



BROCKHURST & MARLSTON HOUSE SCHOOLS
Including all of the Pre-Prep Department and Early Years
Foundation Stage



Brockhurst & Marlston House Schools (the School) is committed to providing the best possible care and education to its pupils, and to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. This policy is written with that commitment in mind, and in accordance with KCSIE September 2025.

Brockhurst & Marlston House Schools

Ridge House Early Years

Foundation Stage

Handbook

Review: September 2025

Next Review: September 2026

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Introduction

The aims of Brockhurst and Marlston House School Early Years Foundation Stage are to give children a happy start to school life, the opportunity to work and play together in an ordered and happy atmosphere and to foster kindness, good manners and consideration for others according to the development of the Early Years Foundation Stage. We also believe that a thorough grounding in the Prime areas: Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Communication and Language and Physical Development along with Literacy and Numeracy lays the foundation of a confident and successful school career.

Children are born ready, able and eager to learn. They actively reach out to interact with other people and the world around them. Development is not an automatic process, however. It depends on each unique child having opportunities to interact in positive relationships and enabling environments. We deliver and implement the four themes of the EYFS –a unique child, positive relationships, enabling environments and learning and development. The Characteristics of Effective Learning: Playing and Exploring, Active Learning and Creating and Thinking Critically support children’s learning across all areas and the Prime and Specific Areas of Learning and Development are all interconnected.

As children begin their journey at Brockhurst and Marlston House, we begin to develop and nurture strong, positive attitudes where children become proud and respectful of themselves, others and their environment.

Early Years Foundation Stage

The EYFS requirements apply to all children from birth to 31st August following their 5th birthday. The overall aims of the EYFS are to help young children achieve the five ‘Every Child Matters’ outcomes of staying safe, being healthy, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and eventually achieving economic wellbeing.

The EYFS principles which guide the effective work of all practitioners are grouped into four distinct but complementary themes:

- **A Unique Child** – every child is a competent learner.
- **Positive Relationships** – children learn to be strong and independent.
- **Enabling Environments** – supporting and extending a child’s development
- **Learning and Development** – 3 Prime and 4 Specific Areas of Learning and Development

The Characteristics of Effective Learning in the Prime and Specific Areas of Learning and Development are interconnected. The way in which the child engages with other children and their environment- playing and exploring, active learning, and creating and thinking critically – underpin learning and development across all areas and support the child to remain an effective and motivated learner.

The Learning and Development Requirements

The EYFS Statutory Framework sets out the learning and development requirements. There are seven areas of learning and development, which are divided into three Prime Areas and four Specific Areas.

The three Prime Areas, for school readiness and future progress linked with the National Curriculum areas are:

- **Communication and Language**
- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**
- **Physical Development**

These are then supported by Specific Areas that strengthen the Prime Areas. The Specific Areas are:

- **Literacy**
- **Mathematics**
- **Understanding the World**
- **Expressive Arts and Design**

Assessment

When children enter Nursery and Reception they complete a baseline assessment. Staff then carry out termly assessments using Development Matters age/stage bands to ascertain whether the child is emerging or expected in that area of learning and development. Assessment is ongoing and plays an important part in helping practitioners to monitor the children's progress, understand their needs and enable teachers to plan appropriate activities.

In the final term of the year in which the child reaches age five, teachers complete the EYFS profile for each child. This happens no later than 30th June in that term. The profile provides parents, carers and teachers with a clear picture of a child's development, knowledge, understanding and abilities, as well as their progress against expected levels. It furthermore informs Form 8/Year 1 teachers for individual children's readiness, needs and next steps.

The teacher will determine whether the child is emerging or meeting the expected levels of development. The child's level of development is assessed against the 17 Early Learning Goals.

Reception parents receive a detailed written report in the Summer Term identifying children's achievements and the results of the EYFS Profile. F8/Y1 teachers are given a copy of the profile, together with a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three Characteristics of Effective Learning.

In compliance with Early Years regulations, parents may have access to developmental records about their child throughout the year e.g. Early Years Foundation Stage Profile and Learning Journey.

Transition

Brockhurst & Marlston House prides itself on supporting each child in transitions. This is achieved in the following ways:

- Each child is invited to attend a taster session prior to starting.
- Parents have the opportunity to arrange a home visit.
- Where appropriate, teaching staff may visit the child's Nursery/Pre-School to begin the building of positive relationships.
- Each child is supported in developing the confidence to progress smoothly to Form 8/Year 1 at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Transition sessions are planned and opportunities are made available for F8/Y1 teachers to get to know the Reception children.

Information for Parents and Carers

How the EYFS is being provided in the setting:

We plan from children's interests, taking into consideration children's individual needs and stage of development. Planning consists of the seven areas of learning and development, learning outcomes, planned experiences, child opportunities, evaluation and next steps.

How parents and carers can access more information about the EYFS:

We foster positive relationships with parents and carers through an 'Open Door' policy, daily informal communication with staff and regular updates via weekly class emails and posts on their child's Tapestry online learning journal. To keep parents well-informed, we use effective systems that provide accurate and up-to-date information through parent forums, parents' evenings and ongoing email communications.

The range and type of activities and experiences provided for children:

We have small classes and generous ratios which ensure that the needs of each child are met both academically and emotionally, helping to develop each child's confidence and independence.

Small classes enable the teacher to provide an individual education planned around the interests, needs and experiences of each child, so that true potential can be nurtured.

We provide a rich variety of academic, social, artistic, musical and sporting experiences. We have welcoming, child friendly and stimulating indoor and outdoor areas.

Routines are established so that children begin to anticipate and feel confident to take the next step. Visual timetables give children the security to know and understand their routines.

Children have access to clearly labelled and easily accessible activities and resources. Activities and resources include small world area, construction area, fine motor area, creative area, exploration area, maths area, writing area, book area, sand and water area, sensory area and role play area. All these areas are replicated in the garden.

Outdoor learning is a key part of the Nursery and Reception experience. Children are encouraged to engage with the outdoor environment across all areas of learning, with daily access to the Early Years garden and the courtyard. Additionally, we make use of the school's grounds for teacher-led activities, including sound walks, number walks, shape and pattern walks, and nature walks. Nursery and Reception children also take part in Welly Wednesdays, where they are actively encouraged to assess risks, such as climbing trees.

Nursery and Reception children have weekly swimming lessons following ASA Duckling awards.

Example of a daily routine in the setting:

Nursery

8 am Doors Open	Self-registration and welcome activities
8.45 am – 9am	Welcome song, registration, days of the week, visual timetable
9 am	Mathematics/literacy/phonics input followed by focused adult led activity and child led activities classroom/courtyard
	Open snack table
10.15 am	Tidy up, recall
10.30 am	Mathematics/literacy/phonics input followed by focused adult led activity and child led activities classroom/courtyard
11.15am	Tidy up lunchtime routine
11.30 am	Lunch
12 pm – 1 pm	Garden play time (Morning children collected at 1pm).
1pm	Quiet time, stories, rhymes and songs
1.15pm	Topic with adult led focused activity and child led activities classroom/courtyard
2.30pm	Tidy up, snack, garden
3.30pm	Home routine, stories and songs
3.45pm	Home
4pm – 6pm	After school club (ASC) supper served 4.30pm

Reception

8 am Doors Open	Self-registration and welcome activities
8.30 am – 9am	Registration, days of the week, visual timetable and Phonics
9 am	Child initiated learning or focused mathematics/literacy lesson depending on the day
10 am	Snack and recall
10.15-10.45 am	Play time Ridge House garden
10.45 am	Focused lesson mathematics/literacy whole class/small group focused tasks
11.45 am	Lunch in Coach House
12.10 pm – 1 pm	Garden play time
1pm	Quiet time, stories, rhymes and songs
1.15 pm	Topic with adult led focused activity and child led activities
2.30pm	Tidy up, snack, garden
3.30pm	Home routine, stories and songs
3.45pm	Home
4pm – 6pm	After school club (ASC) supper served 4.30pm

How parents and carers can share learning at home:

Weekly emails inform parents what children have been learning and will be learning, allowing parents to reinforce and support learning at home. Reception children all receive reading books and reading diaries and teachers provide comments on how parents can support their child's reading at home.

We use an online learning journal called Tapestry which is produced by the Foundation Stage Forum. Tapestry builds a very special record of a child's experiences, development and learning journey through their early years. Using photos, videos, and diary entries, a teacher or key worker, along with the child's parents or carers, and the child themselves if they're ready, 'weaves' the story of the child and how they are growing and developing. The Tapestry platform then works seamlessly to enable these memories to be kept as a permanent record of each child's unique journey. All information held in the platform is stored securely and can be downloaded and shared as required. Parents or carers are able to view their child's progress, the activities provided for them, and how much fun they're having, whilst also uploading their own comments and media.

The communication between staff and parents that Tapestry enables, helps build a shared understanding of how every child can reach their full potential, from birth to the end of the early years. The Tapestry online learning journal is also available as an easy-to-use, secure app, meaning capturing key learning moments, and videoing milestones are even easier.

How the setting supports children with SEN or disabilities:

The setting follows the SEN Code of Practice and has a rigorous policy in place. The EYFS setting implements a SEN checklist and identifies children who are struggling with learning and development, behavioural, emotional and social issues, communication/interaction concerns and physical/sensory concerns. Concerns are raised through a range of evidence such as observations, development matters assessment grids and ECAT monitoring tools.

Concerns are discussed with the schools SENCO, who carries out a formal observation to identify a child's needs. A Support Achievement Plan (SAP) is implemented with recommended targets, interventions and strategies to support the child and if necessary external agencies are involved such as speech therapist, occupational therapist or physiotherapist. Concerns are addressed with a child's parents throughout the process.

Staff proactively identify areas where children may need extra support and adjust activities to ensure effective learning and progress. They skillfully use questioning and encourage children's play to advance their learning, providing resources that challenge and expand their thinking. Children with English as an additional language (EAL) are supported through various visual cues and gestures.

Learning objectives and activities are differentiated to suit the needs of all children. Children who are more able are challenged through open ended questions, tasks and problem solving activities.

Food and drinks provided for children:

Children have access to fresh drinking water throughout the school day. Children are encouraged to bring their own water bottles into school. Cups are also provided.

Morning snack – Children can have water or milk to drink and a range of fruit and healthy snacks are provided. (apples, bananas, strawberries, cut grapes, carrot sticks, cucumber sticks, breadsticks, pastries, toast).

Lunch – Children are provided with a set menu of well-balanced nutritious food. Likes, dislikes and special diets are taken into consideration and alternative food is provided to meet individual children's requirements. Menus can be found on the school website.

Afternoon snack – Children are provided with water and a snack (biscuits and breadsticks).

After school club snack – Children who stay for after school club have the opportunity to drink water and eat a selection of fruit and sandwiches. A supper is also available and can be ordered through the booking system.

Staffing in the setting:

Nursery and Reception classes are led by experienced teachers, assisted by additional qualified staff. We value all members of the team and work together as reflective practitioners. Experienced staff model outstanding provision for newer staff. We endeavor to support each other, to identify our own strengths and those of others. Working closely with families is an essential part of what we do, they are the main carers of these children and this is always respected. Staff are fully committed to the setting and take pride in its achievements.

All staff are pediatric first aid trained. We operate a key person system. We believe that children settle and thrive best when they have a key person to relate to, who knows them and their parents well, and who can meet their individual needs. Research shows that a key person approach benefits the child, the parents, the staff and the setting by providing secure relationships in which children thrive, parents have confidence, staff are committed and the setting is a happy and dedicated place to attend or work in.

An emergency contact for parents to use:

School Number: 01635 220 293

or

Rachel Harper: 07872 969 763

Intimate Care and Toileting

Aim

At Ridge House, we aim to meet the needs of all our children and promote their welfare. We recognise and assist children with intimate care where needed, and ensure that the children are treated with courtesy, dignity and respect at all times.

Intimate care is defined as care involving washing, touching or carrying out a procedure to intimate personal areas which some children may need support in doing because of their young age, physical difficulties or other special needs. Where a child has intimate care needs, a designated member of staff takes responsibility to provide their care. We address issues on an individual basis.

Due to the developmental stages of the children we work with, we support them with their personal care, such as reminding them to use the toilet and encouraging hygiene practices, to help develop their independence. As outlined in the Foundation Stage Curriculum, we are responsible for supporting children's personal care skills, which are an essential part of Personal Development, enabling them to fully engage with the rest of the curriculum.

On some occasions, children come to our setting in nappies. We support children sensitively and

with dignity in this matter. Also, from time to time some children will have accidents and need to be attended to. Parents are asked to supply a bag of clean clothes for their child in a drawstring bag to be hung on their child's peg. These are taken into the toilet facilities prior to changing. However, a supply of spare clothing is available if necessary and parents are asked to return this as soon as possible.

If a child has needed help with meeting intimate care needs (had a toileting accident), it is treated as confidential and shared with the parents in person at the end of the day.

Implementation

Staff training

All staff are knowledgeable about intimate care/personal care. They are aware of their responsibilities, relevant policies and procedures in place (including adhering to Child Protection, Health and Safety, Confidentiality). The designated employed adult is trained, DBS checked and has received training for very specific intimate care procedures where relevant. They undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times. They are fully aware of best practices, including hygiene.

Intimate care / personal care plan

If a child requires regular assistance with intimate care, staff meet with the parents to discuss the child's needs and devise an agreed intimate / personal care plan. Relevant health personnel are involved if needed. We monitor and review the plan on a regular basis. The Key Person in Nursery will deal with these issues.

Practice

The designated practitioner who provides the care (in most cases: the child's key person) forms a strong, trusting relationship with the child. They ensure that it is a positive experience that is safe and comfortable for all. Whilst the child is having their needs met, it is treated as a time to converse and promote personal development.

The child is encouraged to undertake as much of the procedure for themselves as possible, including washing intimate areas, dressing/undressing and hygiene.

The Nursery/Reception toilet area is used to attend to a child's needs and every effort is made to ensure privacy and modesty.

Most procedures are carried out by just the designated person. However, careful consideration is given to the child's individual circumstances to determine how many practitioners might need to be present when a child needs help with intimate care.

If a child is unhappy or anxious about the care being provided, the issue will be addressed to ensure that we continually meet a child's needs.

Working with parents

We work closely with parents to identify and ensure that we meet the child's needs. Cultural and religious values are respected when planning for their care. We seek to engage in regular communication with parents, and monitor and review the plan together.

Working with outside agencies

We work closely with outside agencies and utilise their knowledge and expertise where necessary. The SENCO coordinates this approach.

Disposal of nappies, aprons and gloves safely

We follow strict hygiene practices when disposing of waste to prevent infection. We adhere to stringent nappy-changing procedures to ensure the safe disposal of waste, as outlined below:

Changing a nappy

- A clean disposable apron and gloves are worn every time a child is changed. Hands are washed thoroughly before and after.
- Whilst changing, children's skin is cleaned with a disposable wipe/creams if needed.
- Nappies and 'pull ups', gloves, aprons and wipes are disposed of hygienically and safely by double bagging and placing them in a special bin.

This bin is emptied at the end of the day. We dispose of our waste in accordance with guidelines from the West Berkshire council.

Settling In

Statement of Intent

At Ridge House Early Years Foundation Stage we want children to feel safe, stimulated and happy in the setting and to feel secure and comfortable with staff. We want parents and carers to have confidence in both their children's wellbeing and their role as active partners with the setting. We want the setting to be a welcoming place where children settle quickly and easily because consideration has been given to the individual needs and circumstances of children and their families. We recognise the importance of a paced entry procedure for all new entrants and implement daily welcoming strategies throughout the year for all parents and children.

Children Beginning Nursery/Reception

- Before a child starts at the setting, we use a variety of ways to provide parents with information. These include written information (including our prospectus and policies), displays about activities available within the setting, information days and evenings and individual meetings for key workers and parents.
- Prior to the visit, parents are issued with administration and medical forms to complete.
- We may offer a home visit or pre-school visit by the person who will be the child's key person, to ensure all relevant information about the child can be made known.
- When a child starts to attend, we explain the process of settling-in with his/her parents/carers and jointly decide on the best way to help the child to settle into the setting.
- Children and their parents/carers are invited to visit the Nursery/Reception for a 'taster' session. This is usually in the half term before the child begins. During the 'taster', children and parents/carers are introduced to the staff including the child's key worker and informed about routines. The children are encouraged to take a full part in the session.
- Once the child has started Nursery/Reception, staff will agree the best settling procedures with the parent/carer. Most children settle immediately and are able to stay for the full session from the outset. Some children require more support to make the transition to Nursery a positive experience for them. Settling strategies may include e.g. initially staying

for shorter part of a session, initially attending 3 sessions of the week, parent/carer staying for the first half hour until the child is more confident staying on his/her own.

- When parents leave, we ask them to say goodbye to their child and explain that they will be coming back, and when.
- Staff will constantly review settling progress and discuss next steps with parents/carers.
- We reserve the right not to accept a child into the setting without a parent or carer if the child finds it too distressing to be left. This is especially the case with very young children.
- We reserve the right to delay the start of a child if we feel they are not ready for the environment.

Daily Welcoming of Children

- A member of staff welcomes children and parents/carers in the classroom.
- Parents/carers should then assist their child in the cloakroom, promoting as much independence as possible when changing. There are individual pegs for coats and bags. The pegs and shoe boxes are labelled with the child's picture.
- Children are then encouraged to have a time of free play. Occasionally, children may need the support of the key person or parent/carer to settle and subsequently select an activity they feel comfortable with. Children are able to mix with all children in the Nursery/Reception.
- We judge a child to be settled when they have formed a relationship with their key person; for example the child looks for the key person when he/she arrives, goes to them for comfort, and seems pleased to be with them. The child is also familiar with where things are and is pleased to see other children and participate in activities.

Key Worker

Introduction

A key worker has special responsibility for a particular child. The key worker will work with the child and his/her parents/carers to ensure the child's care and educational needs.

If a child is nervous or worried about attending Nursery/Reception, the key worker may arrange with parents to visit the child at home or in a previous setting. The key worker's aim is to ensure the child is happy and feels secure at Ridge House Nursery or Reception and to observe, encourage and extend the child's learning experiences.

Main duties of a key worker

- To provide for the emotional needs of the child, to comfort and reassure.
- To care for the child.
- To contribute to and ensure that our provision takes into account each child's race, culture, religion, language and family values.
To liaise with parents/carers to discuss the child's progress and achievements.
- To observe and record the child's progress and achievements.
- To be available to speak to the parents/carers at the beginning and end of sessions.

- To liaise with the other settings on the progress and the welfare of the child.
- If necessary to liaise with the allocated member of staff who is responsible for Child Protection.
- To liaise with the parents/carers and Special Education Needs Co-coordinators if there is any concern such as language, hearing or other areas.

The key worker will ensure parents/carers are always contacted about any concerns involving their child.

The key worker will respect confidentiality.

The key worker is always aware of being a member of staff and will work with, care for, look after and be responsible for other children attending Nursery/Reception in addition to his/her key children.

The parents/carers responsibilities are:

- To ensure that the key worker is well informed about their child's needs and that this information is updated as circumstances change.
- To inform the key worker about their child's progress and development outside the Nursery.
- To aid planning for their child's needs and interests.