



Royal School
for the Deaf Derby



Chair of the
Governing Body



Why not come and see us for yourself?

To organise an informal visit or chat about the role please contact Paul Burrows, Headteacher on 01332 362512 , paul.burrows@rsdd.org.uk or Helen Radford, Company & Charity 07500 878569 (Voice, SMS, BSL WhatsApp & FT), helen.radford@rsdd.org.uk

Come and lead a school where,

“Pupils’ behaviour is exemplary in class and around the school” “Inspirational deaf and hearing staff inspire pupils to believe they can achieve anything” “Pupils engage in their curriculum with confidence, expressing their views and opinions” (Ofsted December 2024)

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Find out what we’ve been up to on our Facebook pages at www.facebook.com/RSDDOfficial

Chair of the Governing Body

Royal School for the Deaf Derby is a unique provider of day and residential placements for deaf children and young people aged 3 - 19.

Royal School for the Deaf Derby is a unique provider of education and care for D/deaf children and young people aged 3 – 19 from a national catchment area. We aspire to be the best outstanding provider of education and care to D/deaf children and young people. Over the last ten years substantial investment in the campus has ensured our built environment is fit for purpose though there is still work to do in realising the wishes of children and young people for a contemporary and earth friendly campus to live and learn in.

We are proud of our continuing Outstanding and Good judgements from key inspection regimes. As trust and confidence in the provision grows so do the number of learners on roll. Our success is driven by a qualified, competent and confident team of in-house experts enabling financial sustainability and increasing scope for all stakeholders to have their say in the future of the school.

Our Co-chairs of the Governing Body stepped down in July 2025 to make way for a new Governing Body led by an interim Chair. We are now looking for a new Chair to provide strong leadership and ensure the Governing Body's expertise and contributions are maximised to the benefit of our ambitions.

The Governing Body are the proprietor of the school and tasked to support, challenge, scrutinise, promote and drive the ambitions of the school effectively.

We are looking for a successful strategic leader with high levels of personal and professional credibility, commercial acumen, personal networks and proven experience operating at Board level, perhaps as a non-executive. The successful candidate will be an effective Chair and have an appreciation of good governance; the ability to engage with a wide range of internal and external stakeholders and be a highly effective ambassador and advocate of D/deaf children and young people's right to the very best education.

The role is fully supported by governance professionals and a board of Trustees, responsible for the overall administration of the Charity. We are a non-maintained special school limited by guarantee (not share capital), regulated by the Charity Commission and not-for-profit.

Committed to Continuous Professional Development

All staff enjoy a bespoke continuing professional development programme starting with a comprehensive induction package. An in-house, expert, British Sign Language (BSL) team support all staff to achieve the level of BSL needed for their role from beginners through to Level 6. All groups of staff are sponsored to achieve appropriate underpinning qualifications for their role.

Over the last academic year we have sponsored staff to achieve advanced diplomas in supporting teaching and learning, health and social care, Communication Support Worker with Deaf people, MA Teacher of the Deaf – to name but a few.

In-house specialists made up of highly specialist Speech and Language Therapists, Audiology, subject specialist Teachers of the Deaf, Early Years practitioners, social care workers (including a qualified Social Worker), wellbeing and attendance leads provide exceptional opportunities to learn through collaboration as part of the team around every child.

One of our aspirations, to be an employer of choice

Our aspiration is to become an employer of choice. All Teachers are employed on the School Teacher's Pay and Conditions Document and automatically enrolled into the Teacher's final salary pension scheme.

Terms and conditions for other child contact staff mirror these for example, a standard working week of 32.5 hours for education assistants, 13 weeks paid holiday leave entitlement (14 for Transition Support Communicators), 7.2 weeks holiday entitlement for non-child contact staff from day one and automatic enrolment into a workplace pension scheme for all



About our school

Organisational Context

Royal School for the Deaf Derby is a non-maintained special school, a unique provider of day and residential placements for young deaf learners aged 3 – 19. There are currently 127 learners on roll: Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) has 8 children, Primary 21, Secondary 53 and Post 16 45. Of these 25 are residential, Monday to Friday, term time only. A number of children and young people have complex special needs, in the context of the school this means a need in addition to deafness for example, deafness and autism

Quality of Teaching, Learning & Care

The reputation of the School as a lead practitioner in deaf education is established together with positive relationships with over 27 Local Authorities reaching from Kent to North Yorkshire. In December 2024 the School was judged a solid Good by Ofsted Education and in December 2025 the residential provision was judged Outstanding for the third year in a row. Both achievements demonstrate the school's ability to consistently deliver good and outstanding outcomes against progressively stringent criteria.

Our Approach

Royal School for the Deaf Derby uses an innovative bilingual approach, valuing English and British Sign Language equally. We are a speaking and signing community. An increasing body of research evidence supports our approach. Language is a fundamental part of being human. Research cites language deprivation as a key barrier for D/deaf children, impacting on many developmental outcomes including school readiness. Plans are afoot to build on the successes of messy play sessions and the Peer Enhanced e-Placement (PEEP) Learning Together Programme for deaf pre-school children through provision of more EYFS places. Early intervention is a cornerstone of development. We are widening the offer to reach more beneficiaries so we can give the very best start to deaf children

by surrounding them with a team of experts in their field who would ordinarily prove inaccessible.

Recent dialogue between professionals sparked constructive discussions and an idea about how deaf children can best access phonics. Collaboration formed a launch pad for accelerating language acquisition at the most crucial time, Key Stages 1 and 2. Together with an innovative bilingual approach, the idea counters language deprivation, provides a gateway to the wider curriculum and drives up literacy - the ability to read, write, speak and understand what is written and spoken in a way that lets us communicate helps make sense of the world.

Over the last 5 years we have made pioneering progress in championing a model of social disability which recognises that disability is something that is created by society. For D/deaf children and young people this is often a lack of deaf awareness and sign language skills beyond the school gates. In the year the British Sign Language (BSL) team have delivered accredited BSL courses to front line services including the Police, Firefighters and children at local schools. In addition, top-notch functional and accredited BSL tuition is offered to all parents and carers of D/deaf children and young people at the school free of charge.

Admissions

Admissions are based on an in-house interdisciplinary assessment of needs by a team led by the Headteacher made up of Social Care (if appropriate), subject specialist Teachers of the Deaf, Highly Specialist Speech and Language Therapy, Audiology. Admissions do not always follow a neat pattern with ad hoc referrals and assessments taking place throughout the academic year across all departments. Prospective pupil initial visits and assessments are busy.

Financial health is consistently rated as outstanding supported by a fair fee basis underpinned by a sound matrix of need.

The number of learners on roll is trending upwards including the number of residential placements. Five year fee modelling is in place together with comprehensive reporting through to the Governing Body by the Senior Leadership team which includes and is led by, the Headteacher.

Campus and Buildings

The School enjoys a large leafy green eleven acre campus with ample parking facilities. It is within walking distance of Derby city centre and a stone's throw away from the Peak National Park.

The school has its own sports field, sports hall, outdoor gym, outdoor play and teaching areas and a forest school cabin. There are specialised D&T, Science, Food Technology, ICT, Early Years classrooms, a dedicated health centre, audiology suite, speech and language therapy rooms and Deaf Heritage Centre. Further information linked to the heritage of the School is also available on our vacancies page. A major capital expenditure plan is came to an end in August with over 750k invested in the campus to make it fit for purpose leaving more scope for stakeholders to have a greater say in the future of the campus. Phase one consultation on a new development plan is near complete in readiness for presentation to the Governing Body.

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Some frequently asked questions

I don't know anything about Deaf community, culture and context or any British Sign Language (BSL) – should I apply?

Yes. RSD Derby has a brilliant BSL Lead and team. If you have the willingness to learn we have the know-what and know-how to make you an expert.

What is Non-Maintained Special School?

NMSS are schools for children with special educational needs. They do not belong to any one local authority however their fees come from Local Authorities from a national catchment area and the Department for Education. Like most Non-Maintained schools, RSD Derby is a charitable not-for-profit organisation.

Who inspects RSD Derby and how often?

Ofsted Social Care inspect each year against National Minimum Standards for Residential Special Schools, Residential special schools: national minimum standards - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) Ofsted Education visit based on the same intervals and criteria as maintained schools. Our last visit was in 2025.

What does RSD Derby's curriculum look like?

Like a mainstream school's. We follow the National curriculum and differentiate for individual young people. We've recently finished mapping teaching and learning across all key stages.

What is the time commitment?

The Governing Body meet at least four times each academic year and usually in person. In addition the Chair of the Governing Body is expected to be available to meet with Ofsted inspectors, liaise with the Headteacher at least once each term and visit the school as part of a Governing Body monitoring programme. The role is fully supported by external governance professionals including a clerk.

Governors and Trustees, either or both?

Both. Trustees are ultimately responsible for the administration of the charity and do this by delegating responsibilities to the Governing Body. The Governing Body lead and oversee the executive (senior leadership team) including its leader, the Headteacher, to make sure the School fulfils its aims and purposes. The Governing Body have a key responsibility to ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction and holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the school, pupil progress, attainment, wellbeing and safeguarding.

Post 16, what's on offer?

Young People in the Post 16 Department choose a course and provider and enjoy the same experiences as their non-deaf peers out at a sector college. On base teaching and learning is topped up with maths and English together with a range of opportunities to learn to drive, achieve accredited British Sign Language qualifications, take part in Duke of Edinburgh's Awards. This year young people in residence enjoyed staying in halls of residence at a local university to further develop their independence and ambitions.

Who works at RSD Derby?

We have 121 staff (at a headcount) spread over different occupational groups including experiences Early Years Practitioners, subject specialist Teachers of the Deaf, Key Stage Co-coordinators, Highly Specialist Speech and Language Therapists, Audiologist, Social Care Workers, Education Assistants, Communication Support Workers, our own catering, housekeeping, maintenance, administration employment, payroll and finance teams

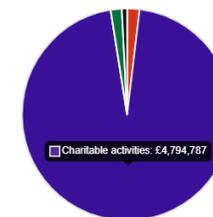
Where does income come from and where does it go at RSD Derby?

99.9% of income comes from government contracts made up of High Needs Funding topped up by Local Authorities. Our main expenditure is staffing costs and running our campus. We've been rated as financially outstanding four times in a row. You can see our latest accounts on the Charity Commission website [here](https://www.charitycommission.gov.uk), ROYAL SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF DERBY - 1062507 ([charitycommission.gov.uk](https://www.charitycommission.gov.uk))

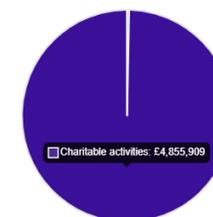
Income and expenditure

Data for financial year ending 31 August 2024

Total income: £5,016,394



Total expenditure: £4,871,483





**Royal School
for the Deaf Derby**

*Help us realise our
ambitions for
children and young
people*

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