CURRICULUM POLICY

Inspiring curiosity. Empowering learning.
Achieving potential.



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 curriculum design, organisation, implementation, progression and assessment. It explains the principles, pathways and curriculum framework through which we provide ambitious, personalised and meaningful education for every learner.

At Riverside Bridge School, we believe that every learner has the right to an ambitious, meaningful and personalised education that enables them to communicate effectively, develop independence, participate fully in society and achieve the very best outcomes possible throughout their lives.

Our curriculum has been carefully designed to meet the diverse and often complex needs of our learners. It is built upon the belief that education should be relevant, engaging and purposeful, recognising that success looks different for every individual. While academic achievement is valued, we place equal importance on communication, personal development, wellbeing, relationships, independence and preparation for adulthood.

Rather than adopting a one-size-fits-all approach, Riverside Bridge School provides a pathway-based curriculum that reflects how our learners access education. Through carefully planned learning experiences, specialist teaching and integrated therapeutic practice, we ensure that every learner can access an ambitious curriculum that builds progressively on their strengths, interests and aspirations.

Communication is the foundation of our curriculum. We recognise that learners can only fully engage, develop relationships and become increasingly independent when they are provided with effective and personalised opportunities to communicate. Our Total Communication approach underpins every aspect of school life and is embedded across all curriculum pathways.

Our curriculum also extends far beyond the classroom. Through community participation, enrichment opportunities, therapeutic support, personal development and meaningful real-life experiences, learners develop the knowledge, skills and confidence needed to become active members of their communities and prepare successfully for adult life.

The curriculum is continually reviewed and developed to reflect current educational research, national guidance and the changing needs of our learners. It remains firmly rooted in Riverside Bridge School's vision to Inspire, Empower and Achieve, ensuring that every learner is supported to reach their individual potential within a safe, inclusive and aspirational learning environment.

Our responsibility to learners, families and the school community

Riverside Bridge School has a responsibility to provide a curriculum that is ambitious, inclusive and responsive to the individual needs of every learner.

In delivering our curriculum, we will:

- provide learning that is personalised, meaningful and appropriately challenging;
- place communication, relationships and wellbeing at the centre of every learner's educational experience;

- maintain high aspirations for every learner, recognising and celebrating progress from individual starting points;
- prepare learners for adulthood through the progressive development of knowledge, skills, independence and personal confidence;
- ensure learning is supported through collaborative working between education, therapy, families and external professionals;
- provide a curriculum that promotes equality, inclusion and participation for all learners;
- regularly evaluate and refine the curriculum to ensure it continues to reflect best practice in specialist education;
- work in genuine partnership with families to support every learner's development both within school and beyond.

Through these commitments, we aim to ensure that every learner leaves Riverside Bridge School with the communication, confidence, independence and life skills needed to participate as fully as possible within their communities and achieve their individual aspirations.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

01	CURRICULUM VISION	02	RATIONALE FOR THE CURRICULUM
03	CURRICULUM PRINCIPLES	04	CURRICULUM ARCHITECTURE
05	CURRICULUM ORGANISATION	06	CURRICULUM PATHWAYS
07	CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK	08	THE LEARNING EXPERIENCE
09	CURRICULUM PROGRESSION	10	ASSESSMENT & CURRICULUM EVALUATION
11	PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT & PREPARING FOR ADULTHOOD	12	PARTNERSHIP WITH FAMILIES & PROFESSIONALS
13	LEADERSHIP, MONITORING & REVIEW	14	RELATED POLICIES & FRAMEWORKS
	APPENDICES		

APPROVED BY: Governing Board

APPROVED ON: September 2026

REVIEWED DUE ON: September 2027

Section 01

CURRICULUM VISION

Inspiring ambition. Empowering learners. Achieving brighter futures.

The curriculum at Riverside Bridge School is designed to enable every learner to flourish as an individual, develop meaningful knowledge and skills, and prepare successfully for life beyond school.

Our learners present with a wide range of strengths, interests and complex learning needs. Many have significant communication differences, learning disabilities, autism, physical disabilities, sensory needs or medical conditions that require highly personalised approaches to education. We therefore recognise that a curriculum designed primarily around age-related expectations alone would neither reflect our learners' needs nor enable them to achieve their full potential.

Instead, Riverside Bridge School has developed a curriculum that is ambitious, flexible and responsive. It provides learners with carefully sequenced opportunities to acquire knowledge, develop skills and apply their learning in meaningful contexts, whilst ensuring that communication, independence, emotional wellbeing and personal development remain central throughout their educational journey.

We believe that learning should be purposeful, enjoyable and connected to real life. Every experience, whether within the classroom, the local community or through enrichment opportunities, contributes to the development of confident, resilient and increasingly independent young people.

Our curriculum is underpinned by the belief that preparation for adulthood does not begin in the final years of education. It begins from the moment a learner joins Riverside Bridge School. Every interaction, every learning experience and every opportunity to communicate, make choices, solve problems, develop relationships and participate within the wider community contributes towards each learner's long-term aspirations and quality of life.

Our curriculum therefore seeks not only to develop knowledge and understanding, but also to empower learners to communicate effectively, advocate for themselves where possible, build meaningful relationships and become active participants within their communities. This holistic approach reflects the school's commitment to educating the whole child and preparing every learner for a fulfilling and meaningful future.

Section 02

RATIONALE FOR THE CURRICULUM

Recognising individuality. Removing barriers. Enabling achievement.

Riverside Bridge School provides education for children and young people with a diverse range of complex and often interrelated special educational needs and disabilities. Our learners present with a wide variety of strengths, interests and aspirations, alongside differing communication profiles, learning needs and developmental pathways. Many have autism, learning disabilities, speech, language and communication needs, sensory processing differences, physical disabilities, social, emotional or mental health needs, complex medical conditions or combinations of these. However, no two learners are the same.

We recognise that a diagnosis alone does not define how a learner accesses education. Learners with similar diagnoses may learn in very different ways, while learners with different diagnoses may benefit from similar approaches. For this reason, curriculum decisions are not based on labels or categories of need, but on a detailed understanding of each learner as an individual. This principle remains central to our curriculum and reflects the belief that every learner deserves an education that is personalised, ambitious and responsive to their own strengths and aspirations.

Our curriculum has therefore been designed to remove barriers to learning rather than expecting learners to adapt to a fixed curriculum. It provides multiple pathways through learning, recognising that progress may be demonstrated in many different ways and that success cannot be measured solely against age-related expectations.

While the National Curriculum provides an important reference point for curriculum content, it does not fully reflect the breadth, complexity and specialist approaches required by many of our learners. Riverside Bridge School has therefore developed a curriculum that is informed by national expectations but carefully adapted to ensure that learning remains meaningful, functional and accessible across all curriculum pathways.

The school also recognises that education is about far more than academic achievement alone. For many of our learners, the ability to communicate effectively, regulate emotions, build relationships, make choices, travel safely within the community or develop increasing independence will have as great an impact upon future quality of life as the acquisition of academic knowledge. Our curriculum therefore values personal development, communication, wellbeing and preparation for adulthood alongside subject-specific learning, recognising that these areas are inseparable within a specialist educational setting.

A strength-based and neurodiversity-affirming approach

Riverside Bridge School adopts a strengths-based approach to education. We recognise and celebrate neurodiversity and understand that learners experience, process and respond to the world in different ways. Rather than viewing difference as something to be overcome, we seek to understand each learner's unique profile and create environments in which they can flourish.

This means that staff begin by asking:

- How does this learner communicate?
- What motivates and interests them?
- What helps them feel safe and ready to learn?
- What barriers might prevent successful participation?
- How can we adapt teaching so that the learner can experience success?

By understanding the learner first, we are able to personalise curriculum experiences whilst maintaining ambitious expectations for achievement and independence.

Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)

Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) provide an essential foundation for curriculum planning at Riverside Bridge School. They identify the long-term outcomes that are most important for each learner and ensure that education, health and care work together towards shared aspirations.

EHCP outcomes are not viewed as additional tasks to be completed alongside the curriculum. Instead, they are woven naturally into everyday teaching and learning so that learners have frequent opportunities to develop and apply new skills in meaningful contexts.

For example, communication outcomes are developed through classroom learning, play, community visits, enrichment activities and everyday interactions. Independence outcomes are practised through routines, personal care, cooking, enterprise and travel training. Social and emotional outcomes are embedded within relationships, collaborative learning and Positive Support approaches.

This integrated approach ensures that learning remains purposeful and that progress towards EHCP outcomes contributes directly to wider curriculum achievement rather than taking place in isolation. It also reflects our belief that learning is most successful when knowledge, skills and personal development are experienced together within authentic situations.

A Curriculum for life

Our curriculum has been designed with the future in mind. Every aspect of learning should contribute to enabling pupils to live safe, healthy, fulfilling and increasingly independent lives. This does not mean preparing pupils only for examinations or qualifications. It means preparing them to communicate

effectively, develop meaningful relationships, participate within their communities, make informed choices and experience the greatest possible quality of life.

Preparation for adulthood begins when a learner joins Riverside Bridge School. It is embedded progressively throughout the curriculum, with learning becoming increasingly age-appropriate and future-focused as pupils mature.

Ultimately, our curriculum seeks to educate the whole child. It reflects our belief that education should empower every learner to become the very best version of themselves and to lead a life that is meaningful, valued and rich in opportunity.

Section 3

CURRICULUM PRINCIPLES

Raising aspirations. Valuing individuality. Promoting independence.

Our curriculum is underpinned by a number of fundamental principles that influence every decision made about curriculum design, teaching, assessment and wider school life. These principles provide consistency across all curriculum pathways whilst ensuring that learning remains personalised, ambitious and responsive to the needs of every learner.

Rather than viewing the curriculum simply as a collection of subjects, Riverside Bridge School understands curriculum as every planned experience that contributes to a learner's knowledge, communication, independence, wellbeing and preparation for adulthood. Consequently, the curriculum extends beyond the classroom into relationships, community experiences, therapeutic practice, enrichment opportunities and everyday interactions.

High aspirations for every learner

At Riverside Bridge School, we believe that every learner has the potential to make meaningful progress when provided with the appropriate support, opportunities and challenge. High aspirations are not determined by a learner's diagnosis or starting point, but by an understanding of their individual strengths, interests and future aspirations.

Success is recognised in many different ways. For some learners it may be demonstrated through increasingly sophisticated subject knowledge and accredited learning. For others it may be seen through spontaneous communication, greater independence, improved emotional regulation or increased participation within their community. Every achievement is valued because every learner's journey is unique.

Maintaining ambitious expectations requires staff to continually ask not "Can this learner do it?" but "What adaptations, support or teaching approaches will enable this learner to succeed?"

Communication is the foundation of learning

Communication lies at the heart of our curriculum because it underpins learning, relationships, emotional wellbeing, independence and participation in society.

Many of our learners communicate in different ways and require personalised approaches to express themselves, understand others and engage with the world around them. Riverside Bridge School therefore adopts a Total Communication approach, recognising that communication may include speech, gesture, Makaton, symbols, photographs, Objects of Reference, AAC, written language, signing, body language and facial expression.

Communication is not viewed as the responsibility of a single professional or curriculum area. Every member of staff has a responsibility to create meaningful opportunities for learners to communicate throughout the school day.

Learning environments, routines, teaching strategies and interactions are therefore designed to ensure that learners have:

- appropriate means to communicate;
- meaningful reasons to communicate; and
- frequent opportunities to communicate.

This principle builds upon the Means, Reasons and Opportunities (MRO) approach embedded within our communication practice and ensures that communication remains the golden thread running throughout the curriculum.

Positive relationships enable learning

Learning takes place most effectively when learners feel safe, respected and understood.

Relationships between learners, families and staff therefore form the foundation upon which successful learning is built. Staff invest time in developing trusting relationships, understanding each learner's individual communication style, recognising signs of dysregulation and responding consistently with empathy and professionalism.

Our Positive Support approach reflects our belief that behaviour communicates need. Rather than asking "How do we change behaviour?", staff seek first to understand "What is the learner communicating and what support do they need to succeed?"

By creating emotionally safe learning environments, learners become increasingly able to engage, explore, take appropriate risks, solve problems and develop resilience.

Learning should be meaningful

Learning has greatest value when it is purposeful, relevant and connected to everyday life.

Our curriculum therefore seeks to provide authentic learning experiences that enable pupils to understand why knowledge and skills matter. Wherever possible, concepts are introduced through practical experiences before being generalised and applied in increasingly varied contexts.

Community learning, enterprise, enrichment activities, outdoor learning and therapeutic experiences all contribute towards ensuring that learning is memorable, transferable and functional.

Rather than separating academic learning from life skills, Riverside Bridge School seeks to integrate them wherever possible so that knowledge can be applied meaningfully beyond the classroom.

Independence is developed progressively

Developing independence is a continuous process rather than a destination reached at the end of a learner's education.

From their earliest experiences of making choices, expressing preferences and participating within daily routines through to travel training, work-related learning and accredited qualifications, learners are continually supported to develop increasing autonomy and confidence.

Independence is therefore viewed as both an outcome and a teaching approach. Staff carefully balance support with appropriate challenge, ensuring learners experience success whilst gradually reducing reliance on adult assistance wherever possible.

Partnership strengthens learning

Effective education is strengthened through genuine partnership between learners, families, school staff and external professionals. Parents and carers provide invaluable insight into their child's interests, strengths and aspirations, while therapists and specialist professionals contribute expertise that enhances curriculum planning and classroom practice.

By working collaboratively, Riverside Bridge School ensures that learning is consistent across home, school and the wider community, enabling learners to generalise skills more effectively and experience greater success.

Continuous reflection and improvement

The curriculum is not static. It continues to evolve in response to educational research, developments in specialist practice, feedback from learners and families and the changing needs of our school community. Leaders and staff continually reflect upon the effectiveness of curriculum design, teaching approaches and learning experiences to ensure that Riverside Bridge School remains ambitious, innovative and responsive whilst remaining firmly rooted in its core values and educational philosophy.

Section 4

CURRICULUM ARCHITECTURE

Connecting learning. Structuring progression. Personalising pathways.

The curriculum at Riverside Bridge School has been carefully designed to ensure that every learner experiences a coherent, progressive and meaningful educational journey. Rather than viewing curriculum as a collection of separate subjects or isolated experiences, Riverside Bridge School has developed an integrated curriculum model in which every aspect of learning contributes towards long-term knowledge, communication, personal development, independence and preparation for adulthood.

The curriculum architecture provides the framework through which the school's educational vision is translated into everyday practice. It ensures consistency across the school whilst allowing teachers the flexibility to respond to individual learners, pathway needs and changing cohorts.

Our curriculum architecture is therefore not a rigid sequence. It is a connected framework in which each element informs the next:

School Vision → Principles for Learning + Curriculum Drivers → Curriculum Subjects → Subject Areas of Learning → Stems of Learning → Curriculum Pathways and Personalised Planning → Teaching and Specialist Practice → Development Indicators and Assessment → Meaningful Progress and Preparation for Adulthood

Together, these elements ensure that learning remains ambitious while being genuinely responsive to the needs of the individual.

School vision

Everything begins with the school vision of inspiring communication, empowering independence, achieving brighter futures. It provides the overarching direction for curriculum design and ensures that communication, independence and future outcomes remain central to decisions about learning.

The curriculum drivers

Our Curriculum Drivers provide the golden thread connecting curriculum, personal development and the wider life of the school:

- **A Sense of Self** supports learners to understand their preferences, emotions, strengths, communication and identity and to develop increasing agency and self-advocacy.
- **A Sense of Community** develops belonging, participation, relationships and an understanding that learners have a valued role within their class, school, family and wider community.

- **A Sense of Culture** broadens learners' understanding of their own identity and the diverse cultures, beliefs, traditions and experiences of others.
- **A Sense of Wonder** promotes curiosity, exploration, creativity, enquiry and enjoyment of discovering the world.
- **A Sense of Future** gives learning purpose, linking the knowledge and skills developed today to increasing independence, community participation, employment, adult relationships and future quality of life.

These Drivers are already established within our curriculum and provide continuity across pathways. They ensure that learning contributes not only to what pupils know and can do, but also to their developing identity, relationships, curiosity, belonging and aspirations. The Drivers are not separate subjects. They are experienced continuously and shape curriculum choices, learning experiences and enrichment across all four pathways.

The Curriculum Drivers

Our interconnected drivers provide the golden thread that unites our curriculum, pedagogy, school life and leadership. Together, they shape every learning experience for every pupil.



The curriculum pathways

Learning is facilitated through four personalised pathways: **Flow 1a • Flow 1b • Flow 2 • Flow 3**.

The pathways reflect differing learning profiles and enable teaching, communication, support and curriculum experiences to be appropriately adapted to the individual learner. They are not separate curricula or levels of attainment. Curriculum content and contexts develop in age-appropriate and increasingly future-focused ways within every pathway.

Curriculum Subjects, Subject Areas and Stems of Learning

Curriculum content is organised through a broad range of curriculum subjects. Within each subject, learning is structured through Subject Areas of Learning, which identify the important strands of knowledge, understanding and skills to be developed. Learning within these Subject Areas is broken down into Stems of Learning. These stems provide the progressive journeys through which learning develops in depth, complexity, independence and application.

This structure enables Riverside Bridge School to maintain curriculum breadth and clear progression whilst ensuring that learning remains accessible, meaningful and appropriately ambitious for every pupil.

Themed curriculum maps

Themed curriculum maps translate the architecture into a carefully sequenced programme of learning.

Maps identify what pupils should encounter, revisit and develop over time. They provide progression in knowledge and experience whilst allowing staff to adapt depth, complexity, communication demands and methods of access according to pathway.

Our curriculum maps deliberately revisit significant concepts. For many of our learners, repeated exposure is essential for retention and generalisation. Repetition is therefore not viewed as a failure to progress; where it enables a learner to deepen understanding, become more fluent or apply knowledge in a different context, it is an important part of progression.

Thematic contexts may provide motivation and coherence, but the underlying progression in knowledge and skills remains the central consideration.

Personalised planning

A common curriculum architecture does not mean identical learning.

Teachers use curriculum maps alongside a detailed understanding of the individual learner. Planning is informed by assessment, Development Profiles, EHCP outcomes, communication profiles, sensory and physical needs, therapeutic recommendations, learner interests and professional judgement.

This enables teachers to maintain the curriculum's intended learning whilst removing barriers that could prevent a pupil from accessing it. Personalisation is therefore not lowering expectations. It is the process of identifying what support, adaptation or teaching approach will allow the learner to engage successfully with ambitious learning.

Communication as a curriculum enabler

Communication runs through every layer of the curriculum architecture. The school's Total Communication approach ensures that learners have appropriate Means, Reasons and Opportunities to communicate throughout learning. Communication is therefore both an essential condition for curriculum access and an area of development embedded across curriculum experiences.

Positive Support as a curriculum enabler

Positive Support enables learners to feel safe, regulated and ready to engage with learning. Relationships, co-regulation, predictable environments, sensory support and personalised communication strategies are used proactively to reduce barriers to participation. For many learners, developing regulation, resilience and increasingly independent strategies is also significant curriculum learning in its own right.

Integrated Therapeutic practice

Therapeutic practice is woven into the curriculum rather than operating as an additional service outside it. Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Educational Psychology and other specialist professionals contribute to understanding learners, curriculum access, environmental adaptation and staff practice.

Where appropriate, therapeutic recommendations are incorporated into everyday teaching, communication systems, sensory support, physical programmes and personalised planning.

This reflects the school's current model that therapy supports access to learning and, for some pupils, aspects of therapeutic development are themselves fundamental to meaningful curriculum participation.

Structured teaching

BridgeWorks provides a structured approach that supports learners to understand expectations, engage with learning and develop increasing independence. Through predictable routines, clearly organised environments and appropriately structured learning experiences, it helps remove barriers and enables pupils to participate more successfully in the curriculum.

Learning beyond the classroom

Curriculum does not stop at the classroom door. Community access, visits, enrichment, enterprise, work-related learning, outdoor experiences and residential opportunities allow pupils to apply knowledge in authentic settings. These experiences are particularly important because successful performance in a familiar classroom does not automatically mean that a learner can transfer the same skill elsewhere. Learning beyond school therefore provides opportunities to test and strengthen generalisation, communication, problem-solving, independence and resilience.

Assessment and review

Assessment completes the curriculum cycle and informs what happens next. Development Profiles and ongoing assessment enable staff to evaluate how learning is developing, identify where further opportunities or support are required and inform personalised teaching. Assessment also enables leaders to evaluate the effectiveness of curriculum design and implementation. The curriculum therefore remains dynamic: planned, implemented, assessed, evaluated and refined in response to evidence.

Section 5

CURRICULUM ORGANISATION

Organising provision. Responding to needs. Ensuring coherence.

Riverside Bridge School does not organise its curriculum around a conventional age-related or Key Stage model. Our learners have highly individual developmental profiles, and chronological age alone does not provide a meaningful indication of either what they should learn or how they are most likely to access learning successfully. Instead, curriculum organisation begins with the learner.

Every pupil presents with a unique combination of strengths, interests, communication needs, sensory preferences, physical abilities, levels of independence, social and emotional development and aspirations for the future. Two learners of the same chronological age may therefore require very different approaches to teaching. Equally, two learners working at a similar developmental level may be many years apart in age and require very different experiences, relationships, expectations and preparation for adulthood.

For this reason, Riverside Bridge School organises learning through four curriculum pathways:

- **Flow 1a**
- **Flow 1b**
- **Flow 2**
- **Flow 3**

These pathways provide a framework through which teaching approaches, communication support, learning environments and expectations can be matched more closely to the individual learner's developmental profile.

A holistic view of the learner

Pathway placement is based on a holistic understanding of the pupil rather than an isolated test score, diagnosis or year-group expectation.

Staff consider the interaction between:

- cognition and learning;
- communication and interaction;
- sensory processing and physical development;
- social and emotional development;
- independence and self-help skills;
- engagement and readiness to learn;
- EHCP outcomes;
- Development Profile information;
- therapeutic advice;

- family knowledge; and
- professional judgement.

The central question is therefore not simply “What level is this learner working at?” but “What approach to learning will enable this pupil to communicate, participate, progress and become increasingly independent?”

This reflects the school's wider curriculum philosophy that the learner must be understood as a whole person rather than through a single label or measure.

Pathway, individual need and age

Curriculum pathway is the primary consideration when organising classes, but chronological age remains highly important.

A younger pupil and an adolescent may have similar developmental profiles but significantly different social, emotional, physical and safeguarding needs. They may also require very different curriculum experiences in relation to relationships, independence, community participation and preparation for adulthood.

It would therefore not generally be appropriate to place pupils together simply because they access the same curriculum pathway.

Class organisation takes account of pathway, individual need, chronological age and the dynamics of the cohort. This allows pupils to learn alongside peers whose learning profiles are sufficiently similar for specialist teaching to be effective whilst ensuring that resources, language, expectations, relationships and experiences remain respectful of each learner's age and stage of life.

This principle is particularly important within pre-formal provision. A young pupil and an older teenager may both require sensory, experiential or communication-led teaching, but the content, social context and long-term purpose of that learning must remain age appropriate.

Pathways are approaches to learning, not labels

A pathway (a “Flow”) should never be understood as a label, fixed ability group or ceiling on achievement. Learners frequently demonstrate what may be described as “spiky” developmental profiles, showing greater strengths in some Subject Areas of Learning and requiring significantly more support in others. A pupil may, for example, demonstrate relatively strong mathematical understanding but require extensive support with communication, regulation or independence. Teachers therefore personalise learning within each pathway rather than assuming that all pupils within a pathway require identical teaching, content or outcomes.

The pathway identifies the predominant approach through which the learner is currently most likely to flourish. It does not define the limit of their potential.

Reviewing pathway placement

Pathway placement is reviewed through ongoing assessment rather than treated as a one-off decision. Teachers, leaders and relevant professionals consider whether the pathway continues to provide:

- an appropriate level of challenge;
- effective access to communication;
- meaningful opportunities for independence;
- suitable curriculum breadth;
- appropriate social and peer experiences; and
- progression towards EHCP and long-term outcomes.

The Development Profile provides the central assessment evidence for pathway placement and review, drawing together assessment across the pupil's curriculum learning. This is considered alongside classroom evidence, EHCP and annual review information, family perspectives and professional observations to inform professional judgement.

Where a learner's needs or pattern of learning change significantly, staff may consider whether another pathway would provide a more appropriate approach. Any transition is planned carefully and takes account of the whole learner rather than being driven by age or attainment alone.

Movement between pathways is therefore not an achievement target in itself. A learner does not need to move from one pathway to another in order to demonstrate significant progress. A pupil may remain within the same pathway throughout much of their school journey and continue to make substantial progress in communication, knowledge, participation, independence and quality of life.

Curriculum organisation across a learner's school journey

As pupils grow older, curriculum experiences become increasingly age-appropriate and future-focused within every pathway. A learner who continues to access a pre-formal curriculum may therefore develop communication, cognition and independence through adult-life contexts such as shopping, travel, personal care, enterprise, community participation or work-related experiences rather than through experiences designed for younger children.

Similarly, accredited learning where appropriate to the individual learner is not attached to a particular pathway. Where accredited learning provides meaningful recognition of learning and supports a pupil's future progression, appropriate courses may be undertaken by older learners across different pathways, with teaching and assessment adapted to their individual learning profile. The learning approach may remain pre-formal, semi-formal or formal; the context, dignity, aspiration and preparation for adulthood must mature with the learner.

A flexible but coherent model

The pathway model enables Riverside Bridge School to balance two equally important responsibilities: consistency and personalisation.

The pathways provide a coherent whole-school framework so that staff share a common understanding of curriculum expectations and specialist pedagogy. Within that framework, teachers retain sufficient flexibility to respond to individual learners, changing cohorts and emerging needs. This means that our curriculum is neither wholly individualised nor rigidly standardised. It provides a common architecture with personalised routes through it. Ultimately, curriculum organisation exists for one purpose to ensure that every learner is taught alongside appropriate peers, through an approach that reflects how they learn best, whilst maintaining ambitious expectations for communication, knowledge, independence, participation and adult life.

Section 6

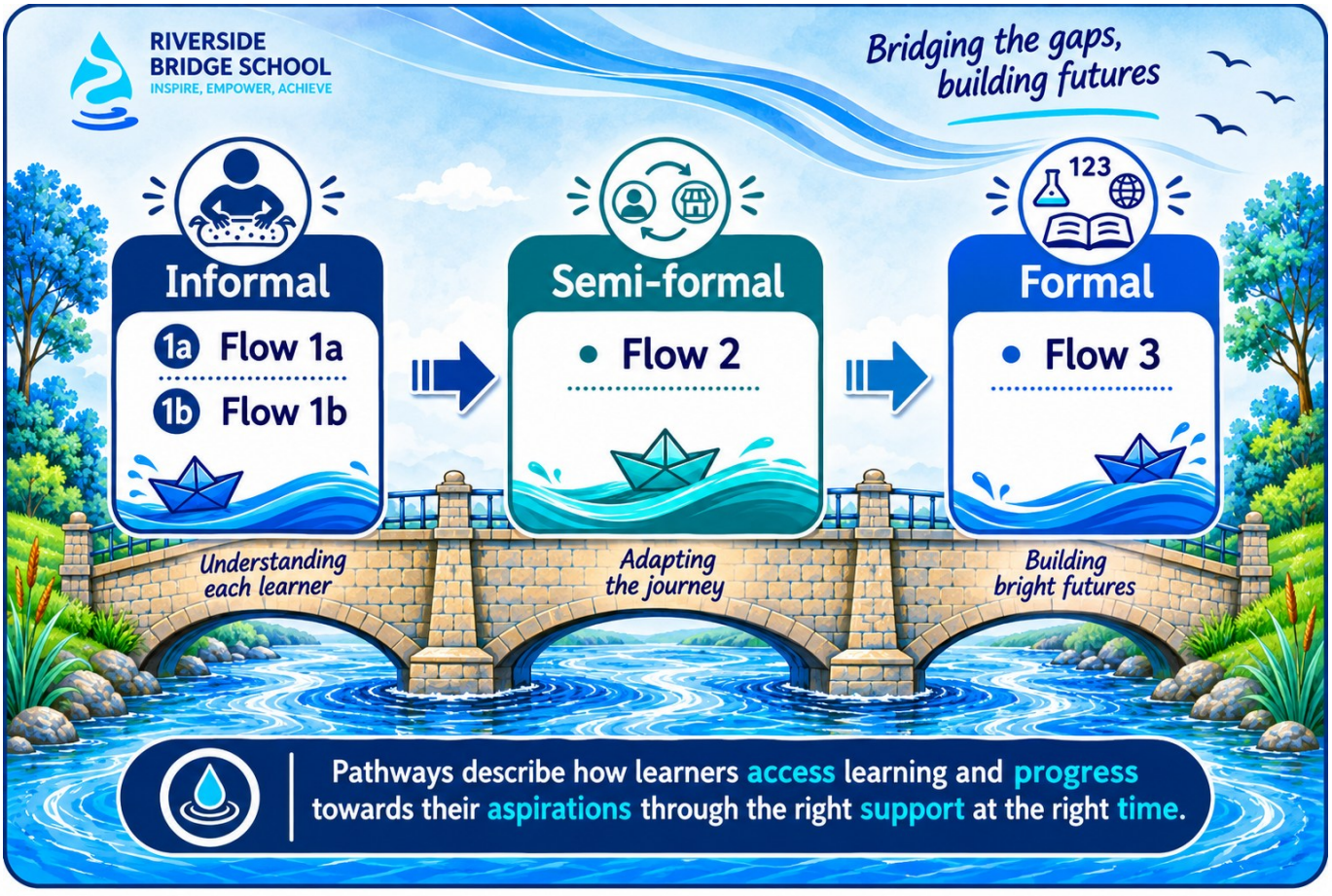
CURRICULUM PATHWAYS

Recognising differences. Personalising learning. Maintaining ambition.

The pathways or “Flows” provide a coherent continuum of specialist curriculum provision. They share the school’s common curriculum principles, the Curriculum Drivers and long-term ambitions, but differ in the balance of experiential, developmental, functional and increasingly formal learning.

The pathways are deliberately permeable rather than rigid. They are designed to help staff identify the predominant approach through which a learner is most likely to flourish, not to place a fixed label on ability or future potential.

Each pathway therefore provides a different route through the same overarching curriculum ambition to develop communication, knowledge, independence, wellbeing, participation and preparation for adulthood in ways that are meaningful to the individual learner.



Flow 1a - Pre-formal - Experiencing, Connecting and Communicating

Flow 1a is designed for learners at the earliest stages of development who require the highest levels of personalisation, specialist support and responsive teaching. For these learners, successful curriculum access begins with connection, emotional and physical safety, regulation and communication. Staff develop detailed knowledge of each pupil's individual responses, motivations, sensory preferences, physical presentation and communication behaviours so that learning can be built from what is meaningful to the learner.

Progress may initially be demonstrated through subtle but significant changes in gaze, facial expression, body movement, vocalisation, anticipation, attention or intentional action. These responses are recognised as meaningful and provide the foundation for developing greater agency, participation and interaction.

The Flow 1a curriculum places particular emphasis on shared attention, anticipation, cause and effect, exploration, communication, interaction, early cognition and participation in familiar routines. Learning is practical and experiential, with play, movement, music, sensory exploration, Intensive Interaction and everyday activities providing rich contexts for development.

Communication is highly personalised. Learners may use Objects of Reference, photographs, symbols, gesture, Makaton, AAC, vocalisation, body movements, facial expression or speech. Staff respond consistently to emerging communication and create genuine situations in which learners can request, reject, choose, anticipate, initiate and influence what happens around them.

The aim is not simply for the learner to engage with adult-led activity. It is to support the gradual development of agency, an increasing understanding that their communication, actions and choices can have an effect.

Progress within Flow 1a may therefore be reflected through greater engagement, sustained attention, intentional communication, anticipation, participation, tolerance of new experiences, environmental control and growing independence within familiar contexts.

Flow 1b - Pre-formal - Participating, Purposeful Communication and Increased Independence

Flow 1b remains a highly personalised pre-formal pathway but supports learners who are demonstrating increasingly consistent intentional engagement with people, activities and their environment. Learners are encouraged to move from predominantly responsive interaction towards greater initiation, purposeful participation and increasing independence. Teaching remains experiential, carefully structured and highly scaffolded, but expectations gradually increase around communication, problem-solving, choice-making and active engagement. Communication continues to sit at the heart of learning. Staff create repeated opportunities for pupils not simply to respond to prompts but to initiate, request, reject, comment, choose, seek attention and influence activity.

Early literacy, mathematical understanding and knowledge of the world emerge through meaningful experiences rather than being artificially separated from them. Stories, songs, cooking, play, movement, shared exploration, community experiences and familiar routines provide opportunities to develop concepts, vocabulary, sequencing and understanding.

Learners are increasingly supported to follow familiar sequences, anticipate what happens next, participate in shared activities and complete elements of routines with reduced adult direction where appropriate

The distinction between Flow 1a and Flow 1b is therefore not based simply on attainment. It reflects increasing intentionality, communication, cognition, participation and the learner's growing ability to engage more actively with the world around them.

Flow 2 - Semi-formal - Building Understanding, Generalising Learning and Increasing Independence

Flow 2 provides a semi-formal curriculum for learners who are ready to engage with increasingly structured learning while continuing to require specialist teaching, repetition, scaffolding and practical contexts. The pathway retains an important principle from the school's existing curriculum, the fact that many learners benefit from order, structure, routine and certainty, but also require learning to be broken into manageable steps and revisited repeatedly before it becomes secure and transferable.

For many Flow 2 learners, the challenge is not simply acquiring a skill. It is remembering it, understanding it and knowing when and how to use it independently. Teaching therefore places significant emphasis on repetition, retrieval, overlearning, generalisation and functional application. Knowledge or skills developed in one setting are deliberately revisited with different people, in different environments and for different purposes so that pupils learn to transfer rather than merely reproduce.

Communication continues to underpin all learning. Learners are supported to understand increasingly complex language, express ideas and preferences, participate in discussion, solve problems and communicate for a wider range of social and functional purposes.

Literacy and mathematics become increasingly explicit while remaining grounded in meaningful contexts. Reading, writing, number, money, time, measure and problem-solving are connected to everyday experiences so that learners understand their practical relevance.

Science, humanities, creative learning, physical development, healthy living and personal development broaden pupils' understanding of themselves and the wider world. Teachers move carefully from concrete experience towards greater conceptual understanding rather than assuming that increased formality requires abstract teaching.

Independence is intentionally developed throughout the day. Learners are supported to organise themselves, make decisions, follow routines with reduced support, collaborate with others and apply learning within increasingly unfamiliar situations.

Progress within Flow 2 is therefore reflected through both the acquisition of new knowledge and an increasing ability to retain, generalise and apply learning with confidence and independence.

Flow 3 - Formal - Conceptual Understanding, Subject Knowledge and Application

Flow 3 provides the school's most formal curriculum pathway for learners who are increasingly able to engage with conceptual reasoning, abstraction and subject-specific knowledge whilst continuing to benefit from specialist teaching, appropriate adaptation and personalised support.

Learners within Flow 3 are increasingly able to use structured spoken language, reading, writing, symbolic representation, AAC or other communication systems to explore ideas, explain reasoning and participate in more sustained learning. Communication may include multi-turn conversations, retelling events, explaining ideas, adapting language for different audiences and contributing to discussion and collaborative tasks.

Teaching develops increasingly secure subject knowledge and supports pupils to make connections, consider cause and effect, understand chronology, investigate questions and communicate their reasoning. Literacy, mathematics, science, humanities, computing, creative subjects, physical development and Personal Development therefore become increasingly explicit, while remaining appropriately adapted to each learner's needs.

Formal does not mean mainstream by default. Riverside Bridge School does not simply replicate a mainstream curriculum within a specialist setting. Content, pace, communication demands, resources and teaching methods remain responsive to the learner, enabling meaningful depth and understanding rather than superficial curriculum coverage.

Learners are increasingly encouraged to apply knowledge independently, solve problems, work collaboratively, communicate ideas and transfer learning between contexts. Practical and community experiences remain important because formal learning at Riverside Bridge School continues to have a strong emphasis on purposeful application.

Flow 3 is not the school's Preparing for Adulthood or accreditation pathway. Preparing for Adulthood is an entitlement across all four Flows and becomes increasingly explicit for every learner as they mature. Similarly, accredited learning may be undertaken by pupils in any pathway where the course is appropriate to their ability, needs and intended outcomes.

Progress within Flow 3 is therefore characterised primarily by increasing conceptual understanding, subject knowledge, communication flexibility, reasoning, problem-solving and independent application.

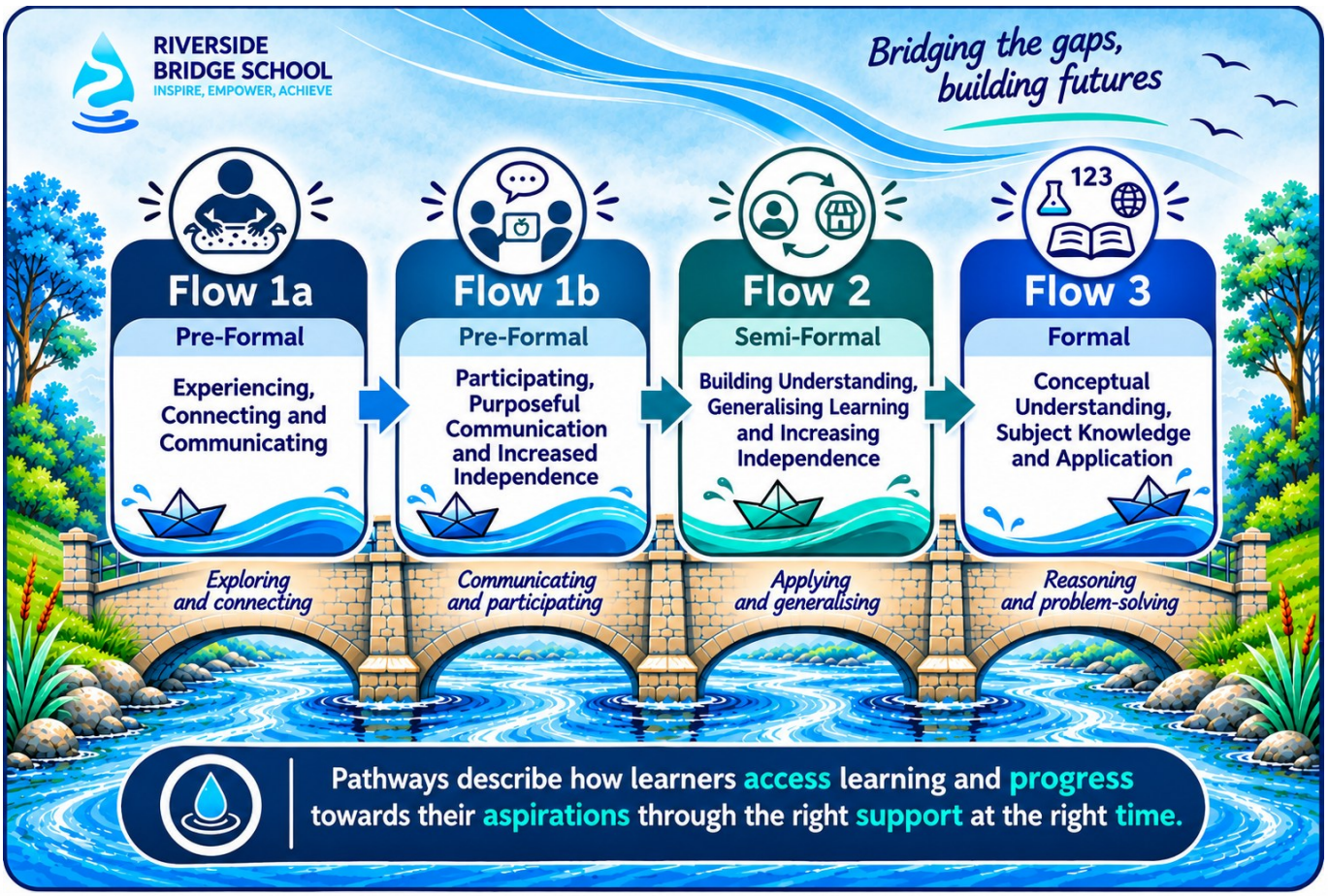
Progress within and across pathways

Progression at Riverside Bridge School is not defined by movement from one pathway to another. A learner may remain within the same pathway for a significant period, or throughout much of their school journey, and still make substantial progress in communication, knowledge, participation, independence and quality of life.

Similarly, a learner may demonstrate strengths that align more closely with another pathway within particular subjects or Subject Areas of Learning whilst continuing to require their existing pathway approach overall. This reflects the "spiky" profiles common within specialist education and reinforces the importance of professional judgement and personalised planning.

Movement between pathways is considered only where a different approach to teaching would better support the learner's development. It is never treated as an outcome in itself.

The pathways therefore provide structure without creating unnecessary limits. Their purpose is to ensure that every learner continues to experience the right balance of challenge, support, dignity and opportunity throughout their time at Riverside Bridge School.



Section 7

CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

Defining learning. Connecting knowledge. Supporting progression.

The curriculum has been developed around the belief that successful learning for children and young people with complex special educational needs and disabilities begins long before subject knowledge is taught. Learners first need to be understood as individuals, feel safe within positive relationships, learn within environments that reduce barriers to participation and experience teaching that is responsive to their individual stage of development.

For this reason, the curriculum is built upon interdependent Principles for Learning. These principles underpin decisions about curriculum design, teaching, assessment and support. They ensure that learning is accessible, meaningful and ambitious for every pupil, regardless of their pathway, communication profile or level of need. Rather than viewing curriculum simply as a collection of subjects, Riverside Bridge School recognises that the conditions in which learning takes place are equally important. The Principles for Learning therefore provide the foundation from which the curriculum has been developed.

- **Understanding the Individual -** Every learner is unique. Effective education begins with developing a deep understanding of each pupil's strengths, interests, communication profile, sensory preferences, physical needs, emotional wellbeing, aspirations and barriers to learning. This understanding is developed through close partnership with families, observation, assessment, Development Profiles, EHCP outcomes and collaboration with therapists and other professionals. Understanding the individual enables staff to personalise learning whilst maintaining ambitious expectations. It ensures that curriculum planning begins with the learner rather than expecting the learner to fit a predetermined curriculum.

  For example, two pupils may both be learning within science, but one may access scientific enquiry through sensory exploration and cause-and-effect activities, while another investigates materials through structured experiments and records observations. The curriculum entitlement remains equally ambitious, but the route through learning reflects the individual learner.

- **Learning and Development -** Learning is carefully sequenced so that knowledge, understanding, skills and independence develop progressively over time. Riverside Bridge School recognises that learners do not all progress at the same rate or in the same way. The curriculum has therefore been designed to provide clear progression whilst remaining sufficiently flexible to respond to individual strengths and needs.

Teaching combines subject knowledge with specialist pedagogy, communication strategies and therapeutic approaches so that pupils develop increasing confidence and competence across the curriculum. Whether a learner is developing early communication, acquiring literacy skills, investigating historical events, composing music or preparing for employment, learning is viewed as part of a continuous developmental journey.

- **Enabling Environments -** The environment is an active part of the curriculum. Riverside Bridge School creates learning environments that reduce barriers to participation and maximise opportunities for communication, independence and achievement. The school's BridgeWorks framework supports this through structured environments, predictable routines and approaches that promote engagement and increasing independence. Classrooms, outdoor spaces and community environments are carefully organised to meet learners' communication, sensory, physical and emotional needs.

  Enabling environments may include visual supports, structured work systems, accessible technology, sensory adaptations, communication resources, predictable routines and opportunities for both collaborative and independent learning. These environments allow pupils to focus their energy on learning rather than overcoming unnecessary barriers.

  For example, during mathematics, a learner may use adapted resources, visual representations or practical equipment to develop number concepts, while within Art a carefully organised sensory environment may enable creative exploration without becoming overwhelming.

- **Positive and Effective Relationships -** Learning develops most successfully within trusting, respectful and consistent relationships. Positive relationships provide learners with the confidence to communicate, explore, take appropriate risks, solve problems and develop increasing independence. Staff build strong relationships through consistent routines, responsive communication, high expectations and a Positive Support approach that seeks to understand behaviour as communication. Relationships extend beyond the classroom and include families, therapists, external professionals and the wider community. By working together, adults create consistent approaches that help learners feel secure and enable learning to generalise across different environments.

  For example, a learner developing communication within Communication and Interaction may use the same symbols, signing or AAC system with teachers, therapists and family members, helping communication to become meaningful across different aspects of daily life.

From the Principles for Learning to the Curriculum

The Principles for Learning do not sit alongside the curriculum; they are the foundation from which it has been designed. Each principle influences both what pupils learn and how they are supported to learn it.

Together, they create the conditions in which ambitious learning can take place. From this shared foundation, the curriculum is organised through a broad range of curriculum subjects, each providing pupils with progressively richer knowledge, understanding, skills and experiences. Every subject has been carefully designed to balance subject-specific knowledge with meaningful and functional application, ensuring that learning is relevant, transferable and connected to life beyond school. Although each subject has its own knowledge, concepts and progression, all are planned and taught through the same Principles for Learning. This ensures that the curriculum remains coherent across every pathway whilst responding to the diverse needs of individual learners.

The Principles for Learning and the Curriculum Subjects

Each curriculum subject is aligned with the Principle for Learning that most strongly represents its primary educational purpose. The four colours used throughout the curriculum illustrate this relationship and provide a consistent visual structure for staff, learners and families. This does not mean that a subject contributes only to the Principle for Learning beneath which it is positioned. Learning is inherently interconnected and every subject may contribute to several aspects of a learner's development. The colour coding identifies the principal lens through which each subject has been developed, preserving the educational rationale from which our curriculum was constructed.

The curriculum subjects include Communication and Interaction, Literacy, Mathematics, Science, History, Geography, Computing (ICT), Physical Education, Cooking and Nutrition, Healthy Living, Skills for Life, Work-Related Learning, Sensory Development, Art, Music, Drama, Social and Emotional Development and Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural Development (SMSC).

Understanding the Individual

Understanding oneself is a starting point for learning. Learners need opportunities to develop communication, self-awareness and the ability to express their thoughts, feelings, needs, experiences and preferences.

Subjects aligned with this principle primarily develop the learner's understanding of themselves and their ability to communicate and make meaning.

These include:

- Communication and Interaction
- Literacy

Communication and Interaction provides the foundations through which pupils understand others, express themselves, exercise agency and participate in learning and everyday life. Literacy extends these foundations through reading, writing, language and the development of meaning, enabling learners to understand, interpret and communicate increasingly complex ideas.

Learning and Development

Learning and Development reflects the progressive acquisition and application of knowledge, understanding and practical skills.

Subjects aligned with this principle enable learners to investigate, reason, understand concepts, develop physical competence and build knowledge of the world.

These include:

- Mathematics
- Science
- History
- Geography
- Physical Education
- Cooking and Nutrition
- Healthy Living

Science, for example, is positioned within this principle because it develops curiosity, investigation and understanding of the natural and physical world through progressive enquiry. Mathematics develops concepts and reasoning that enable learners to recognise patterns, solve problems and understand quantity, space and measure. History and Geography progressively broaden understanding of people, places, time, change and the wider world.

Enabling Environments

Learning is influenced by the environments in which it takes place. Riverside Bridge School seeks to enable pupils not only to access those environments, but increasingly to understand, navigate, participate within and influence them.

Subjects aligned with this principle provide important opportunities for pupils to interact with physical, practical, creative and digital environments.

These include:

- Skills for Life
- Work-Related Learning
- Computing (ICT)
- Art
- Music
- Drama
- Sensory Development

Computing (ICT), for example, equips learners to access and participate within an increasingly digital world.

Skills for Life and Work-Related Learning enable pupils to navigate practical environments and increasingly participate within home, community and employment-related contexts. Art, Music, Drama and Sensory Development provide opportunities to explore, interpret, respond to and shape the world through creativity, expression and sensory experience.

🟡 Positive and Effective Relationships

Learning takes place through relationships. This principle recognises that pupils develop through their interactions with others and through growing understanding of families, communities, cultures and society. Subjects aligned with this principle particularly support learners to understand themselves in relation to other people, appreciate diversity and develop a sense of belonging and responsibility within their local and wider communities.

These include:

- Social and Emotional Development
- SMSC

Together, these subjects support the development of relationships, empathy, social understanding, citizenship, cultural awareness, values and appreciation of the diverse people and communities that make up modern society.

Subject Areas of Learning

Within each curriculum subject, learning is organised into a number of Subject Areas of Learning.

These are the broad strands through which the important knowledge, concepts and skills of each subject are organised and progressively developed. They provide sufficient structure to ensure breadth, balance and progression whilst allowing learning to be adapted appropriately for pupils with very different developmental and communication profiles.

Every curriculum subject therefore has its own Subject Areas of Learning, reflecting the particular nature and purpose of that subject. They enable teachers to understand the different dimensions of learning within a subject and ensure that important aspects are not lost within thematic or highly personalised teaching.

For example,

- Communication and Interaction may include Subject Areas of Learning such as attention and engagement, receptive communication, expressive communication, social interaction and functional communication.
- Literacy includes areas that develop phonological awareness, reading, comprehension and the use and understanding of language and writing.
- Mathematics is organised through areas such as number, calculation, measure, shape, space and data handling, enabling mathematical understanding to develop systematically.

- Science includes areas that encourage pupils to investigate, observe, question and develop understanding of living things, materials, physical processes and scientific enquiry.
- History develops learning through areas such as chronology, significant people and events, historical enquiry and understanding change over time.
- Geography enables pupils to explore places, environments, human and physical geography and relationships between people and the world around them.
- Creative subjects, including Art, Music, Drama and Sensory Development, use Subject Areas of Learning that support creativity, exploration, performance, expression and appreciation.
- Skills for Life, Healthy Living, Physical Education, Cooking and Nutrition and Work-Related Learning use Subject Areas of Learning that progressively develop independence, physical wellbeing, functional skills, employability and preparation for adulthood.

Subject Areas of Learning provide continuity across the school because teachers can identify the important strands of a subject regardless of the pathway through which a learner accesses the curriculum. The complexity of the learning, teaching approach, communication demands and context may differ considerably between learners, but the Subject Areas provide a shared curriculum structure.

They also ensure that thematic teaching does not become a series of disconnected activities. Themes and contexts may provide meaningful ways of engaging learners, but teachers remain clear about the underlying subject learning being developed.

Although curriculum knowledge is organised in this way, subjects are not taught as isolated compartments. Teachers deliberately create meaningful connections between them where these strengthen understanding and application. A community shopping experience, for example, may provide opportunities to develop communication, literacy, mathematics, independence, healthy living and work-related learning. A Science investigation may simultaneously strengthen vocabulary, observation, mathematical reasoning, collaboration and problem-solving. These connections are particularly important for our learners because they provide repeated opportunities to encounter, practise and apply learning in different contexts. However, integration does not replace subject progression: teachers remain clear about the specific learning being developed within each subject.

Subject Areas of Learning therefore provide the broad organisational structure within each curriculum subject. Within each Subject Area, progression is defined more precisely through the Stems of Learning.

Stems of Learning

Within each Subject Area of Learning, progression is organised through a series of Stems of Learning.

The Stems of Learning are a distinctive feature of the Riverside Bridge School's curriculum and provide the progressive framework through which knowledge, understanding and skills are developed over time.

Each stem represents a carefully sequenced learning journey within a particular Subject Area of Learning. Rather than identifying isolated objectives or disconnected activities, the stems describe how important learning can develop in depth, complexity, independence and application.

The stems enable teachers to identify the learning a pupil is currently developing, understand the learning that precedes and follows it, and provide appropriately sequenced opportunities through which that learning can develop further. In doing so, they provide continuity across the curriculum whilst recognising that our learners develop at different rates and in different ways.

Because the stems focus on the development of learning rather than age or year-group expectations, they provide sufficient flexibility to support learners with a wide range of abilities and learning profiles.

Two pupils of the same age may therefore be developing different aspects of a stem, while pupils of different ages may be working within the same stem through very different, age-appropriate contexts.

Similarly, remaining within the same stem does not necessarily indicate a lack of progress. A learner may be developing greater fluency, independence, consistency or generalisation within that stem before being ready for more complex learning.

Importantly, the Stems of Learning are not assessment checklists. They are curriculum progressions that describe how learning develops within each subject. They guide curriculum planning, support professional dialogue and help ensure that teaching builds purposefully upon prior learning.

Each stem is considered alongside Development Indicators, which enable teachers to evaluate the extent to which a learner is acquiring, developing, mastering or generalising the learning represented by that stem.

Together, the Subject Areas of Learning, Stems of Learning and Development Indicators provide Riverside Bridge School with a consistent framework for curriculum progression and assessment whilst retaining the professional flexibility required to respond to individual learners.

The Development Indicators

The Development Indicators provide a consistent way for teachers to evaluate the extent to which a learner is developing the knowledge, understanding or skill represented within a Stem of Learning.

They are used to support professional judgement rather than to create a simple measure of attainment. The Development Indicators consider not only whether a learner can demonstrate particular learning, but also how securely, consistently and independently that learning can be demonstrated and whether it can be applied beyond the original teaching context.

- **Acquiring -** The learner has been introduced to the learning represented by the Stem and is beginning to develop the associated knowledge, understanding or skill. At this stage, significant adult support may be required to enable successful participation. Depending upon the individual learner, this may include modelling, physical guidance where appropriate, intensive prompting,

highly structured teaching or carefully supported exploration. The emphasis is upon emerging awareness, engagement, participation and initial understanding.

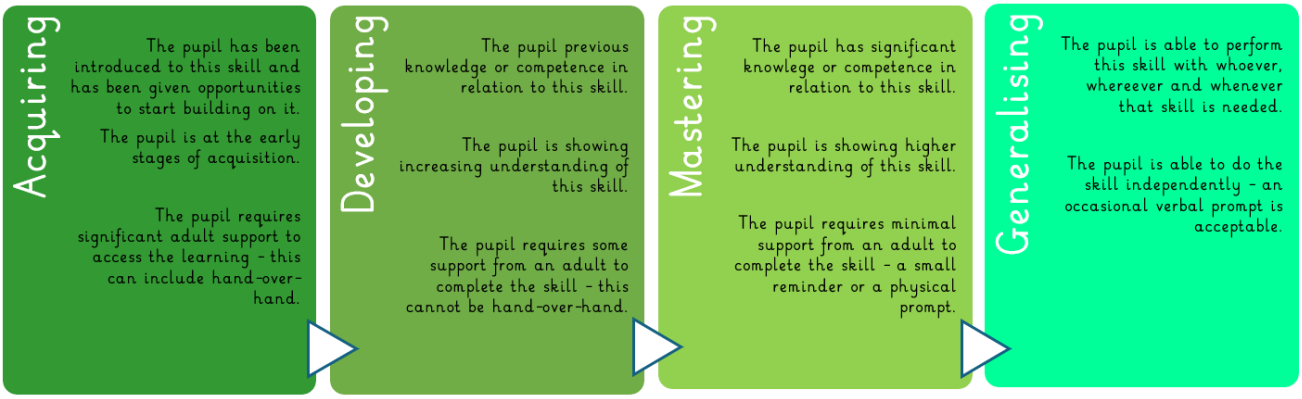
- **Developing -** The learner is demonstrating increasing understanding and is beginning to apply the learning with greater consistency. Adult support remains necessary, but the learner is beginning to take a more active and increasingly independent role. Support may include verbal or gestural prompts, modelling, visual supports, reminders or structured opportunities for practice. The learner is beginning to demonstrate that the learning is becoming established rather than occurring only through intensive adult direction.
- **Mastering -** The learner demonstrates secure understanding of the learning represented by the Stem and can apply it successfully and consistently within familiar situations. Only minimal adult support is required, such as occasional reminders or prompts. The learner demonstrates increasing confidence, fluency and independence and is able to use the learning purposefully within contexts in which it has been developed.
- **Generalising -** The learner can transfer and apply the knowledge, understanding or skill across different people, places, situations or purposes. Learning has become sufficiently secure to move beyond the original teaching context and can be used increasingly flexibly and independently within everyday life. Generalisation is particularly significant for many learners with complex SEND because successful performance within a familiar activity or environment does not necessarily mean that learning will automatically transfer elsewhere. The ability to generalise therefore demonstrates that learning is becoming genuinely functional, transferable and embedded.

Using the Development Indicators

The Development Indicators are not intended to function as a checklist, grade or linear ladder through which every learner must move at the same rate. They provide a shared language through which teachers can evaluate and discuss how the learning represented within each stem is developing.

Teachers draw upon evidence gathered through observation, classroom learning, practical application, learner responses, work where appropriate, communication, assessment and professional judgement to determine the Development Indicator that most accurately reflects the learner's current development within a particular Stem. A learner's profile will rarely be uniform. A pupil may be Acquiring learning within one stem whilst Mastering another and Generalising learning elsewhere. This is expected and reflects the individual and often uneven developmental profiles of our learners.

The Development Indicators therefore help teachers evaluate the extent to which each Stem of Learning is developing rather than placing the learner themselves at a single overall level. Used alongside the Stems of Learning, the Development Indicators enable staff to recognise progression that might otherwise be overlooked, including increased consistency, reduced reliance on adult support, greater fluency, increased spontaneity and successful transfer of learning into new contexts.



The Curriculum Pathways, Stems of Learning and Development Indicators serve different but complementary purposes. The Curriculum Pathway reflects the predominant approach through which a learner is most likely to flourish; the Stems of Learning describe the progression of learning within the curriculum; and the Development Indicators enable teachers to evaluate the extent to which the learning represented by each stem is developing. Progress through the stems or development indicators does not require movement between curriculum pathways.

Together, these elements create a curriculum framework that is coherent without being restrictive, progressive without being narrowly linear and ambitious without losing sight of the individual learner.

Section 8

THE LEARNING EXPERIENCE

Creating opportunities. Encouraging participation. Enabling learning.

The curriculum at Riverside Bridge School is brought to life through high-quality specialist teaching, positive relationships and meaningful learning experiences that enable every pupil to participate, achieve and prepare for adult life.

Learning at Riverside Bridge School is purposeful, personalised and responsive. Whilst teaching approaches differ across the four curriculum pathways, every learner experiences a curriculum that is underpinned by the same values, expectations and commitment to communication, independence and inclusion.

Curriculum implementation is therefore not simply about delivering lessons. It is about creating the conditions in which every learner can communicate, engage, develop confidence and make meaningful progress over time.

Riverside Bridge School's Learning Experience is characterised by communication-rich environments, specialist teaching, integrated therapeutic practice, meaningful experiences and carefully planned opportunities for pupils to apply their learning in increasingly independent ways.

Knowing the learner

Effective teaching begins with a thorough understanding of the individual learner. Teachers and support staff develop detailed knowledge of each pupil's communication profile, interests, motivations, sensory preferences, physical needs, emotional wellbeing, strengths and barriers to learning. This understanding is developed through daily observation, Development Profiles, assessment, EHCP outcomes, professional collaboration and close partnership with families. Planning therefore begins with the learner rather than the lesson. Staff consider not only what pupils need to learn, but also how they learn most successfully, what motivates them and what adaptations are required to enable full participation.

Communication throughout the school day

Communication is embedded throughout the school day and is recognised as the responsibility of every adult working with pupils. Staff use each learner's personalised communication system consistently and create meaningful opportunities for pupils to express preferences, make choices, ask for help, initiate interactions, comment, build relationships, solve problems, negotiate with others and influence what happens around them. This reflects the school's commitment to ensuring that every learner has the Means, Reasons and Opportunities (MRO) to communicate within authentic situations. Communication therefore becomes both a curriculum outcome and the primary vehicle through which learning takes place.

Positive relationships and positive support

Positive relationships form the foundation of effective learning. Staff invest time in developing trusting, respectful relationships with pupils and recognise that emotional security, co-regulation and consistency are essential for successful engagement. Riverside Bridge School adopts a Positive Support approach which recognises that behaviour communicates need. Positive Support includes:

- understanding the function of behaviour;
- recognising sensory and communication needs;
- proactive planning;
- co-regulation;
- predictable routines;
- restorative approaches;
- promoting emotional wellbeing.

By creating environments in which pupils feel safe, understood and valued, staff enable learners to engage with increasing confidence, resilience and independence.

Specialist teaching and adaptive practice

Teaching at Riverside Bridge School combines high expectations with carefully personalised support. Teachers adapt the curriculum to ensure that learning is accessible whilst maintaining ambitious expectations for all pupils. Adaptations may include changes to communication methods, resources, sensory environments, pace, sequencing, levels of adult support or methods of recording learning. Learning is carefully scaffolded so that pupils experience success whilst continuing to be challenged appropriately. Staff understand that support should enable independence rather than create dependency. Adults therefore provide the level of assistance needed at that moment whilst continually seeking opportunities for pupils to develop greater confidence and autonomy. Teaching is informed by current research, specialist practice and ongoing professional reflection to ensure that learners benefit from approaches that are evidence-informed and responsive to changing needs.

Integrated therapeutic practice

Teachers work collaboratively with Speech and Language Therapists, Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists, Educational Psychologists and other professionals to integrate therapeutic recommendations naturally into classroom practice. Communication strategies, sensory regulation, physical programmes, positioning, environmental adaptations and specialist resources are incorporated into everyday learning wherever appropriate.

This integrated approach enables pupils to access learning more successfully whilst ensuring that therapeutic outcomes are developed through meaningful curriculum experiences rather than isolated interventions.

Learning environments

Learning environments are intentionally designed to reduce barriers and maximise participation. Classrooms across Riverside Bridge School provide predictable routines, accessible resources and communication-rich environments that support pupils to understand expectations and engage successfully in learning. Depending on the needs of learners, environments may include:

- visual timetables;
- structured work systems;
- communication boards;
- sensory adaptations;
- low-arousal spaces;
- accessible technology;
- quiet reflection areas; and
- opportunities for collaborative and independent learning.

The environment itself is recognised as an active part of teaching. It supports communication, promotes independence and enables learners to become increasingly confident in managing their own learning.

Learning beyond the classroom

Our curriculum extends far beyond classroom walls. Educational visits, outdoor learning, enterprise, community participation, cultural experiences, residential visits and enrichment opportunities enable pupils to apply learning within authentic contexts. These experiences are carefully planned so that pupils can transfer knowledge and skills into everyday situations, strengthening understanding and increasing independence. For many learners, real-life experiences provide the context in which communication becomes purposeful, mathematics becomes functional and personal development becomes meaningful.

The principles developed through BridgeWorks also support learning beyond the classroom by providing structured, practical contexts in which pupils can apply communication, literacy, numeracy, problem-solving, teamwork and independence. Through enterprise, work-related learning and real-life experiences, learners are supported to use their knowledge and skills purposefully beyond individual lessons.

Developing independence

Independence is developed intentionally throughout the school day. Opportunities are embedded within routines, self-care, community learning, enterprise, travel experiences, collaborative learning and preparation for adulthood. Adults carefully balance support with challenge, reducing prompts and intervention where appropriate so that learners develop increasing confidence, responsibility and autonomy.

High expectations for every learner

High expectations are reflected in the quality of learning, experiences, support and opportunities provided to every pupil. Staff maintain ambitious expectations whilst recognising that achievement may be demonstrated through different forms of knowledge, communication, independence, participation and application. The Learning Experience therefore focuses not only on what pupils know, but on how confidently and independently they are able to use their learning.

A learning community

Learning at Riverside Bridge School is a shared responsibility. Teachers, co-educators, therapists, leaders, families and pupils all contribute to creating a culture in which curiosity, communication, inclusion and achievement are valued. By working collaboratively and maintaining a relentless focus on the individual learner, Riverside Bridge School ensures that every pupil experiences a curriculum that is ambitious, meaningful and genuinely prepares them for a fulfilling adult life.

Section 9

CURRICULUM PROGRESSION

Building knowledge. Developing skills. Securing progression.

At Riverside Bridge School, progression is understood as the continuous development of knowledge, understanding, communication, independence and personal growth over time. It is not defined solely by age-related expectations or movement between curriculum pathways, but by each learner's increasing ability to participate meaningfully, apply learning and prepare for adulthood. We recognise that progress is rarely linear for learners with complex special educational needs and disabilities.

Learners often develop unevenly across different Subject Areas of Learning, demonstrating significant strengths in some areas whilst requiring continued support in others. Progress may therefore be characterised by periods of rapid development, consolidation, repetition or lateral growth, all of which are recognised as meaningful aspects of learning.

The curriculum has been designed to ensure that every learner experiences appropriate challenge, regardless of their starting point, and that learning builds progressively throughout their time at Riverside Bridge School.

A developmental model of progression

Progression at Riverside Bridge School is developmental rather than purely chronological. Learning is carefully sequenced so that pupils revisit important concepts, knowledge and skills over time. Each new experience builds upon previous learning, allowing pupils to deepen their understanding, strengthen their confidence and increase their independence. For many learners, progression is demonstrated not only by acquiring new knowledge but by:

- retaining learning over longer periods;
- becoming more fluent and confident;
- communicating more spontaneously;
- applying learning in unfamiliar situations;
- requiring less adult support;
- solving increasingly complex problems; and
- generalising skills across different people, places and experiences.

These achievements are recognised as equally significant indicators of progress because they demonstrate that learning has become secure, meaningful and transferable.

Progression across the curriculum

Each curriculum subject and its associated Subject Areas of Learning and Stems of Learning are carefully planned so that learning can develop in breadth, depth and complexity over time. For some learners, progression may begin through sensory exploration, shared attention and early interaction before developing into increasingly purposeful communication, structured learning and independent application. For others, progression may involve increasingly sophisticated subject knowledge, abstract thinking, problem-solving, analytical skills and accredited learning. Although the learning experiences differ across the curriculum pathways, every pupil follows a progressive curriculum that enables them to build upon prior knowledge and prepare for future learning.

Progression therefore reflects the individual learner's journey rather than comparison with other pupils.

From supported to increasing independence

Increasing independence is an important aspect of progression. As learning becomes more secure, pupils are supported to communicate, make choices, solve problems, manage routines, organise themselves and apply strategies with decreasing levels of adult support. Progress may therefore be reflected not only in what a learner can do, but in the increasing confidence, consistency and independence with which they can do it.

Generalisation of learning

One of the greatest challenges for many learners is transferring knowledge and skills from one context to another. A learner may demonstrate a skill confidently in the classroom but require additional support to apply the same skill in the community, at home or with unfamiliar adults. For this reason, Riverside Bridge School deliberately plans opportunities for learners to revisit learning across a range of environments and situations.

Knowledge and skills are therefore deliberately revisited through classroom learning, outdoor and community experiences, enrichment, enterprise, work-related learning and everyday routines. Generalisation is regarded as an essential part of progression because it demonstrates that learning has become functional and meaningful.

Progression through communication

Communication develops continuously across every curriculum pathway. Progress may range from increasing intentionality, shared attention and early communication through to more confident use of symbols, signing, AAC or spoken language and, where appropriate, increasingly sophisticated conversation, explanation, questioning and self-advocacy. Progression is reflected in the learner's growing ability to understand others, express themselves and communicate purposefully across different situations.

Progression towards adulthood

Preparation for adulthood develops progressively throughout a learner's school journey and is not determined by movement between Curriculum Pathways. As pupils mature, curriculum contexts and opportunities become increasingly age-appropriate, purposeful and future-focused, supporting greater communication, independence, participation and preparation for adult life. This is explored fully in Section 11.

Curriculum progression and assessment

Assessment enables staff to evaluate how learning is developing and whether pupils are becoming increasingly secure, independent and able to apply learning across contexts. It also informs curriculum planning and review. The school's approach to assessment is set out fully in Section 10.

Celebrating meaningful achievement

Achievement is recognised in many forms, including the development of knowledge, communication, independence, relationships, resilience, wellbeing and participation. Through this developmental approach, Riverside Bridge School recognises meaningful progress from individual starting points whilst maintaining ambition for every learner.

Section 10

ASSESSMENT AND CURRICULUM EVALUATION

Recognising progress. Informing teaching. Evaluating impact.

Assessment at Riverside Bridge School is an integral part of the curriculum. It is not viewed as a separate process undertaken after learning has taken place, but as a continuous cycle that informs planning, teaching, support and curriculum development. The purpose of assessment is to understand how each learner's knowledge, skills and understanding are developing, inform responsive teaching and evaluate the impact of the curriculum on their progress and wellbeing. Assessment enables staff to celebrate achievement, identify barriers to learning and ensure that every pupil continues to experience an ambitious, personalised and appropriately challenging curriculum. Because our learners have highly individual profiles, assessment is holistic and responsive. It recognises that progress may be demonstrated in many different ways and values the development of communication, independence, participation and personal growth alongside academic achievement.

Principles of assessment

Assessment at Riverside Bridge School is underpinned by the following principles:

- it should improve learning rather than simply measure it;
- it should recognise the whole learner;
- it should reflect individual progress rather than comparison with others;
- it should value communication, independence and personal development alongside academic outcomes;
- it should be meaningful, proportionate and evidence-informed; and
- it should support ambitious expectations for every learner.

Assessment is therefore used to guide teaching, celebrate achievement and inform future curriculum planning rather than becoming an end in itself.

Assessment for Learning

The majority of assessment at Riverside Bridge School takes place through high-quality day-to-day teaching. Teachers continually observe how pupils respond to learning, adapt activities, provide appropriate challenge and identify how learning is developing and when pupils require further consolidation, additional opportunities or increased challenge. Formative assessment may include:

- skilled observation;
- practical activities;
- communication attempts;

- learner's responses;
- photographs and video evidence where appropriate;
- completed work;
- questioning;
- peer interaction; and
- professional reflection.

This ongoing assessment enables staff to respond immediately to individual needs and ensures that teaching remains responsive throughout every lesson.

Development Profiles

Development Profiles are a key feature of assessment at Riverside Bridge School. Within each curriculum subject and Subject Area of Learning, teachers evaluate the extent to which the learning represented by each relevant Stem is developing using the Development Indicators: Acquiring, Developing, Mastering and Generalising. These assessments build a holistic picture of the pupil's learning and development across the curriculum.

The Development Profile is not a checklist or a linear programme through which every learner is expected to progress at the same pace. It brings together assessment across the curriculum, enabling staff to recognise strengths, patterns of development and areas in which learning requires further opportunities, consolidation, support or challenge. The Development Profile supports teachers to:

- monitor development across curriculum learning;
- recognise strengths and patterns within the learner's profile;
- inform responsive teaching and personalised curriculum experiences;
- contribute to EHCP and annual review processes;
- support professional discussion and moderation; and
- inform Learning Pathway placement and review.

Profiles are reviewed regularly and updated through ongoing assessment so that they remain an accurate reflection of each learner's current development.

Using the Development Indicators

Teachers use the Development Indicators to evaluate the extent to which the knowledge, understanding or skill represented by each Stem has developed. Judgements are based on observation of the pupil's learning across meaningful opportunities and contexts rather than a single performance or isolated piece of evidence.

Acquiring, Developing, Mastering and Generalising do not represent pupil levels and are not stages through which pupils must progress at a predetermined rate. They enable teachers to recognise how learning becomes increasingly established, secure and transferable over time.

Education, Health and Care Plan Outcomes

Assessment is closely aligned with each learner's Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

EHCP outcomes are not assessed separately from the curriculum. Instead, they are integrated into everyday learning so that progress towards statutory outcomes is achieved through meaningful educational experiences. Teachers consider how curriculum activities contribute to communication, independence, physical development, social interaction, emotional wellbeing and preparation for adulthood alongside subject-specific learning. Evidence gathered through classroom practice, observations and professional collaboration informs annual reviews and helps demonstrate the progress learners are making towards their longer-term aspirations.

Recording and reporting progress

Teachers maintain appropriate records of assessment that enable progress to be monitored over time and shared with pupils, families and professionals. Assessment information contributes to:

- curriculum planning;
- Development Profiles;
- EHCP reviews;
- annual reports;
- parent consultations;
- transition planning; and
- whole-school curriculum evaluation.

Information is recorded in ways that are proportionate, meaningful and useful to teaching, avoiding unnecessary workload whilst ensuring that progress can be demonstrated clearly.

Moderation and professional dialogue

Professional discussion plays an essential role in ensuring the accuracy and consistency of assessment. Teachers regularly work with colleagues, curriculum leaders and senior leaders to review evidence, discuss professional judgement and agree expectations across curriculum pathways. Where appropriate, moderation also includes collaboration with therapists and other professionals to ensure that assessment reflects the learner's wider development and not solely classroom performance. This collaborative approach strengthens consistency while recognising that professional judgement remains central within specialist education.

Evaluating the curriculum

Assessment is used not only to evaluate learners but also to evaluate the curriculum itself. Leaders consider a wide range of evidence to determine whether the curriculum is achieving its intended aims, including:

- pupil progress;
- Development Profile information;
- EHCP outcomes;
- work scrutiny;
- lesson visits;
- curriculum planning;
- pupil voice;
- parent and carer feedback;
- staff feedback;
- attendance and engagement;
- behaviour and wellbeing information;
- destination outcomes; and
- preparation for adulthood achievements.

Curriculum evaluation enables leaders to identify strengths, respond to emerging needs and ensure that the curriculum continues to reflect current research, statutory guidance and the changing profile of learners attending Riverside Bridge School.

Continuous improvement

Assessment at Riverside Bridge School is part of an ongoing cycle of improvement. Information gathered through assessment informs future curriculum development, professional learning, resource allocation and strategic planning. Leaders continually review whether the curriculum remains ambitious, inclusive and relevant, making refinements where necessary to improve outcomes for learners. This reflective approach ensures that assessment is not simply a record of past achievement, but an integral part of responsive teaching, curriculum evaluation and continuous improvement.

Section 11

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT & PREPARING FOR ADULTHOOD

Developing independence. Building confidence. Preparing for adulthood.

At Riverside Bridge School, Personal Development and Preparing for Adulthood are not discrete subjects or additional curriculum programmes. They represent the purpose of the curriculum itself. We believe that education should enable every learner to develop the knowledge, confidence, communication and independence needed to lead a fulfilling life. Our curriculum also seeks to develop resilience, emotional wellbeing, positive relationships, self-awareness, curiosity, responsibility and the ability to participate meaningfully within family, school and community life.

For many of our learners, these aspects of development will have as great an impact upon future quality of life as any qualification or academic outcome. Consequently, Personal Development is not confined to specific lessons or themed weeks. It is experienced throughout the school day, embedded within teaching, relationships, routines, community experiences and every interaction between adults and learners.

Preparation for adulthood begins from the moment a learner joins Riverside Bridge School. It is not something that starts during the later years of education. From their earliest experiences of making choices, expressing preferences and communicating intentionally, learners are developing the foundations that will support increasing independence, confidence and participation throughout adult life.

As learners mature, these experiences become progressively broader and more sophisticated. The curriculum provides increasing opportunities for learners to understand themselves, contribute to their communities, develop aspirations and prepare for the responsibilities and opportunities of adulthood. The contexts change as pupils grow older, but the underlying ambition remains constant: to support every learner to become as independent, confident and fulfilled as possible.

The Curriculum Drivers

Personal Development is underpinned by the Curriculum Drivers, which provide the values and experiences that shape every learner's journey through school.

- **A Sense of Self -** Developing a strong sense of self is fundamental to lifelong wellbeing and independence. The curriculum supports learners to understand who they are, recognise their strengths, communicate their needs, develop confidence and build resilience. Pupils are encouraged to make choices, express preferences, develop self-awareness and increasingly advocate for themselves using the communication methods that best meet their individual needs.

- **A Sense of Community -** Learners are supported to understand that they belong to a range of communities, including their family, school, local area and wider society. Through collaborative learning, shared experiences and community participation, pupils develop respect, co-operation, responsibility and an appreciation of the valuable contribution they can make to the lives of others.
- **A Sense of Culture -** The curriculum enables learners to explore their own identity whilst developing an appreciation of the diverse cultures, beliefs, traditions and experiences that make up modern society. Through literature, music, art, history, religious education and cultural experiences, pupils broaden their understanding of the world and develop respect for others.
- **A Sense of Wonder -** Curiosity lies at the heart of lifelong learning. Riverside Bridge School encourages pupils to explore, investigate, create and ask questions through rich learning experiences that inspire imagination, creativity and discovery. Whether through sensory exploration, scientific enquiry, outdoor learning or the expressive arts, learners are encouraged to experience the excitement of learning something new.
- **A Sense of Future -** Every learner has the right to look towards the future with optimism and ambition. This Driver ensures that the curriculum continually helps pupils understand that today's learning creates tomorrow's opportunities. As pupils mature, learning increasingly focuses on developing aspirations, confidence and the knowledge and skills required for adult life.

Preparing for Adulthood across the curriculum

Preparing for Adulthood is not associated with a particular learning pathway. Learners do not need to progress into a more formal pathway in order to access careers education, enterprise, work-related learning, community experiences or accreditation. These opportunities become increasingly age-appropriate and personalised within each learner's existing curriculum pathway. Preparing for Adulthood is woven throughout every aspect of the curriculum rather than being delivered as a separate programme. The curriculum reflects the nationally recognised Preparing for Adulthood outcomes of employment, independent living, community inclusion, and health and wellbeing. These themes influence curriculum planning across every Learning Pathway, curriculum subject and Subject Area of Learning, ensuring that learning remains purposeful, relevant and connected to life beyond school. For younger learners, preparation for adulthood may involve developing early communication, making choices, participating in routines, building relationships and becoming increasingly aware of themselves and others. As pupils grow older, these foundations develop into greater independence, self-advocacy, community participation, employability skills and preparation for adult responsibilities.

Careers Education and Employability

Careers education is a continuous process that develops throughout a learner's time at Riverside Bridge School rather than a programme introduced during the final years of education.

Pupils are encouraged to recognise their strengths, explore interests, understand different roles within society and develop aspirations for the future. As they move through their school journey, opportunities become increasingly focused on employability, enterprise, volunteering, work-related learning and, where appropriate, work experience.

Alongside vocational experiences, the curriculum develops the transferable skills that employers and communities value, including communication, teamwork, organisation, resilience, problem-solving, responsibility and adaptability. These qualities support learners not only in employment but in every aspect of adult life.

Developing independence for life

Independence is understood as far more than completing tasks without support. It involves developing confidence, making informed choices, solving problems, communicating effectively, managing emotions and taking increasing responsibility for everyday life. As learners mature, opportunities become increasingly age appropriate and personalised. Everyday routines provide contexts for developing personal organisation, self-care, food preparation, household skills, money management, travel awareness, digital competence, personal safety and self-advocacy. These experiences are carefully planned so that they reflect each learner's aspirations, future living arrangements and long-term outcomes. The aim is not for every learner to become independent in the same way, but for every learner to achieve the greatest possible independence within the context of their own abilities, preferences and future circumstances.

Health, wellbeing and relationships

Preparing learners for adulthood also requires them to understand how to lead healthy, safe and fulfilling lives. The curriculum promotes physical health, emotional wellbeing, positive relationships and personal safety through everyday teaching and carefully planned learning experiences. Age-appropriate Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) enables pupils to develop an understanding of themselves, respect for others and the knowledge needed to make informed decisions as they mature.

Positive Support, emotional regulation and mental wellbeing are embedded throughout the curriculum. Learners are encouraged to recognise emotions, develop coping strategies, build resilience and seek support when needed, creating strong foundations for lifelong wellbeing.

Learning beyond the classroom

Community learning, educational visits, residential experiences, enterprise, volunteering and work-related opportunities provide authentic contexts through which pupils can apply communication, independence and personal development beyond the classroom.

These experiences strengthen confidence, social understanding and generalisation whilst enabling learners to participate increasingly meaningfully within their communities.

Working towards brighter futures

Every learner's journey towards adulthood is unique. Some pupils will progress towards supported or independent employment, accredited qualifications and greater independence within their communities. Others will focus on developing communication, relationships, self-care and meaningful participation in family and community life. Regardless of pathway, the school's ambition remains the same: to provide every learner with the knowledge, skills, confidence and opportunities needed to communicate effectively, develop meaningful relationships, participate actively within their communities and prepare for a fulfilling adult life. Personal Development and Preparing for Adulthood are therefore not additional elements of the curriculum; they represent the purpose towards which the curriculum is directed.

Section 12

PARTNERSHIP WITH FAMILIES AND PROFESSIONALS

Building partnerships. Sharing expertise. Strengthening outcomes.

At Riverside Bridge School, we recognise that the most effective education is achieved when learners, families, school staff and external professionals work together with shared purpose, mutual respect and a clear understanding of the individual learner. No single person or profession holds all of the knowledge needed to support a child or young person with complex needs. Families bring an understanding of the learner's history, personality, routines, communication and aspirations that cannot be replicated elsewhere. School staff contribute detailed knowledge of learning, curriculum and day-to-day progress, while therapists and external professionals provide specialist expertise that helps remove barriers and improve access to education. For this reason, partnership working is not viewed as an additional aspect of curriculum delivery. It is an essential part of how the curriculum is personalised, implemented and reviewed.

Families as partners in learning

Parents and carers know their children best and provide invaluable insight into their strengths, interests, communication, preferences, needs and experiences beyond school. Riverside Bridge School values this expertise and seeks to build relationships with families that are open, respectful and based on genuine collaboration. Partnership begins from the point of admission and continues throughout a learner's time at the school. Families contribute to the development of a shared understanding of how their child learns, what motivates them, what may cause anxiety or dysregulation and what their aspirations are for the future. This knowledge directly informs curriculum planning. For example, a learner's interests may provide an important route into engagement, while family knowledge of communication approaches may enable staff to interpret subtle responses more accurately. Information about routines, sensory needs or successful strategies used at home can also support greater consistency between environments. Likewise, school staff share observations and strategies with families so that learning can be reinforced and generalised beyond the classroom where appropriate. The aim is not for home and school to become identical environments, but for learners to experience a coherent understanding of their communication, development and support needs.

Communication between home and school

Effective partnership depends upon regular, meaningful communication. Riverside Bridge School seeks to ensure that communication with families is accessible, respectful and focused on what matters most for the learner. This includes celebrating achievement as well as discussing concerns, changes in need or future priorities. Families are provided with opportunities to contribute through annual reviews, progress discussions, reports, consultation meetings, person-centred planning and wider school events. Informal communication also plays an important role in ensuring that significant information can be shared promptly. Where learners are unable to describe their own experiences verbally, communication between home and school becomes particularly important. Changes in sleep, health, medication, routines, emotional presentation or family circumstances may significantly affect engagement and learning, while changes observed within school may provide equally valuable information to families. The school therefore regards communication with families as part of understanding the learner as a whole person.

Person-centred planning

Learners remain at the centre of all partnership working. Wherever possible, pupils are supported to contribute to decisions about their education in ways that reflect their communication profile and developmental level. Learner voice may be expressed through speech, AAC, symbols, photographs, choices, observation, behaviour, preferences or other forms of communication. Person-centred planning seeks to understand not only what adults believe a learner needs, but what is important **to** the learner as well as what is important **for** them. This becomes increasingly significant as pupils mature and begin to make decisions relating to adulthood, relationships, community participation, further education, employment and future support.

Families and professionals work together to ensure that the learner's strengths, aspirations and preferences remain central to these decisions.

Multi-disciplinary working

Our curriculum is strengthened through collaboration with a wide range of professionals. Depending on individual need, this may include Speech and Language Therapists, Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists, Educational Psychologists, medical professionals, social care teams, sensory specialists and other external agencies. Specialist advice is not treated as separate from education. Instead, recommendations are considered in relation to the learner's curriculum access and incorporated into everyday practice wherever appropriate. Specialist advice may inform communication systems, environmental and sensory adaptations, positioning, mobility, physical access and approaches to independence. This integrated approach ensures that professionals work towards shared outcomes rather than operating in isolation.

Working together around EHCP outcomes

Education, Health and Care Plans provide an important framework for partnership working. EHCP outcomes often depend upon contributions from several adults and professional disciplines, and progress is therefore most effective when those involved share an understanding of the learner's priorities and how they can be developed within everyday life. Riverside Bridge School seeks to embed EHCP outcomes within meaningful curriculum experiences rather than treating them as separate targets. Families and professionals contribute to reviewing progress and identifying future priorities, helping ensure that outcomes remain relevant, ambitious and connected to the learner's long-term aspirations.

Annual reviews provide a formal opportunity for this collaboration, but partnership around EHCP outcomes takes place throughout the year.

Generalising learning across environments

Families and external professionals play an important role in supporting learners to apply knowledge and skills across different environments. Through shared observations and consistent approaches, adults can identify where learning is becoming secure and where further opportunities for practice and application are needed. This helps pupils use their learning increasingly successfully across school, home and community contexts.

Partnership in Preparing for Adulthood

As learners move closer to adulthood, effective partnership becomes increasingly important. Transition from school is rarely the responsibility of a single organisation. Families, school staff, careers professionals, colleges, employers, health services, adult social care and community providers may all contribute to planning for the next stage of a young person's life. Riverside Bridge School seeks to begin these conversations early so that transition is a gradual process rather than an event that occurs when a learner leaves school. Families are supported to understand the options available, while learners are provided with opportunities to develop familiarity with new environments, people and expectations wherever possible.

College visits, work-related experiences, community participation and other Preparing for Adulthood activities help learners develop the knowledge and confidence needed for successful transition.

The school's aim is for future planning to reflect both realistic support needs and ambitious expectations for what each learner may be able to achieve.

Partnerships with the wider community

The wider community is also an important educational partner. Riverside Bridge School works with local organisations, employers, cultural institutions, leisure providers and community groups to broaden the

experiences available to learners and create authentic contexts in which curriculum learning can be applied.

These partnerships enable pupils to encounter different people and environments, develop confidence outside school and practise communication, independence and social participation in real situations. They also help the wider community understand and value the contribution that children and young people with SEND can make. This reciprocal relationship is important. Community participation is not simply about teaching pupils how to access society; it is also about creating opportunities for learners to be visible, valued and included within it.

A shared commitment to the learner

Successful partnership requires trust, openness and a willingness to listen to different perspectives. There may be occasions when families, school staff or professionals hold different views about the most appropriate approach. Where this occurs, Riverside Bridge School seeks to work constructively, keeping the learner's needs, rights, wellbeing and long-term aspirations at the centre of discussion. Ultimately, partnership working strengthens the curriculum because it enables everyone involved to build a fuller understanding of the learner and work towards common goals. By bringing together family expertise, specialist professional knowledge and high-quality education, Riverside Bridge School seeks to provide each learner with consistent support, meaningful opportunities and the strongest possible foundation for future life.

Section 13

LEADERSHIP, MONITORING AND REVIEW

Setting direction. Monitoring implementation. Driving improvement.

Strong curriculum leadership is essential to ensuring that the curriculum remains ambitious, coherent and responsive to the needs of learners. At Riverside Bridge School, curriculum leadership is understood as a shared responsibility. The Headteacher retains overall accountability for the quality of education, but the development and evaluation of the curriculum involves senior leaders, curriculum and subject leaders, teachers, therapists, governors and the wider staff team. The purpose of curriculum monitoring is not simply to check compliance. It is to understand whether the curriculum is being implemented as intended, whether learners are accessing it successfully and whether it is making a meaningful difference to their knowledge, communication, independence, wellbeing and preparation for adulthood. Monitoring therefore focuses on both quality of provision and impact on learners.

Strategic leadership of the curriculum

The Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team provide strategic direction for the curriculum and ensure that it remains aligned with the school's vision, improvement priorities and long-term ambitions for learners. Leaders are responsible for maintaining a coherent curriculum architecture, ensuring that the curriculum pathways remain appropriately defined and that themed curriculum maps, Subject Areas of Learning, assessment systems and specialist approaches continue to work together effectively. They also ensure that curriculum development reflects the changing profile of learners attending Riverside Bridge School, developments in specialist education and relevant national guidance. Where practice evolves, leaders consider how those developments should be reflected across the curriculum rather than introducing isolated initiatives. This is particularly important in areas such as Communication, Positive Support, therapeutic practice and Preparing for Adulthood, where whole-school consistency is essential.

Curriculum and subject leadership

Subject leaders play an important role in ensuring that learning remains ambitious, progressive and well sequenced. Their role is not simply to maintain documents or monitor planning. They help staff understand the intent of the curriculum, support the development of subject and pathway knowledge and evaluate how effectively curriculum content is being translated into meaningful learning experiences. Subject leaders consider whether important knowledge and skills are being revisited appropriately, whether progression is clear and whether learners are being given sufficient opportunities to generalise and apply what they have learnt. They also help identify where curriculum content may need refinement in response to assessment information, changes in pupil need or developments in specialist practice.

The role of teachers

Teachers are responsible for translating the curriculum into high-quality learning experiences. They use curriculum maps, Development Profiles, EHCP outcomes, communication information, therapeutic advice and ongoing assessment to plan learning that is ambitious and personalised. Teachers also contribute directly to curriculum development. Their professional knowledge of learners provides essential evidence about what is working well, where barriers remain and where curriculum content or teaching approaches may need to be adapted. Curriculum review is therefore not something done to teachers. It is a collaborative process that draws upon their expertise and day-to-day experience.

The contribution of therapists and specialist professionals

Therapists and specialist professionals contribute to curriculum quality by helping staff understand and remove barriers to learning. Their role is particularly important in relation to communication, sensory regulation, physical access, emotional wellbeing and independence.

Curriculum monitoring therefore considers not only whether therapeutic recommendations exist, but whether they are understood and meaningfully embedded within classroom practice. This reflects the school's integrated approach in which education and therapy work towards shared outcomes rather than operating as separate systems.

Monitoring the quality of the curriculum

Curriculum quality is evaluated through a range of evidence so that leaders develop a balanced and reliable understanding of provision. This may include lesson visits, learning walks, curriculum discussions, review of planning and pupil work, assessment information, Development Profiles, EHCP progress, moderation, pupil engagement, family feedback and professional dialogue. No single source of evidence is used in isolation. A learning walk, for example, may show how communication systems are being used; assessment information may show whether learning is being retained; pupil work may demonstrate increasing subject knowledge; and family feedback may indicate whether learning is transferring beyond school. Taken together, these sources provide a fuller picture of curriculum effectiveness.

Evaluating impact

The impact of the curriculum is considered holistically. Leaders evaluate whether learners are:

- developing knowledge and understanding;
- communicating with increasing purpose;
- becoming more independent;
- generalising learning across settings;
- developing confidence and resilience;

- participating more fully in school and community life;
- developing the knowledge, skills and independence that support preparation for adulthood.

These outcomes are considered alongside academic attainment and accredited achievement where appropriate. This broader view reflects the nature of the curriculum and ensures that important developmental gains are recognised without lowering expectations for academic learning.

Pupil voice and learner experience

Learners should have opportunities to influence the curriculum and share their experience of school. At Riverside Bridge School, pupil voice is understood broadly. For some learners, this may involve formal discussion, surveys or School Council. For others, preferences may be communicated through AAC, symbols, photographs, gesture, choice-making, behaviour or observation. Staff therefore consider both what learners say and what they communicate through engagement, avoidance, preference and participation. This helps leaders understand not only whether the curriculum is being delivered, but whether learners experience it as meaningful, accessible and engaging.

Family and community feedback

Families provide another important source of curriculum evaluation. Their observations can help identify whether knowledge and skills are transferring beyond school, whether learners are becoming more independent and whether curriculum priorities remain relevant to future aspirations. Feedback from employers, community partners, colleges and other external organisations also helps leaders evaluate the effectiveness of preparation for adulthood, work-related learning and transition planning.

Professional development and curriculum improvement

Curriculum quality depends upon staff having the knowledge and confidence to implement it effectively. Professional development is therefore closely connected to curriculum priorities. Training, coaching, collaborative planning, moderation and professional discussion help staff deepen their understanding of specialist pedagogy, communication, Positive Support, subject knowledge, assessment and preparation for adulthood. Where monitoring identifies areas requiring improvement, the first response should not automatically be increased scrutiny. Leaders consider what additional knowledge, resources, modelling or professional support staff may require in order to strengthen practice. In this way, curriculum monitoring becomes part of a cycle of professional learning and improvement.

The role of governors

The Governing Board provides strategic oversight and challenge. Governors seek assurance that the curriculum remains ambitious, broad, inclusive and appropriately matched to the needs of our learners.

They consider whether curriculum design reflects the school's vision, whether statutory responsibilities are met and whether learners are being prepared effectively for future life. Governors receive information about curriculum development, learner outcomes and school improvement priorities and use this to hold leaders appropriately to account. Their role is strategic rather than operational, providing challenge and assurance while enabling leaders to retain professional responsibility for curriculum design and implementation.

Curriculum review

The curriculum is reviewed continuously rather than only when this policy is formally updated. Themed curriculum maps, pathway expectations, assessment approaches and specialist practice may evolve in response to evidence, learner need, professional learning and developments within the school. Formal review provides an opportunity to consider the curriculum as a whole and ensure that its different elements remain coherent.

The school will consider whether the curriculum continues to:

- reflect the needs and aspirations of current learners;
- provide clear curriculum progression within every learning pathway;
- maintain appropriate breadth and challenge;
- embed communication, independence and Positive Support effectively;
- integrate therapeutic practice;
- support Personal Development and Preparing for Adulthood; and
- remain aligned with the school's vision and strategic priorities.

This policy will normally be reviewed annually, or sooner where significant changes to curriculum provision, legislation, national guidance or school practice make this necessary. Curriculum review remains an ongoing process of reflection, evaluation and improvement, ensuring that provision continues to respond to learner need, developing professional knowledge and ambitious expectations for children and young people with SEND.

Section 14

RELATED POLICIES & FRAMEWORKS

Connecting practice. Strengthening consistency.

The Curriculum Policy should not be read in isolation. It forms part of Riverside Bridge School's wider framework of policies, strategies and guidance that collectively support the delivery of high-quality education for all learners. Whilst this policy establishes the school's curriculum intent, architecture and principles, other policies and frameworks provide further detail about specific aspects of curriculum implementation, safeguarding, teaching and learner support.

In particular, this policy should be read alongside the following documents:

- Teaching and Learning and Assessment Policy
- Total Communication Framework
- Positive Support Framework
- Preparing for Adulthood Policy
- Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) Policy
- CEIAG Policy
- BridgeWorks – Structured Teaching Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- ICT Acceptable Use Policy
- Accessibility Plan
- Equality Information and Objectives
- SEND Information Report
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

These policies complement one another and should not be viewed as separate initiatives. They contribute collectively to ensuring that every learner experiences a safe, ambitious, inclusive and well-sequenced curriculum.

The curriculum at Riverside Bridge School is ultimately judged by the difference it makes to the lives of its learners. Through ambitious, personalised and meaningful education, we seek to ensure that every pupil develops the knowledge, communication, independence and confidence to participate as fully as possible in school, their community and adult life. Every learner at Riverside Bridge School is entitled to:

- an ambitious and personalised curriculum;
- effective communication support;
- high-quality teaching;

- opportunities to develop independence;
- meaningful assessment;
- access to enrichment and community experiences;
- appropriate therapeutic support;
- preparation for adulthood;
- learning within a safe, inclusive and respectful environment.

APPENDICES

THE CURRICULUM MODEL

RIVERSIDE BRIDGE SCHOOL
INSPIRE, EMPOWER, ACHIEVE

Our curriculum is designed around our pupils. It is ambitious, inclusive and personalised, enabling every pupil to make progress, build independence and prepare for a future full of possibilities.

FOUR PRINCIPLES FOR LEARNING

- Understanding the Individual
- Learning and Development
- Enabling Environments
- Positive and Effective Relationships

FIVE CURRICULUM DRIVERS

- A Sense of Self
- A Sense of Community
- A Sense of Culture
- A Sense of Wonder
- A Sense of Future

CURRICULUM STRUCTURE – WHAT WE TEACH

Curriculum Subjects
Broad and balanced subject disciplines.

→

Subject Areas of Learning
Essential and meaningful areas.

→

Stems of Learning
Small, sequenced steps that build knowledge and skills.

Teachers use the Stems of Learning to plan meaningful, personalised learning experiences and identify appropriate next steps.

LEARNING PATHWAYS

Learning Pathways reflect pupils' differing learning profiles and enable teaching, communication and support to be matched to individual strengths and needs.

Flow 1a	Flow 1b	Flow 2	Flow 3
Pre-formal: Exploratory	Pre-formal: Emerging Symbolic	Semi-formal	Formal
Exploration, early interaction and play.	Joint attention, early symbolic understanding and social intent.	Extended symbolic meaning, functional application and increasing independence.	Conceptual reasoning, abstraction and increasingly explicit subject learning.

CURRICULUM ENABLERS

- **Total Communication** – Removes communication barriers and creates meaningful opportunities to communicate.
- **Positive Support** – Supports emotional safety, regulation, participation and successful engagement.
- **Integrated Therapeutic Practice** – Supports access, participation and development through coordinated specialist practice.
- **Personalisation** – Ensures learning reflects the individual's strengths, needs, communication and aspirations.
- **Community Learning** – Provides authentic contexts in which learning can be applied and generalised.

BRIDGEWORKS – OUR STRUCTURED TEACHING APPROACH

BridgeWorks provides the structure, clarity and consistency that enable our pupils to understand their world, communicate, learn and grow in independence.

It shapes how environments are organised, how information is presented, how activities are structured and how independence is taught.

HOW WE ASSESS & TRACK PROGRESS

Stems of Learning → Assessed using the Progress Scale

- ACQUIRING
- DEVELOPING
- MASTERING
- GENERALISING

Development Profiles bring together progress across the Stems of Learning, professional judgement and personalised priorities.

PREPARING FOR ADULTHOOD

- Employment
- Independent Living
- Community Inclusion
- Health & Wellbeing

Preparing for Adulthood develops across all four pathways and becomes increasingly age-appropriate as learners mature.

OUR AMBITION FOR EVERY LEARNER

Communication · Knowledge · Confidence · Independence · Participation · Quality of Life

Inspiring communication, empowering independence, achieving brighter futures.

RIVERSIDE BRIDGE SCHOOL
INSPIRE, EMPOWER, ACHIEVE

THE LEARNING PATHWAYS

Learning Pathways reflect pupils' differing learning profiles and enable teaching, communication and support to be matched to individual strengths and needs.

Pupils are grouped according to their learning profiles and needs rather than solely by chronological age or Key Stage, while ensuring appropriate consideration of age, peer relationships, safeguarding and social development.

	FOCUS	LEARNING STYLE	COMMUNICATION	SCERTS	MRO MODEL	STRATEGIES	CURRICULUM
FLOW 1a **Pre-formal: Exploratory**	Building early awareness, attention and connection through sensory experiences and positive interactions.	Pre-symbolic: facial expressions, body movements, sensory responses, behaviours. Strong reliance on intensive interaction, sensory play, adult co-regulation, objects of reference, simple Now & Next.	Pre-intentional behaviours – responds to familiar voices, eye contact, vocalisation for attention. Early joint attention beginnings. Bridges to EYFS Listening & Attention.	• Social Partner stage – focus on early interaction and joint attention. • Means: pre-intentional behaviours (eye gaze, vocalisation, sensory cues). • Reasons: basic needs, comfort, attention-seeking. • Opportunities: 1:1 intensive interaction, predictable routines, sensory play, Attention Autism Stage 1.	Motivation through sensory experiences and social interactions. Relationships are central to learning. Opportunities for choice and engagement.	• Intensive Interaction • Attention Autism (Stage 1) • Objects of Reference • Sensory Stories • Makaton signs modelled	Sensory curriculum with early skills across Communication, Exploration, Independence and Wellbeing.
FLOW 1b **Pre-formal: Emerging Symbolic**	Developing joint attention, early symbolic understanding and intentional communication within motivating contexts.	Still highly sensory-based, but starting to use conventional gestures, symbols, and early AAC (Makaton, low-tech core boards). Beginning to show joint attention and purposeful exchanges with adults; can follow simple Now/Next and short visual schedules.	Purposeful interaction – follows pointing/gestures, imitates, early turn-taking, uses single symbols/signs/ words. Bridges to EYFS Speaking.	• Social Partner or transitioning into Language Partner stage – broadening range of communication and increasing social motivation. • Means: expanding use of single symbols, signs, simple AAC. • Reasons: choice-making, sharing enjoyment, requesting, turn-taking games. • Opportunities: small-group sensory routines, Attention Autism Stage 2, structured play, Now/Next boards.	Motivation through meaningful activities. Relationships build understanding and intent. Choices support engagement.	• Visual Supports • Total Communication • Intensive Interaction • Attention Autism (Stage 2) • Social Stories • Early AAC Strategies	Functional curriculum focusing on Communication, Independence, Social Skills and Early Learning.
FLOW 2 **Semi-formal**	Applying skills in practical ways across different contexts and becoming more independent learners.	Builds on F1b learning style (symbols, Makaton, simple speech) but moves toward functional use – applying these to routines, problem-solving, teamwork and independence; increasing vocabulary (action words, names, feelings); more consistent early literacy/numeracy supported by visuals and repetition.	Moves to multi-symbol/ multi-word requests, follows multi-step instructions, shares feelings, short group interactions. Introduces "I don't understand" → self-advocacy. Aligned to PKS.	• Language Partner stage moving into Language Partner + – increased functional communication applied in daily contexts, longer messages. • Means: expanding to multi-symbol/word utterances, AAC with core vocabulary. • Reasons: sharing opinions, requesting help, self-advocacy ("I don't understand"). • Opportunities: through supported enterprise, group tasks, role-play.	Motivation through real-life relevance and success. Relationships support challenge and growth. Learners experience increased autonomy.	• Visual Timetables • Now/Next Boards • Task Analysis • Communication Systems • Social Stories • Positive Behaviour Support	Semi-formal curriculum with functional academic, vocational and life skills focus.
FLOW 3 **Formal**	Developing understanding, conceptual thinking and greater independence across all areas of learning.	Structured spoken language, reading/writing, symbolic representation at a basic level; can work with concepts (cause/ effect, time, sequencing, scientific explanation); able to use ICT, AAC or oral and written speech for structured communication.	Maintains multi-turn conversations, starts to adapt for audience/context, uses some reasoning (explanatory/figurative language, debates, negotiation). Bridges to KS1 & 2 NC expectations.	• Early Conversational Partner stage – beginning to use communication flexibly in small and academic tasks. • Means: developing spoken language, speech supported by writing and visuals, higher-level AAC. • Reasons: reflecting events, explaining ideas, adapting language for peers/adults. • Opportunities: through short discussions, storytelling, class presentation, and NC-linked group activities.	Motivation through purpose, goals and future aspirations. Relationships coach and challenge learners to achieve their potential.	• Explicit Instruction • Metacognitive Strategies • Discussion & Debate • Self-Advocacy • Study Skills • Preparation for Adulthood	Formal curriculum across academic subjects, vocational pathways and accredited learning (where appropriate).

THE LEARNING PATHWAY IN CONTEXT

LEARNING PATHWAY
Reflects the pupil's learning profile and the approaches through which they learn most successfully.

CURRICULUM
The knowledge, skills and experiences pupils are taught.

DEVELOPMENT PROFILE & EHCP
Identifies personalised priorities, outcomes and next steps for the individual pupil.

PREPARING FOR ADULTHOOD
Ensures learning increasingly supports future independence, participation, aspiration and quality of life.

ACCREDITATION
Recognises learning where appropriate and is not linked to a particular pathway.

Inspiring communication, empowering independence, achieving brighter futures.

Inspiring communication, empowering independence, achieving brighter futures.

RIVERSIDE BRIDGE SCHOOL
INSPIRE, EMPOWER, ACHIEVE

Inspiring communication, empowering independence, achieving brighter futures.

RIVERSIDE BRIDGE SCHOOL
INSPIRE, EMPOWER, ACHIEVE

PREPARING FOR ADULTHOOD

Preparing for adulthood develops progressively throughout every pupil's time at school. It is woven through our curriculum so that all pupils build the knowledge, skills and behaviours they need for a fulfilling, independent and healthy adult life.

OUR PURPOSE

We prepare pupils for adulthood by helping them gain the confidence, independence and life skills they need to live the life they choose.

Preparing for adulthood is not a separate pathway or something that begins in Post-16. It starts early, builds steadily and becomes increasingly meaningful and future-focused over time.

THE FOUR AREAS OF PREPARING FOR ADULTHOOD

EMPLOYMENT
Developing work-related knowledge, skills and behaviours so pupils can achieve their employment goals.

INDEPENDENT LIVING
Developing life skills so pupils can be as independent as possible and live safely and successfully.

COMMUNITY INCLUSION
Developing confidence, social skills and relationships so pupils can participate in their communities.

HEALTH & WELLBEING
Developing knowledge, habits and resilience so pupils can lead healthy, happy and safe lives.

A PROGRESSIVE JOURNEY

Learning builds over time and becomes increasingly personalised and future-focused.

1. EARLY FOUNDATIONS
Building awareness, curiosity and early experiences.

Pupils begin to explore people, places and routines with support. They develop communication, choice-making and initial independence skills.

2. DEVELOPING PARTICIPATION AND INDEPENDENCE
Building skills, confidence and increasing independence.

Pupils take part in more purposeful activities. They build skills for work, daily living, relationships and community participation with growing independence.

3. FUNCTIONAL APPLICATION
Applying skills in real-life situations.

Pupils use their skills and knowledge in a range of real and relevant contexts. They solve problems, make choices and take on more responsibility.

4. INCREASINGLY PERSONALISED PREPARATION FOR ADULT LIFE
Preparing for individual goals and next steps.

Learning is individualised to support each pupil's aspirations and plans for the future, including further education, employment, independent living and community life.

EVERY LEARNING PATHWAY ACCESSING PfA

All pupils access preparation for adulthood.

FLOW 1a
Pre-formal: Exploratory

Early connections, sensory experiences and awareness of people, places and routines.

FLOW 1b
Pre-formal: Emerging Symbolic

Developing understanding, communication and simple skills for everyday life.

FLOW 2
Semi-formal

Building independence, functional skills and active participation in real contexts.

FLOW 3
Formal

Increasingly complex skills, responsibilities and preparation for adult life and next steps.

All pathways follow the same progressive journey. The contexts, expectations and complexity of learning become increasingly age-appropriate and future-focused.

HOW WE DO IT

CURRICULUM INTEGRATED
PfA is embedded across all subjects, areas of learning and Stems.

MEANINGFUL EXPERIENCES
Real experiences in school, at home and in the wider community.

PERSONALISED LEARNING
Learning is matched to individual strengths, needs, interests and aspirations.

PARTNERSHIPS THAT SUPPORT
We work with families, employers and community partners.

HIGH EXPECTATIONS FOR EVERY PUPIL
We believe in every pupil and their potential to achieve a great future.

Preparing for adulthood is everyone's responsibility and a golden thread through everything we do. **INDEPENDENCE • PARTICIPATION • CHOICE • WELLBEING • OPPORTUNITY**

RIVERSIDE BRIDGE SCHOOL
INSPIRE, EMPOWER, ACHIEVE

Inspiring communication, empowering independence, achieving brighter futures.

RIVERSIDE BRIDGE SCHOOL
INSPIRE, EMPOWER, ACHIEVE

ASSESSMENT AND PROGRESSION

We assess learning within the Stems of Learning to understand how knowledge, understanding and skills are developing, inform teaching and build a full picture of each pupil's learning.

1. HOW LEARNING IS ORGANISED

CURRICULUM SUBJECT
Subjects provide the context and knowledge for learning.

→

SUBJECT AREA OF LEARNING
Areas organise learning into meaningful, connected themes.

→

STEM OF LEARNING
Stems identify the key strands of knowledge, understanding and skills within each area.

2. HOW EACH STEM IS ASSESSED

OBSERVE THE PUPIL'S LEARNING
Look for what the pupil is doing, how they are doing it and the support they need.

ACQUIRING
A skill or understanding is beginning to emerge; the pupil is encountering and starting to establish it.

→

DEVELOPING
The learning is becoming more established through repeated opportunities and increasing understanding.

→

MASTERING
The learning is becoming secure and can be demonstrated with much less support.

→

GENERALISING
The learning moves beyond the original situation and is applied across different people, places, activities or contexts.

RECORD JUDGEMENT IN THE DEVELOPMENT PROFILE
Record the most appropriate Development Indicator for the Stem in the pupil's Development Profile.

3. ONGOING TEACHING: INFORMED BY ASSESSMENT

OBSERVE
Continue to observe the Stem in a range of situations.

→ **EVALUATE**
Evaluate against the Development Indicators to understand current development.

→ **RECORD**
Record the assessment in the Development Profile.

→ **RESPOND**
Adapt teaching, opportunities, support and challenge based on what has been observed.

→ **REVIEW**
Review and continue observing to identify development, consolidation and application.

Assessment is ongoing and takes place across all curriculum subjects and areas of learning.

4. WHOLE-PUPIL PROFILE

Assessment across the relevant Stems within all curriculum subjects and areas of learning builds a full picture of the pupil's learning and development.

The Development Profile brings this evidence together.

→

5. LEARNING PATHWAY

The completed Development Profile provides evidence of the pupil's overall learning profile across the curriculum and informs professional judgement about the Learning Pathway that best reflects their learning needs.

Flow 1a	Flow 1b	Flow 2	Flow 3
Pre-formal Exploratory	Pre-formal Emerging Symbolic	Semi-formal	Formal

Assessment, teaching and purposeful next steps are connected and continuous, enabling every pupil to progress, achieve and thrive.

RIVERSIDE BRIDGE SCHOOL
INSPIRE, EMPOWER, ACHIEVE