RISK MANAGEMENT AND RISK ASSESSMENT POLICY

Identifying risk. Managing proportionately.
Enabling 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 risk management and risk assessment. It establishes the principles, responsibilities and arrangements through which foreseeable risks are identified, assessed, managed and reviewed to protect pupils, staff and others while supporting safe, inclusive and high-quality educational provision.

Riverside Bridge School is committed to creating a safe, inclusive and enabling environment in which pupils can learn, participate and develop with appropriate protection from foreseeable harm. Effective risk management is integral to safeguarding, health and safety, educational provision and the effective operation of the school.

As a specialist school supporting pupils with complex special educational needs and disabilities, we recognise that risk cannot, and should not, be eliminated entirely. Many pupils develop communication, confidence, independence and skills for adulthood through carefully planned experiences that involve an element of managed risk. Our approach therefore seeks to balance protection with opportunity, ensuring that control measures are proportionate to identified risk and do not unnecessarily restrict pupils' participation or development.

Risk assessment at Riverside Bridge School is a dynamic process that informs decision-making across school life, including learning activities, educational visits, personal care, healthcare, therapeutic provision, positive support, moving and handling, premises management and emergency planning. Assessments will take account of individual needs and changing circumstances and will be reviewed where necessary to ensure that control measures remain appropriate and effective.

Risk management is a shared responsibility. Staff are expected to identify foreseeable hazards, follow agreed control measures, respond appropriately when circumstances change and report concerns promptly. Those responsible for developing or reviewing risk assessments must be appropriately competent and seek specialist or professional advice where this is required.

Our responsibilities to pupils

We will use risk assessment to enable pupils to participate as fully and safely as possible in learning, personal development and wider school life. Assessments and control measures will take account of pupils' communication, sensory, physical, medical and regulation needs, alongside their strengths, aspirations and opportunities to develop greater independence. We will seek to remove or reduce avoidable hazards while recognising that carefully managed risk can form an important part of learning and preparation for adulthood. Wherever appropriate, reasonable adjustments, environmental adaptations, communication support and other enabling strategies will be considered before restricting a pupil's participation.

Through these commitments, Riverside Bridge School aims to maintain a culture in which risk is understood, managed proportionately and used to support informed decision-making rather than unnecessary restriction. We will continue to strengthen risk management through effective leadership, staff competence, collaborative working, monitoring and learning from experience.

RIVERSIDE BRIDGE SCHOOL
INSPIRE, EMPOWER, ACHIEVE

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APPROVED BY: Governing Board

APPROVED ON: September 2026

REVIEWED DUE ON: September 2027

Section 01

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

Defining expectations. Managing risk. Enabling safe participation.

The purpose of this policy is to establish Riverside Bridge School's strategic framework for the identification, assessment, management and review of risk across all aspects of the school's activities. It provides a consistent approach to risk management that supports safeguarding, promotes health and safety, enables high-quality educational provision and ensures compliance with statutory responsibilities.

Riverside Bridge School recognises that effective risk management is not about eliminating all risk, but about identifying foreseeable hazards, implementing proportionate control measures and enabling pupils to participate safely in learning, therapy and wider school life.

As a specialist setting for pupils with complex special educational needs and disabilities, the school is committed to balancing protection with opportunity, ensuring that risk assessments support independence, communication, regulation and preparation for adulthood wherever appropriate.

This policy establishes the principles, responsibilities and governance arrangements for risk assessment throughout the school. It applies to all school activities, including curriculum delivery, educational visits, therapeutic provision, personal care, medical support, premises management, staff activities, contractors and visitors.

Section 02

LEGISLATIVE AND PROFESSIONAL FRAMEWORKS

Meeting duties. Applying guidance. Managing responsibly.

Riverside Bridge School will manage risk in accordance with its legal duties and with regard to relevant statutory and professional guidance. The school's arrangements are informed by legislation and guidance including:

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974;
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999;
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002, where applicable;
- Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013;
- Equality Act 2010;
- Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004;
- Education Act 2002;
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0–25 Years;
- current statutory safeguarding guidance;
- Health and Safety Executive guidance on risk assessment; and
- relevant Trust and Local Authority health and safety requirements and guidance, where applicable.

This policy should be read alongside the school's Health and Safety Policy and other policies, procedures and operational arrangements addressing specific areas of risk. Together, these establish the school's framework for identifying and managing risk across educational, safeguarding, healthcare, premises and operational activity.

The school recognises that effective risk management extends beyond compliance with legislation. It is an integral part of safeguarding, curriculum delivery, premises management, emergency planning, educational visits, therapeutic provision and the wider strategic management of the school. Risk assessment therefore supports informed decision-making, continuous improvement and the creation of environments in which pupils can develop safely, confidently and independently.

Section 03

RISK MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES

Balancing protection. Managing proportionately. Enabling opportunity.

Riverside Bridge School adopts a proactive and proportionate approach to risk management, recognising that effective risk assessment supports both safeguarding and high-quality educational provision. The following principles underpin all risk assessment and risk management activities undertaken across the school.

Safeguarding first

The safety and wellbeing of pupils, staff, visitors and contractors will always be the school's primary consideration. Risk assessments will support the school's safeguarding responsibilities by identifying foreseeable hazards, reducing the likelihood of harm and ensuring that appropriate control measures are implemented and reviewed.

Proportionate risk management

Risk management will be proportionate to the level of risk presented. The school will focus on identifying and controlling significant foreseeable risks whilst avoiding unnecessary bureaucracy or restrictions that do not improve safety.

Positive risk taking

Riverside Bridge School recognises that learning, independence and personal development often require pupils to experience carefully managed levels of risk. Risk assessments will therefore seek to enable participation rather than prevent it, ensuring that appropriate control measures support pupils to develop confidence, resilience and preparation for adulthood.

Individualised risk management

As a specialist setting for pupils with complex special educational needs and disabilities, the school recognises that risks and appropriate control measures will vary between individuals. Risk assessments will take account of pupils' communication needs, physical health, medical conditions, sensory processing, regulation needs, positive support arrangements and personal circumstances, ensuring that arrangements are person-centred and responsive.

Shared responsibility

Effective risk management depends upon the active involvement of all members of the school community. Staff are expected to identify hazards, follow agreed control measures, report concerns promptly and contribute to the ongoing review of risk assessments. Where appropriate, pupils, parents, carers and external professionals will be involved in developing and reviewing individual risk management arrangements.

Continuous improvement

Risk management is a dynamic process. Risk assessments will be monitored, reviewed and updated to reflect changes in activities, environments, legislation, individual needs and lessons learned from incidents, near misses, audits and professional practice. The school is committed to continually strengthening its approach to risk management through regular review, training and quality assurance.

Section 04

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Defining accountability. Sharing responsibility. Maintaining oversight.

Effective risk management relies upon clear leadership, shared responsibility and a commitment to maintaining a safe and enabling learning environment. Whilst overall accountability rests with the Headteacher and Governing Board, every member of the school community has a role in identifying, managing and reviewing risk.

The Governing Board is responsible for providing strategic oversight of the school's arrangements for risk assessment and risk management. This includes:

- approving and reviewing this policy;
- seeking assurance that appropriate risk management systems are in place;
- monitoring compliance with statutory health and safety duties;
- ensuring sufficient resources are available to implement effective risk management arrangements;
- receiving assurance through reports, audits and monitoring activities.

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for ensuring that effective risk management arrangements are established, implemented and monitored throughout the school. This includes:

- promoting a positive culture of health, safety and risk management;
- ensuring suitable and sufficient risk assessments are completed where required;
- allocating appropriate responsibilities to competent staff;
- ensuring appropriate training and resources are available;
- monitoring compliance with this policy;
- reporting significant health and safety matters to the Governing Body.

The Health and Safety Lead is responsible for coordinating the school's overarching risk assessment arrangements and supporting compliance with statutory health and safety requirements. This does not replace the responsibility of senior leaders, managers or specialist professionals for risks falling within their own areas of responsibility. This includes:

- maintaining oversight of the school's risk assessment programme;
- providing advice and guidance to staff;
- monitoring the completion and review of risk assessments;
- maintaining the central register of risk assessments where appropriate;

- supporting investigations following incidents or near misses;
- reporting significant findings to senior leaders.

Senior leaders and line managers are responsible for ensuring that risk assessments are completed, implemented and reviewed within their areas of responsibility. They will:

- ensure staff understand and implement agreed control measures;
- monitor compliance through routine supervision;
- review assessments following significant changes or incidents;
- escalate concerns where additional controls or resources are required.

All staff have a responsibility to contribute to the effective management of risk by:

- taking reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others;
- following agreed control measures and safe working practices;
- identifying and reporting hazards, defects and unsafe practices;
- contributing to the development and review of risk assessments where appropriate;
- participating in relevant training;
- undertaking dynamic risk assessment where circumstances change unexpectedly.

Pupils will be supported, according to their age, understanding and individual needs, to recognise risks, follow safety expectations and develop increasing independence through participation in appropriately managed activities.

Parents and carers play an important role in supporting effective risk management by sharing relevant information regarding their child's health, medical needs, regulation, communication or other circumstances that may influence individual risk assessments.
The school will work collaboratively with parents and carers to ensure that individual arrangements remain appropriate and responsive to changing needs.

Contractors, visitors and external professionals are expected to comply with the school's health and safety arrangements, follow relevant risk control measures and work in accordance with statutory requirements and agreed site procedures whilst on school premises.

Section 05

RISK ASSESSMENT ARRANGEMENTS

Identifying hazards. Assessing risk. Applying proportionate controls.

Riverside Bridge School adopts a systematic approach to identifying, assessing, controlling and reviewing risks arising from its activities, environments and the individual needs of pupils. Risk assessments are undertaken where there is a foreseeable risk of harm and are used to inform safe systems of work, support educational participation and ensure compliance with statutory responsibilities.

Risk assessments will be suitable and sufficient for the activity or circumstance being considered and will be proportionate to the level of risk presented.

Wherever possible, existing control measures, professional judgement and dynamic decision-making will be used alongside formal written assessments to create a balanced and practical approach to risk management.

5.1 Types of risk assessment

The school undertakes a range of risk assessments to support the safe operation of the school and the delivery of high-quality education. These may include, but are not limited to:

- workplace and premises risk assessments;
- curriculum and classroom activities;
- educational visits and off-site learning;
- individual pupil risk assessments;
- positive support and pupil-specific safety arrangements;
- medical and healthcare needs;
- moving and handling;
- personal and intimate care;
- therapeutic interventions;
- fire safety and emergency procedures;
- specialist equipment and facilities;
- lone working;
- contractors and construction activities;
- other activities where a significant foreseeable risk has been identified.

Individual risk assessments

Riverside Bridge School requires an individual pupil risk assessment to be in place for every pupil.
This requirement reflects the complexity and diversity of need within the school's specialist context and provides a consistent mechanism through which the individual circumstances of every pupil are considered. It does not arise from an assumption that special educational needs or disability inherently presents a risk.

The purpose of the individual pupil risk assessment is to ensure that reasonably foreseeable risks to the pupil, other pupils, staff or others have been considered systematically; that appropriate and proportionate control measures are identified and recorded; and that staff supporting the pupil have access to clear, individualised information about how identified risks must be managed.

Every pupil must have an individual risk assessment that considers their needs, presentation and potential risks across the full range of school activities and environments.
This includes classroom learning, shared spaces, playgrounds, transitions, arrival and departure, eating and drinking, personal care, practical activities, educational visits, off-site activities, transport and wider community access.

Assessments must consider relevant areas including communication and understanding, medical and healthcare needs, eating and drinking, choking and ingestion, sensory needs, regulation and positive support, mobility and physical support, personal and intimate care, environmental safety, absconding or leaving safe areas, road safety, emergency evacuation and any other individual circumstances that may give rise to reasonably foreseeable risk.

Using the school's general risk assessments

The school's general risk assessments must be used to inform the completion of individual pupil risk assessments. These assessments identify hazards and control measures associated with school environments, activities and routines. They provide an established framework to support staff in identifying risks that may be relevant to an individual pupil.

When completing an individual pupil risk assessment, staff must consider the relevant general risk assessments and determine:

- which identified hazards are relevant to the pupil, taking account of their individual needs, understanding, communication, mobility, medical needs, sensory presentation and regulation;
- how the pupil may be exposed to those hazards and the nature of any reasonably foreseeable harm;

- whether the control measures identified within the general risk assessment are appropriate and sufficient for that pupil;
- whether those controls need to be adapted, strengthened or supplemented to reflect the pupil's individual circumstances;
- whether additional risks exist that are not adequately addressed within the general assessments.

Relevant risks and control measures must be recorded within the pupil's individual risk assessment, even where the measures are consistent with those already established in the school's general risk assessments.

This ensures that staff supporting the pupil can identify the risks that apply to that individual and understand the arrangements required to manage them safely.
Staff should not simply refer to a general risk assessment without considering and recording how the identified hazards and controls apply to the pupil.

The individual risk assessment must demonstrate that the pupil's needs have been considered and that the recorded controls are appropriate to their circumstances.

Educational visits, trips and wider community access
Every individual pupil risk assessment must explicitly consider the risks associated with educational visits, trips, transport and access to the wider community.

This consideration must take account of the pupil's individual presentation and ability to access environments beyond the school site safely.

Relevant factors may include road safety, traffic awareness, remaining with a group, unfamiliar environments, public transport, crowds, noise, sensory demands, changes in routine, communication with unfamiliar people, medical needs, mobility, absconding or leaving safe areas, and responses to unexpected situations.

Where risks are identified, the pupil's individual risk assessment must specify the control measures required. These may include individual supervision arrangements, communication strategies, environmental adjustments, staffing requirements, specialist equipment, medical arrangements or other necessary precautions.

The individual pupil risk assessment must provide a clear basis for planning the pupil's safe participation in educational visits and wider community activities.

This does not replace the requirement for a visit-specific risk assessment. The Visit Leader remains responsible for assessing the particular destination, activity, transport arrangements, group composition and circumstances of the visit.

The Visit Leader must use the participating pupils' individual risk assessments when planning the activity and ensure that the identified pupil-specific controls can be implemented safely.

Where additional risks arise from a particular visit, these must be addressed within the visit-specific assessment. The individual pupil risk assessment must also be reviewed where the additional risk is ongoing or indicates a change in the pupil's needs.

Recording individual risks and control measures

Each materially different risk identified as relevant to the pupil must be recorded separately within their individual risk assessment. For each risk, staff must identify the hazard, potential harm, initial risk rating, control measures required and revised risk rating. Control measures must be sufficiently detailed and individualised to enable any member of staff supporting the pupil, including unfamiliar or temporary staff, to understand what is expected.

General statements such as "close supervision", "monitor" or "follow the general risk assessment" are not sufficient unless the assessment explains what these arrangements mean for the individual pupil.

Where specialist plans are in place, including Individual Healthcare Plans, Eating and Drinking Plans, Positive Support Plans, PEEPs, Intimate Care Plans or Moving and Handling Plans, the individual risk assessment must identify the relevant risk and clearly reference the applicable plan. Specialist instructions must not be replaced or altered through the risk assessment without appropriate professional review.

Individual pupil risk assessments must be reviewed in accordance with the school's annual calendar and sooner following a significant incident or near miss, a change in the pupil's needs or presentation, new professional information or the identification of an emerging risk.

Supporting consistent and effective individual risk assessment

Riverside Bridge School recognises that effective individual risk assessment requires careful consideration, professional judgement and a consistent approach. The school will support staff through an approved Risk and Control Bank, relevant general risk assessments, an assessment consideration checklist, standardised templates and appropriate guidance.

The Risk and Control Bank provides a comprehensive range of commonly identified hazards, associated risks and detailed control measures relevant to the Riverside Bridge pupil population. These include medical and healthcare needs, choking and dysphagia, PICA and ingestion, communication, sensory regulation, actions or presentations that may cause harm, mobility, intimate care, absconding, environmental safety, transport, educational visits, wider community access and emergency evacuation.

Staff are expected to use the Risk and Control Bank alongside the school's general risk assessments when completing each pupil's individual risk assessment. Staff must systematically consider the relevant areas of risk when completing each pupil's individual risk assessment. The school provides an Assessment considerations Checklist as a supporting reference to assist staff in identifying foreseeable hazards and ensuring that relevant school environments, activities, educational visits and wider community access have been considered. The checklist is not a separate record that staff are required to complete or submit. Evidence of the assessment and the controls required must be recorded within the individual pupil risk assessment itself.

Staff should select relevant hazards and control measures from these resources and adapt them to reflect the pupil's individual needs, presentation and circumstances. Where appropriate wording is already available, staff are not expected to develop standard control measures independently. However, controls must not be copied without individual consideration.

The assessor must determine whether each control is necessary, appropriate and sufficient, and must amend, strengthen or supplement it wherever required.

The individual risk assessment must clearly identify the risks relevant to the pupil and the specific arrangements required to manage them safely. Where a risk is addressed within another current pupil-specific document, such as an Individual Healthcare Plan, Pupil Profile, Positive Support Plan, PEEP, Moving and Handling Plan or Eating and Drinking Plan, the assessment may clearly reference that document rather than reproduce its detailed instructions. The identified risk must nevertheless be recorded within the individual pupil risk assessment.

The Risk and Control Bank, general risk assessments and mandatory checklist provide a consistent framework for identifying and managing foreseeable risks. They do not replace individual professional judgement, dynamic risk assessment or specialist clinical and professional advice where required.
The school will provide appropriate training, guidance and leadership oversight to ensure that assessments are comprehensive, proportionate, individualised and maintained to a consistent standard.

New admissions and emerging risks

For new pupils, available information relating to significant foreseeable risks will be considered before admission wherever reasonably practicable. Where this is not possible, an initial risk assessment and any necessary interim controls will be established as soon as possible to ensure that known significant risks are communicated to staff from the pupil's first day.

Completion of a fuller individual pupil risk assessment must not delay the implementation of an immediately necessary control measure. Where information received from parents or carers, professionals, an EHCP, healthcare documentation or other sources identifies a significant risk, appropriate interim controls must be implemented and communicated without waiting for completion of the full assessment.

Individual pupil risk assessments must also be reviewed following a significant incident or near miss, receipt of relevant new professional information, a significant change in presentation or need, or where there is reason to believe that existing controls may no longer be sufficient.

Dynamic risk assessment

The school recognises that not all situations can be anticipated through formal written assessments. Staff are therefore expected to apply professional judgement and undertake dynamic risk assessments where circumstances change unexpectedly or where emerging risks require immediate consideration.

Dynamic risk assessment does not replace formal risk assessment but complements it by enabling staff to respond safely and proportionately to changing situations whilst maintaining the safety and wellbeing of those involved.

Review of risk assessments

Risk assessments will be reviewed:

- at planned intervals appropriate to the activity;
- following an accident, incident or near miss;
- where there are significant changes to activities, environments or equipment;
- where an individual's needs change;
- following changes in legislation or professional guidance;
- whenever concerns are identified regarding the effectiveness of existing control measures.

Reviews will ensure that risk assessments remain current, proportionate and reflective of the school's operational arrangements.

Section 06

MANAGING RISK IN A SPECIALIST SEND ENVIRONMENT

Understanding individual need. Removing barriers. Enabling participation.

Riverside Bridge School recognises that effective risk management within a specialist special school extends beyond traditional health and safety arrangements. Many pupils require highly individualised approaches to communication, regulation, medical care, mobility and learning. Risk assessments must therefore balance the need to safeguard individuals with the school's commitment to inclusion, participation, independence and preparation for adulthood.

Risk management arrangements will be person-centred, proportionate and responsive to each pupil's strengths, needs and circumstances. Wherever possible, reasonable adjustments, environmental adaptations and supportive strategies will be implemented to enable participation before restricting opportunities for learning or engagement.

Communication and understanding

Risk assessments will take account of each pupil's communication profile and their ability to understand, anticipate and respond to potential risks.

Appropriate communication supports, including visual information, augmentative and alternative communication (AAC), structured teaching approaches and other agreed strategies, will be used to promote understanding, reduce anxiety and support safe participation.

Medical and healthcare needs

Where pupils have identified medical conditions or healthcare needs, risk management arrangements will reflect the pupil's Individual Healthcare Plan, agreed clinical instructions and advice from the Nursing Team or other appropriately qualified healthcare professional. Staff undertaking healthcare procedures will receive the training and competency assessment required for the responsibilities they undertake and will follow the agreed clinical instructions relevant to the pupil.

Regulation and positive support

Some pupils may experience behaviours that communicate distress, anxiety or unmet need. Risk management will therefore emphasise proactive planning, environmental adaptations, co-regulation and preventative strategies to reduce foreseeable risks wherever possible.

Where required, individual Positive Support Plans and associated risk assessments will identify appropriate preventative approaches, agreed responses and strategies to maintain the safety and wellbeing of the pupil and those around them.

Physical support, moving and handling

Risk assessments will be completed where pupils require physical assistance, moving and handling support or specialist equipment. These assessments will ensure that appropriate techniques, equipment, staffing arrangements and training are in place to safeguard both pupils and staff.

Personal care and intimate care

Risks associated with personal and intimate care must be identified and appropriately managed. Relevant control measures must be reflected within individual care planning and associated risk assessments, ensuring that dignity, privacy, safeguarding and safe practice are maintained.

Therapeutic provision

Therapeutic interventions delivered within school, including those provided by therapists or trained school staff, will be undertaken within agreed professional guidance and supported by appropriate risk assessments where necessary.

Educational visits and community learning

Educational visits and learning beyond the classroom provide valuable opportunities to develop independence, communication, social understanding and preparation for adulthood.

Appropriate risk assessments will support pupils to participate safely whilst recognising that reasonable levels of managed risk are an important part of learning and personal development.

Positive risk taking and Preparing for Adulthood

The school is committed to supporting pupils to develop increasing independence through carefully planned experiences that involve proportionate and well-managed risk. Decisions will consider both the potential risks and the educational, social and developmental benefits of participation, ensuring that opportunities are not unnecessarily restricted where appropriate control measures can be implemented.

Section 07

RECORDING, MONITORING AND REVIEW

Recording clearly. Monitoring effectiveness. Learning from experience.

Riverside Bridge School is committed to maintaining effective oversight of its risk management arrangements to ensure that risk assessments remain appropriate, proportionate and responsive to changing circumstances. Risk assessment is recognised as an ongoing process rather than a one-off exercise and forms part of the school's wider arrangements for safeguarding, health and safety, quality assurance and continuous improvement.

Recording risk assessments

Suitable and sufficient records will be maintained for formal risk assessments where required. Documentation will clearly identify the hazards considered, the control measures implemented, the person(s) responsible and the arrangements for review.

The level of documentation required will be proportionate to the nature and significance of the risk; not every routine activity or professional decision requires a separate written risk assessment.

Risk assessments will be stored securely and made available to those responsible for implementing the agreed control measures, whilst ensuring that personal information is managed in accordance with data protection requirements.

Monitoring compliance

The implementation and effectiveness of risk assessments will be monitored through the school's established quality assurance processes. This may include:

- routine leadership monitoring;
- health and safety inspections;
- learning walks and environmental audits;
- incident and accident monitoring;
- review of near misses;
- compliance checks;
- internal audits;
- feedback from staff, pupils, parents and external professionals where appropriate.

Where monitoring identifies areas requiring improvement, appropriate actions will be implemented and monitored to completion.

Incident reporting and learning

Accidents, incidents and near misses provide valuable opportunities to review existing control measures and strengthen future practice. Significant incidents will be investigated where appropriate to identify contributory factors, evaluate the effectiveness of existing risk assessments and determine whether additional controls are required.

Learning arising from investigations, audits and professional review will be shared, where appropriate, to promote continuous improvement across the school.

Review of risk management arrangements

The school's overall risk management arrangements will be reviewed regularly by senior leaders to ensure that they remain effective and reflect changes in legislation, guidance, individual or organisational need and operational practice. This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner where significant change, monitoring, audit or learning from incidents identifies a need for review.

Section 08

TRAINING AND COMPETENCE

Building knowledge. Developing competence. Supporting safe practice.

Riverside Bridge School recognises that effective risk management depends upon staff having the knowledge, skills and confidence to identify hazards, implement appropriate control measures and respond proportionately to changing circumstances. The school is committed to ensuring that all staff receive appropriate information, instruction, training and supervision relevant to their roles and responsibilities.

Staff training

All staff will receive appropriate information and training in health and safety and risk management as part of induction and ongoing professional development. Additional training will be provided according to role, identified risk and the responsibilities undertaken by individual staff. This may include training relating to risk assessment, safeguarding, fire and emergency arrangements, moving and handling, medical needs and emergency medication, positive support and de-escalation, educational visits, lone working, specialist equipment and other areas identified through risk assessment or organisational need.

Role-specific competence

Where staff undertake activities requiring specialist knowledge or qualifications, they will receive appropriate training, instruction and, where necessary, supervision before undertaking those responsibilities independently. The school will ensure that staff responsible for developing, reviewing or implementing specialist risk assessments are suitably competent to do so and have access to appropriate professional advice where required.

Information, instruction and supervision

Staff will receive clear information regarding the risk assessments relevant to their work and will be expected to implement agreed control measures consistently. Line managers will provide appropriate supervision and support to ensure that safe systems of work are understood and maintained.

Continuous professional development

Risk management is an integral part of professional practice at Riverside Bridge School. Opportunities for learning from incidents, audits, professional guidance and reflective practice will be incorporated into the school's wider programme of continuous professional development to promote a culture of continuous improvement and shared responsibility.

Section 09

RELATED POLICIES & FRAMEWORKS

Connecting practice. Strengthening consistency.

This policy should be read alongside, but is not limited to, the following school policies and procedures:

- Health and Safety Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- SEND Policy
- Premises Management Policy
- Emergency Management and Business Continuity Policy
- Educational Visits Policy
- Medical Needs, Medication and Allergy Safety Policy
- Positive Support Policy
- Intimate Care Policy
- Infection Prevention and Control Policy
- Fire and Emergency Evacuation Policy
- Lockdown and Invacuation Policy
- First Aid Policy

Operational risk assessment procedures, approved templates and supporting documentation are maintained separately and should be used alongside this policy where appropriate. These documents may be updated in response to operational need, professional guidance or changes in identified risk without requiring amendment to this overarching policy, provided that they remain consistent with its requirements.

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner where significant legislative, organisational or operational change, monitoring or learning from incidents identifies a need for review.

APPENDICES

Appendix A - Risk assessment hierarchy

Level	Purpose	Examples	Review
Generic Risk Assessments	Risks associated with routine activities undertaken across the school.	Classrooms, offices, cleaning, playgrounds, workshops, curriculum activities.	Annually or sooner if circumstances change.
Activity Risk Assessments	Risks relating to specific events or activities.	Educational visits, sports events, swimming, enrichment activities, performances.	Before each activity or when arrangements change.
Individual Risk Assessments	Required for every pupil. Records consideration of reasonably foreseeable individual risks and any pupil-specific controls required.	Communication, eating/drinking, choking/ingestion, medical needs, regulation, behaviour, mobility, personal care, PICA/mouthing, absconding, sensory/environmental risks.	At least annually and following significant change, incident/near miss or new relevant information.
Dynamic Risk Assessment	Immediate assessment of changing circumstances requiring professional judgement.	Behaviour incidents, environmental hazards, unforeseen situations.	Continuous during the activity.
Specialist Risk Assessments	Risks requiring specialist knowledge or external advice.	Fire, COSHH, asbestos, lifting equipment, contractors, complex medical procedures.	In accordance with statutory requirements.

Appendix B - Hierarchy of risk control

When managing identified risks, Riverside Bridge School applies the recognised hierarchy of control measures wherever reasonably practicable.

Control Measure	Examples
Eliminate	Remove the hazard entirely where possible.
Substitute	Replace with a safer activity, process or piece of equipment.

Control Measure	Examples
Engineering Controls	Physical barriers, guards, environmental adaptations, specialist equipment.
Administrative Controls	Policies, procedures, supervision, training, staffing arrangements, visual supports, scheduling.
Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)	Gloves, aprons, eye protection or other equipment where appropriate.

Where elimination of risk is neither possible nor appropriate, the school will implement a combination of proportionate control measures to reduce risk to an acceptable level whilst maintaining educational opportunity and inclusion.

Appendix C - Positive Risk-Taking Decision Framework

When making decisions about risk, staff should consider:

- What are the educational benefits of participation?
- What is the foreseeable risk of harm?
- Can the risk be reduced through reasonable adjustments?
- Are there alternative ways to achieve the same outcome?
- Would preventing participation unnecessarily limit independence or development?
- Have the views of parents, carers and relevant professionals been considered where appropriate?
- Does the level of control remain proportionate to the level of risk?

The school recognises that carefully managed experiences involving an element of risk are often essential in developing resilience, confidence, communication, independence and preparation for adulthood. Decisions should therefore seek to enable participation wherever it is safe and appropriate to do so.

Appendix D - Individual Pupil Risk Assessment - Assessment Considerations

A practical reference for teachers and SLT quality assurance. This is not a separate form to complete, sign or submit. Record relevant hazards, potential harm, numerical ratings and pupil-specific controls in the individual pupil risk assessment.

MEDICAL AND HEALTHCARE

Consider: Seizures or altered consciousness; respiratory or cardiac needs; diabetes; allergies and anaphylaxis; medication and emergency medication; medical devices; fatigue, pain or deterioration; difficulty reporting illness.

Ask: What changes in presentation must staff recognise? Who is trained? How will emergency medication and support be accessible in every setting?

EATING, DRINKING AND INGESTION

Consider: Dysphagia, aspiration or choking; food and fluid consistency; feeding support and positioning; eating too quickly or food pocketing; allergies; taking others' food; PICA, mouthing or swallowing objects; small parts and batteries.

Ask: What supervision and resource restrictions apply at meals, snacks, cooking and on visits?

COMMUNICATION AND DANGER AWARENESS

Consider: Non-speaking communication; AAC, symbols or signing; hearing and vision; understanding warnings and instructions; delayed processing; expressing pain, distress or refusal; recognising unsafe situations.

Ask: How does this pupil communicate risk or distress? What must unfamiliar staff do differently, particularly during emergencies?

SENSORY PROCESSING AND REGULATION

Consider: Sensitivity to sound, touch, light, crowds or temperature; sensory-seeking movement; overload; unexpected changes; waiting and transitions; limited access to familiar regulation strategies.

Ask: What are early signs of distress? Which environmental changes and proactive regulation supports are necessary in school and in the community?

ACTIONS THAT MAY CAUSE HARM

Consider: Self-injury; hitting, biting, scratching or kicking; throwing objects; grabbing others or equipment; damaging furniture; sudden movements during care or transfers; dropping to the floor in unsafe places.

Ask: When are these actions most likely? How will staff prevent escalation and protect the pupil and others? Is a Positive Support Plan relevant?

ABSCONDING AND BOUNDARIES

Consider: Leaving classrooms or playgrounds; approaching exits or gates; running from adults; hiding; moving towards roads, vehicles or preferred objects; becoming separated from a group.

Ask: What positioning and supervision are required? What happens if the pupil leaves the designated area, including during trips?

MOBILITY AND MOVING AND HANDLING

Consider: Falls; stairs, ramps and uneven ground; wheelchair and mobility-aid use; transfers, hoists and slings; posture and positioning; equipment faults; fatigue; emergency evacuation.

Ask: Is there a Moving and Handling Plan? What equipment, trained staff and accessible routes are required?

PERSONAL AND INTIMATE CARE

Consider: Toileting, changing and continence; falls or sudden movement; privacy and safeguarding; skin integrity; infection; products being mouthed; menstrual care; unfamiliar facilities or staff.

Ask: What individual arrangements protect dignity and safety? How will care be delivered on educational visits?

CLASSROOMS AND SPECIALIST ENVIRONMENTS

Consider: Furniture and climbing; doors and trapping points; small resources, sharp objects and cables; electrical equipment; cupboards; sensory room equipment; room changes; risks to or from peers.

Ask: Which resources or areas require adaptation, restriction or direct supervision?

COOKING, PRACTICAL AND WORK-RELATED LEARNING

Consider: Hot surfaces and liquids; knives and cutting tools; food preparation; laminators, shredders and laundry equipment; cleaning products; moving stock or trolleys; outdoor maintenance; unfamiliar tools.

Ask: What tasks can the pupil undertake safely? What equipment, training, positioning and supervision are required?

PLAYGROUNDS AND OUTDOOR LEARNING

Consider: Climbing and falls; moving play equipment; collisions; throwing or mouthing outdoor objects; gates and boundaries; sensory overload; insects, plants and allergens; uneven or wet surfaces.

Ask: Are any equipment or areas unsuitable? How will supervision work in busy outdoor spaces and public parks?

PE, SWIMMING AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES

Consider: Falls and collisions; fatigue or overexertion; gym and trampoline equipment; posture and balance; swimming and water safety; changing facilities; medical or sensory restrictions.

Ask: Are activity-specific adaptations, specialist advice, trained staff or additional supervision required?

TRANSITIONS AND MOVEMENT AROUND SCHOOL

Consider: Corridors and stairs; lifts; busy areas; unsafe door access; separation; unexpected route changes; refusal or freezing in unsafe locations; mobility equipment in crowded spaces.

Ask: Are alternative routes, visual communication, adjusted timings or specific handover arrangements needed?

ARRIVAL, DEPARTURE AND TRANSPORT

Consider: Car parks and vehicle movement; boarding and disembarking; seatbelts or assessed travel supports; wheelchair restraints; transport distress; unfamiliar escorts; breakdowns and delays; handovers.

Ask: What must transport staff know? What safeguards apply to school-organised travel and off-site activities?

EDUCATIONAL VISITS AND WIDER COMMUNITY ACCESS

Consider: Roads and crossings; public transport; unfamiliar spaces; crowds and strangers; group separation; absconding; accessible toilets; meals and medication away from school; open water; animals; unexpected changes and emergencies.

Ask: For every pupil: what ongoing pupil-specific risks and controls apply off site? The Visit Leader must also complete a visit-specific assessment.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION AND UNEXPECTED INCIDENTS

Consider: Alarm sensitivity or lack of awareness; difficulty following directions; freezing or dropping to the floor; absconding; mobility limitations; medical equipment; assembly-point safety; unfamiliar evacuation routes.

Ask: Is a PEEP needed? What communication, staffing and equipment are required if the pupil cannot use the usual evacuation route?

SAFEGUARDING AND PERSONAL SAFETY

Consider: Difficulty reporting harm; dependence on adults for care; personal boundaries; vulnerability with peers or unfamiliar adults; privacy; unsafe contact; communication of consent or refusal; online access where relevant.

Ask: How can the pupil raise a concern? What supervision, dignity and safeguarding arrangements are necessary?

WEATHER AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

Consider: Heat and dehydration; cold exposure; difficulty communicating discomfort; sun exposure; rain, ice and slippery surfaces; pollen or insect exposure; reduced mobility in adverse weather.

Ask: What pupil-specific adjustments to hydration, clothing, access, activities and monitoring are required?

STAFFING, SUPERVISION AND CONSISTENCY

Consider: Individually assessed supervision needs; unfamiliar or agency staff; medical and handling competencies; inconsistent communication approaches; break-time cover; handovers; community staffing.

Ask: What must every supporting adult know? What is the contingency if usual trained staff are unavailable?

EMERGING AND ADDITIONAL RISKS

Consider: New diagnoses or treatments; changes in regulation, mobility or communication; incidents and near misses; new equipment; new activities; professional or parental information; changes in staffing or transport.

Ask: What has changed since the last review? Are controls still effective and does the pupil RA need updating now?

Using this appendix

- Consider each area in relation to the individual pupil; not every prompt will apply.
- Use the school's general risk assessments, Risk and Control Bank and relevant specialist plans to inform the assessment.
- Record each relevant hazard and the practical, individualised controls in the pupil's own risk assessment, even where the same controls appear in a general risk assessment.
- Consider educational visits, transport and wider community access for every pupil. A visit-specific assessment is also required for the actual visit.
- Review in line with the school cycle and sooner following incidents, near misses, changes in need or new information.