# SEND and Disability

## Ripley St Thomas Church Of England Academy Local Offer

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| **School/Academy Name and Address** | **Ripley St Thomas CE Academy**<br>**Ashton Road**<br>**Lancaster**<br>**LA1 4RS** | | **Telephone Number** | **01524 64496** |
| | | | **Website Address** | **www.ripleystthomas.com** |
| **Does the school specialise in meeting the needs of children with a particular type of SEND?** | **No** | **Yes** | | |
| | **X** | | | |
| **What age range of pupils does the school cater for?** | **11-19** | | | |
| **Name and contact details of school's SENDCo** | **Mr J Bithell**<br>**admin@ripley.lancs.sch.uk** | | | |
| **Ripley Offer reviewed** | **November 2026** | | | |

Name and contact details of the person/role responsible for maintaining details of the Local Offer for Ripley St Thomas C Academy:

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| **Name of Person/Job Title** | **Mr J Bithell – SENDCo** | | |
| **Contact telephone number** | **01524 64496** | **Email** | **admin@ripley.lancs.sch.uk** |

## Accessibility and Inclusion

What the school provides:

- Ripley St Thomas is an academy (1700+ pupils) on a large site which provides a wealth of facilities. Some buildings date from 1864 but, where we have made alterations or built new accommodation, access has been carefully thought through with new building regulations adhered to. There are two lifts: one in the sixth form block and one in the sports hall. Parking is limited with some dedicated disabled spaces on both the sixth form and main school sites. We have full 'all access' changing facilities in the main school, sixth form and sports hall plus 'all access' toilets throughout.
- We communicate with parents through our 'Parentline' system. In addition, there is a direct line to the Learning Support team so that parents of pupils with SEND can communicate quickly. Additional communication takes place through letters, emails, text, telephone, reports, meetings, consultation evenings, reviews, family meetings, Facebook, Instagram and X (formerly Twitter).
- Protocol and procedures are reviewed regularly at senior management level. The school ensures that all students can access the site and full curriculum. For pupil safety, barriers limiting vehicular access during the school day are in place and the school gates are under constant surveillance by the school's security staff and CCTV.
- When required, adapted furniture and equipment are made available for pupils to facilitate their access to the curriculum. The school offers ICT equipment and software (laptops, headphones, visualisers, etc.,) when needed.
- The school offers a well-staffed Learning Support department for pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and an additional 'Bridge' area.

## Teaching and Learning

What the school provides:

- Prior to the start of Year 7, information is gathered from primary schools, parents, and other professionals at the point of entry. At the start of Year 7, all pupils are assessed using the Cognitive Ability Tests (CAT) and Progress in English, Maths and New Group Reading Test (NGRT). Following these tests and with parental consent, some pupils may have further detailed assessments to identify their strengths and weaknesses and further support may be put into place. The Progress in English, Maths and NGRT tests are repeated at the end of year 7, 8 and 9, providing further opportunities to identify pupils who are experiencing barriers to their learning.
- Throughout Years 7 to 11, for pupils who have not already been identified through the entrance screening procedure, pupils, parents, or teachers may raise concerns with either the SENDCo, Progress Leader, or Assistant Progress Leader. Staff from the Learning Support department will then follow up the concern and arrange whatever action/referral is considered the most appropriate.

- Parents can also raise concerns throughout the year via 'Parentline'. These will be raised with the SENDCo (SEND Coordinator), Progress Leader, and Assistant Progress Leader, and the concern will be followed up with whatever action/referral is considered the most appropriate. If parents take their child for a private assessment, the report can be sent into school to help update their child's pupil passport, which can help in deciding on the next steps.

- Our overriding aim is to develop independent learners by nurturing the students' individual skills and give them confidence. In the classroom we use adaptive strategies. These adaptations are made to the curriculum and the learning environment on an individual basis and could include ensuring the curriculum is accessible for all pupils, for example, setting, teaching style, utilising TAs within lessons and in form-time and time-bound interventions, smaller group teaching etc. We ensure quality first teaching within the classroom, for example, processing time, visual as well as verbal clues, prompts and scaffolding, modelling, sentence starters, reading instructions aloud etc.

- In the Learning Support department there are three Level 3 TAs, four HLTAs, two TLCSW (Teaching and Learning Communication Support workers), two Assistant SENDCos, SEND Administrator, Deputy SENDCo and one SENDCo. In addition to providing in-class support, TAs also mentor students and provide small group intervention sessions. The Learning Support department also welcomes specialist colleagues into school to provide additional guidance and support for pupils. We commission external professionals when we need extra input with pupils: Educational Psychologists, teachers for the pupils with Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC), Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Visual Impairment and Hearing Impairment alongside medical professionals, speech and language support and nurses specialising in diabetes and epilepsy.
- SEND training is included as part of a teacher's induction programme, with SEND INSET as part of the whole school INSET cycle. In-house training and access to training is provided by external agencies.
- Ripley works within the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) examination board guidelines to provide access arrangements that are proportionate and appropriate for individual pupils. In Key Stage 4 we offer GCSE qualifications with two BTEC in Animal Care and Digital I.T. If any individual needs to access alternative provision this is monitored by pastoral staff. In Key Stage 5, we offer a wide range of A-Levels, in addition to 2 BTEC Qualifications in Animal Management and BTEC IT

**Reviewing and Evaluating Outcomes**

What the school provides:

- All pupils with an EHC plan are reviewed annually and all professionals working with the child are invited to attend or provide a report. These reviews are conducted in line with the statutory guidance and information is gathered and distributed prior to the meeting. Following the meeting, summary advice is sent to the Local Authority and parent/carer.
- The progress of other pupils with additional learning needs is monitored by their teachers, the Learning Support department and through the school's assessment

procedures. Internal tracking systems are used to highlight the progress of individuals.

- As part of the school's Assessment and Reporting cycle, contact is made with parents at least three times a year through published reports, and there is at least one Parents' Evening for each year group. The SENDCo analyses this information to track the progress of SEND pupils. In addition, the SENDCo analyses the results of the internal diagnostic testing, as mentioned above.

## Keeping Children Safe

What the school provides:

- The school has a rigorous Safeguarding Policy which is inclusive and comprehensive. This policy and the school's anti-bullying policy can be seen via the school's website or hard copies are available on request. All members of staff receive Safeguarding training throughout the year and use the Child Protection Online Management System (CPOMS) for communicating and tracking safeguarding concerns. All staff know who their Dedicated Safeguarding Leaders (DSL) are in school.
- When risk assessments or care plans are in place these are reviewed regularly and/or when a student's needs change.
- There is a designated pick up and drop off point for pupils who need to access the site by car or taxi. If required, pupils can be dropped off and a responsible adult will be designated to greet them. Designated drop off/pick up points must be agreed and authorised in advance to ensure the safety of ALL pupils.
- There are a number of places around school which provide supervised supportive areas at social times including The Bridge, the Reading Room, Learning Support and the Chaplaincy.
- The Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) is responsible, with party / trip leaders, for completing risk assessments for all excursions.

## Health (including Emotional Health and Wellbeing)

What the school provides:

- The Learning Support department works closely with our Pastoral Leaders in the school to monitor and support the wellbeing of our pupils. Also, counsellors work with our pupils. The school Chaplain provides additional support to pupils individually and we run student wellbeing groups. Some of our staff are trained wellbeing advocates and our staff wellbeing newsletter includes examples of strategies to help our pupils cope socially and emotionally with their problems. We have a strict 'no tolerance' policy regarding bullying at Ripley St Thomas and our pastoral team and behaviour managers swiftly deal with pupils' concerns.

- Where we have permission from families to do so, we work with many other agencies to ensure that the needs of the pupil and their family are met. This includes following the Local Authority (LA) Early Help Assessment and SEND Early Help Assessment procedures. Also, the school has a 'Team Around the Child/Family' (TAF) approach, which involves Progress Leaders as well as the SENDCo.

- Ripley St Thomas has a full-time First Aider on site and First Aid room available. As pupils are not allowed to carry personal medication, the First Aider will administer it according to the instructions. In her absence this responsibility falls to other trained First Aiders within the school. Medication is checked regularly for expiry dates. If this occurs parents are asked to send replacements. The First Aider helps to draw up care plans for individual students. A database identifying medical needs is compiled and circulated to all staff. Pupil care plans are held centrally with the First Aider with copies given to identified, responsible staff and parents. These care plans are reviewed annually or when circumstances change.
- In the event of a medical emergency the First Aider is alerted. After an initial assessment she will decide what action to take and if an ambulance should be called. There are three defibrillators on site which are located in the sixth form, main school reception and the sports hall. A number of staff are trained to use these, including all PE staff.
- Health professionals regularly make appointments to visit pupils at school. This is always done with parental permission and subject to safeguarding protocols. These professionals offer services in Speech, Language and Communication, Visual and Hearing impairment, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), and also include Educational Psychologists and nurses specialising in diabetes and epilepsy.

**Communication with Parents**

What the school provides:

- Usually, for pupils who have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) at Primary School, the SENDCo is invited to the Year 6 transition review to begin to discuss arrangements with parents, the school and other professionals about the most appropriate transition. For other students, there is an opportunity to hold a meeting with the SENDCo and the pupil's Progress Leader to discuss any concerns and pass on information.
- Pupils with an EHCP will be invited to meet the SENDCo at least once a year to formally review progress and plan support. In practice, contact between parents and school will usually be more frequent.
- Also, during the first half term in Year 7 there is a whole school opportunity to meet form tutors, the Progress Leader, Assistant Progress Leader and SENDCo as part of the Year 7 Welcome Parents' Evening.
- Meetings and contact with parents take place within the normal cycle of discussions with parents and all pupils, for example during Parents' Evenings. However, it is recognised that for parents of pupils with SEND these meetings may take more time, and parents are actively encouraged to contact the Learning Support Department via Parentline whenever they have concerns or queries regarding their child's needs. In addition, there are SEND Review days throughout the academic

year when parents are invited into school to discuss their child's progress and next steps with a focus on their needs.

- Parents can use the unique 'Parentline' facility to request information and send enquiries. This is then forwarded to the most appropriate member of staff. They endeavour to respond within five working days. In emergencies, parents may ring the academy.
- The Ripley St Thomas website is updated regularly with news, polices, department information, admissions, sixth form information, calendars and Friends' events to name just a few.
- The Friends of Ripley welcome all parents as members and encourage them to get involved with fundraising and social activities.
- We regularly seek views of parents and pupils through questionnaires and audits on a variety of subjects from bullying to curriculum issues. As mentioned earlier, parents are regularly provided with grades, reports, and verbal feedback on the progress of their child.

**Working Together**

What the school provides:

- School and families should work together in partnership and the basis for this is set out in the Home/School Agreement which is signed when pupils enter the school.
- Student Panels are selected throughout the academic year to receive a sample of opinion. Through this Pupil Voice system, pupils are regularly asked for their views on all school matters including staff appointments. During the year, pupils and parents are asked to complete questionnaires on a variety of topics including safety, learning, provision and curriculum.
- The school council meets with senior teachers and the Headteacher to raise ideas, concerns, and issues on a half termly basis. The school council members feedback to year meetings to ensure the whole school is involved. If appropriate, they attend governor and Ripley Friends' meetings.
- Our Enrichment Days provide opportunities for pupils to express opinions and views to outside guests and speakers including local councillors, our MP and health professionals.
- Our peer mentor system gives older pupils the opportunity to take responsibility for younger pupils and it provides a conduit for dialogue between years. A buddy system for new pupils eases the settling in process for pupils transferring mid-year.
- The constitution of the Governing Body requires parents to be represented. When a vacancy arises, or term of office expires, vacancies are advertised. Interested parents can then apply and the procedure set out in the constitution is implemented. Link governors are appointed with responsibility for many areas including safeguarding, SEND and pupil premium. They liaise with key staff at school and report back to the governing body, ensuring regular and comprehensive reviews are completed. Governors approve professionals meeting with pupils on site providing safeguarding procedures are adhered to.

## What Help and Support is available for the Family?

What the school provides:

- If you have a question regarding your child and wish to speak to a member of the Learning Support team, use the school's 'Parentline' system to send a message or email admin@ripley.lancs.sch.uk The most appropriate member of staff will be identified, depending on the nature of the request. A face-to-face or telephone meeting may be arranged to discuss any concerns.
- Pastoral teams can help families to complete an Early Help Assessment (EHA) and Team Around the Family (TAF) meetings can be arranged with school and include agencies that can offer external support.
- Also, the Ripley St Thomas website has a wealth of advice and guidance to support pupils and parents on a variety of topics.
- Careers advice and guidance is provided by a qualified independent advisor who visits school weekly and supports our in-house careers designated staff. Mrs H Abell has overall responsibility for Careers Education Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG). Meetings for advice can be group based or one-to-one. Vulnerable pupils may have repeat appointments to ensure their needs are met.
- The school has members of staff able to offer advice about how students can travel to school. Duty teams oversee the arrival and departure of buses each day.

## Transition from Primary School and School Leavers

What the school provides:

- Ripley works with feeder schools and the Local Authority Information, Advice and support Team (IAS) in advance usually from year five onwards. This was formally known as the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, Information and Support Service (SENDIASS). This continues when pupils are allocated places until they start in the September. For details contact: 0300123 6706 or email information.lineteam@lancashire.gov.uk Monday-Friday 9am – 5pm.
- An open evening in July is advertised widely. Every aspect of school life is on display and departments can be visited. Follow up tours and meetings are arranged on request.
- Transition visits to primary schools are undertaken by the Year 7 progress leader at the beginning of the summer term. A parents' information meeting is also held and transition days for all pupils are held in June. Again, further visits are arranged for vulnerable pupils.
- KS3 pupils are given advice on KS4 subjects and curriculum planning when preparing to make option choices. Talks from external providers are included on our

Enrichment Days. Enrichment days provide opportunities to talk to post-16 providers. By arrangement, pupils attend open days and taster sessions.

- For SEND pupils, statutory meetings and appointments with CEIAG professionals are organised through Years 9 to 11. All pupils are offered Careers Education Information Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) from specialist professions (in-house and external colleagues). Follow up appointments are available for those with additional needs. CEIAG colleagues attend parental consultation evenings in Years 9, 10 & 11. Sixth form pupils have dedicated staff to advise on college, university, employment and training opportunities post 'A' level. A dedicated careers library supports this work.
- The Learning Support manager liaises with the careers officer, pupils, parents and external providers to ensure smooth transition to post-16 provisions.
- Ripley St Thomas works in partnership with local universities to create opportunities for students and parents to understand the UCAS system and application methods to higher education.

## Extra-Curricular Activities

What the school provides:

- We have numerous clubs and societies at Ripley St Thomas which are inclusive for all pupils, including those with SEND. These are either run in the morning before form time, at lunch time, or after school. Currently we run the following: Art; Badminton; Basketball; Brass Band; Cadets; Chapel Choir; Chess; Christian Union; Coding; Content Creators; Dodgeball; Dance; Drama; Eco Club; Fantasy Football; Flute and Clarinet Group; Football; GCSE Design Technology; GCSE Food Clinic; Game Design; Guitar Group; Gym; Home Learning Club; Jazz Band; Junior Boys Choir; Junior Girls' Choir; Maths Clinic; MFL Film Club; Netball; Orchestra; Rugby; Running; Samba Band; Saxophone Group; Science Club; School Band; Strong Group; Swimming; Table Tennis; Tabletop Club; Trampolining; Upper School Choir; Y11 Programming
- Wednesday Sixth form enrichment clubs are listed on the school's website.
- Individual Music tuition is available, but this has to be paid for unless a bursary is applicable.
- Attendance at/on some clubs, trips and visits are subject to a voluntary contribution. However, a small fund is available in case of hardship.
- Full risk assessments are completed before activities are undertaken.
- Vulnerable pupils can be initially supported accessing clubs by older pupils, Teaching Assistants or teachers attending with them. The pupils are actively encouraged to join clubs to develop friendships in a social setting.