



Riverside Virtual College-Admissions Policy

Legislation	Education/ Other
Lead staff member	Leanne Burke
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1. Introduction

Riverside Virtual College (RVC) is committed to providing a safe, inclusive and stimulating online learning environment for neurodiverse pupils. We operate in accordance with the Riverside ethos of Honesty, Integrity and Respect. This policy sets out a fair, transparent and consistent approach to admissions and placement decisions.

RVC is a virtual provision. Admission therefore includes consideration of whether the pupil's education, special educational needs and/or disabilities, safeguarding needs, communication needs and ability to access learning can be appropriately supported through RVC's online model.

2. Admission Principles

- Equality and non-discrimination: RVC welcomes pupils from diverse backgrounds and

will not unlawfully discriminate because of a protected characteristic. Reasonable adjustments will be considered for disabled pupils in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

- Neurodiverse focus: RVC specialises in supporting neurodiverse pupils, including pupils with autism and ADHD. Each referral is considered individually.
- Accessibility: As an online provision, RVC may consider referrals from local authorities and schools across different geographical areas, subject to commissioning arrangements and the suitability of the placement.
- Age range: RVC's primary focus is Key Stage 4. Where appropriate, RVC may provide a planned transition for pupils moving from Key Stage 3 into Key Stage 4.
- Best interests and suitability: Decisions will consider whether RVC can reasonably and safely meet the pupil's identified educational, SEND, pastoral and safeguarding needs through virtual education.

3. Referral and Admissions Routes

Parents/carers are welcome to contact RVC directly to discuss the provision. Where a place is to be commissioned or funded by a local authority, including where an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) is involved, the relevant local authority consultation and placement process will apply.

RVC also welcomes referrals from schools and other commissioners. The referring organisation will be asked to provide the information and agreements RVC requires, which may include a service level agreement or other commissioning documentation.

4. Admissions Process

- Initial enquiry/referral: RVC provides information about its virtual model, curriculum and support arrangements.
- Information gathering: RVC may request relevant educational, SEND, safeguarding, attendance, behaviour, health or professional reports where these are necessary to understand the pupil's needs and assess the proposed placement.
- Consultation: Where appropriate, RVC will liaise with the parent/carer, pupil, referring school, local authority and relevant professionals.
- Admissions meeting: The pupil and parent/carer may be invited to meet the Head of College or another appropriate leader. This provides an opportunity to understand the pupil's needs, explain RVC's virtual teaching model and identify reasonable adjustments or support.
- Suitability assessment: RVC will consider whether the pupil can access and benefit from the curriculum and whether identified educational, SEND, pastoral and safeguarding

needs can be appropriately supported in a virtual setting.

- Decision: The outcome will be communicated to the relevant parties. Where a placement is agreed, appropriate enrolment, induction and transition information will be provided.

5. Equality, SEND and Reasonable Adjustments

RVC will consider each application individually and will make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils where required. A diagnosis, disability, EHCP or neurodivergence will not in itself determine whether a pupil is offered a place.

Where RVC considers that further information is required to understand whether the virtual provision can appropriately meet a pupil's needs, it may seek information from the family, local authority, current setting or relevant professionals, subject to lawful information-sharing arrangements.

6. Parent/Carer Responsibilities

RVC aims to work in partnership with parents/carers to support pupils' education, attendance, engagement and welfare. Parents/carers are expected to:

- support regular and punctual attendance at scheduled online lessons and notify RVC promptly of absence in accordance with the Attendance Policy;
- support the pupil to access RVC's approved learning platform and maintain suitable internet access and necessary equipment, subject to any agreed commissioning arrangements;
- provide, as far as reasonably practicable, an appropriate and safe location from which the pupil can participate in online learning;
- monitor information made available through RVC's systems and maintain appropriate communication with tutors and staff;
- inform RVC promptly of significant changes in the pupil's circumstances, contact details, location, health, welfare or safeguarding situation that may affect education or safety; and
- support the pupil to follow RVC's expectations for online behaviour, safeguarding, privacy and appropriate use of technology.

The fact that a pupil is learning from home or another remote location does not remove RVC's safeguarding responsibilities. Where staff see, hear or receive information that raises a safeguarding or welfare concern, RVC's safeguarding procedures will be followed.

7. Attendance and Engagement in a Virtual Setting

Attendance and engagement are monitored as part of RVC's educational and safeguarding arrangements. Attendance is not treated solely as a technical log-in exercise; RVC will consider participation in scheduled provision and any patterns of absence or disengagement.

- Parents/carers should notify RVC promptly where a pupil cannot attend a scheduled live lesson.
- Where a pupil is absent without explanation, staff will follow RVC's attendance and safeguarding procedures and make appropriate contact.
- Repeated or unexplained absence, sudden disengagement or inability to establish contact may be treated as a welfare or safeguarding concern and escalated to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
- Lesson recordings or alternative learning materials may support continuity of learning where appropriate, but accessing a recording does not replace RVC's responsibility to monitor attendance, engagement and welfare.
- Where necessary, RVC will work with parents/carers, commissioners, local authorities and other agencies to address persistent attendance or engagement concerns.

8. Safeguarding in a Virtual School

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and remains central to RVC's work when pupils are learning remotely. RVC follows its Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and has regard to Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026 and applicable independent school standards.

- All staff must know the DSL and deputy DSL arrangements, complete required safeguarding training and act immediately on concerns.
- Safeguarding concerns identified during live lessons, one-to-one sessions, messages, telephone contact or other online activity must be reported through RVC's safeguarding procedures without delay.
- Where a child is in immediate danger or requires emergency assistance, staff will take appropriate emergency action, including contacting emergency services where necessary.
- RVC will maintain clear expectations for professional boundaries, approved communication channels, online conduct, live lessons, one-to-one contact and the use of cameras and recordings.
- Pupils, parents/carers and staff will be given clear routes for reporting online bullying, harmful content, inappropriate contact and other online-safety concerns.
- RVC will consider patterns of non-attendance or disengagement alongside other

information when assessing whether a pupil may need early help or safeguarding intervention.

- Information will be shared with children's social care, police, health services, local authorities or other relevant agencies when necessary and lawful to safeguard a child.
- Safeguarding records will include concerns, actions, decisions, reasons and outcomes and will be maintained securely.

9. Live Lessons, Recordings and Online Safety

- Staff and pupils must use RVC-approved platforms and communication methods for educational activity.
- RVC's staff code of conduct and safeguarding expectations apply equally to remote teaching and communication.
- Live and one-to-one sessions will be managed in accordance with RVC's safeguarding and online-safety arrangements, with risks considered where necessary.
- Where lessons or sessions are recorded, RVC will set clear expectations regarding the purpose of recording, access, storage, retention, sharing and confidentiality in accordance with data protection requirements.
- Unauthorised recording, copying or sharing of lesson content, images or personal information is not permitted.
- Any concern observed within a pupil's remote learning environment will be considered under RVC's safeguarding procedures.

10. Information Sharing, Confidentiality and Privacy

Personal information collected during admissions will be processed lawfully, fairly and securely in accordance with UK data protection legislation, RVC's Privacy Notice and records-retention arrangements.

Information may be shared without consent where this is necessary and lawful to safeguard a child. Data protection law does not prevent appropriate information sharing for safeguarding purposes. RVC will follow current statutory information-sharing guidance.

11. Staff Safety and Placement Concerns

RVC is committed to protecting pupils and staff from abuse, threats, harassment and violence. Concerns about behaviour towards staff will be risk assessed and managed under the appropriate school policies and, where necessary, with the involvement of the commissioner, local authority, police or other agencies.

Where serious or persistent risks cannot be safely managed, RVC may request an urgent

placement review or, where appropriate, an emergency review of an EHCP or commissioning arrangement. Any decision to suspend, alter or end a placement will be considered individually and handled in accordance with applicable contractual, safeguarding, SEND and legal requirements. It will not be treated as an automatic consequence of a complaint, incident or staff safety concern.

12. Transition and Induction

Following admission, RVC will plan an appropriate induction and transition. This may include familiarisation with the learning platform, online-safety expectations, staff contacts, attendance arrangements, curriculum information, reasonable adjustments and safeguarding/reporting routes. Transition arrangements will be tailored where appropriate to the pupil's needs.

13. Related Policies

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Online Safety / Acceptable Use arrangements
- Attendance Policy
- SEND Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Complaints Procedure
- Data Protection / Privacy Notice
- Staff Code of Conduct

14. Queries

For queries or clarification about admissions, please contact the Admissions Office at l.burke@riversidevirtualcollege.co.uk.