HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

Managing risk. Protecting people. Enabling safe participation.



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 health and safety. It establishes the principles, responsibilities and arrangements through which the school identifies and manages risk, maintains safe working and learning environments and protects the health, safety and wellbeing of pupils, staff, visitors and others affected by school activities.

Riverside Bridge School is committed to providing a safe, healthy and inclusive environment in which pupils, staff, visitors and contractors can learn, work and thrive. We recognise that effective health and safety management is fundamental to high-quality education and to meeting the complex and diverse needs of our pupils.

Health and safety is an integral part of the school's leadership, governance and everyday practice. It influences the design and management of learning environments, curriculum activities, specialist provision, healthcare, personal care, educational visits, premises management and emergency planning. The school is committed to a positive health and safety culture in which risks are identified proactively, responsibilities are understood and learning from incidents informs continuous improvement. As a specialist school for pupils with complex SEND, Riverside Bridge School recognises that safe practice does not mean eliminating all risk. Pupils require meaningful opportunities to explore, communicate, develop independence, access their community and prepare for adulthood. Risk will therefore be managed proportionately, balancing foreseeable hazards with the educational, therapeutic and developmental benefits of participation. The Governing Board and Headteacher will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that safe premises, equipment and systems of work are maintained; appropriate risk assessments are undertaken; staff receive suitable information, instruction, supervision and training; and arrangements are monitored and reviewed to remain responsive to the changing needs of the school.

Health and safety is a shared responsibility. Every member of the school community is expected to act responsibly, follow agreed arrangements, report hazards and concerns promptly and contribute to maintaining safe environments and practice.

Our responsibilities to pupils

Riverside Bridge School will provide learning environments, activities and specialist provision that are appropriately risk assessed and enable pupils to participate as safely and independently as possible. Health and safety planning will take account of pupils' individual communication, sensory, physical, medical and regulation needs and the reasonable adjustments required to support equitable participation.

We will support pupils to develop an increasing understanding of personal safety, risk and responsibility wherever this is appropriate to their developmental stage. Staff will provide the level of supervision and support necessary to protect pupils while avoiding unnecessary restrictions that limit learning, participation or independence.

Through these commitments, Riverside Bridge School aims to create a culture in which effective risk management enables rather than restricts high-quality education. We will continue to strengthen health and safety through clear accountability, professional competence, proportionate risk management and learning from practice.

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APPROVED BY: Governing Board

APPROVED ON: September 2026

REVIEWED DUE ON: September 2027

Section 01

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

Setting expectations. Managing risk. Enabling safe participation.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Riverside Bridge School provides and maintains a safe, healthy and secure environment for pupils, staff, visitors, contractors and all members of the wider school community.

As a specialist school for pupils with complex special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), Riverside Bridge School recognises that health and safety extends beyond statutory compliance.

Effective health and safety arrangements are fundamental to enabling pupils to communicate, regulate, learn, participate and develop independence whilst ensuring that risks are identified, managed and, where appropriate, balanced against the educational, therapeutic and developmental benefits of meaningful experiences.

The school is committed to developing a positive health and safety culture in which every member of the school community understands their responsibilities, actively identifies hazards, reports concerns promptly and contributes to maintaining a safe environment.

Health and safety is regarded as a shared responsibility and is embedded within everyday practice, strategic planning and continuous school improvement.

This policy establishes the arrangements through which Riverside Bridge School manages health and safety, including governance, leadership responsibilities, risk assessment, premises management, curriculum activities, emergency planning, accident reporting, staff training and continuous monitoring. It provides the framework through which statutory duties are met whilst recognising the additional considerations associated with educating pupils with complex SEND.

The policy applies to all activities undertaken by the school, whether on the main site, within the community, during educational visits, home visits, extended provision, work-related learning or any other activity organised or supervised by Riverside Bridge School.

Section 02

LEGISLATIVE AND STATUTORY FRAMEWORK

Meeting duties. Applying guidance. Maintaining compliance.

This policy has been developed with regard to current health and safety relevant legislation, statutory guidance and national health and safety guidance applicable to schools and specialist educational settings.

The school will comply with all relevant legislation and will review this policy regularly to reflect changes in statutory requirements, operational practice and guidance. This policy has particular regard to:

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992
- Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations (PUWER) 1998
- Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations (LOLER) 1998
- Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 (as amended)
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations 2002
- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- Work at Height Regulations 2005
- Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 2013
- Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992
- Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998
- Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012
- Equality Act 2010
- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (current edition)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (current edition)
- Department for Education Health and Safety: Responsibilities and Duties for Schools
- UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) guidance relating to infection prevention and control

Health and safety arrangements are implemented alongside the school's safeguarding, medical, educational and operational procedures to ensure that pupils with complex special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) are educated within an environment that is safe, inclusive and appropriately risk assessed. The school recognises that effective health and safety management is integral to safeguarding, pupil well-being, staff welfare and the delivery of high-quality education.

Section 03

HEALTH AND SAFETY PRINCIPLES

Preventing harm. Managing proportionately. Supporting participation.

Health and safety at Riverside Bridge School is embedded within every aspect of school life and underpins the safe delivery of education, therapy and care.

As a specialist school for pupils with complex special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), the school recognises that effective health and safety management must support learning, communication, independence and participation whilst ensuring that foreseeable risks are identified, assessed and managed appropriately.

The school is committed to fostering a proactive health and safety culture in which everyone understands that maintaining a safe environment is a shared responsibility.

Staff are expected to remain vigilant, report hazards promptly, follow agreed procedures and contribute to the continuous improvement of health and safety practice.

Pupils are supported, according to their age, stage of development and individual needs, to understand and participate in safe practices wherever possible.

Health and safety arrangements are based upon the principles of prevention, proportionality and continuous improvement. Wherever reasonably practicable, risks will be eliminated through effective planning, environmental design, training and safe systems of work.

Where risks cannot be eliminated, suitable control measures will be implemented, monitored and reviewed to ensure they remain effective.

The school recognises that many pupils require carefully managed opportunities to develop independence and life skills. Health and safety is therefore not intended to remove all risk from educational experiences, but to ensure that risks are balanced against the developmental, therapeutic and educational benefits of participation.

Decisions will always be informed by individual risk assessments, professional judgement and, where appropriate, advice from specialist professionals.

Health and safety management at Riverside Bridge School is underpinned by the following principles:

- Every individual has a responsibility to contribute to a safe working and learning environment.
- Risk assessment informs decision-making and supports safe participation rather than unnecessary restriction.
- Pupils' individual needs, medical conditions, communication profiles and sensory differences are central to planning safe practice.
- Hazards, incidents and near misses are reported promptly to enable effective action and continuous improvement.
- Staff are provided with appropriate information, instruction, supervision and training to carry out their roles safely and confidently.
- Health and safety arrangements are regularly monitored, reviewed and adapted to reflect changes in legislation, the school environment and the needs of the school community.

Through these principles, Riverside Bridge School aims to maintain a culture in which safety, safeguarding and wellbeing are integral to high-quality education and where every member of the school community feels confident in their role in promoting and maintaining a safe environment.

Section 04

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Defining accountability. Sharing responsibility. Maintaining oversight.

Maintaining a safe and healthy school environment is a shared responsibility. Whilst specific responsibilities are delegated to individuals according to their roles, every member of the school community has a duty to contribute to the effective management of health and safety.

The Governing Board has strategic responsibility for ensuring that suitable arrangements are in place to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of pupils, staff, visitors and contractors.
The Governing Board will:

- ensure the school meets its statutory health and safety responsibilities;
- receive assurance that effective health and safety systems are operating across the school;
- monitor health and safety performance through reports, audits and compliance monitoring;
- ensure sufficient resources are available to maintain a safe learning and working environment;
- review significant incidents, trends and lessons learned where appropriate;
- promote a culture of continuous improvement and accountability.

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for the day-to-day management of health and safety throughout the school and for ensuring that this policy is implemented effectively.
The Headteacher will:

- provide visible leadership in promoting a positive health and safety culture;
- ensure suitable and sufficient risk assessments are completed, implemented and reviewed;
- ensure appropriate staffing levels and supervision arrangements are maintained;
- ensure the school premises, equipment and learning environments remain safe;
- ensure emergency procedures are established, practised and regularly reviewed;
- ensure staff receive appropriate information, instruction, training and supervision;
- ensure accidents, incidents and near misses are investigated appropriately;
- report significant health and safety matters to the Governing Board.

The Headteacher may delegate operational responsibilities to members of the Senior Leadership Team whilst retaining overall accountability.

The School Business Leader is the school's designated Health and Safety Lead and is responsible for co-ordinating the operational management of health and safety across the school.

Responsibilities include:

- overseeing statutory compliance;
- maintaining the school's health and safety management systems;
- co-ordinating risk assessments and ensuring they are reviewed appropriately;
- overseeing premises compliance and contractor management;
- monitoring statutory inspections, servicing and maintenance programmes;
- investigating significant accidents and incidents;
- maintaining health and safety records and documentation;
- advising leaders on emerging risks;
- reporting health and safety matters to the Headteacher and Governing Board.

The Senior Leadership Team are responsible for ensuring that health and safety arrangements are implemented consistently within their areas of responsibility. They will:

- monitor safe working practices;
- ensure staff understand and follow agreed procedures;
- review risk assessments relating to their areas;
- respond promptly to reported hazards;
- support investigations following incidents;
- promote a positive culture of health and safety through leadership and professional practice.

The Site Team plays a key role in maintaining a safe physical environment. Responsibilities include:

- carrying out routine premises inspections;
- monitoring the condition of buildings, grounds and equipment;
- responding promptly to maintenance concerns;
- completing statutory and planned compliance checks;
- monitoring fire safety systems and emergency equipment;
- identifying hazards and implementing immediate control measures where necessary;
- liaising with contractors and reporting significant concerns to the School Business Leader.

Every member of staff has a personal responsibility to take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their actions. Staff are expected to:

- work in accordance with school policies, procedures and risk assessments;
- report hazards, accidents, incidents and near misses promptly;
- participate in mandatory health and safety training;
- use equipment safely and only for its intended purpose;
- maintain safe classroom and working environments;

- follow agreed moving and handling, healthcare and Positive Support procedures;
- co-operate with investigations and audits;
- contribute to the continuous improvement of health and safety across the school.

Pupils will be supported to develop an understanding of personal safety and safe participation appropriate to their age, developmental stage and individual needs.
Staff will actively teach and reinforce safe practices through the curriculum, daily routines and personalised support, recognising that some pupils will require ongoing adult supervision and adapted approaches to maintain their safety.

Parents and carers play an important role in supporting the school's health and safety arrangements. They are expected to:

- provide accurate and up-to-date information regarding their child's health and medical needs;
- work collaboratively with the school to support agreed risk management arrangements;
- follow the school's health and safety procedures when visiting the site;
- notify the school of any significant changes that may affect their child's safety or wellbeing.

All contractors, visitors and external professionals are expected to comply with the school's health and safety arrangements whilst on site.
Contractors must provide appropriate risk assessments and evidence of competence before commencing work where required. Visitors are expected to follow the school's safeguarding, security and emergency procedures at all times and report any hazards or concerns to a member of staff immediately.

Section 05

RISK ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT

Identifying hazards. Balancing risk. Enabling opportunity.

Effective risk assessment is central to maintaining a safe learning and working environment at Riverside Bridge School. The school is committed to identifying foreseeable hazards, assessing the level of risk and implementing proportionate control measures that enable pupils, staff and visitors to participate safely in school life.

Risk assessments will be suitable and sufficient, proportionate to the level of risk and reviewed regularly to ensure they remain effective. They will be reviewed whenever there is a significant change in circumstances, following an accident or near miss, where concerns have been identified, or at least annually unless a shorter review period is required.

The school recognises that, within a specialist SEND environment, risk assessment extends beyond the physical environment. Individual pupils may require personalised assessments to support their medical needs, communication, regulation, sensory regulation, mobility, personal care, feeding, educational visits or access to specialist equipment. These assessments will be developed collaboratively with relevant professionals and parents or carers where appropriate and will be implemented consistently by all staff.

Health and safety decisions will be informed by both planned and dynamic risk assessment. Whilst written risk assessments provide the framework for safe practice, staff are expected to continually assess changing situations and respond appropriately to emerging risks throughout the school day. Where new hazards are identified, staff will take immediate action to reduce risk, report concerns promptly and seek additional guidance where necessary.

The school recognises the importance of positive risk management. Pupils with complex SEND require carefully planned opportunities to develop communication, independence, resilience and preparation for adulthood. Wherever reasonably practicable, risks will be managed rather than eliminated, allowing pupils to access meaningful educational, therapeutic and community experiences safely. Decisions will always balance the potential benefits of participation against foreseeable risks and will reflect professional judgement, statutory responsibilities and the individual needs of each pupil.

Risk assessments may include, but are not limited to:

- individual pupil risk assessments;
- educational visits and community activities;
- moving and handling;
- personal and intimate care;
- medical procedures and medication;
- Positive Support and restrictive intervention;

- fire safety and emergency evacuation;
- lone working;
- working at height;
- COSHH and hazardous substances;
- premises, equipment and maintenance;
- contractors and construction work;
- off-site and work-related learning;
- extreme weather and environmental hazards.

Risk assessments will be communicated to all relevant staff, monitored through routine practice and reviewed as part of the school's quality assurance processes to ensure that control measures remain effective and continue to reflect the needs of the school community.

Section 06

SAFE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT AND SECURITY

Creating safe spaces. Maintaining security. Supporting access.

Riverside Bridge School is committed to providing a safe, secure and well-maintained environment that supports high-quality education whilst protecting the health, safety and wellbeing of pupils, staff, visitors and contractors. The school recognises that the physical environment plays a significant role in promoting independence, reducing anxiety and enabling pupils with complex SEND to learn safely.

The school will ensure that buildings, grounds, classrooms, therapy spaces, specialist learning environments and external areas are maintained in a safe condition through planned maintenance programmes, routine inspections, statutory compliance checks and responsive repairs. Identified hazards will be addressed promptly and, where immediate action is not possible, suitable control measures will be implemented to minimise risk.

Security arrangements are designed to safeguard pupils whilst maintaining an accessible and welcoming environment for families and professionals. Access to the school site is controlled through established visitor management procedures. All visitors and contractors are required to report to reception on arrival, sign in using the school's visitor management system, wear appropriate identification and follow safeguarding and health and safety procedures throughout their visit.

Defects, hazards or maintenance concerns identified by staff will be reported promptly through the school's agreed reporting systems. Significant risks will be prioritised and managed without delay to ensure the continued safety of the school community.

Where contractors undertake work on the school site, appropriate arrangements will be implemented to protect pupils, staff and visitors.

Contractors must demonstrate competence, comply with relevant health and safety legislation, provide suitable risk assessments and method statements where appropriate, and work in accordance with the school's safeguarding and site management procedures. The school reserves the right to suspend or terminate work where health and safety standards are not met.

The school recognises that many pupils require highly structured environments to support communication, emotional regulation and safe participation. Classrooms and learning environments will therefore be organised to minimise unnecessary hazards, promote safe movement, reduce sensory overload where appropriate and enable pupils to access learning, therapy and daily routines safely and consistently.

The school will maintain appropriate arrangements to ensure that health and safety remains an integral part of premises management, environmental planning and continuous improvement.

Section 07

PREMISES, EQUIPMENT AND STATUTORY COMPLIANCE

Maintaining standards. Managing equipment. Securing compliance.

Riverside Bridge School is committed to ensuring that all buildings, facilities, equipment and infrastructure are maintained in a safe condition and remain fit for their intended purpose. Effective premises management supports the safety, wellbeing and accessibility of the school environment whilst enabling pupils to participate fully in learning, therapy and wider school activities.

The school operates a planned programme of preventative maintenance, statutory inspection and routine monitoring to ensure that buildings, services and equipment continue to meet legal requirements and operational needs. Maintenance schedules are overseen by the School Business Leader and Site Team, with specialist contractors appointed where statutory inspections or technical expertise are required.

The school will ensure that statutory inspections, servicing and maintenance are completed in accordance with legislative requirements, including where applicable:

- electrical installations and portable electrical equipment
- fire detection, alarm and emergency lighting systems
- fire-fighting equipment
- gas installations and appliances
- water hygiene and Legionella controls
- lifting equipment and hoists
- fixed and specialist equipment
- playground equipment
- heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems
- asbestos management
- security and access control systems.

All equipment provided for use within the school will be suitable for its intended purpose, maintained in accordance with manufacturer's guidance and subject to routine inspection where required. Equipment that is identified as defective, damaged or unsafe will be removed from use immediately until repaired or replaced.

Where specialist equipment is used to support pupils with complex SEND, including mobility equipment, standing frames, hoists, communication devices and therapy equipment, staff will only use equipment for which they have received appropriate instruction or training. Equipment provided by external professionals or families will be used in accordance with agreed guidance and individual pupil plans.

Hazardous substances will be managed in accordance with the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations. Appropriate risk assessments, safe storage arrangements, labelling and disposal procedures will be maintained for all hazardous materials used within the school. Access to hazardous substances will be restricted to authorised staff.

The school will maintain robust arrangements for managing asbestos, water hygiene, gas safety and other statutory compliance requirements. Contractors undertaking inspection, servicing or maintenance activities will be appropriately qualified and competent to undertake the work.

Staff are expected to report defects, unsafe equipment or premises concerns immediately using the school's agreed reporting procedures. Where a defect presents an immediate risk, appropriate action will be taken without delay, including removing equipment from use, restricting access to affected areas or implementing temporary control measures until the issue has been resolved.

Routine inspections, statutory compliance programmes and responsive maintenance form part of the school's wider health and safety monitoring arrangements and contribute to the continuous improvement of the learning environment.

Section 08

CURRICULUM ACTIVITIES, EDUCATIONAL VISITS AND POSITIVE RISK TAKING

Managing challenge. Enabling experience. Building independence.

Health and safety is an integral part of the curriculum at Riverside Bridge School. Safe practice is embedded throughout teaching, therapy, enrichment and community experiences, enabling pupils to develop independence, resilience and preparation for adulthood within appropriately managed environments.

The school recognises that pupils with complex special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) benefit from meaningful opportunities to experience challenge, develop life skills and participate in activities beyond the classroom. Whilst risks cannot be removed entirely, they will be identified, assessed and managed proportionately to enable safe participation wherever reasonably practicable.

Educational visits, community access, work-related learning, enrichment activities and other off-site experiences form an important part of the school's curriculum. All visits will be planned in accordance with the school's Educational Visits procedures and will be supported by suitable and sufficient risk assessments that consider the individual needs of participating pupils, the nature of the activity and the environment in which it will take place.

Risk assessments will take account of factors including, where appropriate:

- individual medical needs and medication requirements
- communication needs and preferred methods of communication
- mobility and physical access requirements
- positive support arrangements and individual risk assessments
- sensory processing needs
- feeding, eating and drinking requirements
- personal care arrangements
- staffing ratios and competency
- transport arrangements
- emergency procedures and contingency planning.

Where individual pupils require additional support, personalised arrangements will be incorporated into visit planning to ensure that they are able to participate safely alongside their peers wherever possible.

Staff leading educational visits are responsible for ensuring that appropriate planning, supervision and risk management arrangements are in place before the visit takes place.

All visits will be approved in accordance with the school's Educational Visits procedures, and staff will ensure that emergency contact information, medication, first aid equipment and relevant pupil information are readily available throughout the activity.

The school promotes positive risk taking as an important element of preparing pupils for adulthood. Wherever appropriate, pupils will be supported to develop independence through carefully planned opportunities that encourage decision-making, problem-solving, travel awareness, community participation and life skills. Such opportunities will always be supported by appropriate supervision, professional judgement and proportionate risk management.

By embedding health and safety within the curriculum, Riverside Bridge School aims to develop pupils who are increasingly able to understand, communicate and manage risk appropriately, enabling them to participate as safely and independently as possible throughout school and beyond.

Section 09

MEDICAL NEEDS, FIRST AID AND INFECTION PREVENTION

Co-ordinating health. Responding safely. Protecting wellbeing.

Riverside Bridge School is committed to promoting the health, safety and wellbeing of all pupils, staff and visitors by maintaining robust arrangements for medical care, first aid and infection prevention. The school recognises that many pupils have complex medical needs requiring individualised planning, specialist intervention and close collaboration with families and healthcare professionals.

The school will ensure that pupils with identified medical conditions are supported safely and appropriately to access education. Individual Healthcare Plans will be developed and clinically reviewed through the arrangements established within the Medical Needs, Medication and Allergy Safety Policy, with the Nursing Team coordinating clinical healthcare planning in partnership with parents, healthcare professionals and relevant school staff.

Detailed arrangements relating to the administration of medication, emergency medication, healthcare plans, intimate care, allergy management, feeding, medical procedures and staff responsibilities are set out within the school's Medical Needs, Medication and Allergy Safety Policy, which should be read alongside this policy.

Appropriate first aid provision will be maintained throughout the school day, during educational visits and at all school-organised activities. The school will ensure that:

- suitably trained first aiders are available at all times;
- first aid equipment is maintained, accessible and regularly checked;
- individual medical equipment is readily available where required;
- first aid incidents are recorded and reported in accordance with school procedures;
- emergency services are contacted without delay where necessary.

The school promotes effective infection prevention and control through established hygiene practices, environmental cleaning, appropriate use of personal protective equipment (PPE), safe waste disposal and compliance with current UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) guidance. Staff will receive appropriate training to minimise the risk of infection and protect the health of the wider school community.

Infection prevention guidance

Riverside Bridge School follows the most up-to-date guidance issued by the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) regarding the management of infectious diseases, exclusion periods and outbreak control. Staff should refer to the current UKHSA guidance when managing cases of infectious illness, as national guidance may change and supersedes any historic exclusion periods or recommendations.

Where infectious illnesses or outbreaks occur, the school will implement appropriate control measures based on national guidance and local public health advice. This may include enhanced cleaning, exclusion periods, communication with families, liaison with health professionals and temporary adjustments to operational practice where necessary.

The school recognises that some pupils are particularly vulnerable due to underlying medical conditions, compromised immunity or complex healthcare needs. Individual risk assessments and healthcare plans will inform the additional precautions required to safeguard these pupils whilst enabling them to participate fully in school life wherever reasonably practicable.

Health and safety arrangements relating to medical needs are subject to regular review to ensure that they remain effective, reflect current clinical guidance and continue to meet the changing needs of individual pupils.

Section 10

MOVING AND HANDLING, PERSONAL CARE AND PHYSICAL INTERVENTION

Supporting safely. Protecting dignity. Minimising restriction.

Riverside Bridge School is committed to ensuring that all moving and handling activities, personal care procedures and physical interventions are undertaken safely, respectfully and in a manner that protects the dignity, wellbeing and rights of pupils whilst minimising the risk of injury to both pupils and staff.

The school recognises that many pupils require specialist support due to physical disabilities, complex medical needs, sensory, regulation or other needs that may affect their own safety or the safety of others. Appropriate risk assessments, individual support plans and staff training are therefore essential components of safe practice.

Moving and handling activities will be undertaken in accordance with the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992, individual moving and handling risk assessments and guidance provided by appropriately qualified professionals, including Occupational Therapists where appropriate. Staff will only undertake moving and handling procedures for which they have received appropriate training and will use approved equipment in accordance with manufacturer guidance and individual pupil plans.

Where specialist equipment is required, including hoists, slings, standing frames, changing facilities, specialist seating or mobility equipment, the school will ensure that:

- equipment is regularly inspected, serviced and maintained;
- staff receive appropriate training before use;
- individual moving and handling plans are followed consistently;
- equipment is removed from use immediately if defects are identified;
- statutory inspections are completed in accordance with legislative requirements.

Personal care will always be delivered in a manner that promotes dignity, privacy, independence and respect. Individual care plans will identify the support required and will be developed in partnership with parents or carers and relevant professionals where appropriate. Detailed arrangements relating to intimate care are contained within the school's Intimate Care Policy.

Where pupils require physical intervention to prevent harm, staff will act in accordance with the school's Positive Support Policy and agreed Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) procedures.

Where physical intervention is required to prevent harm, staff must act in accordance with the Positive Support Policy, Restrictive Physical Intervention Policy and the pupil's individual arrangements. Any restrictive intervention must be lawful, necessary, proportionate and undertaken by appropriately trained staff in accordance with the school's agreed procedures.

The school recognises that the majority of health and safety risks within a specialist SEND environment arise during routine daily activities rather than exceptional events. Staff are therefore expected to remain vigilant, apply dynamic risk assessment throughout the day and adapt their practice in response to changing circumstances whilst maintaining safe systems of work.

Appropriate staffing levels, supervision arrangements and environmental adaptations will be maintained to reduce foreseeable risks associated with moving and handling, personal care and positive support.

Where additional advice is required, the school will work collaboratively with Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists, healthcare professionals and other relevant specialists to ensure that practice remains safe, evidence-informed and responsive to individual needs.

The safety of both pupils and staff is central to all moving and handling, personal care and positive support arrangements. Through effective planning, training and professional collaboration, the school aims to promote safe participation whilst enabling pupils to access learning, therapy and daily routines as independently as possible.

Section 11

EMERGENCY PLANNING, FIRE SAFETY AND BUSINESS CONTINUITY

Preparing effectively. Responding promptly. Maintaining continuity.

Riverside Bridge School is committed to maintaining effective emergency arrangements that protect pupils, staff, visitors and contractors whilst enabling the safe and timely response to incidents that may affect the operation of the school. Emergency planning is based upon clear procedures, regular training, effective communication and continuous review to ensure that all members of the school community understand their roles and responsibilities.

The school maintains emergency procedures for a range of foreseeable incidents, including fire, lockdown, invacuation, medical emergencies, missing pupils, utilities failure, severe weather, environmental hazards and other critical incidents. These procedures are reviewed regularly and exercised periodically to ensure they remain effective and reflect the changing needs of the school community.

Fire safety

The school will maintain suitable fire safety arrangements in accordance with current fire safety legislation. Fire risk assessments will be reviewed regularly and appropriate control measures implemented to minimise the risk of fire and ensure the safe evacuation of the building.

The school will ensure that:

- fire detection and alarm systems are maintained and tested regularly;
- emergency lighting, fire-fighting equipment and escape routes are inspected and maintained;
- emergency exits remain clearly identified and unobstructed at all times;
- fire evacuation plans are displayed throughout the school;
- Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) are developed where required;
- fire drills are carried out at least termly and evaluated to identify any improvements;
- all staff receive appropriate fire safety information and training as part of induction and ongoing professional development.

Given the complex needs of many pupils, evacuation procedures will take account of individual communication, mobility, medical, communication and regulation need to ensure that all pupils can be evacuated safely and efficiently.

Emergency response

The school maintains clear procedures for responding to emergencies that may occur during the school day or whilst undertaking school activities off site. Staff are expected to respond calmly, follow established procedures and seek assistance promptly where required.

Emergency arrangements include:

- evacuation and assembly procedures;
- lockdown and invacuation procedures;
- medical emergency response;
- management of missing pupils;
- severe weather procedures;
- utilities failure and loss of essential services;
- major incidents affecting the wider community;
- communication with emergency services, families and relevant agencies.

Where necessary, individual emergency arrangements will be incorporated into pupils' healthcare plans, risk assessments or Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) to ensure that additional support is available during an emergency.

Business Continuity

The school maintains business continuity arrangements to minimise disruption following significant incidents that affect the normal operation of the school. These arrangements include contingency planning for staffing shortages, loss of utilities, premises issues, information technology failures and other events that may impact the delivery of education.

Business continuity planning aims to protect the safety and wellbeing of pupils and staff whilst enabling essential services to continue wherever reasonably practicable.

Following any significant incident, the school will review its response, identify lessons learned and implement improvements to strengthen future emergency preparedness.

Section 12

STAFF WELLBEING, LONE WORKING AND OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH

Protecting staff. Managing workplace risk. Supporting wellbeing.

Riverside Bridge School recognises that the health, safety and wellbeing of staff are fundamental to providing high-quality education and care for pupils. The school is committed to creating a safe working environment that promotes physical health, psychological wellbeing and professional support, recognising that staff working within a specialist SEND setting may experience additional physical and emotional demands.

The school will take all reasonably practicable steps to identify, assess and manage risks to staff arising from their work. This includes ensuring that appropriate staffing levels, safe systems of work, suitable equipment, training and professional support are available to enable staff to carry out their roles safely and effectively.

Lone working

Whilst every effort will be made to minimise lone working, there are occasions where staff may be required to work alone, including before or after the school day, during home visits, whilst undertaking site duties or when working in isolated areas of the school.

Where lone working cannot be avoided, suitable risk assessments and control measures will be implemented. Staff undertaking lone working are expected to:

- follow the school's lone working procedures;
- ensure that a colleague or designated contact is aware of their location and expected duration of work;
- carry an appropriate means of communication where necessary;
- avoid undertaking high-risk activities whilst working alone;
- report any concerns, incidents or near misses promptly.

Occupational health and wellbeing

The school is committed to supporting staff wellbeing through early intervention and appropriate professional support. Where health concerns may affect an employee's ability to carry out their duties safely, the school may seek advice from Occupational Health or other relevant professionals to identify reasonable adjustments or additional support.

Support available to staff may include:

- Occupational Health referrals;
- employee wellbeing support services;
- risk assessments relating to pregnancy, disability or medical conditions;
- reasonable workplace adjustments where appropriate;
- phased returns following periods of sickness absence;
- access to professional advice and support through external agencies where required.

Work-related stress

The school recognises that prolonged workplace stress can have a significant impact on health, wellbeing and performance. Leaders are committed to promoting a positive working environment through effective communication, supportive leadership, manageable workloads and opportunities for professional development.

Where concerns relating to work-related stress are identified, these will be managed sensitively and proportionately. Appropriate support, adjustments and regular review meetings will be implemented where necessary to promote staff wellbeing and facilitate a safe and sustainable return to work.

The school encourages all staff to raise health, safety or wellbeing concerns at the earliest opportunity so that appropriate support can be provided. Staff wellbeing is recognised as an essential component of maintaining a safe, effective and sustainable learning environment for pupils.

Section 13

ACCIDENT REPORTING, INVESTIGATION AND LEARNING

Reporting promptly. Understanding causes. Preventing recurrence.

Riverside Bridge School is committed to fostering a proactive health and safety culture in which accidents, incidents and near misses are reported promptly, investigated appropriately and used as opportunities to strengthen practice. The purpose of reporting is not to attribute blame but to understand contributing factors, reduce risk and prevent recurrence.

All staff have a responsibility to report accidents, incidents, hazards and near misses as soon as reasonably practicable using the school's approved reporting procedures. Timely reporting enables appropriate action to be taken, supports compliance with statutory requirements and contributes to the school's continuous improvement of health and safety.

Reporting arrangements

The school maintains clear procedures for recording:

- accidents involving pupils, staff, visitors or contractors;
- injuries requiring first aid or medical treatment;
- dangerous occurrences and significant near misses;
- damage to property or equipment that may present a safety risk;
- incidents involving hazardous substances or environmental hazards;
- health and safety concerns identified by staff or visitors.

All reports will be reviewed by the appropriate member of the leadership team to determine whether further investigation, remedial action or statutory reporting is required.

Investigation

Significant incidents will be investigated in a proportionate manner to establish the circumstances surrounding the event and identify any underlying or contributory factors. Investigations may consider:

- environmental conditions;
- equipment or premises issues;
- staffing arrangements and supervision;
- communication and information sharing;
- risk assessment effectiveness;
- training and competency;
- procedural compliance;

- any additional factors relevant to the incident.

Where improvements are identified, appropriate actions will be implemented and monitored to reduce the likelihood of recurrence.

Statutory reporting

The school will comply with the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 2013. Where an incident meets the reporting threshold, the appropriate statutory notification will be submitted to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) within the required timescales.

The School Business Leader, or another designated member of the leadership team, will oversee statutory reporting and ensure that all necessary records are maintained.

Monitoring and learning

Health and safety information is reviewed regularly to identify trends, recurring issues and opportunities for improvement. This may include analysis of:

- accident and incident records;
- first aid data;
- near miss reporting;
- moving and handling incidents;
- premises-related hazards;
- educational visit incidents;
- fire evacuation outcomes;
- health and safety inspections;
- staff concerns or suggestions.

Findings are used to inform risk assessments, staff training, policy development and operational practice. Significant learning arising from investigations will be shared with relevant staff to promote consistent practice across the school.

Through open reporting, reflective practice and continuous review, Riverside Bridge School seeks to create an environment in which health and safety is continually strengthened for the benefit of pupils, staff and the wider school community.

Section 14

HEALTH & SAFETY TRAINING, MONITORING AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Building competence. Monitoring standards. Strengthening practice.

Riverside Bridge School recognises that effective health and safety management relies upon competent staff, robust monitoring arrangements and a culture of continuous improvement. The school is committed to ensuring that all employees receive appropriate information, instruction, supervision and training to enable them to undertake their responsibilities safely and confidently.

Health and safety training forms an integral part of staff induction and ongoing professional development. Training requirements are determined by individual roles, responsibilities and identified risks and are reviewed regularly to ensure that knowledge and practice remain current.

The school will ensure that staff receive appropriate training relevant to their role, which may include:

- safeguarding and child protection;
- fire safety and emergency procedures;
- first aid;
- moving and handling, including safe manual handling relevant to the employee's role;
- use of specialist equipment;
- positive support and restrictive intervention;
- medication and medical needs;
- infection prevention and control;
- educational visits;
- lone working;
- any other training identified through risk assessment, changes in legislation or operational need.

Training records will be maintained to ensure statutory and mandatory training remains current and to identify future training requirements.

Monitoring and inspection

Health and safety arrangements are monitored throughout the year to ensure that standards remain high and that statutory responsibilities continue to be met. Monitoring activities include:

- regular site inspections;
- statutory compliance checks;
- premises audits;
- equipment inspections and servicing;

- review of accidents, incidents and near misses;
- fire safety monitoring;
- risk assessment reviews;
- educational visit monitoring;
- governor oversight;
- external audits or professional inspections where appropriate.

Where monitoring identifies areas requiring improvement, proportionate action plans will be developed, implemented and reviewed to ensure improvements are completed within appropriate timescales.

Continuous improvement

The school is committed to maintaining an open and positive health and safety culture in which all members of the school community contribute to improving practice. Staff are encouraged to report hazards, identify opportunities for improvement and share good practice as part of the school's wider commitment to continuous improvement.

Health and safety performance is reviewed regularly by the Senior Leadership Team and Governing Board to ensure that arrangements remain effective, proportionate and responsive to the changing needs of the school community.

Lessons learned from audits, inspections, incidents, complaints, staff feedback and changes in legislation or guidance are used to strengthen policy, improve practice and enhance the safety and wellbeing of pupils, staff and visitors.

Through effective leadership, professional collaboration and reflective practice, Riverside Bridge School seeks to develop a culture where health and safety is embedded within everyday decision-making and forms an integral part of delivering high-quality education and care.

Section 15

RELATED POLICIES & FRAMEWORKS

Connecting practice. Strengthening consistency.

This Health and Safety Policy should be read alongside other school policies and procedures that contribute to the safety, health and wellbeing of pupils, staff and visitors, including but not limited to:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Risk Management and Risk Assessment Policy
- Medical Needs, Medication and Allergy Safety Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Intimate Care Policy
- Infection Prevention and Control Policy
- Positive Support Policy
- Restrictive Physical Intervention Policy
- Educational Visits Policy
- Emergency Management and Business Continuity Plan
- Attendance Policy
- Staff Wellbeing Policy
- Sickness Absence Policy
- Accessibility Plan
- Equality, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy
- relevant fire safety procedures
- moving and handling procedures
- relevant premises, COSHH and statutory compliance procedures.

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner where required by significant legislative, organisational or operational change, or following a significant incident. The Governing Board will receive appropriate assurance regarding the effectiveness of the school's health and safety arrangement.

Detailed operational arrangements supporting this policy are maintained separately and include the Health and Safety Responsibilities Matrix, statutory compliance and inspection schedules, monitoring and assurance arrangements, risk assessments, fire safety documentation, COSHH assessments and other relevant health and safety procedures and records. These documents may be updated in response to operational need, competent-person advice, legislative change or revised guidance without requiring amendment to this overarching policy, provided that they remain consistent with its principles and requirements.