PARENT PARTNERSHIP POLICY

Valuing families. Sharing understanding.
Achieving together.



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 partnership with parents, carers and families. It explains the principles, expectations, responsibilities and arrangements through which families are welcomed as valued partners, involved meaningfully in their child's education and supported to contribute to decisions that affect their child and the wider life of the school.

At Riverside Bridge School, we believe that strong partnerships between families and school are fundamental to achieving the best possible outcomes for every pupil. Families bring essential knowledge, experience and understanding of their child's strengths, communication, needs, interests, routines, aspirations and experiences. School staff bring professional knowledge of education, development and specialist provision. Effective partnership brings these perspectives together.

As a specialist school for pupils with complex SEND, we recognise that meaningful partnership extends beyond sharing information. It requires trust, respect, accessibility, openness and a shared commitment to understanding the individual pupil. Families should have meaningful opportunities to contribute to decisions about learning, communication, wellbeing, attendance, independence, transitions and preparation for adulthood.

Partnership does not mean that families and professionals have identical roles or responsibilities. It means that each contributes their knowledge and expertise, listens to the perspectives of others and works collaboratively to identify priorities, consider options and support positive outcomes for the pupil.

We recognise that families engage with school in different ways. Language, culture, disability, personal circumstances, previous experiences of services, work or caring responsibilities and access to technology may affect how families participate. Riverside Bridge School will therefore seek to provide accessible and flexible opportunities for involvement and will make reasonable adjustments, including interpretation or translation, where required.

Communication is an important part of partnership but is not its entirety. Our Home–School Communication Policy establishes the arrangements for effective, respectful and secure communication, while Bridge for Families provides additional practical and graduated support where families require further guidance or intervention. This policy establishes the overarching principles that connect those arrangements.

Parent and carer voice also contributes to the development of the school. Through consultation, feedback, forums, governance opportunities and wider participation, families should be able to influence aspects of school practice and improvement where appropriate. We will listen to feedback, respond constructively and communicate how family views have informed development wherever reasonably possible.

Our partnership with families remains centred upon the pupil. Their safety, rights, wellbeing, communication, participation, independence and future outcomes guide our decisions and shared work.

Our responsibility to pupils, families and the school community

Riverside Bridge School has a responsibility to build respectful, inclusive and productive relationships with families and to provide meaningful opportunities for them to participate in their child's education and the wider life of the school.

In delivering this responsibility, we will:

- welcome every family as a valued member of the school community;
- recognise and value the knowledge and expertise parents and carers bring about their child;
- build relationships based upon openness, honesty, respect and professional trust;
- communicate clearly and accessibly and provide reasonable adjustments where required;
- involve families meaningfully in decisions affecting their child;
- listen to families' views, experiences, concerns and aspirations;
- maintain high aspirations for every pupil and work collaboratively towards positive outcomes;
- support partnership across communication, learning, wellbeing, attendance, independence, transitions and preparation for adulthood;
- provide appropriate information, guidance and opportunities that enable families to participate confidently;
- work collaboratively with relevant professionals and agencies where this benefits the pupil;
- provide opportunities for family voice to contribute to school development and improvement;
- respond constructively when concerns arise and use established procedures where matters cannot be resolved informally;
- respect family privacy, culture, circumstances and decision-making;
- maintain appropriate professional boundaries and safeguarding responsibilities;
- regularly evaluate and strengthen our partnership with families.

Through these commitments, we aim to create a school community in which families feel welcomed, informed, listened to and respected, and where home and school work together to support every pupil to communicate, participate, develop independence and achieve the best possible outcomes for their future.

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APPROVED BY: Governing Board

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This policy is approved by the

Leading Parent Partnership Award (LPPA)

LPPA
Improving parental engagement

For more than 15 years, the LPPA has supported schools to achieve and sustain outstanding parental engagement.

To learn more about the LPPA, visit www.awardplace.co.uk/award/lppa

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Optimus Education offers a range of non-curricular awards to support different areas of school improvement. To find out more, visit www.awardplace.co.uk

Section 01

SCOPE

Defining partnership. Clarifying responsibility. Supporting involvement.

This policy applies to all parents, carers, guardians and those with parental responsibility for pupils attending Riverside Bridge School.

It also informs the expectations and responsibilities of governors, school leaders, staff, volunteers and partner agencies when working collaboratively with families.

The policy establishes the principles that underpin effective partnership between home and school, recognising that positive relationships are fundamental to supporting pupils with complex special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

It provides a strategic framework for communication, engagement and collaboration, ensuring that families are active partners in their child's education, wellbeing and preparation for adulthood.

Section 02

PRINCIPLES OF PARTNERSHIP

Valuing expertise. Sharing responsibility. Building trust.

Riverside Bridge School believes that effective partnership is founded upon shared responsibility, mutual respect and a common commitment to achieving the very best outcomes for every pupil.

Families and school each bring unique knowledge, expertise and perspectives which, when combined, create the strongest foundation for learning, development and wellbeing.

Our partnership with families is underpinned by the following principles:

- Every family is welcomed, valued and treated with dignity and respect.
- Parents and carers are recognised as bringing unique expertise and knowledge about their child and are valued contributors to decision-making.
- Communication is open, honest, timely, accessible and solution-focused.
- Relationships are built upon trust, empathy and mutual understanding.
- Decisions are made collaboratively, with the best interests of the pupil at the centre.
- Diversity, culture, language and individual family circumstances are respected and celebrated.
- Families are supported to participate meaningfully in their child's education and wider school life.
- Concerns are addressed constructively, professionally and at the earliest opportunity.
- Continuous dialogue and feedback strengthen our practice and contribute to ongoing school improvement.

These principles reflect Riverside Bridge School's commitment to creating a collaborative community where families and professionals work together to support communication, participation, independence and lifelong success.

Section 03

BUILDING EFFECTIVE RELATIONSHIPS

Welcoming families. Developing trust. Strengthening connection.

Positive relationships are central to the culture of Riverside Bridge School. We recognise that trust is developed through consistent actions, respectful communication and a genuine commitment to understanding the needs, aspirations and experiences of every family.

We are committed to building relationships that are welcoming, inclusive and responsive from the earliest stages of a family's journey with the school.

This begins during the admissions and transition process and continues throughout each pupil's education, ensuring that families feel informed, listened to and actively involved.

Our staff will work proactively with families by:

- developing positive, professional relationships based on openness and mutual respect;
- recognising and valuing the expertise that parents and carers have regarding their child;
- creating opportunities for regular dialogue, collaboration and shared problem-solving;
- ensuring communication is accessible, inclusive and responsive to individual family needs;
- respecting confidentiality and handling sensitive information appropriately;
- celebrating pupils' achievements and recognising progress in all its forms;
- responding to questions or concerns in a timely, supportive and solution-focused manner.

We recognise that families may require different levels of support at different times. Where appropriate, the school will work collaboratively with families and external agencies to identify barriers, coordinate support and ensure that pupils and their families receive the right help at the right time.

Strong relationships enable consistency between home and school, strengthen pupil outcomes and contribute to a positive, inclusive school community where every family feels valued and supported.

Section 04

COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT

Sharing openly. Listening actively. Staying connected.

Effective communication is fundamental to successful partnership between home and school. Riverside Bridge School is committed to maintaining open, respectful and purposeful communication that enables families to remain informed, involved and engaged in their child's education and wider school life.

We recognise that every family communicates differently. As a specialist school, we are committed to providing communication that is accessible, inclusive and responsive to individual needs, taking account of language, culture, communication preferences and any additional support requirements.

The school will communicate with families through a range of appropriate methods and will ensure that information relating to pupils, school life and key events is shared in a timely and meaningful way.

Operational communication methods are published separately and reviewed regularly to ensure they remain effective.

We are committed to:

- providing clear, accurate and timely information;
- communicating with professionalism, courtesy and respect;
- ensuring important information is accessible to all families;
- celebrating pupils' achievements and sharing progress regularly;
- providing opportunities for dialogue rather than one-way communication;
- responding to enquiries within reasonable timescales;
- maintaining confidentiality and protecting personal information in accordance with data protection legislation.

Parents and carers are encouraged to communicate openly with the school, share relevant information regarding their child's needs and raise questions or concerns at the earliest opportunity so that issues can be addressed collaboratively and positively.

Section 05

WORKING TOGETHER TO SUPPORT LEARNING, ATTENDANCE AND WELLBEING

Sharing aspirations. Supporting progress. Preparing for the future.

Parents and carers play a vital role in supporting their child's education, wellbeing and development.

Riverside Bridge School is committed to working in partnership with families to ensure that pupils experience consistency between home and school, enabling them to achieve the best possible outcomes.

Partnership extends beyond academic progress and encompasses communication, emotional wellbeing, regulation, independence, health, attendance, personal development and preparation for adulthood.

Through shared understanding and consistent approaches, families and school can provide greater consistency and coordinated support for pupils.

The school will work collaboratively with families to:

- develop shared aspirations and high expectations for every pupil;
- support communication and engagement using approaches that meet each pupil's individual needs;
- promote positive attendance and punctuality through early identification and supportive intervention where barriers arise;
- encourage independence and the development of life skills both at home and at school;
- support pupils' emotional wellbeing, regulation and personal development;
- involve families in planning for key transitions throughout their child's educational journey;
- celebrate progress, achievement and success in all aspects of school life.

Parents and carers are encouraged to reinforce learning opportunities at home, promote regular attendance, share relevant information that may affect their child's education or wellbeing, and work collaboratively with the school to achieve agreed outcomes.

Where additional support is required, the school will work alongside families and relevant professionals to identify appropriate strategies, interventions and services that promote positive outcomes for the pupil.

Section 06

SUPPORTING FAMILIES

Providing guidance. Removing barriers. Building confidence.

Riverside Bridge School recognises that supporting pupils effectively also means supporting their families. Families of pupils with complex SEND may experience additional demands associated with communication, health, care, services, transitions or wider family life and we are committed to working alongside families with compassion, understanding and practical support.

Where families would benefit from structured practical support beyond the school's universal partnership offer, this may be provided through Bridge for Families in accordance with the Bridge for Families - Home Support Programme Policy.

Our approach is based on early identification, collaborative problem-solving and timely intervention. We aim to empower families by providing information, guidance and opportunities that strengthen confidence, promote resilience and enable informed decision-making.
The school will:

- provide advice and guidance to help families understand their child's learning and developmental needs;
- offer opportunities for parents and carers to develop knowledge and skills through workshops, information sessions and school events;
- signpost families to appropriate external services, community organisations and specialist support where appropriate;
- work collaboratively with health, social care and other professionals to coordinate support for pupils and their families;
- support families during periods of transition, including admission, key stage changes and preparation for adulthood;
- promote an inclusive school community where families feel welcomed, valued and connected.

Where families require more targeted support, the school will work with them to identify appropriate interventions and, where appropriate, facilitate access to additional services through the school's established partnership arrangements.

Our aim is to ensure that every family feels supported, informed and empowered to play an active role in their child's education and wellbeing.

Section 07

LISTENING TO PARENT AND CARER VOICE

Listening meaningfully. Learning together. Shaping improvement.

Riverside Bridge School values the views, experiences and expertise of parents and carers.

We recognise that meaningful partnership is strengthened when families are given genuine opportunities to contribute to the development of both their child's education and the wider life of the school.

Parent voice is an important part of our culture of continuous improvement.

We are committed to creating opportunities for families to share their experiences, celebrate what is working well and identify areas where we can continue to improve.

The school will:

- actively seek the views of parents and carers through a range of appropriate consultation and engagement activities;
- encourage open and constructive dialogue throughout the academic year;
- listen respectfully to feedback, suggestions and concerns;
- use parent feedback to inform school improvement planning where appropriate;
- communicate how feedback has influenced decision-making where possible;
- promote a culture where parents and carers feel confident that their views are valued and considered.

We recognise that concerns may occasionally arise. Wherever possible, these should be discussed at the earliest opportunity so that they can be resolved through positive and collaborative dialogue.

Where concerns cannot be resolved informally, they will be managed in accordance with the school's Complaints Policy.

By listening to the voices of our families, we strengthen relationships, improve practice and ensure that our provision continues to meet the evolving needs of our pupils and community.

Section 08

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Sharing responsibility. Clarifying expectations. Working together.

Effective partnership is built upon shared responsibility. While Riverside Bridge School has a responsibility to provide high-quality education, care and support, parents, carers and pupils also have an important role in contributing to successful outcomes.

By working together with openness, honesty and mutual respect, we create the consistency that enables pupils to flourish.

The school will:

- provide a safe, welcoming and inclusive environment where every family feels respected and valued;
- communicate openly, professionally and in a timely manner;
- involve parents and carers in decisions relating to their child's education, wellbeing and development;
- provide opportunities for meaningful engagement throughout the school year;
- listen to and value the views of families;
- work collaboratively with external professionals where this supports positive outcomes for pupils;
- provide appropriate information, guidance and support to enable families to participate confidently in school life;
- promote safeguarding, attendance, wellbeing and preparation for adulthood through effective partnership;
- continually review and strengthen partnership arrangements as part of the school's improvement journey.

Parents and Carers are expected to:

- work collaboratively and respectfully with the school in the best interests of their child;
- share relevant information that may affect their child's education, health, wellbeing or safety;
- support their child's attendance, punctuality and readiness to learn;
- engage with meetings, reviews and opportunities to discuss their child's progress;
- communicate concerns respectfully and at the earliest opportunity;

- consider and, where appropriate, support agreed approaches that promote meaningful consistency between home and school;
- uphold the expectations outlined within the Parent and Carer Code of Conduct;
- contribute positively to the wider school community.

Pupils, where appropriate, are encouraged to:

- participate in decisions that affect them in ways that are meaningful and appropriate to their communication and developmental needs;
- share their views, preferences and aspirations wherever possible;
- work collaboratively with staff and families towards agreed outcomes;
- develop increasing independence, confidence and self-advocacy as they prepare for adulthood.

Section 09

MONITORING, REVIEW AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Evaluating partnership. Maintaining oversight. Strengthening practice.

The Governing Board has overall responsibility for ensuring that Riverside Bridge School promotes effective partnership with families as an integral part of its strategic vision and school improvement priorities.

The Headteacher is responsible for implementing this policy, ensuring that effective partnership practices are embedded across the school and that staff are supported to develop positive, collaborative relationships with families.

This policy will be:

- reviewed annually, or sooner where legislation, statutory guidance or operational requirements require amendment;
- monitored through parental feedback, engagement activities, safeguarding and attendance monitoring, complaints analysis and quality assurance processes;
- evaluated as part of the school's continuous improvement cycle to ensure partnership arrangements remain effective, inclusive and responsive;
- supported by operational procedures and guidance that describe the day-to-day processes for communication and family engagement.

The school is committed to continually strengthening relationships with families, recognising that effective partnership is essential to achieving the best possible outcomes for every pupil.

Section 10

RELATED POLICIES & FRAMEWORKS

Connecting practice. Strengthening consistency.

This policy should be read alongside the following documents:

- Parent and Carer Code of Conduct
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Total Communication Policy
- Positive Support Policy
- SEND Policy
- Equality, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Home-School Communication Policy
- Bridge for Families - Home Support Programme Policy
- Medical Needs, Medication and Allergy Safety Policy
- Accessibility Plan