

80. Early Learning Opportunities Statement

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| EYFS: 1.1 – 1.17, 2.1-2.6, 3.1, 3.20, 3.27, 3.59, 3.68, 3.80 |
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At Ridgemount Cottage Nursery School we promote the learning and development of all children in our care. We recognise that each child is an individual and our highly qualified staff consider their needs, interests and development to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience across the seven areas of learning and development. Our staff guide and plan what children learn reflecting on the different rates at which they develop and adjust practice appropriately. Our aim is to support all children attending the nursery to attain their maximum potential within their individual capabilities.

We provide a positive inclusive play environment for every child, so they develop good social skills and an appreciation of all aspects of this country's multi-cultural society. We plan learning experiences to ensure, as far as practical, there is equality of opportunity for all children and a celebration of diversity.

Our Pedagogy focuses heavily on Outdoor Education and Mindfulness.

We have four key elements to how we care for and educate children (our ethos):

- Exploration
- Discovery
- Independence
- Community

“Never help a child at a task at which he feels he can succeed” – Maria Montessori

Our children are encouraged to participate in dressing themselves, washing themselves, tidying away, cleaning mud from wellies, planting flowers/ plants and vegetables, preparing food and many other tasks. This brings them pleasure, improves self-esteem, develops hand eye co-ordination/ spatial awareness, and equips them not just for school but for life.

We are a ‘MY Happy Mind’ accredited setting. We are working on this NHS backed scheme to help us to create a culture of positive mental well-being for our children and staff. Our programmes for practitioners, parents and children help to prepare today’s children for tomorrow’s world by building resilient, balanced and happy minds at home, nursery and school. At Ridgemount we believe that all children deserve to learn coping strategies and develop a bag of tools to help them thrive from the earliest of ages. The ‘My Happy Mind’ programme allows us to bring a fully developed framework and curriculum into our nursery. This approach is beautiful in helping young children to deploy breathing strategies to help with dysregulation and balancing those big emotions.

Our plans for beyond 2024 include offering more opportunities for independent learning, (more) gardening and baking, as well as music and movement/dance, yoga, maths following the Karen Wilding approach (subitising) in particular. We aim to extend our outdoor provision,

with an expectation going forward that every child and staff member will arrive on site “outdoors ready” (wellies, rainwear etc.)

We are have Forest School accreditation and the children will be joining us on our journey in this by taking part in group sessions of forest school experiences which we will call out door learning time while relevant practitioners receive training.

We maintain a personalised record of every child's development, showing their abilities, progress, interests and any areas requiring further support.

For children whose home language is not English, we will take reasonable steps to:

- Provide opportunities for children to develop and use their home language in play and learning and support their language development at home; and
- Ensure that children have sufficient opportunities to learn and reach a good standard in English language during the EYFS, ensuring that children are ready to benefit from the opportunities available to them when they begin year one.

We ensure that the educational programmes are well planned and resourced to have depth and breadth across the seven areas of learning. They provide interesting and challenging experiences that meet the needs of all children. Planning is based on a secure knowledge and understanding of how to promote the learning and development of young children and what they can achieve.

We implement the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) set by the Department for Education that sets standards to ensure all children learn and develop well. We support and enhance children’s learning and development holistically through play-based activities. We review all aspects of learning and development and ensure a flexible approach is maintained, which responds quickly to children’s learning and developmental needs. We develop tailor-made activities based on observations, which inform future planning and draw on children’s needs and interests. This is promoted through adult-led and child-initiated opportunities both indoors and outdoors.

Assessment is an integral part of our practice, we carry out ongoing assessment (formative) through daily observations and ensure that this does not take us away from interacting with the children.

Summative assessment is carried out at set points of the year including:

- assessment on entry (starting point), including parental contributions. Progress check at age two
- other summative assessment e.g. when children transition to new rooms or leave for school
- Six Monthly reviews as outlined in the EYFS document.

At Ridgemount we also consider the community to be very important. We acknowledge parents/carers as primary educators and encourage parental involvement as outlined in our

Parents as Partners policy. We build strong home links in order to enhance and extend children's learning both within the nursery environment and in the child's home and have regular meetings with parents/carers to keep them up to date with their child's progress. We host 3 events each year where we invite families to come to social events to meet new families, build relationships and network among other families. We want to be more than a nursery where children are dropped off we want to be a community where families feel included, welcome and a part of something more.

We share information about the EYFS curriculum with parents/carers and signpost them to further support via the following website:

www.foundationyears.org.uk/

| This policy was adopted on | Signed on behalf of the nursery | Date for review |
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| <i>November 2024</i> | <i>N Hendry</i> | <i>November 2025</i> |