

**RIVERSIDE SCHOOL**

**ACCESSIBILITY/EQUALITIES PLANS**

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**Approved at Board meeting No 7, 3 May, 2023**

*This policy will be reviewed triennially.*

**Next review date: Summer 2026**

# **1. Accessibility Plan**

## **Introduction**

This plan is drawn up to implement Riverside's School Planning Duty for Disabled Access. This planning duty arises from changes made to the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 by the SEN and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA) and The Equality Act 2010. The plan is written in accordance with the Department for Education guidance publication 'Accessible Schools: Planning to increase access to schools for disabled students'. The Equality Act 2010 covers all activities that occur in schools.

## **Definition of Disability**

The Equality Act 2010 defines disability as: 'a physical or mental impairment which has substantial and long term adverse impact on a person's ability to carry out normal everyday activities'. Physical or mental impairments can include sensory impairments (such as those affecting sight and hearing) and learning difficulties. The definition also covers certain medical conditions when they have a long-term and substantial effect on students' everyday lives. This includes students with ASD (Autistic Spectrum Disorders), ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder) and any linked with CAMHS/Deaf CAMHS (Child and Adolescents Mental Health).

## **Main Objective**

The school is aware of its obligation under Schedule 10 of The Equality Act 2010 to have a 3-year rolling accessibility plan. The aim of this 3-year plan is to set out how Riverside is committed to providing a rich and inclusive environment to enable all students to participate fully in the school community by identifying and eliminating barriers that could prevent this.

## **Key Responsibilities**

The school recognises that the following key responsibilities underpin the planning duty:

- Not to discriminate against disabled students in their admissions and exclusions, and provision of education and associated services.
- To treat disabled students equally.
- To take reasonable steps to avoid putting disabled students at a substantial disadvantage

## **Principles**

When performing their duties all staff and governors have regard to the DRC Code of Practice (2002). Compliance with the requirements of the DDA is key to all school policies. All students are entitled to the best education they can receive regardless of any disability they may have. Access to Education means making a full school life accessible to the disabled student, including extracurricular activities and events.

The school provides all students with a broad and balanced curriculum, tailored to meet their individual learning requirements. The school recognises and values parents' knowledge of their student's disability and its effect on his/her ability to carry out normal activities. The school recognises parents' and student's rights to confidentiality.

### **Access to the Curriculum**

The school undertakes to assess its provision of curriculum to students on a regular basis, and to use this information to better tailor the curriculum to student requirements. The identification of barriers to participation in all areas of school life is a priority and, where necessary, adjustments are made to the curriculum and teaching methods. The school undertakes to create a challenging and personalised curriculum where suitable learning challenges are set and progress of individual's achievements can be accurately assessed.

The school senior management team (SMT) identifies continuing staff development (CPD) needs to improve their ability to meet the needs of students and include these within the staff appraisal systems.

### **Access to the Physical Environment**

The school regularly audits existing facilities and develops ways of making the physical environment more accessible to students with disabilities. The stairs and lift The school will consider how different disabilities have specific requirements and how they can be best catered for within the school environment, indoors and outside. The school regularly considers ways of providing the most suitable aids and resources outside of the student's SEN, or health, provision.

### **Access to Information**

The school audits existing methods of providing information to improve accessibility.

### **School Accessibility Statement**

Staff ensure that the specific needs of every student have been met by forward planning of every lesson, and the production of differentiated material to meet identified needs. The school will adopt an inclusive attitude towards parents and all other visitors.

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## **2. Equalities Plan**

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### **– Introduction**

Riverside School's Equality Policy meets the Race, Disability, and Gender Equality Duties requirements, as well as the requirements of the law for Religion and Belief, Employment Equality (Age) Regulations and Sexual Orientation.

In the implementation of this Policy we have evolved an approach that builds on race, disability, sexuality and gender considerations from the start and at every level of the school; at strategic, policy, management and classroom level.

This policy will be monitored and delivered through the governors' role, School Improvement Plans and Local Authority Students' Service Improvement Plans.

We aim to ensure that every student, irrespective of race, disability, gender or religion, is able to achieve the highest standards they are capable of and that strategies are in place to tackle under-achievement. We aim to ensure that every student has access to the necessary support required to enable them to achieve their highest potential. We ensure that the school's procedures for managing challenging behaviour are fair, effective but equitable.

Our intention is to ensure that adults working or volunteering in the school properly reflect the student population. This will include as much as possible a balanced gender mix, appropriate representation of ethnicity and disabled people. We believe that this will provide good role models for students from all backgrounds.

We consult students, staff, parents, governors and all other stakeholders in the development of our Policy. The aim is to ensure that we meet the needs of those from the many different ethnic and cultural backgrounds, girls and boys and students and adults with disabilities as represented in the school.

## **– School Profile and Values**

Riverside is a successful, oversubscribed 160-place Haringey LA secondary special school. From year to year about two-thirds of our student population have a diagnosis of autism. The school is located on the same site as Woodside High School which enables a range of inclusive activities to take place between the schools.

The school provides:

128 Main School places for students (aged 11-16 in Teams 1-3, and 11-19 in Team 4) from across Haringey with a wide range of general, complex, severe and profound and multiple learning difficulties – including those with a wide range of language and communication needs.

14 Learning Centre places (Team 5) for students aged 15-19 experiencing significant barriers to their prior learning, be they medical, emotional or behavioural.

We are always mindful that we need to deliver positive outcomes for all, according to our motto: 'Learning to Live Life to the Full'. We aim to develop and nurture happy and fulfilled students whilst ensuring that they have the highest possible levels of independence before they move on to either our own or to other post-16 education and later adult life.

We welcome our duty under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, to advance equality of opportunity and to foster good relations, and our specific duties to publish information every year about our school population; to explain how we have due regard for equality; and to publish equality objectives which show how we plan to tackle particular inequalities, and reduce or remove them. We welcome the emphasis in the Ofsted inspection framework on the importance of narrowing gaps in achievement which affect, amongst others:

- 1) Students from certain cultural and ethnic backgrounds
- 2) Students who belong to low-income households and those eligible for free school meals
- 3) Students who are disabled or who have special educational needs
- 4) Boys in certain subjects, and girls in certain other subjects.

### **School Motto**

'Learning to Live Life to the Full'

### **School Vision**

- We will ensure that the school is inspiring and welcoming and that all members of our community feel respected and valued.
- We will help every student develop high self-esteem, independence skills and an enthusiastic attitude to life and learning.
- We value and promote inclusive learning, and we will develop strategies to enable all our students to make a success of their lives.

### **Disabled Students**

At Riverside, all our students are learning disabled and many physically disabled. All students will have an EHCP unless they are on an assessment place. Our school building is fully accessible in all respects.

Riverside is dedicated to the effective and efficient education of disabled students, all aspects of curricular and extracurricular life take the student's individual needs into account and students participate at every level of school life regardless of ability or disability.

Riverside has extensive extended school opportunities including short breaks care, support-in-the-home, after-school and holiday clubs. They offer a wide range of sporting, cultural and social activities and all Riverside students are offered places in the sessions.

Riverside has a comprehensive residential school journey programme, including 6 annual trips to a Residential Centre in the Cotswolds, an annual International trip to Slovenia and several Outdoor Challenge Trips for students participating in our Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award.

We are continually working to ensure that all our policies and practices reflect and incorporate equalities objectives in creating a positive working ethos/environment for our staff and students.

We are committed to challenging all types of discrimination and responding to any member of the school community who may become a victim of such action. We ensure that every student and member of staff irrespective of race, disability, gender, gender reassignment, religion, or sexual orientation is able to achieve to the highest level and that strategies are in place to raise awareness and to tackle discrimination and under achievement.

The school aims to make sure that every student has access to the necessary support required to enable them to achieve the highest standards possible. We serve a community which is very diverse, with staff and students from many different social, economic, ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds. As well as coming from these diverse backgrounds, Riverside students have profound and multiple, severe and/or complex disabilities and autism. We are proud to respect and value this additional diversity and make every effort to ensure that all students are given the fullest opportunity to reach her or his own potential.

We reach out to all families and welcome and encourage them to become part of the school community. We work hard to build a caring, stimulating and enabling environment for all our students; constantly monitoring their individual performance, their achievements and their progress, giving praise, support and advice as it is needed.

Staff are fully aware of Riverside's duties, values and aims. They also know that as well as living and working by them, we have to be able to demonstrate that we do so, and not just by our attitudes, words and actions. We maintain up-to-date policies covering every aspect of how the school is run, covering such areas as safeguarding and child protection, behaviour management, anti-bullying, grievances and guidelines for intimate care.

Annually we agree a comprehensive School Development Plan and assess our performance against it. Every member of staff be they teaching or support staff assesses their own individual performance through our appraisal programme. We evaluate the impact of all our work in terms of equalities annually.

When recruiting new staff members, whether teachers or support staff, and when promoting existing staff, we advertise posts appropriately and do everything practicable to ensure that all candidates are selected on merit and are given equal opportunities to represent themselves. In cases where two or more candidates appear to offer comparable qualities, appointment will be made with a view to achieving a truly representative staff complement.

All staff receive training to ensure they provide the best possible service to the school and its students and to make the most of their own potential. Governors, as 'critical friends', keep themselves informed on all school matters, so that they can satisfy themselves, on behalf of the community, that all this is being achieved. All Governors undertake regular training to ensure that they keep up to date with developments, whether legislative or professional.

As far as possible, the Governing Board is constituted so as to be representative of the school community as a whole.

The School Council, which represents all students in the school - has updated the Riverside Anti-Bullying Policy - this is available on the school website.

## **1– The Legal Framework**

The Equalities Officer presents this joint policy to Governors every two years. We take into account the following legislation and guidance when reviewing the policy:

### **Disability**

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) protects disabled people from discrimination in employment, the provision of goods, facilities and services or the administration or management of premises. Employers have a duty to make reasonable adjustments to working arrangements or premises so that disabled employees can work effectively. Service providers have to give the same standard of service to disabled people as they do to non-disabled people. The Disability Discrimination Amendment Act 2005 introduces a positive duty on public bodies to promote equality for Disabled people. The DDA 2005 amended the definition of disability. It ensured that people with HIV, cancer and multiple sclerosis are deemed to be covered by the DDA effectively from the point of diagnosis.

### Gender

The Sex Discrimination Act 1975 and The Equal Pay Act 1970 mean that men and women should not receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of their gender or marital status. The Equality Act 2010 places a duty on public authorities to promote equality of opportunity between women and men, and to eliminate sex discrimination. The Gender Recognition Act 2004 provides transsexual people with legal recognition in their acquired gender. The Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations 1999 prevents sex discrimination relating to gender reassignment. It clarified the law for transsexual people in relation to equal pay and treatment in employment and training.

### Race and religious belief

The Race Relations Act 1976 and Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 protects people from being treated less favourably on racial grounds, in relation to employment, training, provision of services, education, housing, and healthcare. Public authorities also have a duty to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between different racial groups.

The Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006 seeks to stop people from intentionally using threatening words or behaviour to stir up hatred against somebody because of what they believe.

Employment Equality Legislation 2003 (Religion or Belief) protects people from discrimination and harassment on the grounds of their religion in employment. The Equality Act 2010 protects people from discrimination in accessing goods, facilities and services on the grounds of religion or belief.

### Age

The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006 protects people against unjustified age discrimination in employment and vocational training including prohibiting age related pay and benefits and default retirement ages without considering individual cases; Protects people from discrimination, victimisation, harassment and instructions to discriminate. In recruiting employees, seeking applicants from underrepresented age groups 'positive action' is lawful but should be stated in advertising.

### Sexual Orientation

The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003 protects people against discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation in employment. The Civil Partnerships Act 2004 provides legal recognition and equal treatment for same sex couples and married couples, including employment benefits and pension rights. The Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013 provides equality of Marriage legislation



### Human Rights Act 1998

The Human Rights Act covers: The right to life, freedom from slavery and forced labour, the right to respect for private and family life, freedom of thought, conscience and religion, freedom of expression, freedom of assembly and association, the right to marry or form a civil partnership and start a family and the right not to be discriminated against in respect of these rights and freedoms. Many of the principles of the Human Rights Act are designed to protect workers in the workplace.

### Haringey Local Safeguarding Students Board

All our staff at Riverside are employees of the London Borough of Haringey and as such are made fully aware of all issues relating to the safeguarding of students. The head teacher, one deputy head and Team Spirit manager are fully up to date with training as Designated Safeguarding Leads.

### Roles and Responsibilities

At Riverside we ensure that our school meets the requirements of the Race, Disability and Gender Equality Duties and the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 by a commitment to the following:

- 1) The Governing Board will review the Equalities Policy and its commitments biennially and the related data will be updated.
  
- 2) The delivery of the school's Equalities Policy will be monitored by the Equalities Officer, (currently Deputy Head), the Leadership Team, the Senior Management Team and the Governing Board.

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## Haringey Equality and Diversity in Employment Policy

<b>Date of issue:</b>	<b>February 2017</b>
Status: This Equality and Diversity in Employment Policy is effective from February 2017. A process of consultation with the relevant trade unions has been undertaken. This policy is the recommended policy for adoption by the Governing Boards or Committees of Community and Voluntary Controlled schools.	

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The Equality and Diversity in Employment Policy details the school's approach to equality and diversity to ensure fair and lawful practices and procedures at all times throughout recruitment and employment. This policy is closely linked to all employment policies and ensures that the school fulfils its obligations as an employer under the Equality Act 2010.

## **2. Equality and Diversity policy statement**

- 2.1 The school is committed to equality of opportunity throughout employment (including pay, training & development, recruitment and retention) and commits to having in place policies, practices and procedures that promote equality and diversity and anti-discriminatory practices.
- 2.2 Everyone has the right to be treated with dignity and respect and afforded equality of access to opportunities that are available within the working environment. By valuing diversity, all staff recognise and embrace that everyone has unique identities which will help to ensure that the school can provide the best services to students possible.

## **3. Scope**

- 3.1 This policy and procedure applies to all employees and prospective employees (job applicants and prospective job applicants) of the school and former employees with regards to the provision of an employment reference.
- 3.2 The school is also committed to equality in relation to all workers, contractors, sub-contractors, consultants, agency workers, employees seconded from other organisation, governors and volunteers and these groups are expected to adhere to the principles set out in this policy and procedure whilst undertaking work or tasks for the school.

## **4. Roles and responsibilities**

- 4.1 The Headteacher is responsible for:
  - Overseeing the preparation and publication of one or more equality objectives that the school believes it needs to achieve to further the general equality duty. These objectives will be reviewed and updated at least every four years and published on the school's website.

- Agreeing the equality objectives with the governing body and where appropriate including these in the school development plan.
- Producing an annual report on workforce equality and diversity information for the governors that provides the opportunity to consider that information in the context of the school's workforce planning, and so that potential positive action in appropriate areas can be considered.

#### 4.2 All employees are responsible for:

- Complying with this policy and associated policies (such as the Bullying and Harassment Policy and the Code of Conduct), in their own conduct, at all times when dealing with each other, managing staff and in their relationships with students, parents, carers, governors and other stakeholders.
- Treating colleagues, governors, students, volunteers, visitors, and members of the public with dignity and respect.
- Embracing a culture that provides supportive and positive working relationships and behaviour, which underpins the school's vision and values.
- Being alert to discrimination and taking action to avoid becoming involved in any form of discrimination.
- Making colleagues aware if their conduct or behaviour is inappropriate and/or reporting this to the headteacher, or, if the inappropriate behaviour comes from the headteacher, the Chair of Governors.
- Providing support to employees who are subject to inappropriate conduct or behaviour.
- Promoting good community and workplace relations to foster and encourage an atmosphere of tolerance and support so that there is no place for behaviours which would negatively impact upon the community or school.
- Informing the school of any reasonable adjustments that may assist them.

## 5. The Equality Act 2010

5.1 The Equality Act 2010 brings together previous legislation to protect people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society. The Act covers nine 'protected characteristics' which qualify for protection from discrimination under the act include:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

5.2 The Equality Act 2010 created a general equality duty. This means that when making decisions and developing policies public bodies are required to have 'due regard' to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it, which means:
  - Removing or minimising disadvantages
  - Taking steps to meet different needs
  - Encouraging participation when it is disproportionately low
- Foster good relations across all protected characteristics (i.e. between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it).

5.3 To help meet the general equality duty schools in England have two specific duties. These are:

- To publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the equality duty (see paragraph 6)
- To prepare and publish one or more specific and measurable equality objectives (See paragraph 7)

5.4 Further information on discrimination may be found at [ACAS 'The Equality Act 2010 – Guidance for Employers'](#)<sup>1</sup> and on the [DfE Equality Act 2010 Advice for Schools](#)<sup>2</sup>. Equality is also an important aspect of the Ofsted common inspection framework, see the [Ofsted School Inspection Handbook](#)<sup>3</sup> for further details.

## 6. Equality information

6.1 As part of its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 the school will publish information to demonstrate its compliance with the general equality duty. This information must include, in particular, information relating to people who share a protected characteristic who are:

- its employees, and
- people affected by its policies and practices.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.acas.org.uk/media/pdf/8/a/Equality-Act-2010-guide-for-employers.pdf](http://www.acas.org.uk/media/pdf/8/a/Equality-Act-2010-guide-for-employers.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> [www.gov.uk/government/publications/equality-act-2010-advice-for-schools](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/equality-act-2010-advice-for-schools)

<sup>3</sup> [www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-inspection-handbook-from-september-2015](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-inspection-handbook-from-september-2015)

For further information see [Essential Guide to the Public Sector Equality Duty](#)<sup>4</sup>

6.2 In addition, for those schools with 150 or more employees, information on workforce monitoring must be published on their website. Schools must do this annually by the 6 April each year.

## 7. Disability Policy

### *Disabled Staff Working in Schools*

7.1 The Equality Act 2010 defines disability as a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on an individual's ability to carry out normal day to day activities.

7.2 There are some types of physical and mental conditions which might be treated as a disability under the Equality Act 2010, depending on the effect that have on the individual's daily life. This includes:

- Hearing and visual impairments;
- Conditions where the effects vary over time or come in episodes such as osteoarthritis and ME;
- Progressive conditions such as motor neurone disease, forms of dementia and cancer;
- Conditions which affect certain organs such as heart disease and asthma;
- Learning disabilities such as dyslexia and dyspraxia;
- Autistic spectrum disorders;
- Mental health conditions, for example depression, bipolar affective disorders, eating disorders;
- Impairments due to injury to the body or brain.

### *Reasonable adjustments*

7.3 The school will make reasonable adjustments that can assist a disabled employee or potential candidate gain or stay in employment with the school, or a governor gain or keep an appointment on the governing body.

7.4 The adjustments may include physical changes to the workplace (for example changing lighting and adding signage), or the provision of auxilliary aids (for example specialist equipment such as adapted keyboards, voice recognition software, or sign language interpreters).

7.5 The following factors may be taken into consideration to determine how reasonable an adjustment might be:

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<sup>4</sup> [https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/psed\\_essential\\_guide\\_-\\_guidance\\_for\\_english\\_public\\_bodies.docx](https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/psed_essential_guide_-_guidance_for_english_public_bodies.docx)

- How effective it would be in helping the employee overcome a disadvantage;
- How practical it would be for the school to make the adjustment;
- The financial costs and the extent of any disruption;
- The availability of financial or other assistance in making the adjustment.

7.6 Where reasonable adjustments may be necessary the school will discuss this with the individual at a stage at which adjustments will enable access, and ensure good attendance and performance. The employee is entitled to keep a health condition confidential if they wish. However, we encourage employees to disclose conditions either to their headteacher or through the Occupational Health Service so that we can consider any reasonable adjustments that might be made. Any such information will be treated confidentially, and only shared as necessary to implement the reasonable adjustments.

7.7 The Equality Act 2010 prohibits prospective employers from asking about a job applicant's health except in certain specified circumstances which include to:

- i) establish whether the applicant can take part in an assessment to determine their suitability for the job;
- ii) determine whether any reasonable adjustments need to be made to enable a disabled person to participate in an assessment during the recruitment process;
- iii) find out whether a job applicant would be able to undertake a function that is intrinsic to the job;
- iv) monitor diversity among job applicants.

7.8 Applicants are encouraged to inform the school of any reasonable adjustments that they may need when called to interview.

7.9 Funding for adjustments may be available through the Government's [Access to Work](#)<sup>5</sup> scheme. It is the employee's responsibility to contact Access to Work to identify what support may be available under this scheme.

7.10 In community schools, the local authority is the employer and it is the authority's budget, rather than the school's, which would be taken into account in relation to capital funding for adjustments to premises.

## 8. Monitoring & review

8.1 The school will maintain a log of all reported breaches of this policy and review the application of this policy annually with the governing board.

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<sup>5</sup>[www.gov.uk/access-to-work/overview](http://www.gov.uk/access-to-work/overview)