



# Riverside Primary Academy

Raising Pupil Aspirations





# Welcome to Riverside Primary Academy

**Foreword:**  
**Headteacher**  
**Julie M. Goodfellow**



I am very proud to welcome you to our wonderful school.

## **Outstanding**

We became an Academy in 2012, and have gone from strength to strength, building seven new classrooms since September 2015. Our success has been recognised by many people. In our last Ofsted inspection we were reported to be outstanding in every single category.

## **Igniting an Interest in the World**

Our teaching is stimulating and creative, and encourages our children to continue their education outside of school, and become lifelong learners. We want to ignite an interest in the world around them, and for that interest to lead to fulfilling and imaginative lives.

## **Calm and Quiet**

We are a very calm and quiet school where children are encouraged to have high standards and achieve their potential. We work very hard to ensure that all children make excellent progress in their work and their social skills.

## **Pastoral Care**

Whilst academic achievements are an important part of life at our school, all our children also have the opportunity to enjoy a wide variety of sporting and musical opportunities, as well as regular trips and residential visits. Our pastoral care is exceptional, ensuring all children are kept safe and are supported both inside and outside school.

## **Dedicated Staff**

I am also very proud of our exceptionally experienced and dedicated staff, who ensure that all our children are well supported to achieve their true potential, and work hard with families to overcome any barriers to learning.

## **Fun**

Learning here is fun. Our curriculum is a real strength, and again was judged outstanding by Ofsted. We have many visits and visitors to make the curriculum/learning come to life and enrich the learning opportunities available to our children. We also do the Prince William Award with all of our children in upper Key Stage 2 (life skills, working co-operatively, team skills, first aid, challenging yourself).

## **Parent and Carer Partnership**

Another very important part of our school is you, the parent! As you will see, by reading the many parent and pupil stories within this prospectus, you and your child are very important to us. We champion the link between

school and parent and work very hard to involve you in every step of your child's time here...and increase your child's enjoyment of learning. The children even help to appoint new staff. We hope that your association with us will bring both happiness and success for your child.

## **Get in Touch**

We welcome your thoughts about our school and ask that you come and see us for a visit while our children are present; when you can see us as we really are. That way you will feel for yourself the sense of fun and happiness in our school and know why our children love being here. To make an appointment to visit, or to simply ask us a question, please telephone 0191 4601918.

**Our children and families come first – they are at the heart of everything we do.**

**Children thrive and succeed in our school. Our pupils know they matter, and have a strong sense of belonging!**



## School Day: settling in

The school gates open for the start of the school day at 7.30am. Children are encouraged to make their way to their classroom independently, hang up their coats and bags and get settled in ready for registration at 8.55am. .

### Wraparound Clubs

#### Breakfast Club

We have a Breakfast Club which runs from 7.30am-9.00am each morning, providing a fantastic start to the day for our pupils.



#### After School Club

There are two sessions in the After School Club:  
3.20pm - 4.30 pm  
4.30 pm - 5.00pm

#### Uniform

The wearing of uniform is an essential part of being a pupil at Riverside Primary Academy. We want children to understand the importance of wearing appropriate clothing and taking pride in their appearance, whilst developing a sense of belonging to our Academy.

#### School Meals and Snacks

Children have the choice of either a hot nutritious meal from the on-site kitchen, or bringing a packed lunch into school. Our 'Live Kitchen' is designed to improve school meals by letting you log in at home, pre-order meals for

up to a term at a time, look up recipes and nutritional information, and check your account balance. Pre-ordering means children get what they want for lunch each day.

For children in the Reception Class and Years 1 and 2, the government provides free school meals. For older children, you need to be in receipt of certain benefits.

#### Break-time and Drinks

Children in Key Stage 1 have a free piece of fruit each day which they eat at morning break time. The school provides a free plastic bottle that can be filled with water and used throughout the day. It has been proven that if children have regular access to water during the day they are more able to concentrate.

# Dipti's professional insight convinces her that Riverside Primary Academy could have so effectively addressed her son's special educational needs

Dr Dipti Patil and her partner, Paul, live in Gateshead with their son, Neil, who is six years old.



teachers who have helped bring about such a wonderful transformation. He has been described as a success story by the school and other professionals, and that is very encouraging for a parent."

### An Amazing Level of Support

Although he was born in the UK, Neil lived for some time in India with Dipti's parents. When the family returned, it was clear that Neil was troubled and in need of support but despite her expertise as a Psychiatrist, Dipti was unable to obtain a diagnosis. "At first I thought he might be on the autistic spectrum but because of the strides he has made in the last six months or so I now think that unlikely. The most important thing was that Riverside was prepared to take him and give him an amazing level of support, and it is that support which has made so much difference."

### Transformation

"Neil has only been a pupil at Riverside Primary Academy for less than two years but in that time he has," says Dipti, made more progress than she could possibly have hoped for. "I am quite sure that if it were not for Riverside, Neil would not be the happy, outgoing and confident little boy that he is today. When he first joined the Reception Class he was very withdrawn, sometimes displaying attention-seeking behaviour, and would try to hide himself away. All that has changed, and I have enormous gratitude to his

### Commitment to Special Educational Needs

Neil was provided with one-to-one classroom support under the supervision of the school's Special Educational Needs and Disability Co-ordinator (SENDCo), together with both speech and language and occupational therapy, and Dipti believes it was this which helped to integrate him effectively into school life. "The SENDCo was excellent, very understanding and prepared to do whatever it took to help and support Neil. Between us, we put measures in

place to make him more comfortable in his surroundings and this included help with his personal care as well as his behavioural difficulties. We had applied to get a Education Health Care Plan but during the process, Neil made so much progress that the local authority decided it was unnecessary."

### Communication is the Key

Dipti has now come to the conclusion that many of Neil's difficulties stemmed from his lack of effective communication skills, skills which have been greatly enhanced by the care he has received from the school. "Because he couldn't express himself verbally he would try to attract attention by physical contact which the other children didn't understand, and this behaviour could have isolated him socially. Through careful and sensitive handling, he has learned how to interact more appropriately and he's now a very popular, extremely well-behaved member of the school."

### Children Say

Neil: "I like school because I like reading, writing and maths and playing with my friends. And I like after-school club."



# Curriculum: creative and rewarding



# Behaviour and Self-development: foundations for the future

## Effective learning

Our first objective is to ensure that your child will be happy in coming to school in order to learn effectively. The teachers assess your child's needs and match work to their stage of development. The curriculum is divided into three stages:

- Early Years Foundation Stage: from ages 0 - 5
- Key Stage 1: from ages 5 - 7
- Key Stage 2: from ages 7 - 11

## Reception

The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum is based on seven areas of learning:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

## Key Stages 1-2

Areas of the curriculum are:

- Mathematics
- English
- Science
- Computing
- History
- Geography
- Art
- Music
- Physical Education
- Religious Education
- Health
- Citizenship
- Personal and Social Health Education.

## High standards

We have high, but appropriate, expectations of the children academically, socially and emotionally. We expect children to behave well and work hard within a supportive framework, which will help them to develop skills at the right level and as a foundation for their future lives. We help the children to become confident and independent learners by talking to them about how they learn, creating a culture of 'having a go' and by encouraging their participation in setting their own targets. We encourage our children to be polite, respectful and to consider the feelings of others.

## School rules and rewards

Our school rules encourage positive and considerate behaviours. Our reward systems celebrate and reinforce good behaviour and they include:

- Verbal praise (use of name, specific praise).
- Tangible rewards (stickers stars etc).
- Certificates.
- Praise assemblies.
- 'Golden time' from 2.15pm - 3.00pm (only when earned).
- Behaviour chart in classes in Nursery and Reception.

House points. Note that only up to three house points can be given at any one time. Every week, the 2 children with the most house points in the class will receive a golden ticket which can be used as credits to save for treats such as additional playtimes and extra visits.





## Enriched Curriculum: trips and visits

### Educational Visits

The Creative Curriculum at Riverside Primary Academy is designed so that children will enjoy and engage in a variety of exciting learning opportunities. Our dedicated staff strive to provide real experiences for our pupils. Each term our pupils take part in an educational visit to enhance their learning experiences. The visits are planned to be a vital part of our creative curriculum as they provide real hands-on experiences for all of our pupils.

Some examples are:

- Beamish Museum.
- Durham Cathedral.
- Sunderland Museum and Winter Gardens.
- Washington Old Hall.
- A local Synagogue and Mosque.

### Residential Trips and Visitors

Older children have the opportunity to go on residential visits during the school year. These experiences can help to develop qualities of self-reliance and tolerance of others. Children learn independence and develop confidence. We also have a range of visitors who come into school to teach or give specialised support in classes. These visitors provide a range of curriculum expertise and opportunities for pupils to learn through tailored workshops, music, drama and much more.

Fiona knew she was right to **listen** to people who **recommended** Riverside Primary Academy – and now she would **recommend** it herself, in every way

Fiona and Gavin Brown live in Gateshead with their daughters Isabella, five and two-year old Emily.



### A Caring and Understanding Attitude

Fiona already knew a little about the school from the playgroup held on its premises and to which she used to take Isabella as a toddler. “I also knew quite a lot of people whose children went to the school and they all recommended it,” she says, “but it was probably the Open Evening we attended that finally sold it to us. I had a hundred questions in my mind and I wondered if some of them might sound a bit silly, but the teachers seemed to know exactly what sort of things a new parent might want to know and answered many of them before I even asked! That is exactly the caring and understanding attitude which sums up Riverside Primary Academy.”

### Simple and Effective Solutions

Keen to support her daughter’s learning, Fiona appreciates the help and guidance offered by Isabella’s teachers so that she can build upon what Isabella is learning in school. “It’s not forced on us but if we want to work with Isabella at home, we are given the tools and ideas to do so,” she explains. “The school’s ethos is to encourage children to do their best and that means that parents are also encouraged to make their own contribution. I have previously worked as a Teaching Assistant at Secondary School level and I know the value of parental input, so many of the ideas for

home support which the teachers at Riverside have offered me are brilliant. Simple but very effective suggestions have been invaluable, and have helped hugely with Isabella’s school experience.”

### Positive Impact

Fiona admits to being a worrier as far as her children are concerned but she is fully reassured by the approach that Riverside Primary Academy takes to the physical and emotional safety of its pupils. “It’s not only the usual security measures in place that make me feel so comfortable but the way the school informs and equips the children to be aware of danger,” she says. “A recent talk by the Headteacher had a real impact on Isabella without scaring her in any way, and I was so pleased to see how much she had taken on board. If my ambition to find work as a Primary School TA comes to anything – working at Riverside Primary Academy is my dream scenario!”

### Children Say

**Isabella:** “I like Read, Write, Inc because you learn new sounds and do words. The teachers help us when we get things wrong and are happy for us when we do well. And I love the cauliflower cheese school dinner - it’s better than Mammys!”



## Inclusion: a curriculum for all

### Special Educational Needs

We value the abilities and achievements of all our pupils and are committed to providing each pupil with the best possible environment for learning. The school aims to meet the individual needs of all children and to provide access to a broad and balanced curriculum. However, not all children learn in the same way, or at the same pace, and some children will need extra help and support with their learning.

If a child is identified as possibly having a Special Educational Need or Disability (SEND) then the child's class teacher or SEND Co-ordinator will discuss this with you. It may be that, in partnership with the school, you can help us to overcome the difficulties. If more help is needed, the school may ask for the advice of the Special Educational Needs Improvement Team (SENIT), and other external agencies.

### Individual Targets

In collaboration with the child and parents, the class teacher will set individual targets for the child based on their specific area of special educational needs. No decision, at any stage, is made without the knowledge and consent of the parents/ carers.

### Access

The school building is fully accessible throughout.

### Gifted and Talented Children

We recognise that all children are individuals with their own specific needs, gifts and talents. Children who are identified as being exceptionally able or talented, are monitored and provided with stimulating and enriching lessons appropriate to their needs.



## Your child's achievements

### Ongoing Assessments

Teachers make ongoing assessments of all children in order to help them better plan the next unit of work. Children are assessed at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage (Reception class) against the Early Learning Goals. At the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, children are assessed in the core subjects by their teachers, and at the end of Key Stage 2, by Standard Assessment Tests (SATs) against the requirements in the National Curriculum. At the end of the academic year, parents of these children will receive information on their child's progress as well as school results.

### School Reports

There is an opportunity to meet with your child's teacher during each term to discuss their progress and achievement. All parents from Nursery Class 2 (pre-school children) to Year 6 receive an annual written report from the class teacher at the end of the summer term. This provides information about your child's academic achievement and summarises their personal and social development. There is a further opportunity to meet with your child's teacher after the publication of the report.





## Clubs

There are a wide variety of lunchtime and afterschool clubs for children to enjoy. Recent examples include:

- Keep Fit
- Art & Craft
- Choir
- Spanish
- Cookery
- Soft Play
- Sport & Fun
- Laptop
- Gymnastics



### Sport

Pupils enjoy a wide variety of sporting activities, games and clubs. We use sports premium funding to enhance curricular and extracurricular opportunities. Amongst other things we have invested substantially in:

- Training for staff to deliver high quality physical education.
- Cricket coaching from Durham Cricket Club.
- Newcastle Eagles
- Prince William Award/SkillForce



# As a mother and an academic Julie knew what she wanted for her children, and she has found exactly that at Riverside Primary Academy

Julie and John Alexander live in Gateshead with their sons Nathan and Kieron who are ten and 12 respectively.



Nursery and school. The close links that the Toddler Group had with the school made the transition seamless and easy for them, and both my boys have benefited massively. They are bright boys and their early start at Riverside has, I have no doubt, nurtured their talents and abilities in the best possible way.”

“Going to the group also gave me a feel of what the school was like in terms of a learning environment. I observed how welcoming, pleasant and approachable the staff were and the children’s work on the walls throughout the school shows how proud they are of their pupils’ work and achievements.”

### Support for Every Child of Every Ability

Both Kieron and Nathan have been identified as academically talented but this does not mean they don’t get the additional appropriate support they need. “Gifted children need just as much input as the less able ones and at Riverside Primary Academy every child is given all the attention and help they need,” Julie believes. “I have seen for myself how my boys’ friends have flourished as much as they have themselves, through the encouragement to believe in their own abilities and the desire to learn. I love the way that lessons are brought to life through educational visits to museums and places of interest and

how things like this help to fully engage the children in their education.”

### A Wonderful Progression

Academic achievement is only one aspect of early education, and Julie has been delighted with her sons’ overall development, especially in terms of Kieron. “Kieron was quite timid and shy as a young boy but his confidence has greatly increased in the years he spent at Riverside and he has moved successfully to secondary school as a mature, ambitious and focussed young man. His overall progression has been wonderful and I credit Riverside for much of that. His teachers had belief in him so he had belief in himself and that is something they do for all the students – showing them their potential and helping them achieve it.”

### Children Say

**Kieron:** “The school is a very friendly place to be and the teachers are very passionate for education. They really helped me to develop and mature as the years passed by”.

**Nathan:** “Teachers are kind and excellent at teaching us. We learn something new every day. They keep us motivated and encourage us to believe in ourselves”.

### A Passion for Education

Julie has a passion for education. Working in university at post-graduate level she is well-placed to assess the quality of teaching she wants for her children, and this she believes she has found at Riverside Primary Academy.

“Working in higher education perhaps makes me even more appreciative of the importance of early education,” she says. “The Baby and Toddler Group I took Nathan and Kieron to at Riverside was excellent and gave them a wonderful foundation to build on before they started



# Admission

## Admission into Nursery

To apply for a place at our nursery you can access the application form on the school's website. You can either hand in the completed form at our school office or post it to the school. Parents are invited to enrol their children at the earliest possible date. You will need to bring your child's birth certificate with you.

## Admission into Reception

All children in the Gateshead area can attend full-time education in the September following their fourth birthday. To apply for your child's Reception school place at Riverside Primary Academy, you will need to follow

Gateshead Council's procedures for admission. The closing date for September applications is in mid January of that year. Full details are available on their website and you can apply online.

## Transition

We want your child to enjoy a smooth, stress-free transition into school. We like to meet all parents of new children prior to them starting so that we can discuss general problems and anxieties. We also like children and parents to make various informal visits to school.

## In-Year Transfers

If you are considering our school for your child, you may find it helpful to arrange an informal visit. Please contact the office to arrange an appointment where we will be very happy to show you around our school.

## Applications

Please ask about applications at the school office. Entry to Reception will need to be made directly to Gateshead Council.

Tel: 0191 433 2757/ 0191 433 2109/ 0191 433 2756  
Email: [schooladmissions@gateshead.gov.uk](mailto:schooladmissions@gateshead.gov.uk)  
Web: [www.gateshead.gov.uk/EducationandLearning/Schools/admissions/PrimaryAdmissions](http://www.gateshead.gov.uk/EducationandLearning/Schools/admissions/PrimaryAdmissions).



# Getting Involved

## Voluntary Helpers

We value the contribution of parents and family and we actively encourage your help during the school day. Parents and family help with a variety of activities which include reading with our children, helping children to choose a library book, sewing, cooking, and acting as extra pairs of hands on educational visits. We accept all help gratefully. Volunteers working in school might be asked to complete a DSB check dependent upon the activities to be undertaken before they commence work in our academy.

## Governance

We have a full and active Governing Body, which includes parent governors as well as representatives from staff and the local community. The Governing Body has a range of duties and powers and a general responsibility for the conduct of the school with a view to promoting high standards of educational achievement including setting targets for pupil achievement, managing the school's finances, making sure the curriculum is balanced and broadly based, appointing staff and reviewing staff performance and pay.

Vacancies for Parent Governors are advertised as they arise.

## Do You Want to be a Governor?

Our Parent Governors give parents a voice in decision making and are elected by parents. If you are interested in becoming a Governor, please contact the school office.



## We strive to ensure...

- children enjoy their time in our school and want to come to school to learn
- our curriculum is of the highest quality with real experiences regularly available so that children can learn for themselves and challenge stereotypes
- our children take an active part in their own education and enjoy the challenge and high expectation offered
- we provide a high quality education in all subjects to ensure all children are offered the opportunity to develop their passions and talents
- we offer a weekly element of self-chosen learning which allows every girl and boy to explore their own area of interest
- everyone feels safe, valued and respected
- those children who are quiet or less confident get the academic and social support they require to thrive
- all children leave our school knowing that their education with us is the pathway to a successful career and the opportunity to go to a good university.



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