management action will be addressed through the appropriate school procedures. This distinction is already well established later in the current policy and should remain central.

Professional learning at Riverside Bridge School is responsive rather than based solely upon a fixed annual programme. Priorities may arise from pupil need, school development, curriculum development, statutory requirements, safeguarding, appraisal, monitoring, professional reflection or staff aspirations. Different roles require different development, and provision should therefore be proportionate to role, responsibility, experience and identified need.

The impact of professional development matters more than the quantity of activity undertaken. Our aim is not simply for staff to attend more training, but for professional learning to strengthen knowledge, confidence, consistency and professional judgement and, ultimately, to improve pupils' experiences, participation, communication, independence, wellbeing and outcomes.

Our responsibility to staff and the school community

Riverside Bridge School has a responsibility to create a professional culture in which learning, reflection, feedback and continued development are normal parts of working within the school.

In fulfilling this responsibility, we will:

- provide staff with high-quality professional development appropriate to their roles and responsibilities;
- ensure development reflects the specialist needs of Riverside Bridge School pupils;
- provide regular coaching and opportunities to apply, practise and refine learning;
- maintain appropriate statutory and mandatory training;
- provide whole-school, team, role-specific and individual development according to identified need;
- recognise and use expertise within the school workforce;
- provide appropriate opportunities for staff at different stages of their careers;
- support leadership development, specialist expertise and succession planning;
- ensure professional development needs identified through appraisal can inform CPD while maintaining the distinction between appraisal and developmental coaching;
- make reasonable adjustments so that professional learning is accessible;
- consider workload and staff wellbeing when planning significant professional development;
- evaluate the impact of CPD and coaching and refine provision accordingly.

Through these commitments, we aim to develop a workforce that continues to learn, reflect, collaborate and strengthen its professional practice so that every pupil benefits from knowledgeable, confident and skilled adults throughout their time at Riverside Bridge School.

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APPROVED BY: Governing Board

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Section 01

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

Defining entitlement. Sharing responsibility. Developing expertise.

The purpose of this policy is to establish Riverside Bridge School's approach to continuing professional development and coaching and to ensure that staff development contributes directly to high-quality provision for pupils. The policy applies to all employees of Riverside Bridge School. The nature and extent of professional development will vary according to role, responsibilities, experience and identified need. Appropriate professional development may also be provided to agency staff, students, volunteers and other adults working within the school where this supports safe, consistent and effective practice. This policy should be considered alongside the school's arrangements for induction, appraisal and, where applicable, capability procedures. These processes are connected but have distinct purposes.

Professional development as an entitlement and responsibility

Riverside Bridge School recognises professional development as both an entitlement and a professional responsibility.

The school has a responsibility to provide staff with appropriate opportunities, support and resources to develop their practice. Staff have a corresponding responsibility to engage constructively with professional development, reflect upon their practice, apply relevant learning and contribute to the development of others where appropriate. Professional learning does not end once induction has been completed or a particular level of experience has been reached. All staff, including experienced practitioners and leaders, should continue to develop throughout their careers.

Professional development in a specialist setting

Working effectively within a specialist school requires knowledge and expertise that develops over time. Professional development may therefore include areas such as communication, cognition and learning, sensory and physical needs, positive support, safeguarding, curriculum, pedagogy, personal care, health, Preparing for Adulthood and the specialist approaches required by individual pupils. Development should help staff understand not only what to do, but why particular approaches are appropriate and how these can be adapted to the individual pupil.

Section 02

APPROACH TO PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Responding to need. Connecting learning. Applying practice.

Riverside Bridge School uses a blended approach to professional development. No single form of CPD is appropriate for every development need. Professional learning may therefore include whole-school training, instructional coaching, small-group development, modelling, observation, professional discussion, external expertise, accredited programmes, reading and research, collaborative planning and opportunities to learn from colleagues. The method selected should reflect the intended development.

Responsive professional learning

The school's CPD programme is informed by identified need rather than being based solely upon a predetermined annual programme. Some priorities will appropriately be planned in advance, particularly statutory training and major school development priorities. Other development needs may emerge during the year through curriculum development, pupil needs, monitoring, appraisal, safeguarding learning, staff feedback or changes in guidance and practice. The school therefore retains flexibility to adapt its professional development programme where this will improve provision.

Connecting professional learning to practice

Where professional development relates to classroom or pupil-facing practice, staff should have opportunities to apply what they have learned. A single training session may introduce knowledge, but sustained development frequently requires opportunities to see effective practice, discuss it, try it, receive feedback and revisit it. Instructional coaching therefore plays an important role in helping professional learning transfer into everyday practice.

Shared expertise

Riverside Bridge School recognises that significant expertise exists within its own workforce. Teachers, co-educators, leaders, therapists and other specialists may contribute to professional development where their knowledge can benefit colleagues. Internal expertise may be used through modelling, coaching, demonstrations, collaborative planning, professional discussion or the delivery of training. External training and expertise should be commissioned where it provides knowledge, challenge or specialist input that cannot be met appropriately within the school. The aim is not to maximise the amount of CPD staff attend. It is to provide the right professional development, for the right staff, at the right time, and enable it to make a difference to practice.

Section 03

PRINCIPLES OF EFFECTIVE CPD

Making it purposeful. Sustaining learning. Demonstrating impact.

Professional development at Riverside Bridge School should lead to meaningful and sustained development rather than simply increasing the amount of training staff attend. CPD should therefore be purposeful, relevant to the individual's role and sufficiently sustained to enable new knowledge and practice to become embedded.

Professional development should be purposeful

Professional learning should have a clear reason. Priorities may arise from pupil need, curriculum development, school development, safeguarding, statutory requirements, appraisal, professional reflection or an identified need within an individual, team or area of provision. Staff should understand what the professional development is intended to improve and how this relates to their work.

Professional development should be sustained

Not all professional learning can be achieved through a single training session.

Where development involves changes to practice, staff should have opportunities to revisit learning through coaching, modelling, rehearsal, observation, professional discussion and feedback. The school therefore seeks to move away from a model in which CPD is predominantly delivered through isolated training sessions.

Professional development should be practical

Staff should be supported to translate professional knowledge into practice. This is particularly important within Riverside Bridge School's specialist context, where effective practice may require staff to adapt approaches carefully to pupils with different communication, cognitive, sensory, physical and emotional needs. Professional development should therefore enable staff to understand, see, practise and refine effective approaches wherever appropriate.

Professional development should recognise different starting points

Staff bring different experience, knowledge, qualifications and professional strengths.

CPD should therefore provide appropriate challenge and development rather than assuming that every member of staff requires the same input.

The school may differentiate professional learning according to role, experience, responsibility or identified development need.

Professional development should be collaborative

Staff should have opportunities to learn with and from one another.

Professional dialogue, shared problem solving, modelling and discussion can help develop consistency while allowing staff to consider how approaches should be adapted for individual pupils and contexts.

Collaboration should encourage professional curiosity rather than simply requiring compliance with a particular technique.

Professional development should have impact

The effectiveness of CPD is not measured solely through attendance or completion records.

Where appropriate, the school considers whether professional development has resulted in increased staff knowledge, confidence, consistency or effectiveness and whether this is contributing positively to pupils' experiences and outcomes.

Section 04

COACHING MODEL

Observing practice. Refining approaches. Embedding development.

Instructional coaching is a central element of professional development at Riverside Bridge School. Coaching provides regular, focused opportunities for staff to examine an aspect of their practice, identify a manageable development, practise an effective approach and revisit its implementation.
It is intended to make professional development part of everyday school development rather than something that occurs primarily during designated training days.

The coaching cycle

Riverside Bridge School's coaching approach follows the cycle:

Observe → Reflect → Model → Practise → Embed

Observation provides a focused understanding of current practice. Reflection enables the member of staff and coach to consider what is working well and identify an appropriate area for development. Modelling provides a clear example of what effective practice may look like. Practice allows the member of staff to rehearse the approach in a supportive environment before or alongside using it within their everyday work. Embedding involves applying the approach consistently, revisiting it and refining it until it becomes part of effective practice. Not every coaching cycle will require each stage to take the same amount of time. The process should remain responsive to the development need and the individual member of staff.

Praise, Action Step and Practice

Coaching conversations should recognise effective practice as well as identify development. The Riverside Bridge School's approach uses: **Praise → Action Step → Practice**

- Praise identifies something specific that is already working effectively and should be maintained or strengthened.
- The Action Step identifies a precise and achievable development. Wherever possible, staff should leave a coaching conversation knowing clearly what they are going to try next.
- Practice provides an opportunity to rehearse, model or discuss how the action step will be implemented.

The purpose is to make development manageable. Coaching should not leave staff with an extensive list of weaknesses or multiple competing targets.

Focused observation

Coaching may involve short, focused observation of practice. Coaching observations are distinct from the school's wider quality-assurance arrangements and should not be used as a substitute for formal performance-management procedures. The focus may relate to areas such as communication, engagement, questioning, independence, structured teaching, positive support, assessment, classroom routines or another identified aspect of practice. Coaching observation should be proportionate to the action step being developed.

A developmental process

Coaching requires professional trust. Staff should be able to reflect upon difficulties, rehearse approaches and acknowledge when something has not worked without feeling that every coaching conversation is a judgement of their overall performance. Coaches should therefore provide clear and constructive feedback while maintaining the developmental purpose of the process. Coaching does not mean avoiding challenge. Effective coaching may require direct feedback where practice can be improved, but this should be specific, actionable and accompanied by appropriate support.

Section 05

COACHING FOR TEACHERS

Focusing precisely. Practising deliberately. Strengthening teaching.

Teachers participate in individual instructional coaching on a fortnightly basis. Individual coaching provides regular opportunities to focus closely on the teacher's classroom practice and develop specific aspects of teaching over time.

Fortnightly coaching

The fortnightly cycle may include a short-focused observation, professional discussion, modelling, rehearsal, feedback and review of the previous action step. The exact structure may vary according to the stage of the coaching cycle and the development being undertaken. Coaching should normally focus on a small number of priorities, with particular emphasis on one achievable action step at a time. This enables teachers to practise and embed development rather than continually moving between new targets.

Selecting coaching priorities

Coaching priorities may arise from:

- the teacher's own reflection;
- previous coaching;
- pupil need;
- curriculum or pedagogical development;
- whole-school development priorities;
- implementation of school frameworks;
- patterns identified through wider monitoring;
- professional development needs identified through appraisal.

Where a whole-school priority is being developed, teachers may work on a common area while retaining an individualised action step appropriate to their own practice.

Coaching and professional autonomy

Instructional coaching is not intended to create identical classrooms or remove professional judgement. Teachers are expected to understand the agreed curriculum and pedagogical principles while making informed decisions about how these are applied to the pupils they teach. Coaching should therefore develop professional expertise and decision-making rather than encourage mechanical implementation.

Section 06

COACHING FOR CO-EDUCATORS

Learning collaboratively. Developing confidence. Strengthening support.

Co-educators make a significant contribution to the quality of teaching, communication, independence and support experienced by pupils. Their professional development is therefore an integral part of the coaching model. Co-educators participate in fortnightly small-group coaching.

This group model enables regular and sustainable coaching across the co-educator workforce while providing opportunities to learn collaboratively from common experiences.

Small-group coaching

Coaching groups should be sufficiently focused to allow staff to participate actively rather than becoming another whole-staff training session. Sessions may include:

- reflection on recent practice;
- discussion of a specific strategy;
- modelling by the coach or another practitioner;
- video or practice examples where appropriate;
- rehearsal and role play;
- collaborative problem solving;
- an agreed action step;
- review of how previous learning has been applied.

The emphasis should remain on practical development that staff can apply within their work with pupils.

Relevant coaching priorities

Co-educator coaching may focus particularly on areas such as communication, prompting, developing independence, engagement, Positive Support, BridgeWorks Structured Teaching, supporting learning, personal care, interaction and implementation of individual pupil strategies. Priorities should respond to the needs of pupils and staff rather than following a fixed programme regardless of relevance. Where an individual co-educator has a development need that is not appropriately addressed through group coaching, additional individual support, modelling, training or supervision should be provided.

Developing professional contribution

Co-educators should increasingly understand the purpose behind the strategies they use rather than simply follow instructions. Coaching should therefore develop professional knowledge alongside practical skill.

Experienced co-educators may also contribute to modelling and sharing effective practice where they have particular strengths or expertise. The group coaching model should create a professional learning community in which co-educators are recognised as active contributors to improving provision, rather than passive recipients of training.

Section 07

WHOLE-SCHOOL AND ROLE-SPECIFIC CPD

Building shared knowledge. Developing roles. Responding to need.

Alongside coaching, Riverside Bridge School provides a wider programme of professional development to ensure that staff have the knowledge and skills required for their roles. Professional development may be delivered at whole-school, team, role-specific or individual level depending upon the nature of the identified need.

Whole-school professional development

Whole-school CPD is appropriate where there is a shared priority or expectation that applies across the workforce. This may include areas such as:

- safeguarding and statutory training;
- Total Communication;
- Positive Support;
- curriculum developments;
- Preparing for Adulthood;
- health and safety;
- equality, inclusion and safeguarding culture;
- significant developments in school practice.

Whole-school training should be used purposefully. Not every professional development need requires every member of staff to attend the same training.

Role-specific professional development

Different roles require different professional knowledge and expertise. Teachers may require development relating to curriculum, pedagogy, assessment, subject or phase leadership and the implementation of specialist teaching approaches. Co-educators may require development relating to communication, supporting learning, promoting independence, prompting, interaction, Positive Support, personal care and individual pupil needs.

Therapists, specialist staff, administrative staff, premises staff and leaders should similarly receive development relevant to their professional responsibilities. Where training is required for a specific responsibility, it should be targeted towards the staff who need it.

Specialist SEND development

Riverside Bridge School recognises that specialist expertise must be continually developed. Staff may require professional learning relating to particular communication approaches, complex learning needs, sensory processing, physical needs, health, emotional regulation or other areas arising from the pupils they support. Where a pupil presents with a need that requires knowledge not currently available within the staff team, the school should consider appropriate specialist advice or training.

External professional development

External courses, qualifications, conferences, networks and specialist training may be supported where these are relevant to school priorities, an individual's role or an identified development need. External CPD should have a clear purpose and, where appropriate, learning should be shared with colleagues so that the benefit extends beyond the individual attendee. Attendance at external training is not automatically an indication of higher-quality professional development. The school will consider the relevance, quality, likely impact and value of opportunities when allocating resources.

Section 08

LEADERSHIP AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Growing expertise. Developing leadership. Building capacity.

Professional development at Riverside Bridge School should enable staff to grow within their current role while also providing opportunities to develop towards future responsibilities. The school seeks to identify and develop expertise across the workforce and create opportunities for staff to contribute to wider school development.

Developing expertise

Staff may develop particular expertise within areas of curriculum, communication, pedagogy, Positive Support, Preparing for Adulthood, personal development or other aspects of specialist provision. Where appropriate, staff should have opportunities to share this expertise through coaching, modelling, mentoring, professional discussion or contribution to wider professional development.

Expertise should be recognised across different roles. Leadership of effective practice is not limited to staff holding formal leadership positions.

Career development

Professional development may support staff who wish to develop towards additional responsibilities or future roles. This may include opportunities to:

- undertake relevant qualifications or accredited development;
- lead an aspect of curriculum or provision;
- contribute to coaching or mentoring;
- participate in projects or working groups;
- observe or work alongside colleagues with different responsibilities;
- undertake leadership development;
- develop specialist expertise.

Career development opportunities will reflect school need, available resources and the individual's readiness and aspirations.

Co-educator development

Riverside Bridge School recognises the importance of creating meaningful professional development opportunities for co-educators.

Experienced co-educators may develop expertise in particular areas of practice, support the development of colleagues, contribute to modelling or undertake additional responsibilities where appropriate. Professional development should enable co-educators to understand how their role contributes directly to pupil learning, communication, independence and wellbeing.

Leadership development and succession

The school seeks to develop leadership capacity internally as part of longer-term workforce planning. Existing and aspiring leaders should have opportunities to develop skills in areas such as curriculum leadership, coaching, staff development, evaluation, decision-making and leading development. Succession planning should help maintain expertise and organisational resilience rather than relying upon individual members of staff holding knowledge that is not shared.

Section 09

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

Identifying priorities. Directing resources. Planning responsively.

Professional development is planned using a combination of whole-school priorities, team needs and individual development priorities. The school's professional development programme should remain sufficiently flexible to respond to emerging needs during the year.

Identifying priorities

Professional development needs may be identified through:

- the School Development Plan and curriculum development;
- pupil outcomes and emerging needs;
- safeguarding and statutory requirements;
- coaching and professional reflection;
- appraisal;
- monitoring and evaluation;
- changes in national or local expectations;
- staff requests or professional aspirations.

Not every identified need requires formal training. In some circumstances, modelling, coaching, professional discussion, observation or access to guidance may provide a more effective response.

Prioritising development

Resources for professional development are finite and should be used where they are most likely to make a meaningful difference. The school will therefore consider the relevance and urgency of identified development, the number of staff affected, the needs of pupils, school development priorities and the most appropriate method of support. Where individual staff request external training or qualifications, consideration should include how the development relates to their role, professional development and the needs of the school.

Recording professional development

Appropriate records of CPD and mandatory training are maintained. Recording systems should enable the school to understand what professional development has taken place, identify requirements that need renewal and support future planning. Records should remain proportionate.

The purpose is not to create unnecessary evidence of professional learning but to ensure that development can be planned and monitored effectively.

Section1 0

RELATIONSHIP WITH APPRAISAL

Connecting development. Maintaining boundaries. Protecting trust.

Professional development and appraisal are complementary but distinct processes at Riverside Bridge School. Appraisal provides a formal opportunity to reflect upon professional practice, recognise contribution, review agreed objectives and identify professional development priorities. CPD provides the learning, support and development that may help staff strengthen their knowledge and practice. Professional development needs identified through appraisal may therefore inform an individual's CPD. Where appraisal identifies a professional development priority, this may inform coaching by agreement; coaching should not become a mechanism for monitoring achievement of appraisal objectives.

Coaching is developmental

Instructional coaching is a developmental process and is not, in itself, an appraisal or capability process. Staff should be able to use coaching to reflect openly upon practice, discuss difficulties, practise approaches and receive feedback without every coaching interaction becoming a formal judgement of their performance. Coaching records and action steps are primarily intended to support professional learning and development.

Maintaining clear boundaries

The developmental nature of coaching does not remove normal professional accountability.

Where concerns about an employee's performance require formal management action, these will be addressed through the appropriate school procedures rather than being managed informally through the coaching process. Similarly, the existence of a coaching programme does not replace normal line management, supervision or appraisal arrangements. Keeping these processes distinct enables coaching to remain a credible and useful space for professional learning while ensuring that the school's formal responsibilities for performance management are maintained.

The distinction between developmental coaching, appraisal and formal capability procedures must remain clear throughout.

Section 11

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Sharing responsibility. Supporting development. Maintaining accountability.

Effective professional development is a shared responsibility. The school is responsible for creating the conditions, opportunities and support for staff to develop, while staff are expected to engage actively with their own professional learning.

The Governing Board provides strategic oversight of professional development and seeks assurance that staff have access to appropriate training and development to fulfil their responsibilities effectively.
Governors should be assured that professional development supports school priorities, statutory responsibilities and the quality of provision for pupils.

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for ensuring that Riverside Bridge School maintains a strong culture of professional learning and continuous development.
The Headteacher ensures that appropriate resources, time and leadership capacity are available for CPD and coaching and that professional development aligns with the strategic priorities of the school.

Senior Leaders contribute to identifying whole-school and workforce development priorities and evaluating the impact of professional learning.
They support the implementation of the coaching model, ensure appropriate development opportunities are available across different staff groups and identify where additional expertise or external support may be required.

Staff with responsibility for CPD and coaching co-ordinate the school's professional development programme and support the effective implementation of the Riverside Bridge School Coaching Framework. Their responsibilities include supporting coaches, identifying development priorities, coordinating appropriate opportunities and helping ensure that coaching remains consistent with its developmental purpose.

Coaches are responsible for creating focused and constructive professional learning relationships.
They should provide specific feedback, identify manageable action steps, model effective practice where appropriate and provide opportunities for rehearsal and reflection.

Coaches should maintain the distinction between developmental coaching and formal performance management and raise any separate safeguarding or serious professional concerns through the appropriate school procedures.

Line Managers support staff to identify professional development needs and opportunities relevant to their roles.
They may use appraisal, supervision and professional discussion to identify areas for development and should support staff to apply learning within their everyday practice.

All Staff are expected to take an active role in their professional development.
This includes engaging with required training and coaching, reflecting on feedback, practising and applying agreed approaches, seeking clarification where necessary and contributing constructively to professional learning with colleagues.
Staff with particular knowledge or expertise should be encouraged to contribute to the development of others where appropriate.

Section 12

MONITORING THE IMPACT OF CPD

Evaluating learning. Reviewing impact. Refining provision.

Riverside Bridge School evaluates professional development to understand whether it is improving staff knowledge and practice and contributing positively to pupils' experiences and outcomes.
Evaluation should be proportionate to the nature of the professional development undertaken.

Looking beyond attendance

Attendance at training or completion of a course does not, by itself, demonstrate that professional development has been effective.

Where appropriate, leaders may consider whether CPD has resulted in:

- increased staff knowledge and understanding;
- greater confidence;
- improved or more consistent practice;
- successful implementation of school approaches;
- improved collaboration;
- increased staff expertise or leadership capacity;
- positive changes in pupil participation, learning, communication, independence, wellbeing or other relevant outcomes.

Not every form of CPD requires formal impact evidence. The level of evaluation should reflect the scale, purpose and significance of the development.

Evaluating coaching

The effectiveness of coaching should be considered at both individual and whole-school level without turning coaching into an additional performance-management system.
At an individual level, coaches and staff consider whether action steps are being understood, practised and increasingly embedded.
At whole-school level, leaders may consider broader themes such as participation in coaching, staff feedback, the quality of coaching, common professional development needs and whether priority approaches are becoming increasingly secure.
The purpose of this information is to improve professional development provision rather than create league tables or comparisons between individual staff.

Staff voice

Staff feedback should contribute to the evaluation of professional development.

This may help leaders understand whether CPD is relevant, accessible, sufficiently practical and providing staff with the support required to improve their practice.

Feedback should not mean that professional development is evaluated solely according to whether staff enjoyed a session. The school should consider relevance, quality and impact alongside staff experience.

Reviewing priorities

Information from evaluation should inform future CPD planning.

Where professional development has not resulted in the intended change, leaders should consider whether further modelling, coaching, practice, clarification or a different approach is required rather than simply repeating the same training.

Section 13

EQUALITY, ACCESSIBILITY AND STAFF WELLBEING

Enabling access. Managing workload. Supporting wellbeing.

Professional development should be accessible to staff and delivered in a way that supports an inclusive professional culture.

Riverside Bridge School will have due regard to equality and reasonable adjustment requirements when planning and providing professional development.

Access to development

Opportunities should not be unnecessarily restricted according to working pattern, role or contractual status.

Where practicable, the school should consider how staff who work part-time or have different working arrangements can access relevant professional development.

Reasonable adjustments should be made where required to enable staff to participate effectively.

Professional development and workload

Professional development should support staff effectiveness rather than create unnecessary workload.

Leaders should consider the time required to attend training, undertake coaching, practise new approaches and implement significant changes.

Where a new initiative or approach is introduced, consideration should be given to what staff may need to stop, simplify or change rather than continually adding expectations.

Coaching and psychological safety

Effective coaching requires staff to feel able to discuss practice openly.

Coaching should therefore be respectful, focused and professionally challenging without becoming punitive or unnecessarily judgemental.

Staff should be able to practise, make mistakes and refine approaches as part of the learning process.

This does not prevent coaches from giving clear feedback. A supportive professional culture includes appropriate challenge as well as recognition of effective practice.

Staff wellbeing

Professional learning can contribute positively to wellbeing when it increases competence, confidence and clarity.

Where development needs are identified, the school should seek to provide appropriate support rather than leaving staff uncertain about expectations or how to improve.

Professional development should be planned with reasonable regard to workload, competing demands and staff wellbeing.

Section 14

POLICY MONITORING AND REVIEW

Reviewing implementation. Responding to need. Strengthening provision.

The Headteacher and designated leaders are responsible for monitoring the implementation of this policy.

The school will periodically review:

- participation in professional development and coaching;
- statutory and mandatory training requirements;
- staff development needs;
- the effectiveness of the coaching model;
- staff feedback;
- alignment with school development priorities;
- the impact of significant professional development initiatives.

The CPD programme may be adapted during the year in response to emerging pupil, staff or school needs.

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner where significant changes to statutory requirements, school organisation or professional development arrangements require amendment.

Section 15

RELATED POLICIES & FRAMEWORKS

Connecting practice. Strengthening consistency.

This policy should be read alongside:

- Staff Induction Policy;
- Appraisal Policy;
- Staff Code of Conduct;
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy;
- Capability Policy
- Equality, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy
- Staff Wellbeing Policy
- Curriculum Policy;
- Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy;
- Total Communication Policy;
- Positive Support Policy;
- BridgeWorks - Structured Teaching Policy;
- Equality Information and Objectives;
- relevant health, safety and role-specific training arrangements.

The policy is implemented alongside the Riverside Bridge School Coaching Framework, which sets out the detailed operation of instructional coaching, including observation, reflection, modelling, practice, action steps and review.

Riverside Bridge School recognises that the quality of provision for pupils is closely connected to the knowledge, confidence and expertise of the adults who work with them.
Professional development is therefore not an occasional activity but an ongoing part of working at Riverside Bridge School.
Through purposeful CPD, regular coaching, shared expertise and opportunities for professional growth, the school seeks to develop a workforce that continues to learn, reflect and improve throughout their careers.
The ultimate measure of professional development is not how much training staff complete, but whether that learning strengthens practice and makes a meaningful difference to pupils.