



Advance Trust
T/A
Kingfisher & Riversides Schools

**Policy Name: School Accessibility Plan
(including Pupil Access Policy)**

Policy Date: September 2018

This policy has been agreed by the Kingfisher & Riversides Joint Local Governing Body and will be reviewed every year.

Reviewed: September 2018

Ratified by Governors: 12th September 2018

New Review due: September 2019

Responsible person: Paul Yeomans (Riversides School)

Responsible person: Jay Hart (Kingfisher School)

Riversides School

Accessibility Plan

Riversides is a special school for children with Social, Emotional and Mental Health difficulties. Disability is defined by the Disability Discrimination Act 1995: "A person has a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day to day activities".

A pupil with significant physical disabilities would not be admitted to the school because of vulnerability to the sometimes violent behaviour of the other pupils.

The school provides all pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum, differentiated and adjusted to meet the needs of individual pupils and their preferred learning styles. School staff receive training in making the curriculum accessible to all pupils and are aware of its importance.

This plan has been produced after reviewing existing plans, looking at options for improving accessibility and an audit of the school site for accessibility. It will contribute to the review and revision of related school policies, e.g.

- School improvement plan
- Continuing professional development policy and procedures
- SEN policy
- Equalities policy

Staff should at all times be aware of an individual's human rights and civil liberties, but must weigh these in conjunction with their duty of care and the health and safety of the individual and others.

Background

Riversides School was opened in 1997 as a maintained local authority special school for pupils with statements of special educational needs for behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. The school caters for 55 to 65 key stage 2 to key stage 4 pupils of both sexes. When the school was fitted out for us by the local authority, a magnetic door locking system was incorporated within the fabric of the building and linked in to the fire alarm system. The magnetic door locking system was installed on all external doors and internal doors to practical lesson areas such as DT, Science, Food Technology. The magnetic door locking system was released by staff with a swipe fob passed over an electronic reader in the wall by the door. If the fire alarm went off then all magnetically locked doors were released automatically.

We became part of Advance Trust in January 2014, a Multi-Academy Trust specialising in special and alternative provision with plans for growth within the mainstream sector. Established in 2013, Advance Trust is a DfE approved sponsor, seeking to grow our schools by raising standards and setting the ultimate goal as being recognised as outstanding in their own right. We aim to improve their capacity to be leaders in their sector and, drive school improvement both within individual schools and across the Trust. Our vision and guiding principles are that we will place learning at the heart of our community; creating a group of academies to support learners of all ages to secure a better future for themselves.

Development

When the school opened initially on the Thorneloe Road site, the behaviour of the pupils in the building was quite extreme with some pupils attempting to abscond on such a regular basis that the magnetic door system operated as a safeguarding tool, to keep pupils safely in the building at difficult times, without access to unattended or dangerous areas. Over a period of 5 – 6 years subsequently, behaviour disruptions lessened and the internal electronic locks were gradually disconnected and became obsolete.

There have however been occasions when an internal door/doors may have been key-locked for a brief period of time to safeguard youngsters in the event of an extreme behavioural outburst by an individual/individuals, due to the nature of our pupils' Statemented Social, Emotional and Behavioural difficulties. These doors would be unlocked as soon as the situation has been made safe.

The RSS site in Spring gardens does not have internal electronic fobs, but does have electronic mechanisms on all external doors.

The external electronic fob mechanisms have all remained in place on both sites on safeguarding grounds, to prevent unlawful access by members of the public and also to prevent uncontrolled egress by students when experiencing behavioural issues.

External doors:-

These remain on the magnetic lock system due to the vulnerability of pupils who attend the school.

These primarily fall into 2 categories:

- a) Pupils who are not emotionally or socially safe to be off-site without an adult because they are, on the balance of probability, likely to put themselves in danger.
- b) Pupils who have been placed at the school because we have externally magnetically locked doors, because they have in the past absconded and put themselves in danger.

Internal corridor doors:-

In the Spring term of 2014, following advice on Ofsted guidelines, the school has made the decision to only lock internal doors to offices, dangerous practical areas when not in use or the stairwell at the RSS site when upstairs rooms are unoccupied. A member of SLT may also need to briefly direct a key lock an internal door(s) in the event of specific danger to pupils or staff from student behavioural outbursts, or if a pupil is attempting to abscond in a state of heightened distress, which would jeopardise their own safety. All doors would be unlocked immediately the danger has passed, and the pupils/staff have been made safe.

Recovery rooms:-

Both school sites have Recovery Rooms in the 'Put It Right' areas. The individual recovery room doors can be held closed temporarily from the outside by holding the door handle firmly, if a student's behaviour causes danger to others, but the doors do not lock. The aim is to allow the door to be opened as soon as the student is calm and safe enough to engage with. The aim of using Recovery Rooms is to provide a stimulus-free area where pupils can recovery effectively from disruption/disturbances, and return successfully to the learning environment.

	Targets	Strategies	Outcome	Timeframe	Goals Achieved
Short Term	Availability of written material in alternative formats.	The school makes itself aware of the services available through the LA/Advance Trust for converting written information into alternative formats and also is aware that some families have various literacy limitations.	If needed the school can provide information in alternative formats and Transport operators/escorts also support delivering information verbally to some families.	Ongoing – annual evaluation of pupil needs for examination materials. Ongoing evaluation of parental literacy needs.	Delivery of information and access to premise for disabled parents and visitors improved, e.g. ramp access at front door.

Medium term	Provide disabled parking space	A disabled parking space will be marked out and a management policy introduced to prevent its misuse.	SLT to decide on appropriate location for this parking space within the car park area.	School carpark being redesigned – awaiting outcome of planning application	Disability access to premises improved.
	Improve direction signs.	Provide direction signs to reception for visitors.	The school is more accessible to all visitors.	Completed	Physical accessibility of school increased

	Improve vehicular access and safer egress via school main gate to car park.	To widen the school main gateway, removing some fencing/hedgerow, to provide greater visibility when entering/leaving the car park.	School access and egress is safer for both vehicular and pedestrian traffic	Completed	Physical access and safety improved for all school users.
Long term					