

Riverside Primary School Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information Report

Our vision is to enable the whole Riverside community to achieve, enjoy learning and aspire to be the best they can be. Our positive “Riverside Attitude” expects everyone to work together, communicate and show respect. We build strong partnerships with parents, carers and other professionals, delivering a fun, rich and varied curriculum. Through this we enable all pupils at Riverside to succeed, engage in their learning, be independent and ready for the next step in their lives.

Riverside is recognised as a Flagship school through the Inclusion Quality Mark scheme.

What types of SEND does the school provide for?

Riverside is a mainstream primary school that benefits from two special resourced provisions: one for children who are visually impaired (VI) and one for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). The VI Provision accepts children who have Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plans, who are registered blind or sight impaired. Several members of staff are trained to modify and adapt teaching materials and specialist equipment is available so that these children can be fully included in their classes. Our ASD provision accepts children who have EHC Plans where Autism is their primary need. Members of staff benefit from a continuing programme of training developing their expertise in supporting children with ASD. The school also has a wide range of equipment and resources to support children within the provision, including sensory rooms with their own outdoor areas. Admissions to the special provisions are made via referral from the Medway SEN Panel. The admissions criteria for the special provisions can be found on the school website.

It is important to note that we are a fully inclusive setting - both of our specialist provisions are intended to enable children to learn alongside their peers within mainstream classes of 30 or more children for the vast majority of the time. We do not place children in a separate 'unit' or educate them within small groups, other than to support their transition or when they are receiving specific interventions. We do not as a rule provide 1:1 support, but recognise that this may be necessary for some individuals on a short-term basis, or for part of the day.

In addition to the special provisions, we also provide support in both the school and the nursery for mainstream children with a wide range of learning difficulties or disabilities, including diagnosed conditions such as ADHD, those with physical disabilities and medical needs. All children at Riverside benefit from the additional resources that have been made available through the two specialist provisions and, more importantly, our children have developed an awareness of disability and appreciate that, with the right adaptations, their disabled friends can work alongside them and make good progress. We strive to ensure that no child with an additional need or disability is disadvantaged in any way when compared to their peers. Our Equality Policy is available on the school website if you would like to know more.

How does the school identify which children need extra support?

Children are identified as having Special Educational Needs and Disabilities in a variety of ways, which may include:

- ~ Concerns about a child’s low attainment or slow progress
- ~ Concerns raised by a parent
- ~ Concerns raised by a member of staff
- ~ Medical diagnoses or formal assessments
- ~ Consultation with other professionals eg. an Educational Psychologist

If you think your child may have a Special Educational Need or Disability, please contact the school. Talk to your child's class teacher and/or Mrs Huggett, our Inclusion Manager. We will be open and honest with you, and let you know what steps we can all take to support your child. We will work with you at every stage, involving you and your child in the decisions made about how we can best assess their needs and support their learning.

How will the school support my child?

The type of support each child needs varies widely. For some children, careful differentiation by the class teacher and access to appropriate intervention programmes can be enough to enable them to make good progress. We have a wide range of equipment and resources which are designed to support children's physical and sensory needs, as well as supporting learning or behavioural needs. However, if we feel that a more targeted approach is needed, we will discuss with you the interventions we think could help, and we will involve you and your child in setting any targets that might be required. The school follows the graduated approach of **Assess** (consider what the child's needs are), **Plan** (identify what support can be offered and how it will be delivered), **Do** (carry out the planned support) and **Review** (evaluate what has or has not worked for the child). If this approach is needed, it is likely that we will place your child on our SEND Register. Your child may be discussed at our In-School Review, where a panel of professionals with SEND expertise meet to discuss the child's needs and suggest different strategies or approaches we can use. We may work with you to complete a School-Based Plan, setting out what we will all do to help your child progress towards and meet their targets. Alternatively, your child may have a plan devised by a specialist, such as a Speech and Language Therapist. If your child has an EHC Plan, they will have targets that are reviewed and set at their Annual Review meeting. At all stages, contributions are sought from the child themselves, parents, school, and other professionals as appropriate.

We are a 'Trauma-Informed' school and our policies reflect the principles of trauma-informed practice.

Your child's class teacher is responsible for planning for your child and overseeing their progress across the curriculum. Mrs Huggett co-ordinates all of the support taking place in the school for every child who needs additional help, and liaises with the external agencies who work with us. She also oversees the different interventions we use and works with staff to assess and record progress made and evaluate how successful they are.

How accessible is the school environment?

Our Accessibility Plan is available on the school website. Key points include:

- ~ The ground floor of the building is wheelchair accessible and there are two lifts (one at each end of the building) to allow access to the first floor.
- ~ The building is adapted to make it easier for the Visually Impaired, with modifications like high contrast paintwork, continuous handrails and tactile mats to denote specific areas.
- ~ Several classrooms have a Soundfield system.
- ~ There are disabled toilets and an adapted changing room to facilitate personal care.
- ~ Rainbow Room, Sunshine Room and Starlight Room provide opportunities for sensory stimulation, regulation and calming.

How do teachers match the curriculum to children's needs?

Children with SEND are fully included in the learning that takes place in their classes. Work in all subjects is planned carefully to ensure that the learning objectives and activities are suited to the

different abilities and needs within the class. This may be on a group or individual basis as necessary. Assessment information is used to help teachers identify the next steps in learning for each child. Teachers will also consider the amount of adult support that a child receives in different lessons and what this support will entail. Again, adults may work with groups of children or with individuals if needed. We provide a wide range of interventions to support children with learning, and also with any social, emotional and behavioural needs.

Where necessary, we may make adaptations to the learning environment to support particular children, such as giving them an individual workstation within the classroom, or taking them to a separate room for some lessons or interventions. Our highly-skilled team of Teaching Assistants (TAs) work alongside the teaching staff to support the needs of children, both in class and when delivering specialist interventions.

How do you judge the effectiveness of the support received?

We hold termly Pupil Progress Meetings where the Senior Leadership team and class teachers look at the progress and attainment data of all children and identify any issues or concerns. The targets of children with SEND are reviewed regularly, using class tracking sheets, children's individual plans if applicable and at Annual Review meetings (for children with EHCPs). We look at how the child is progressing against their own personal targets as well as against national expectations. You and your child will be involved in reviewing targets and, where necessary, setting new ones. Mrs Huggett evaluates the effectiveness of the different intervention programmes we offer and adapts them accordingly, taking advice from external professionals where appropriate.

If a child has made sufficient progress and no longer needs support that is additional to or different from their peers, they may be removed from the SEND register.

How will parents be involved and informed?

We believe that it is extremely important to work in partnership with parents in all aspects of their child's education. As described above, we will communicate with you on a regular basis and ensure you are involved in decisions made about the support your child is receiving, and we would ask you to be open and honest with us about any factors that may be affecting your child's learning or wellbeing. In addition to discussions that are specific to your child's SEND, you will be able to discuss their general progress at Parents Evenings and will receive an annual written report. For children with an EHC Plan, there will also be an Annual Review meeting which you will be invited to attend and contribute your views.

Support at home is an essential part of all children's education. Comments between school and home can be shared via our Class Dojo system or by calling the school. Your child's teacher, our Home School Support Worker (Mrs Wood) or Mrs Huggett can offer advice about practical ways that you can help your child at home with a range of needs. Our termly Inclusion Newsletters will keep you informed about SEND information and strategies for supporting specific needs, and upcoming events such as parent workshops. You will have copies of any plans containing targets set for your child, and recommendations made by any external agencies will be shared with you so that strategies can be implemented at home and at school. If you wish to discuss your child's needs further, you are welcome to make an appointment at any time to meet with either the class teacher or Mrs Huggett.

We also endeavour to involve the children themselves whenever decisions are made about their needs and the provision they receive, where appropriate. This may be through discussion with a trusted adult, inviting them to contribute their views in writing, or attending meetings. These approaches are tailored to the age and understanding of the child.

What about children's social and emotional wellbeing?

We are an inclusive school with a very caring, understanding ethos. We welcome children from all backgrounds and with a diverse range of needs. All of our staff are trained in trauma-informed approaches. They are aware of our most vulnerable children and take great care to ensure that they are nurtured and supported at all times. We aim to include all children in the activities we offer, whether that be lessons, extra-curricular clubs, educational visits or special events.

We offer many opportunities for children to work and play together, establishing good relationships with each other and with the adults in the school. We provide a 'Listening Ear' for children to talk to when they are worried or anxious about something, and will extend this to further therapeutic work or counselling if required. We offer several interventions aimed at building children's confidence and self-esteem. We run themed weeks every year which focus on aspects such as Anti-Bullying Week and Disability Awareness. Children with SEND are represented on the School Council and have opportunities to give their views on school issues.

Our Rainbow Room environment is a safe place for children to go for sensory regulation activities throughout the day, or at break and lunchtimes if they find the main playground too overwhelming. We also have Sunshine Room and Starlight Room which offer opportunities for calming and immersive sensory experiences. Some children benefit from adapted workspaces away from their class, where they can complete learning activities for short periods if they are finding the mainstream classroom overwhelming. We run interventions such as Lego therapy, which focuses on social skills, supporting children to develop their ability to communicate and collaborate with each other. We also provide opportunities for children to learn valuable life skills like cooking in our kitchen classroom, and gardening in our Biodome. We work closely with other professionals, such as the Educational Psychologist, in cases where a child's needs are more profound. Most importantly, we encourage the children themselves to be tolerant, caring and thoughtful towards others, to be mindful of the school's 'CHARACTER' values and have good 'Riverside Attitude', and to support each other when someone is finding things difficult.

How do you support children with transition?

With regard to our special provisions, we have a clear transition policy attached to our main SEND/Inclusion Policy. We endeavour to help children settle in quickly when moving to Riverside, to minimise anxiety and enable a smooth transition between schools.

For transitions within school (such as a new school year), we use strategies like social stories to help prepare children in particular for the upcoming change. Copies are given to home so that they can be revisited throughout holiday periods. Children have the opportunity to visit their new classroom and meet the class staff in advance of moving on. Children's current teachers and TAs meet with the staff of the receiving class to hand over information and share strategies and resources that have worked well for the child. For new entrants to Year R we have a standard transition offer, but may adapt this to take account of any additional needs – for example, a child may spend longer on a reduced timetable until they are ready to do full days in school.

When children are preparing to move on to secondary school, we work with the receiving schools to plan transition arrangements. Where necessary, we will set up an enhanced transition package to allow more time for the child to familiarise themselves with the new environment. We liaise closely with the staff there to ensure that they understand individual needs and pass on all relevant paperwork. If your child has an EHC Plan, we will invite a member of staff from the receiving school to their Year 6 Annual Review meeting.

What training do staff have to support all this?

Teaching and support staff receive regular training and professional development on a range of SEND, including knowledge of specific conditions, strategies to use with children who have various needs and other programmes relevant to their roles. Various members of staff hold accredited qualifications in conditions such as Autism. We work very closely with the VI Advisory Teachers from the Physical and Sensory Service, who visit the school each term and oversee the support received by our VI children. We also make use of outreach services provided through the local authority, as well as the school nursing team. Additional training is accessed through other agencies such as Educational Psychology or through external providers. Furthermore, we have several specialist members of staff who access training in their particular area of expertise, such as Speech and Language. This may entail working alongside an accredited therapist.

We also work closely with partner agencies such as the School Nursing team, the Local Authority Social Care team and other support services and voluntary organisations, who offer their expertise and help us to meet the needs of children and their families.

How are the Academy Committee involved and what are their responsibilities?

Mrs Huggett gives regular reports to the Committee regarding the progress of children with SEND. (This report does not refer to individual children; confidentiality is maintained at all times.) The named Academy Committee member for SEND works with Mrs Huggett to evaluate our SEND provision on an ongoing basis and plan for future development. The Committee may contribute to agreeing priorities for spending within the SEND budget, with the overall aim of ensuring that all children have access to the support they need in order to make progress. Members often attend training sessions and INSET with school staff to ensure their knowledge is up-to-date.

What if something goes wrong?

We would encourage all parents to contact us as soon as possible if they have any concerns about the support being provided for their child. The first port of call should always be the class teacher. We will endeavour to rectify any problems and work with you to reach a mutually acceptable solution. However, if the parents of a child with SEND wish to make a formal complaint about the provision made at the school, the Complaints Policy for the Trust is available on our website with details the further stages of action to be taken.

Please look at our SEND and Inclusion Policy for further information about the ways we provide for SEND at Riverside. This includes an Appendix related specifically to the Covid-19 Pandemic. You can also access Medway Council's Local Offer through their website at <https://www.medway.gov.uk/localoffer>

This also contains details of local support services available to parents of children with SEND.

Should you wish to learn more about either of our provisions, or about SEND in general, you are welcome to contact Mrs Huggett at the school.