



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

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1.Aims and Principles

Our Aims:

This policy sets out our school's approach to our Early Years Foundation Stage at The Ridge Primary School. At The Ridge Primary School, we aim to give each child a positive and meaningful start to their school life, in which they can establish solid foundations on which to develop into independent, confident and happy lifelong learners.

Through our EYFS practice, we aim to:

- Provide a safe, secure and happy learning environment
- Provide a secure foundation that nurtures learning and early childhood development
- Plan learning and development opportunities which are planned around the individual needs and interests of each child
- Have an indoor and outdoor environment that provides a high level of engagement
- Incorporate the key characteristics of effective learning: playing and exploring, active learning and creating and thinking critically
- Create a strong partnership between school and home
- Guarantee fairness and equal chances for all children
- Promote the importance of health and wellbeing, so that all children will value themselves, others and the environment in which they live
- Promote children's understanding of Key British Values: mutual respect, tolerance, individual liberty, democracy, and the rule of law

- Develop our children's self-esteem, so that they become self-confident, self-disciplined and respectful young people, who make a positive contribution to their community
- Promote teaching and learning that ensures 'Year 1 readiness'
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Our Principles:

The principles that underpin our EYFS Approach at The Ridge are:

- Every child is valued and recognised for their own unique qualities
- Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships
- Children thrive, achieve, and grow well in nurturing environments built on a strong collaboration between practitioners and parents
- Children grow and learn in diverse ways, each at their own rate

2. SEND, Inclusion and Individual Needs

At The Ridge, we are committed to ensuring that every child is included, valued and supported to achieve their full potential, regardless of their starting point, background or individual needs. We recognise the importance of identifying developmental differences and additional needs as early as possible. Through observations, ongoing assessment, discussions with families and collaboration between staff, we identify children who may require additional support. Where appropriate, we work closely with our Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENDCo), parents and carers, and external professionals, including Speech and Language Therapists (SALT), occupational therapists, health visitors and other relevant specialists.

Support is tailored to each child's individual needs and may include adaptations to the learning environment, targeted interventions, additional resources and personalised strategies. We monitor children's progress regularly, review the effectiveness of support and work in partnership with families and relevant professionals to agree appropriate next steps. Our inclusive approach aims to ensure that all children can access the curriculum, develop a sense of belonging and make meaningful progress from their individual starting points.

3. Our EYFS Structure

At The Ridge we offer a Reception class for 32 children and a Pre-School that offers both 15- and 30- hour attendance. We recognise that every family's needs are different, so we provide a range of flexible provision options in our Pre-School including:

- Fully funded 30-hour placements
- 15-hour attendance over 2.5 days a week (Monday, Tuesday 9am-3pm and Wednesday 8.30am-11.30am **or** Wednesday 12.30pm-3pm and Thursday, Friday 9am-3pm)
- Wraparound care from 8am to 4pm daily
- Termly intake (September, January, and April), subject to availability

4. Our EYFS Pedagogy

At The Ridge, children are at the centre of everything we do. In Reception, our timetable includes daily direct teaching of key skills such as Phonics, English, and Maths, alongside topic-based learning and extended periods of continuous provision. In Pre-School, children explore these Areas of Learning throughout their sessions.

We value the importance of children following their own interests and leading their learning through access to our enabling indoor and outdoor environments. Our highly skilled adults, including teachers and support staff, carefully observe and identify teachable moments as children engage with our high-quality provision. By achieving a balance between adult-led and child-initiated learning, we ensure children develop new skills while also consolidating their learning through play.

5. Communication and Language

Communication and Language is a key priority within our EYFS provision at The Ridge. We recognise that children's ability to listen, understand, express themselves and communicate with others underpins their learning and development across all seven areas of the EYFS curriculum. We provide a language-rich environment in which adults model high-quality language, introduce new vocabulary, encourage purposeful conversations and use open-ended questions to extend children's thinking. Through stories, songs, rhymes, role play, discussion and sustained shared thinking, children develop their listening, attention, understanding and speaking skills. We explicitly model and develop oracy, enabling children to express their ideas, explain their thinking, ask questions and communicate confidently with others. These foundations support future success in reading, writing, mathematics and learning across the wider curriculum.

6. Our Curriculum

Our Pre-School and Reception follow the statutory framework of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and use the non-statutory 'Development Matters' alongside your child's interests and stage of development to plan meaningful and appropriate learning opportunities. The statutory framework outlines seven areas of learning: three prime areas and four specific areas. The prime areas form the essential foundations for all future learning, whilst the specific areas build on these to develop knowledge, skills, and academic understanding. All seven areas of learning are equally important and all inter-connected.

Stories are at the heart of learning in The Ridge. They provide rich opportunities for children to develop their language, communication, and literacy skills while nurturing curiosity, creativity, and imagination. Through carefully chosen, high-quality texts, children are introduced to new vocabulary, concepts, and experiences that broaden their understanding of the world. Stories support children's personal, social, and emotional development by helping them explore feelings, relationships, and different perspectives. At The Ridge, we use stories as a foundation for learning, inspiring meaningful play, discussion, and exploration across all areas of the curriculum while fostering a lifelong love of reading.

We have developed our own curriculum to enable teachers to deliver a broad and balanced education that is built around the skills, knowledge, and vocabulary children need to make progress. It supports staff in making accurate assessment judgments and identifying appropriate next steps for each child. Through our curriculum design and assessment framework, staff are able to deepen understanding, provide challenge, and extend children's learning. Our EYFS teachers plan weekly direct teaching of Phonics, English, Maths and Topic. Children spend time in our both our indoor and outdoor learning areas. Early Years staff carefully plan our provision to enhance, provoke, and revisit learning. Experiences are planned to enable children to develop and learn effectively and take into account the individual needs, interests, and developmental stage of each child.

7. Our Curriculum Rationale and Progression

At The Ridge, our EYFS curriculum is carefully sequenced to build on what children already know and can do, while introducing the knowledge, skills and vocabulary they need for future learning. We recognise that children learn at different rates and that secure foundations are essential for long-term success. Our curriculum moves from developing early communication, physical, social and emotional skills towards increasingly complex knowledge, understanding and independence. Learning is revisited and built upon over time, enabling children to consolidate prior learning, make connections and apply their skills in different contexts.

Our curriculum is designed to provide a balance between developing essential early skills, including communication, early reading, writing and mathematical understanding, and providing rich opportunities for exploration, creativity, problem-solving and discovery. Through carefully planned adult-led teaching and child-initiated learning, we ensure that children develop the foundations they need to access the Key Stage 1 curriculum and continue to flourish as confident, motivated learners. Further information about curriculum intent, implementation and impact can be found in our Curriculum Policy.

8. Our Learning Environment

Our Pre-School and Reception classrooms provide a range of carefully planned learning provisions, including role play, sand and water play, a reading area, a construction area, a small world area, and a variety of creative and art activities. Resources are readily available and organised to enable children to access them independently throughout the day.

Children are encouraged to make choices about where and how they learn, fostering independence and ownership of their learning. Staff may also guide children towards specific areas of provision to support, extend, and deepen their learning experiences.

9. Role of the Adult

Our Reception and Pre-School teams consist of experienced teachers and support staff who are skilled in Early Years teaching. Our aim is that it is hard to distinguish between teacher and support staff in our setting with everyone working towards the

same goal: that every child achieves their full potential through learning through play. During continuous provision all of our adults, will be observing, interacting, assessing children, and finding opportunities to 'teach in the moment' by:

- Demonstrating and explaining
- Exploring ideas alongside children
- Encouraging engagement and participation
- Communicating and modelling language
- Asking purposeful questions to deepen thinking
- Supporting children to recall and reflect on prior learning
- Providing a narrative that enriches learning experiences
- Facilitating learning opportunities and setting appropriate challenges
- Using sustained shared thinking to extend children's language, understanding, and problem-solving skills

All adults also lead 'Direct teaching' sessions in Phonics, English, Maths and Topic.

10.Safeguarding, Welfare and Healthy Lifestyles

The safety and wellbeing of children are central to our EYFS provision. All staff follow The Ridge's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, Health and Safety Policy and other relevant school procedures. We maintain appropriate staff-to-child ratios in accordance with the statutory EYFS framework and ensure that staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities, including recognising and reporting concerns. Visitors are subject to the school's visitor procedures, and appropriate arrangements are in place to ensure that children are supervised safely throughout the school day and during educational visits.

We ensure that appropriate first-aid arrangements are in place, including access to staff with the relevant paediatric first-aid training, in accordance with statutory requirements. We follow school procedures for responding to accidents, illness, administering medicines, managing allergies and supporting children with individual medical needs.

We promote healthy lifestyles by encouraging regular physical activity, healthy food choices, good hygiene, adequate hydration and positive habits that support children's physical and emotional wellbeing. Oral health is also promoted through age-appropriate discussions and activities that help children understand the importance of looking after their teeth, brushing regularly and making informed choices about food and drink. Through our daily routines and learning experiences, we support children to develop.

11.Assessment and Recording in EYFS

Statutory Assessment at the start of Reception:

When children start Reception, they will take part in the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA). This is a short, statutory, age-appropriate assessment that is administered to all children in England within the first six weeks of starting Reception.

The assessment measures early skills in Mathematics, Literacy, Communication, and Language. It is designed to be informal and interactive, typically taking around 20 minutes to complete. During the assessment, children engage with practical resources and/or use a touchscreen device, while the teacher records their responses using an online scoring system.

The purpose of the RBA is to provide a starting point from which children's progress can be measured throughout primary school, up to the end of Key Stage 2. Further information will be shared with parents when their child joins Reception.

Ongoing Assessment in EYFS:

At The Ridge ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Our staff observe pupils and track learning through children's books, floor books, and online assessments. Both teachers and support staff contribute to these on a regular basis. We record our baseline data and subsequent data at the end of each term. Internal moderation takes place termly and external moderation with our Local Authority takes place regularly during network meetings and whole school moderation events. Target pupils are identified through ongoing monitoring and after each assessment cycle, enabling appropriate interventions to be planned and implemented.

Statutory Assessment at the end of Reception:

At the end of Reception, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 Early Learning Goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

If a child achieves the Early Learning Goal in all the strands included within Communication and Language, Physical Development, Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Literacy and Mathematics they will achieve a Good Level of Development (GLD). EYFS Profile results are reported to Dudley Local Authority in June.

12. Cultural Capital, Enrichment and Memorable Experiences

At The Ridge Primary School, we recognise the importance of cultural capital in broadening children's experiences, developing their understanding of the world and preparing them for future learning. Within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), we provide a rich and stimulating curriculum that offers children opportunities to explore new experiences, develop their interests, learn about different cultures and communities, and make meaningful connections with the world around them.

We aim to provide regular enrichment opportunities throughout the year, including educational visits, visitors to school and memorable hands-on learning experiences linked to the children's interests and curriculum topics. These opportunities may include local walks, visits to the library or other places of interest, and trips to relevant educational attractions. Visitors, including professionals, community

members and parents, are encouraged to share their knowledge, skills and experiences with the children to enhance their learning and bring topics to life.

We value the contribution that families and the wider community make to our curriculum and actively encourage parents and carers to share their talents, occupations, hobbies, cultural traditions and experiences. These contributions help children develop curiosity, respect for others, an appreciation of diversity and a deeper understanding of the world beyond their immediate experiences.

Through carefully planned enrichment opportunities, we aim to create meaningful and lasting memories that inspire children's curiosity, build confidence, enrich their vocabulary and support their personal, social and emotional development. We are committed to ensuring that all children have access to a wide range of experiences that broaden their horizons and support them in becoming confident, enthusiastic and independent learners.

13. Parental Involvement

We recognise that children learn and develop most effectively when there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers. Parents and carers are kept informed of their child's progress and development through parent consultation meetings held during the autumn and spring terms.

At the end of the summer term, parents receive an annual report outlining their child's achievements and progress throughout the year, as well as identifying their next steps in learning.

Parents are regularly updated on class learning through our online communication platform, Class Dojo. This platform also provides information and suggestions to help support children's learning at home. In addition, parents are encouraged to share learning experiences and 'wow' moments from home to celebrate their child's achievements and development.

A range of special events and workshops are held throughout the year to strengthen home-school partnerships. We encourage parents and family members to attend these events whenever possible.

14. Transition

Our aim is for every child to feel happy, safe, and secure at The Ridge. We understand that some children may find it difficult to be away from their parents or carers at first. By working in partnership with families from the very beginning, we help children settle confidently into their unfamiliar environment and develop a genuine enjoyment of Ridge life. To support a smooth and positive transition into both Pre-School and Reception, children start in small groups. This gradual introduction allows children to become familiar with their unfamiliar environment, build relationships with staff and their peers, and develop confidence in their surroundings. Starting in smaller groups helps practitioners provide individual support, ensuring that each child feels safe, secure, and settled as they begin their journey.

To support a smooth and positive transition into Pre-School, we:

- Arrange a home visit, providing an opportunity for you and your child to meet our staff before the induction session. This is an ideal time to discuss any questions, concerns, or individual needs.
- Invite children to attend an hour-long induction session, where they can meet staff and explore the setting. As part of our induction process, children attend this session independently, helping them to begin building confidence and independence in their new environment.
- Work closely with parents and carers during the settling-in period, offering shorter initial sessions where appropriate to support individual needs.

To support a smooth and successful transition into Reception, we:

- Arrange a home visit for children who have not attended our Pre-School, along with induction sessions to help them become familiar with the classroom, staff, and routines.
- Provide opportunities for children attending our Pre-School to spend time in the Reception classroom during the summer term, supporting a gradual transition.
- Host a Teddy Bears' Picnic, giving children, parents and carers, and staff the opportunity to meet and build positive relationships before the start of the school year.

Further information about the transition process will be shared with parents and carers once a place in either Pre-School or Reception has been offered.

Transition from Reception to Year 1:

We recognise that the transition from the EYFS into Key Stage 1 is an important stage in children's learning journey. At The Ridge, we work closely with Year 1 staff to ensure that this transition is positive, carefully planned and responsive to the needs of individual children.

Transition arrangements include opportunities for children to become familiar with their new classroom, staff, routines and expectations before the start of Year 1. Reception and Year 1 staff share relevant information about children's attainment, progress, interests, individual needs and any additional support required to ensure continuity in learning. Staff work collaboratively to review assessment information and moderate children's work and judgements, supporting a shared understanding of each child's development and appropriate next steps.

We recognise that children continue to benefit from practical, play-based learning and opportunities to develop independence as they move into Key Stage 1. Staff therefore work together to support continuity in teaching approaches, while gradually introducing the routines and expectations of Year 1. Further details of our transition arrangements can be found in the school's Transition Policy or EYFS Transition Document.

15. Intimate Care

“Intimate” care is any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure that most children are able to carry out themselves. However, depending on a child’s stage of development, they may need some support, for example, dressing, verbal encouragement to wipe their bottom after toileting and changing underwear following an accident. In most cases intimate care is to do with personal hygiene. Every child has the right to privacy, dignity, and a professional approach from all staff when meeting their needs and it is important that staff work in partnership with parents to give the right support to an individual child. It is our aim that all children should be independent and we consider our role to be one of supporting and encouraging rather than doing.

16. Monitoring, Evaluation and Leadership of the EYFS

The quality of provision within the EYFS at The Ridge is monitored and evaluated by the EYFS Lead, in collaboration with the Senior Leadership Team (SLT). Monitoring focuses on the quality of teaching, the implementation of the curriculum, the effectiveness of the learning environment, children's engagement and progress, and the outcomes achieved by different groups of children.

Monitoring activities may include learning walks, observations of teaching and learning, discussions with staff, scrutiny of children's work and assessment information, review of the learning environment and analysis of children's progress from their individual starting points. Staff also work collaboratively through planning discussions, assessment reviews and moderation to ensure consistency and identify opportunities to improve provision.

Information gathered through monitoring is used to celebrate effective practice, identify strengths and areas for development, and inform priorities for the EYFS action plan and wider school improvement. The EYFS Lead and SLT review the impact of actions taken to ensure that provision continues to meet the needs of all children and supports strong foundations for future learning.

17. Statutory Policies and Procedures

The following table identifies key statutory policies and procedures relevant to the EYFS and where they can be found.

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Safeguarding policy and procedures	Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
Procedures for responding to illness	Health and Safety Policy
Administering medicines	
Emergency evacuation procedure	Health and Safety Policy
Procedure for checking identity of visitors	Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
Procedure for parents failing to collect a child and for missing children	Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Procedure with dealing with concerns and complaints	Complaints Policy
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Link Governor for EYFS

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Headteacher

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

EYFS Lead

Name: Mrs Lara Melia

Signature: _____

