

# Visitors to School Policy



**RIVERSIDE BRIDGE SCHOOL**  
**INSPIRE, EMPOWER, ACHIEVE**



Approved by: Ms Leila Amri  
Reviewed and evaluated: September 2025  
Ratified by Governors: September 2025  
Next Review date: September 2026

## 1. Introduction

At Riverside Bridge School, we are proud to welcome a wide range of visitors, including parents, carers, external professionals, contractors, governors and community partners. As a specialist setting dedicated to educating pupils with complex learning, communication, sensory and health needs, we must ensure that every visit to our school is conducted safely, respectfully and in line with our safeguarding responsibilities. Our school values - Inspire, Empower, Achieve - shape the way we interact with visitors and the expectations we hold for anyone entering our site. We expect all visitors to uphold these values and to contribute positively to our school environment.

The purpose of this policy is to establish clear procedures and expectations for all visitors, ensuring that the safety, dignity and wellbeing of our pupils remain our highest priority. This policy should be read in conjunction with our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Health and Safety Policy, Parent and Carer Code of Conduct, and Data Protection Policy.

## 2. Safeguarding Commitment

Riverside Bridge School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all pupils. Many of our learners are highly vulnerable and may communicate, interact or regulate themselves differently due to their additional needs. All visitors to our school must recognise this context and conduct themselves with sensitivity, patience and understanding. In accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, and visitors must report any concerns immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), a member of the safeguarding team or a SLT member.

## 3. Scope of This Policy

This policy applies to all individuals entering the school premises, including but not limited to parents and carers, therapists, social workers and multi-agency professionals, Local Authority officers and inspectors, contractors undertaking work on-site, Governors, trustees and volunteers, prospective staff or students on placement as well as volunteers.

## 4. Arrival and Access Procedures

All visitors must enter via the Main Reception, sign in using the school's visitor system -- Inventory - and clearly display the issued identification badge and lanyard at all times. Visitors will be met and escorted to the appropriate area by a designated member of staff. Visitors are not permitted to move unaccompanied around the school unless prior approval has been given and their safeguarding status verified.

## 5. Behaviour and Conduct Expectations

Riverside Bridge School expects all visitors to behave in a respectful, calm and professional manner at all times. We are a trauma-informed and communication-inclusive environment, and our pupils may exhibit behaviours linked to anxiety, sensory processing differences or communication needs. Visitors must respond with patience and understanding and may not challenge or approach pupils directly about behaviour or incidents.

**5.1 A trauma-informed school** is a school that recognises that many children and young people may have experienced trauma such as neglect, abuse, instability, medical trauma, grief, or chronic stress and adapts its practice to ensure that the environment, relationships and responses are safe, supportive and healing, rather than reactive or punitive.

Key Principles of a Trauma-Informed School:

- understanding behaviour, not unishing It - staff recognise that behaviour is a communication

- of emotional distress, anxiety, fear or past trauma and not simply “misbehaviour”.
- safety first - physical, emotional and relational safety are prioritised. The school avoids actions that may re-trigger trauma, such as shouting, shaming or unpredictable reactions.
- relationships at the school - trusting, stable relationships with adults are seen as the foundation for learning. Connection comes before correction.
- regulation over reaction - staff help pupils co-regulate through calm voices, sensory strategies, predictable routines and emotional support.
- curiosity over judgement - instead of asking “What’s wrong with you?”, a trauma-informed school asks “What has happened to you?” or “What do you need right now?”

A trauma-informed approach allows staff to respond with compassion, understanding and strategy, helping pupils feel safe, build trust and remain ready to learn.

**5.2 A communication-inclusive environment** is one where every pupil is supported to understand and express themselves using the methods that work best for them. At Riverside Bridge School, this is achieved through our Total Communication Approach, which recognises that communication is not limited to speech and must include a combination of:

- spoken language
- Makaton and signing
- symbols and visual supports
- gestures, facial expression and body language
- objects of reference and sensory cues
- high- and low-tech AAC (communication devices, switches)

By embedding multiple modes of communication across the school, we ensure that every pupil, regardless of need, ability or diagnosis, has a meaningful way to engage, make choices, interact, and be understood. Classrooms are communication-friendly spaces, and all staff are trained to model language, create opportunities for communication, and reduce barriers. This approach is central to respecting pupil voice, autonomy and emotional well-being.

A communication-inclusive school understands that dysregulation or behaviour may be rooted in communication difficulties. We believe that every behaviour is a form of communication and must be acknowledged with curiosity, patience and appropriate communication support.

## 6. Use of Mobile Phones, Photography and Confidentiality

To protect pupil privacy, confidentiality and safety, visitors are strictly prohibited from using mobile phones, cameras or recording devices on school premises unless expressly authorised by the Headteacher or a member of the Senior Leadership Team. No photographs, videos or social media content may be created or shared involving pupils or staff.

## 7. Health, Safety and Emergency Protocols

Visitors must adhere to all health and safety protocols while on-site. In the event of an emergency, such as a fire alarm or lockdown, visitors must follow staff instructions and proceed to designated assembly or safe points.

## 8. Responding to Inappropriate Conduct

The Headteacher reserves the right to act immediately in response to any visitor behaviour that compromises safety or breaches school expectations. This may include requesting the visitor to leave the premises, issuing warnings or contacting external agencies.

## 9. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be monitored regularly by the Headteacher and reviewed annually by the Governing

Board, or sooner if circumstances, legislation or safeguarding guidance require.

## **Appendix A - Visitor Categories and Access Requirements**

**Red Lanyard** - Visitors with no DBS required (social workers, parents/carers ...) must be accompanied at all times. This includes volunteers till training is completed.

**Blue Lanyard** - All Agency Staff with DBS sent by their agency.

**Green Lanyard** - Visitors, including NHS staff, governors and staff from the trust with DBS and may move independently.

**Yellow Lanyard** - All Contractors (maintenance/builders/electricians) should be escorted unless fully cleared, enhanced DBS if working near pupils.

## Appendix B – Safeguarding Leaflet

We endeavour to create a culture which inspires a love of learning through emotional and social intelligence and a responsibility of self- discipline, self-regulation and respect for others.

**Our school vision: Inspire, Empower, Achieve**

**Our school values:**

- **Respect** - we value others for who they are and always show respect;
- **Resilience** - we celebrate taking risks in our learning, are determined to never give up and display perseverance;
- **Responsibility** - we always try our best to achieve our full potential.

Valued Behaviours at Riverside Bridge School		
RESPECT	RESILIENCE	RESPONSIBILITY
We greet people... We say "Thank you" to others. We treat our school and others around the school with respect. We wait for our turn.  We listen to each other.  We use kind hands and kind words. We treat others the way we want to be treated. We praise and encourage each other. We celebrate other's differences.	We try hard in everything we do. We don't give up. We ask for help when needed. We learn to regulate ourselves. We engage with new experiences in school and the community.  We learn from our mistakes. We aim to be the best we can be. We take risks with our learning. We reflect and always strive for improvement.	We attend school. We always tell the truth. We forgive each other. We look after our own and other's belongings.  We let others join in our groups and games. We strive to be independent as we can. We prepare for life beyond school. We keep our school tidy and clean ready for the next.

**Riverside Bridge School Safeguarding Team**



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Further safeguarding support can be provided by the Senior Leadership Team:
 

- **Leila Amri** - Headteacher
- **Heather Clark** - Senior Deputy Head
- **Leonel Carvalho** - Assistant Headteacher
- **Ray Flowers** - Assistant Headteacher
- **Elliot Stubbles** - Assistant Headteacher

**Keeping ourselves safe**

- All visitors must sign in at Reception on arrival via our electronic Inventory screen.
- Agency staff are required to hand over their I.D and an in-date DBS check.
- Visitors will be issued with an I.D photo badge that must be worn and visible at all times with specific lanyard depending on visitor.
- Visitors should remain in Reception until under the supervision of a designated member of staff.
- Photographs are not to be taken unless by prior agreement.
- Be a good role model to our pupils by being respectful, fair and considerate of others. Remember pupils may interpret your words/actions differently.
- Report to a member of the pupil's class team if you observe any anti-social behaviour.
- Avoid being in a closed environment whilst 1:1 with a pupil.
- No mobile phones should be out in front of our pupils; these should be used only in the staffroom.
- Ensure you are dressed appropriately and professionally. Some of our pupils have sensory needs and may like to touch bare skin or pull at loose clothing i.e. ties, earrings, necklaces.
- Do not share any personal details with a pupil. If a pupil tries to contact you on any social media platforms, please report this to a member of the Safeguarding Team immediately, do not respond to the pupil.

**Types of harm**

We all have a responsibility to keep children (under the age of 18) safe, both at home and in school.

Harm is identified in four ways:

- **physical** - when a child is deliberately hurt or injured.
- **sexual** - when a child is influenced or forced to take part in a sexual activity. This can be a physical activity or non-physical e.g. being made to look at an inappropriate image.
- **emotional** - when a child is made to feel frightened, worthless or unloved. It can be by shouting, using threats or making fun of someone. It can also be when children see their parents & guardians, or visitors to the home, fighting or using violence.
- **neglect** - when a child is not being taken care of by their parents/guardians. It can be poor hygiene, poor diet, not keeping appointments for additional support, not coming to school and being left home alone.

**REMEMBER**  
**If in doubt, ask. Please do not leave our school without telling someone or doing something.**

If a child discloses, they might be subject to abuse:

- react calmly
- listen carefully
- do not promise confidentiality
- do not ask leading questions or make judgments
- reassure the child throughout
- record by reporting to a member of the Safeguarding Team immediately.

If you feel that a child may be at risk of harm but are not sure, then inform one of the Safeguarding Team members immediately. They will offer advice and take appropriate action. Child abuse can happen to any child regardless of elements such as gender, culture, religion, social background ability or disability. A copy of the school's Safeguarding Policy is located in reception and on the school website.

**Behaviour**

As a Special Educational Needs School, we have a range of behaviours and all of our pupils will have specific strategies in place. Each pupil has a Regulation Plan, which clearly describes what behaviours the pupil may display, what this may mean and what strategies can be used to support each pupil. If unsure, please always ask for the support from the pupil's class team.

Physical interventions is used infrequently and only when **Reasonable, Necessary, and Proportionate** to the risks involved. Such interventions will be employed solely in the best interests of the pupils and when necessary, all efforts will be made to prevent injury and maintain the individual's dignity.

To minimise the use of physical interventions, we adopt preventative strategies based on TeamTeach training, aiming for 95% de-escalation strategies before resorting to physical intervention.

Prevention includes:

- deploying competent staff to meet pupils' needs and minimise physical interventions;
- helping pupils avoid known triggers of challenging behaviour;
- delivering a differentiated curriculum that appropriately challenges all pupils;
- creating meaningful activities that offer choice and a sense of achievement;
- maintaining a clear relationships and behaviour policy understood by all staff and pupils;
- developing Regulation Plans linked to the Zones of Regulation;
- enhancing staff expertise in managing detrimental behaviours;
- recognising early signs of potential detrimental behaviour and using diffusion techniques to prevent escalation.

## Appendix C – Total Communication Leaflet

**The Communication Development Protocol (CDP)** is a bespoke tool developed by our Speech and Language team to facilitate a collaborative approach between our teachers and our therapists in assessing and supporting communication development among our pupils with complex communication needs.

This protocol serves as a comprehensive framework that encapsulates and disseminates valuable knowledge and expertise regarding effective interventions tailored to meet the diverse communication requirements of our pupils. By integrating insights from both educational and therapeutic perspectives, the CDP enables a thorough understanding of each pupil's unique communication profile, guiding educators in implementing targeted strategies that promote language acquisition and social interaction.

The protocol outlines specific assessment criteria, intervention techniques, and progress monitoring methods, ensuring that all stakeholders are aligned in their efforts to enhance communication skills.

Through the use of the CDP, we aim to create a cohesive support system that empowers our pupils to express themselves more effectively, engage meaningfully with their peers, and navigate their learning environments with greater confidence. This collaborative model not only enhances the quality of communication support provided but also fosters a deeper partnership between educational and therapeutic professionals, ultimately benefiting the pupils we serve.



At the SCERTS Social Partner level, the pupils are beginning to develop the prerequisite skills that are needed for social communication. The pupils at this level are communicating through pre-symbolic means. The critical priorities at this stage are to firstly expand on their conventional gestures which have shared meaning including head shaking, nodding, giving and pointing gestures. Secondly, we need to increase the frequency and range of their functional spontaneous communication. We do this by increasing engagement and reciprocal interaction with adults through highly motivating and sensory play which is hands-on and developmentally appropriate. The theory behind working on gesture use and spontaneous communication is that by increasing non-verbal meaningful communication, this ultimately leads to better outcomes for language acquisition and social relationships.



The pupils at the SCERTS Language Partner level are communicating through early symbolic means, as expressed through verbal language, signs or pictures. It is still important to continue to develop gesture use, but at this point, the focus is on increasing the range of spontaneous communication involving other people. During the Social Partner stage, we work on the idea that people are highly interesting and motivating through meaningful and motivating activities. At the Language Partner stage, we support the pupils to share their experiences with adults (and other pupils) by encouraging them to communicate for a social purpose.



The pupils at the SCERTS Language Partner+ level are communicating through a wider range of symbolic means, again, this might be using verbal language, symbols, and/or a combination. We continue to focus on increasing the range of spontaneous communication involving other people. Our staff will be encouraging extended vocabulary for greeting words (for adults/peers), increasing the variety of people's names that are used, more advanced core (highly flexible and functional words used regularly) and fringe vocabulary (concrete/topic specific vocabulary) and increasing the number of symbols used per message. This will allow for language/symbol use to become more flexible, used for a variety of purposes and ready for back-and-forth conversational exchanges. At this stage, our pupils become more skilled in extended turn-taking so that they learn to initiate/respond and then engage and keep interactions going for longer – all skills that are needed for successful reciprocal communication.



The pupils at the SCERTS Conversational Partner level exhibit the ability to engage in meaningful and reciprocal conversations with peers and adults. The critical priorities for the learners at this level is the focus on spontaneous communication with peers and self-efficacy as well as increasing their awareness of social nuances of conversation. Our pupils at this level are practising the skills of initiating dialogue and effectively responding to the contributions of others. These pupils are becoming increasingly capable of using language to express their thoughts, feelings, and intentions, as well as to navigate the complexities of social interactions. We support them to be more equipped to follow conversational rules in taking turns shifting topics, whilst also showing an understanding of when to seek clarification or repair communication breakdowns. This level of conversational ability is crucial for building relationships and fostering a sense of belonging within their social environments. The pupils at this stage have opportunities to practise these skills across their academic and functional skills curriculum – for example, when going to the shops, in 'Chit Chat Café' and special interest clubs.