



Rivermead School

Together on the road to Success



Welcome to Rivermead School



Foreword: Headteacher: Mrs Frances Akinde

Our School

Welcome to our wonderful school.

Rivermead is a community special school for young people aged 11 to 19 years with a range of complex needs. Our specialism is in Autism and associated difficulties for which we provide excellent and extensive support. Years 7 to 11 (11 -16 years) are based at our Forge Lane site in Gillingham, Kent. The school has a range of fully equipped specialist classrooms with up-to-date technology as well as social spaces and therapy areas.

Rivermead...an amazing place to be!

Rivermead is an amazing place to be! We call ourselves a family and this is what we want every learner who comes to Rivermead to feel: that they are a part of our family. Everything we do is driven by our ethos and values guided by our mission to support our learners to succeed on our journey together on the road to success.

A positive and inclusive environment

We nurture a positive environment where every learner and member of our team feels included. Inclusion is at the heart of everything we do and this can be seen through our broad and balanced curriculum. We are proud to be a Flagship School holding the Inclusion Quality Mark.

Our curriculum statement: Support to Succeed

Our purpose is to support our learners to gain the knowledge, skills, attitude and values needed to achieve so that they can successfully access life's opportunities. One of the key questions we ask ourselves within our curriculum is 'What life skills do we need to equip our learners with?' To us, that means imparting our learners with a basic understanding of the world so that they can become integral members of our local and national communities.

Committed and dedicated staff

We are proud to have a committed and dedicated teaching staff with a range of specialisms who deliver a rich and challenging curriculum differentiated to meet the needs of each learner. Learners are encouraged to achieve their full potential academically. All learners achieve success in GCSEs and other public examinations in Year 11. A strong emphasis on personal growth and developing independence is promoted throughout the school both in the curriculum and through the wide variety of enrichment and extra-curricular opportunities on offer.

Get in touch

We hope you enjoy looking through our prospectus. If Rivermead School is somewhere that you would love your young person to be, please do not hesitate to contact our friendly team on 01634 338348.

School day: settling in



School hours

The school day starts at 8.30am. The day consists of 6 lessons. Most lessons are 50 minutes except for a shorter 40-minute lesson before lunch. We have a 20-minute morning break at 10.40 and a 50-minute lunch break between 12.30 to 1.20pm. Our school day ends at 3.30pm.

Uniform

Our school uniform is kept as simple and practical as possible and includes a black blazer, white blouse/shirt with an optional black Cardigan or jumper. Learners are also encouraged to wear a black blazer. A school tie (clip on) and school badge can be purchased via Parent Pay and collected from the school office.

School Uniform

Compulsory Items	OPTIONAL ITEMS
Black Blazer with School Badge Black Trousers/Skirt (skirts to be below the knee)	Black Jumper, with or without Rivermead Logo
White Blouse/Shirt	Black Cardigan, with or without Rivermead Logo
SEAL Tie	Please note, jumpers and cardigans can be worn underneath blazer
Plain Black Shoes or Trainers	

Physical Education

Compulsory Items	OPTIONAL ITEMS
Plain white Polo Shirt (no slogans or brand logos), with or with Rivermead Logo	WINTER: black or navy-blue sweatshirt with or without Rivermead logo
Trainers/Plimsolls	
WINTER: black or navy-blue jogging trousers	
SUMMER: black or navy-blue shorts for summer	

Where to buy

The uniform can be purchased from major supermarkets online and in store. Full details are available on our website. Some supermarkets have started to sell clothing designed for children with specific or sensory-sensitive needs such as Autism.

School meals

We are proud of our school meals. We regard our dining room as the heart of the school. Like most families, it is the place that we all meet to chat and enjoy each other's company.

Healthy

Healthy meals, designed to tempt our learners, are prepared daily using fresh, quality ingredients, starting with the option of breakfast in the morning for those who have not had the time to eat before coming to school. Complimentary fresh fruit is provided at morning break. The price list and meal deal information is available on our website.

Allergies

The school does not guarantee a completely allergen-free environment however, we endeavour to minimise the risk of exposure to allergens and encourage self-responsibility. If your child has allergies, please use the website form to tell us.

School Community

Our learners find that it is fun to be an active member of the school community. Within school we have numerous opportunities to enjoy working and playing together. We actively encourage learners to take on leadership roles within school such as peer ambassador and school council positions.

School Council

Learners elect their peers as representatives to the school council and they play an active role in all aspects of school life. They contribute to decision making and planning for the future. As part of their responsibilities, they have a budget of their own to purchase games and equipment for leisure use.

Code of conduct:

At Rivermead, we pride ourselves on nurturing and supporting the calm, purposeful, happy environment at school, in which we believe all learners can flourish and grow. It is a primary aim of our school that every member of the school community feels valued and respected, and that each person is treated fairly and well.

Our code of was written by learners and staff together and is regularly reviewed by them. It summarises what we wish for our community which includes:

- Respect one another by showing this in the way we speak to one another, the way we treat one another and the way we look after each other's property.
- Believe that everyone's ideas are valuable and listen to each other.
- Act in a responsible manner- work hard and allow others around us to work hard as well.
- Look after our learning environment.
- Care about one another, support and help each other and provide a welcoming atmosphere for all.
- Believe that everyone has a right to be safe and to feel safe.
- Respect school rules because they support the smooth running of our school and ensure that all are safe.

We follow the **SUPER** system: Be Safe, Understanding, Polite, Engaged and Resilient.



Curriculum: challenging and successful



Academic overview

Our curriculum challenges and extends our learners, enabling them to develop both their personal and their academic skills and knowledge. Our investment in excellent resources and staff development has supported our continuing development and ensured that our curriculum is of the highest quality.

ICT

We use ICT to enhance learning and to provide opportunities for learners to take responsibility for their own learning.

Achieve Success

Our learners often achieve successes that they nor their families would have thought possible. Their outcomes show huge progress from their starting points and we are proud of their achievements which, by the end of Key Stage 4, range from success at entry and foundation level through to 5 or more GCSEs.

All our learners achieve public examinations as well as developing personal and practical skills to prepare them for independence, adult life, and the world of work.

Form Groups: Five Ways to Wellbeing

Every school day begins with a Five Ways to Wellbeing lesson when form groups explore topics that prepare them for becoming confident and effective members of the community. The Five Ways to Wellbeing are - **Connect, Be Active, Keep Learning, Give, and Take Notice**. The activities help learners take care of their mental health and wellbeing and promote use of social and emotional skills.

Five Steps to Wellbeing is built on evidence-based research that shows you can live up to 7.5 years longer if you build the five activities into everyday life.

Our fantastic service provision

Pastoral Care and Home School Liaison

At Rivermead we put pastoral support at the centre of all that we do. All staff have pastoral responsibility for our learners. Each individual learner is in a small tutor group (referred to as a Form Group) where the tutor is responsible for the learners within their group. This person is the first point of contact for parents and carers as they know the learner best in school and build up a trusted relationship over time. The Form Tutor teaches their group for the first lesson every day and leads on the Young Persons review of the Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) held every year.

We have a dedicated Pastoral and Behaviour Team who work closely with our learners and their families to support behaviour, wellbeing, welfare, safeguarding and learner achievement. The team are based in the Super Hub.



Intervention and therapy

We recognise the complex needs of our learners and we offer a range of therapies to meet these needs. We have fully qualified and experienced therapists working on site at the school including a Speech and Language Therapist (SALT), an Occupational Therapist, an Art Therapist, and a Play Therapist; they work alongside a team of Specialist Support Assistants who are trained in delivering interventions including sensory therapies, occupational therapy, and physiotherapy.

Learners' social and emotional needs are met by a strong pastoral team, through curriculum delivery and the provision of a range of additional therapies and support provided by our own qualified Art Therapist, our counselling service, our mental health first aiders and the pastoral support staff.

Intervention

The Speech and Language Therapist in school aims to work jointly with Form Tutors, Class Teachers, Teaching Assistants, and other professionals e.g., Educational Psychologist, Occupational Therapist. Through this we offer:

- Team-working.
- 1:1 Therapy.
- Group intervention in class
- Personalised support including use of visual communication strategies, social stories and comic strips.
- Group intervention outside the classroom.
- Termly check-ins.

Accessing support

Each Learner receives a screen for SLCN (Specific Language and Communication Needs) upon entry to the school and Form Tutors are also free to make a school-based referral where needed. If parents would like their child to access support, they should liaise with their Form Tutor. Intervention usually lasts for 2 terms and is then reviewed. If the learner has made good progress, they will have a therapy break and their needs will be reviewed at the beginning of the next new term. If SLCN is having a significant impact on the learner's daily life/ progress in school, therapy will continue a termly basis.

Curriculum: challenging and successful



Occupational Therapy

At Rivermead we have an onsite Occupational Therapist and a dedicated Therapy Assistant who carries out programmes set by the local NHS Children's Therapy Team from occupational health to physio to sensory circuits. Once referred, our onsite Therapist and Therapy Assistant liaises with relevant professionals to understand the needs of those learners who require therapy. We also run fine and gross motor skill screening to understand what our learners can do and what they find difficult.



Art and Play Therapy

Art Therapy is a form of psychotherapy that uses art materials to aid and encourage communication. Through art making, learners can explore thoughts, feelings, and ideas with the therapist. Learners who are referred to an art therapist do not need to have had previous experience or skill in art.

Play Therapy is a way of helping young people express their feelings and deal with their emotional problems, using play as the main communication tool. Our on-site play therapist undertakes an initial assessment and will then speak to the learner and their families about the most appropriate intervention.

Weekly intervention

We launched weekly intervention sessions for all Key Stage learners because we recognize the complex needs of our young people and we want to ensure the delivery of a holistic curriculum. These intervention sessions include pre-teaching of subject vocabulary, language enrichment sessions, social skills session, auditory memory sessions and Lego therapy. Within intervention slots we are targeting skills that may present as a barrier to classroom learning and we do so in a small group setting. This gives our Learners opportunities to practise skills in a small, safe environment. This has been a pilot period of intervention and we look forward to refining and expanding what is currently on offer.

Outside agencies

As a school we work closely with outside agencies and we liaise effectively with others to meet the needs of our Learners. These agencies include; counselling, occupational therapy, physiotherapy, speech and language therapy and careers advice from Medway Youth Trust. This adds to the variety and dynamics of the support we have on offer here at Rivermead.



Triple-R- Rivermead Routes for Reintegration

We are part of the Rivermead Inclusive Trust family, an extension of Rivermead School and we are based in Long Catlis Road, in Parkwood, Kent. We are a Social, Emotional and Mental Health specialist provision; a holistic and educational wrap around approach implemented by an experienced team. We support secondary aged learners in accessing education and finding their way back into a learning environment. We are a dedicated, supportive, and understanding team who pride ourselves on offering a safe, caring and enabling environment.

Vocational Studies

All the work that we do is to achieve our core purpose. That is to see our young people develop into independent adults who can achieve success in their chosen field and can lead a purposeful and enjoyable life. Developing the skills for independent adult life is, therefore, an essential element of our work throughout the school. Handling money, independent travel, being able to eat confidently in a social context and knowing where to find help for a range of everyday problems are among the many skills that we teach both in the classroom, in enrichment activities and during leisure time.

We provide a rich variety of experience and opportunities to develop these skills in the real world through visits out of school, visitors to the school and our links with other organisations.



Enriched curriculum: outreach, trips, and visits



Rivermead Outreach Community Challenge (ROCC)

ROCC offers respite activities during school holidays for young people aged 12-18 years with a variety of learning difficulties. As part of our respite care, young people will have the opportunity to develop their life skills through cooking; shopping and independent travel activities all supported by highly trained support workers. Young people will also have the chance to experience and develop both new and existing skills through a variety of activities catered to their individual needs, abilities, and interests.

Trips and visits

We maintain a curriculum which enables our pupils to benefit from the different environments outside the school, both in the local community and further afield. Examples of our school trips include:

- Buckmore Park.
- Battle Abbey in Hastings.
- Houses of Parliament.
- Riverside Country Park.
- PGL Residential Centre in Swindon.



Your child's achievements: how do you know what progress your child has made?

Ongoing assessments

We identify, assess, record, and regularly review learners' progress and needs. We also involve parents/carers in planning and supporting at all stages of their children's development so that they are aware of the strategies that are being used and are involved as partners in the process.

Monitor and evaluate

Through the school's SEND (Special Education Needs and Disability) register, Provision Maps, and other records, we monitor and evaluate the progress of learners using existing school assessment information, e.g., class-based assessment/records, end of year tests and Cognitive Tests.

Reporting to parents

Parents will be kept informed of any progress/decisions through Parents Evenings and Rivermead Learning Journeys.

The on-site SALT and OT will be available at parent evenings and Annual Review meetings when required. We also welcome parents making contact at any time. Due to a high proportion of our learners having statemented needs for SLCN, the Speech and Language Therapist in school works on a consultancy basis, where Teachers and Form Tutors are free to liaise for advice at any point.

Parent consultations

We provide two formal opportunities to meet one to one with the Class Teacher during the academic year:

1. Annual Review
2. Parents Evenings.

Rivermead Learning Journey

We also send out our Rivermead Learning Journey overviews twice a year. This is our report system that shows parents/carers how much progress our learners have made throughout the year.

Other opportunities

There are several other meetings through the year which provide opportunities to discuss current developments in the school:

- Year 7 transition meetings.
- PCARs (Person Centred Annual Reviews).
- Home visits
- Parent Coffee Mornings and Parent Workshops
- Year 9 Options evening.
- Celebration evenings.

Governing Body and staff; be a Parent Governor

We have a full and active Governing Body which is part of Rivermead Inclusive Trust, (a Multi Academy Trust (MAT)). Our MAT enables us to build on our existing partnerships, work collaboratively and support schools to improve achievement, efficiency and the overall wellbeing of our learners, staff, and wider communities. The core value of the trust is to not only raise standards but to have a strong sense of moral purpose to promote 'life in modern Britain'. The Headteacher and the Governors want to pursue this vision to enhance and secure teaching and learning for learners within today's educational environment. The Governing Body has a range of duties and powers and a general responsibility for the conduct of the school. Vacancies for Parent Governors are advertised as they arise.



Clubs, Music, Sport and P.E.



Clubs

At Rivermead, we have several extra-curricular opportunities available before and after school and at lunchtimes. Our range of clubs includes:

- Football skills
- Rock climbing
- Music
- Trampolining
- Magic the Gathering
- Walking Club

Music

Music and singing are an important part of school life at Rivermead. We encourage children to explore sound and the building of patterns of sound known as 'music.'

Understanding

We support our pupils to develop an understanding of different music styles and cultures and we ensure they appreciate and understand a wide range of high-quality live and recorded music drawn from different traditions and from great composers and musicians.

Staying healthy: Sport and P.E.

Our Staying Healthy focus includes enabling students to become increasingly physically competent in a range of physical activities and to become increasingly effective in different roles within sport. Activities that learners have been involved include:

- Fitness
- Football
- Dance
- Basketball
- Tennis
- Softball
- Rounders
- Ultimate Frisbee
- Cricket
- Athletics.



Staying Healthy tuition

Staying Healthy tuition allows students to experience a range of activities as part of a healthy and active lifestyle and is designed to develop confidence to become involved in exercise out of school and in later life. Other sports available are:

- Archery
- Hurling and Camogie
- Dance
- Gaelic Football
- Handball
- Hockey
- Lacrosse

- Netball
- Rowing
- Rugby League and Rugby Union
- Squash
- Table Tennis
- Tennis
- Volleyball
- Blind Cricket
- Goal Ball
- Powerchair Football
- Table Cricket
- Wheelchair Basketball
- Wheelchair Rugby
- Amateur Boxing
- Athletics and Field/Track events
- Canoeing
- Track Cycling

- Road Cycling
- Diving; Golf
- Gymnastics
- Equestrian
- Kayaking
- Rock Climbing
- Sculling
- Skiing
- Snowboarding
- Swimming
- Trampolining
- Boccia.





Medway Council Special Educational Needs Department

Admission to the school is through the Medway Council Special Educational Needs Department. Places are offered to learners with complex needs who have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and are resident in Medway. Their needs must fit the school's specialist areas of provision.

Transition

Most learners are admitted at normal transition times i.e., when moving from primary to secondary school and from year 11 to post-16 education. The Medway Council Special Educational Needs Department has processes in place to assist parents and learners at these times. You should speak to the SEN (Special Educational Needs) Coordinator at your child's current school to discuss these arrangements. Admissions also take place at other stages in a young person's education such as when an Education, Health and Care Plan is put in place for the first time, following an annual review or when a child moves into the area. In these circumstances contact should be made with Medway Council Special Educational Needs Department - details can be found at www.medway.gov.uk/schoolsandeducation/admissions.

Parents and children who wish to visit the school to help them to make the best choice of school for their needs should contact our Rivermead school office. For further information about Medway Local Authority's local offer, please visit: <https://www.medway.gov.uk/localoffer>

Transport

All applications for school transport should be made to Medway Council. Medway Norse; tel: 01634 283211. The Student Services Transport Operations Team contact details are: 01634 331155 and for more information please visit:

www.medway.gov.uk/schoolsandeducation/gettingtoschool/applyingforschooltransport

Our Ethos and Values

- We believe that every young person, whatever their age or ability, has the potential to progress, both academically and as a well-rounded young adult.
- We believe that an inclusive approach is achieved through holistic and individualised pathways to teaching and learning.
- We believe that every achievement should be shared and celebrated.
- We believe that the inclusion of staff, parents, and governors, the wider community and learners can create a 'sense of belonging'.
- We believe that a safe, calm, and nurturing environment, where respect for each other is paramount, is the best place to learn and succeed.
- We believe that Rivermead embeds the importance of social, moral, spiritual, culture and 'life in modern Britain'. We celebrate this through enrichment, the broad curriculum, Ethics, PSHE, and daily assemblies.

Our mission

We want to enable young people to progress and have every life opportunity to the absolute best of their ability in a completely holistic way. At Rivermead it is about the 'person,' the complete 'person,' to ensure that no one falls through the net. We value our learners equally whatever the difference in their abilities or behaviours and believe that every learner has something unique to contribute to our school community.

We want every child to be able to engage actively in learning and so able to reach their full potential in all areas of school life knowing that they are cared for and supported. We celebrate every success and want our learners to be happy to come to school and we provide a range of educational, social, and cultural activities that will allow them to flourish.

We will celebrate our school ethos by presenting the school as 'our school' so that everyone; learners, staff, parents, and Governors feel that they have a sense of belonging and a sense of togetherness like a big family. We also have high expectations through a close partnership between learners, staff, Governors, parents, and carers.

Our vision

We want a Rivermead learner to develop the skills to become employable, self-confident and to be able to contribute in a positive way to their community.

Rivermead is a 'good' school. To ensure our school is outstanding, we will raise standards by actively ensuring each student's learning is as good as it can be, steering a range of approaches adapted specifically to each learner.

We recognise the importance of social, moral, spiritual, and physical development as well as academic achievement in 'closing the gap.' We will create enrichment opportunities in line with teaching and learning to further advance the knowledge and understanding of our learners.

Our ambition is to explore opportunities to support learners on their journey to become independent adults. By working in partnership with other schools across Medway and in partnership with other agencies we will ensure positive well-being and success for all our learners.



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Web: www.rivermead.org.uk

All school enquiries must be made to the school office between Monday - Friday, 8am - 4.30pm

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