

Ruckleigh School



Early Years Handbook Nursery & Kindergarten **PARENTS**

October 2023

EARLY YEARS PARENTS HANDBOOK

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The purpose of this Handbook is to help guide you through the Early Years years here at Ruckleigh School; to inform you of the school’s daily routines for Nursery and Kindergarten and answer any questions that you may have now, or that may arise in the future. Information for years 1-6 is written in a separate booklet.

We have endeavoured to think of everything you may wish to know, but as a consequence we recognise this document is detailed and lengthy but hope it is useful for you. If you feel we have missed something important, or you have some great ideas please let us know.

A copy of this handbook is available on the Parent Portal for future reference and of course, you are always welcome to talk to your child’s Class Teacher or the School office, who will assist you with any query you may have.

Miss Clark

Early Years Coordinator

Headmasters forward

Welcome to Ruckleigh School and to parents new into school we hope this will be the start of a long and happy association.

Your child's education is a responsibility that we share with you. Ruckleigh provides a caring environment which ensures that a range of opportunities are in place for the academic and personal development of every child; one which stimulates and motivates to achieve with confidence and enjoyment.

Our overriding aim is to provide the highest quality education, consistent so that every child makes progress and no child gets left behind, and to care for the children in our setting. By working together as a team, working in partnership with parents and following all our policies and procedures, we help to maintain high quality provision for every child.

We strongly believe that any success achieved is a result of a close partnership between the staff, the pupils and the parents. A relationship between School and parents must be built on mutual trust and respect. The School places considerable emphasis on its effective and regular communication with parents.

If a parent has a concern or query, no matter how trivial in nature, it is essential that this should be communicated to the Class Teacher in the first instance. Should the concern/query not be answered or resolved after contacting the Class Teacher, the Deputy Head or the Head should then be informed.

If you have any questions or concerns please contact the office staff who will direct you to whom you should speak.

We aim to bring out the best in your child and all the other pupils in our care. With your support and cooperation, we are confident we can do this.

Mr D R Smith

School Headmaster

Definitions

The **Early Years** age group refers to children aged from birth until the 31st August following their fifth birthday who go to an early years setting that delivers the Early Years Foundation Stage.

- Age 4 – 5 Kindergarten
- Age 3 – 4 Nursery

Whilst there are specific Early Years regulations, the work of the early years team fits within our whole-school context. Where our handbook refers to other whole school policies and documents, these are referred to in **blue text** and these can be either found on the parent portal or please contact the School office to ask for a copy of a specific policy.

School Contact Details

Ruckleigh School

17 Lode Lane

Solihull

B91 2AB

Telephone: 0121 705 2773

www.ruckleigh.co.uk

Email: office@ruckleigh.co.uk

Parent Portal

It is a requirement that all parents/guardians register via the 'Parents' Area' of the School website. You will need to 'claim' your child and complete their details to include **allergies, medical and dietary** needs. We also require two alternative contacts to act in 'loco parentis' should you be unavailable.

INTRODUCTION

Aims of early years in our school

Through our work with children in the Early Years foundation stage, we aim to:

- ensure that all children benefit from a safe, secure and happy environment where they can play and develop, laying the foundation for success with the primary school curriculum. We aim to make education in EYFS as enjoyable and stimulating as possible, guided by rigorous policy, monitoring of progress and staff training. With us, children start to learn the key skills. The Independent School Inspection Service team, on their most recent visit in 2019 and the FCI / EQI Reports rated us as EXCELLENT with many positive comments about the Early Years including: ***'Children in the EYFS demonstrate excellent independent learning skills through the continuous provision, both inside and outdoors, of stimulating activities promoting all areas of development.'***

Early Years provision in our school

We have the following early years provision in our school:

- Nursery – ages 3-4. Children can start from the Monday after their third birthday, which means they can remain in nursery for up to 2 years depending on their birth date within the academic year. In Nursery, therefore, the topics are rotated over a two-year period.
- Kindergarten - ages 4-5 years.

Learning is primarily based on play and exploration with termly topics to keep young imaginations inspired. We use the Jolly Phonics phonics scheme and NCETM Mastering Number along side the White Rose Maths programme to develop basic reading and numeracy skills and have specialist teachers for PE and a weekly visit from the school librarian to promote reading for pleasure.

The Early Years Department also benefits from an excellent separate Early Years outdoor environment and play area, and children enjoy a range of daily activities through indoor and outdoor provision.

Independent School Inspectorate

In May 2019 the school underwent both Focused Compliance and Education Quality Inspection (FC / EQI) by the Independent Schools Inspectorate. The School was found to be fully compliant in all areas with no recommendations for improvement and was very complimentary about all areas of the curriculum, grading the school as EXCELLENT.

The full report is found here:

<https://www.isi.net/school/ruckleigh-school-6860>

Staff

Senior Management Team	Mr D R Smith Mrs J Finch Miss H Clark Steven Woodward (MAT cover for HC) Mrs K Bullard Mrs R Chandler Mrs C Laurens	Headmaster Child Protection Deputy Head Class Teacher (Upper School) Assistant Head Early Years Kindergarten Class Teacher Early Years Safeguarding Lead Assistant Head Academic Class Teacher (Middle School) Literacy Coordinator Assistant Head Pastoral Class Teacher (Lower School) Safeguarding Lead Bursar
Early Years Teaching Staff	Steven Woodward Mrs J Cartwright Miss J Mattison Miss Tamb Miss Z Saltan	Kindergarten Class Teacher Early Years Practitioner (Kindergarten) Early Years Practitioner (Kindergarten) Nursery Class Teacher Early Years Practitioner (Nursery)
Support Staff	Mrs B Badham Mrs K Cuffley Mr D Laurens Mr T Garbett Mrs L Aldridge Mrs L Crocker Mrs L Simpson Mrs J Taylor	Assistant Bursar and Administrator Credit Control and Administrator Groundsman and Maintenance Groundsman and Maintenance support Lunchtime Supervisor Lunchtime Supervisor Lunchtime Supervisor Lunchtime Supervisor
Other teaching staff <i>There are a number of staff members who assist certain areas of teaching so your child may come into contact with them.</i>	Mrs S Wilson Ms L Moya Mrs S Harrison Mrs G Slater Mrs V Lynch	Specialist Music teacher Specialist Spanish teacher SENCO Health & Safety Coordinator School Librarian
Safeguarding team	Mrs R Chandler Miss H Clark Steven Woodward	Safeguarding and Pastoral Lead Early Years Designated Safeguarding Lead Early Years Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead




- All staff receive training in basic First Aid, with Miss Clark, Miss Mattison, Miss Tamb and Miss Sultan (from the Early Years Team) being Paediatric First Aiders.
- A whole school staff list including temporary staff, along with a summary of their qualification is available to view upon request from the office.





LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Curriculum

We plan around the areas of the Early Years foundation stage curriculum. When working with the youngest children, there is a strong focus on the prime areas. The prime areas reflect the key skills and capacities all children need to develop and learn effectively, and become ready for school. As children become more confident, the balance moves towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning.

Planning the Early Years curriculum is about weaving together the curricular areas with the needs and interests of children in a way that is appropriate for the stage of development. Learning is planned to be both challenging and enjoyable for each child.

Prime Areas of Learning		
Personal, Social and Emotional Development	Physical Development	Communication and Language
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making relationships • Self-confidence and self-awareness • Managing feelings and behaviour 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moving and handling • Health and self-care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening and attention • Understanding • Speaking 

Specific Areas of Learning			
Literacy	Mathematics	Understanding the world	Expressive arts and Design
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading • Writing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numbers • Shape, space and measures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People and communities • The world • Technology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploring and using media and materials • Being imaginative 

In addition to the areas of learning, we embed highly effective spiritual, moral, social and cultural development into our curriculum and school experience. British Values are embedded in an age-appropriate way.

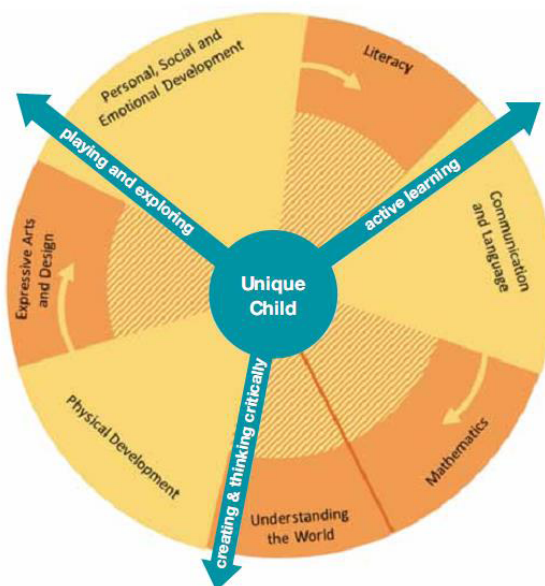
The curriculum is underpinned by the three characteristics of effective learning

Playing and exploring	Active learning	Creating and thinking critically
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finding out and exploring • Playing with what they know • Being willing to 'have a go' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being involved & concentrating • Keeping trying • Enjoying achieving what they set out to do 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having their own ideas • Making links • Choosing way to do things

How the curriculum fits together

The prime areas begin to develop quickly in response to relationships and experiences, and run through and support learning in all other areas. The prime areas continue to be fundamental throughout the EYFS.

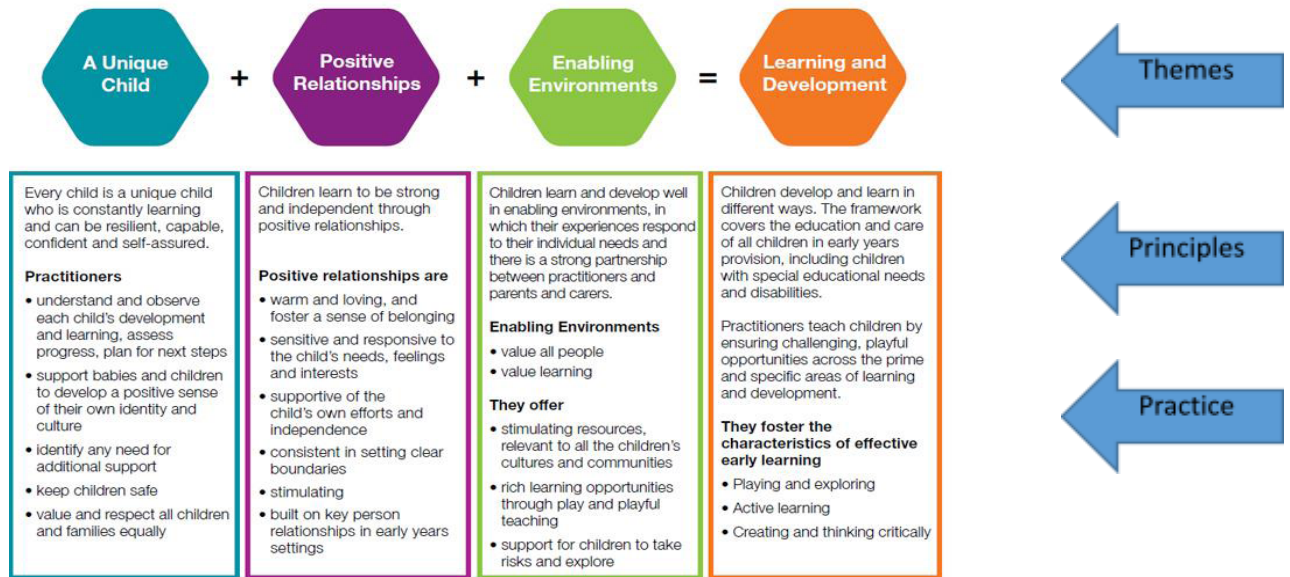
The specific areas include essential skills and knowledge. These grow out of the prime areas, and provide important contexts for learning.



Prime Areas of Learning		
<p>Communication and language development involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations.</p>	<p>Physical development involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their coordination, control, and movement. Children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food.</p>	<p>Personal, social and emotional development involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.</p>
<p>Children are encouraged to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Communicate thoughts, ideas and feelings and build up relationships with adults and each other ● Follow instructions involving several ideas or actions ● Answer how and why questions about their experiences and respond to stories and events ● Talk, listen and be listened to ● Engage through storytelling, songs, games, rhymes, poems, puppet sessions, role play and child initiated activities ● Talk to connect ideas, explain what is happening and anticipate what might happen next ● Recall and relive past experiences ● Question why things happen and give explanations 	<p>Children are encouraged to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Improve fine manipulative and coordination skills through handling a wide range of equipment, materials and tools ● Move confidently and imaginatively with increasing control and coordination ● Show awareness of space and others ● Use a range of small and large equipment, and to improve the skills of running, jumping, balancing and climbing with increasing confidence and control ● Explore the outside facilities in the setting or locality ● Talk about ways to keep healthy and safe, including the importance of physical exercise and a balanced diet ● Become independent with self-care, in dressing themselves and in matters of personal hygiene 	<p>Children are encouraged to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop confidence and self-esteem ● Express themselves verbally ● Recognise and delight in their achievement and the talents of others ● Learn to cope with new experiences and change ● Form positive relationships with adults and peers ● Develop important social skills (negotiation, cooperation, listening, self-control, consideration and respect) and attitudes of fairness and honesty ● Work independently and as part of a group ● Concentrate for sustained periods of time ● Treat living things and property with care, respect and concern and to be sensitive to the needs and feelings of others ● Take turns and to share space, equipment and adult attention

Specific Areas of Learning			
<p>Literacy development involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children must be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest.</p>	<p>Mathematics involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; and to describe shapes, spaces, and measures.</p>	<p>Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.</p>	<p>Expressive arts and design involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology.</p>
<p>We encourage children to read through daily activities linked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enjoy rhyming and rhythmic activities Understand that words & pictures carry meaning Understand that we read L-R and T-B Recall stories both orally and through role play & predict what will happen Enjoy books and handle them carefully Play sound word or pattern matching games Become confident readers <p>We encourage children to write by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Giving them opportunities to experiment with mark making Teaching them to recognise and write their name Encouraging them to read what they have written and value it Encourage them to write Encouraging them to link sounds & letters, naming & sounding letters of the alphabet Encouraging writing for real purposes and audiences <p>We develop children's awareness of sounds, rhythm & rhyme in words by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Singing nursery rhymes and poems Encouraging them to think of rhyming words Clapping, stamping or beating instruments when singing or saying rhymes Promoting use of phonic knowledge in reading and writing <p>We aim to develop the correct formation of handwriting by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing activities that encourage hand eye coordination and left, right tracking Teaching correct pencil grip Providing opportunities for practise Development of gross and fine motor skills Providing opportunities for mark making 	<p>Children are provided with opportunities to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate in structured activities using simple apparatus and real objects to develop understanding of the counting process and increase their ability to match symbols with a group of objects and be familiar with larger numbers from their everyday life and to solve real-life problems Become familiar with rhymes, songs, stories, counting games and activities Compare, sort match, order, sequence, and develop one to one correspondence through everyday objects Recognise, describe and make patterns. Use appropriate language to describe spatial awareness Use mathematical language to compare quantities by using suitable equipment – including sand and water Develop the concept of scale, capacity, conservation and comparative measurement Explore everyday materials and equipment Share and discuss experiences using appropriate mathematical language Use opportunities - outdoor and in - working with construction toys, to develop basic ideas such as shape, distance, position and measures Engage in practical activities to develop awareness of number operation such as addition and subtraction Become aware of the concept of time through appropriate experiences which utilise the pattern of the day 	<p>Children are encouraged to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Talk about where they live, their environment, their families and past & present events in their own lives Notice features in the setting & local environment Look closely at similarities, differences, patterns and change in things from both the natural and man-made world and people Talk about what they observe and record their findings in writing and drawing Ask questions about why things happen and how things work Choose materials and equipment appropriately to develop skills such as cutting, joining, folding and building for a variety of purposes Use technology, where appropriate, to support their learning Meet and talk with other people about the roles they play in the community through visitors coming in to the classroom 	<p>Children are encouraged to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Represent ideas of what they see, hear, touch and feel by drawing, painting, modelling, dancing, role-play and music making Explore colour, texture, shape, form and space in two and three dimensions Express themselves through painting and drawings using a variety of media Choose a widening range of materials and appropriate tools to express their ideas and to develop manipulative skills Talk about their work Appreciate each other's work Explore sound in a variety of forms and to listen and respond to music, songs, poems and rhymes Show an increasing ability to use their imagination, to listen and observe

Underpinning all work in the Early Years is the ‘how’ children learn. Especially with young children, this is through the way that adults interact and model interaction. At Ruckleigh we create learning environments where children learn through exploration and discovery.



Play

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play. We plan for a mix of child initiated and adult initiated activities. The balance of child and adult initiated activities is constantly evaluated, debated and adapted by staff. As children move through the Early Years, the balance moves from more child initiated to more adult initiated play in preparation for transition into Year 1.

Much learning in the Early Years takes place through the skilful interaction of adults – knowing when to intervene and when to step back. As with all learning, we demonstrate a warm, positive interaction so that children feel entirely comfortable as young learners. Making mistakes is a healthy way for all children to learn and mistakes are used as learning opportunities.

Purposeful play forms a significant element of the learning experience for young children. Through the provision of appropriate equipment and materials we ensure that the children encounter specific learning experiences. We aim to give opportunities for different forms of play through a wide variety of activities, not limited to:

- Construction toys
- Cutting activities
- Drawing and colouring
- Dressing up
- Games
- Cooking
- Use of technological equipment
- Music
- Painting and collage work
- Play dough
- Puppets
- Puzzles
- Reading activities
- Role Play (indoor area)
- Small world toys
- Sorting
- Threading and lacing
- Water and sand play
- Mud kitchen
- Writing on paper, blackboards and white boards
- Outdoor wheeled toys
- Gardening
- Role play outdoor theatre
- Counting
- Musical instruments
- Adventure play area
- Playhouse

- Climbing Frame
- Outdoor musical instruments
- Wigwam
- Model making (junk/clay)
- Games to develop early reading and mathematical concepts

Play can support development in four ways:

Physical development	Cognitive development	Social development	Emotional development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Strong, healthy bodies ● Fine and gross motor skills ● Coordination ● Physical confidence ● Agility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Scientific and mathematical thinking ● Language skills ● Literacy skills ● Independent thinking ● Research and enquiry skills ● Cognitive development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cooperation ● Negotiation ● Collaboration ● Socialisation ● Rule formation and turn taking ● Conflict resolution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Joy ● Empathy ● Resilience ● Persistence ● Self-regulation ● Self-confidence ● Impulse control

Outdoor learning

Well planned outdoor learning is integral to our high quality early years provision. Some of the benefits of outdoor learning are that it:

- supports the development of healthy and active lifestyles by offering children opportunities for physical activity, freedom and movement, and promoting a sense of well-being;
- gives children contact with the natural world and offers them experiences that are unique to outdoors, such as direct contact with the weather and the seasons;
- helps children to understand and respect nature, the environment and the interdependence of humans, animals, plants, and life cycles;
- supports children’s problem-solving skills and nurtures their creativity, as well as providing rich opportunities for their developing imagination, inventiveness and resourcefulness;
- provides sensory and physical experiences which supports brain development and the creation of neural networks; and
- teaches children to assess risk and develop the skills to manage new situations

We plan for easy access to the outdoor learning space.

- Ruckleigh offer a free flow approach to the outdoors in both Kindergarten and Nursery
- Children in Kindergarten and Nursery benefit from a daily outdoor session where they come together as an Early Years unit and support each other's play

Shows and Assemblies

Assemblies play an important role in reinforcing the school's ethos. The school holds a variety of assemblies each week, each with a different purpose, theme or focus.

Nursery and Kindergarten come together on a Wednesday for a celebration assembly, known as WOW Wednesday, which provides an opportunity to share children's achievements, both in and outside of school. Kindergarten also attend Gold Book assemblies which celebrate children's qualities, behaviour and attitude to learning as well as attainment. These are listed in the weekly School newsletter.

The performing arts are an integral part of our enrichment curriculum. In the Autumn term, Nursery and Reception perform a Harvest assembly, Nursery and Kindergarten take part in a joint Christmas Production. In the Summer term, Nursery and Kindergarten children participate in Lower School Sports Day and numerous concerts and performances are performed throughout the year much to the enjoyment of staff, children and parents alike.

SCHOOL ORGANISATION

NURSERY has a full time Class Teacher assisted by one or two Early Years Practitioners depending on the numbers of children.

KINDERGARTEN is taught by a full time Class Teacher, assisted by two Early Years Practitioners.

Age	Ruckleigh Year Groups		National Curriculum Year Groups	Key Stage (KS)
3 to 4	Nursery	Early Years Foundation Stage	Nursery	Early Years Foundation Stage
4 to 5	Kindergarten		Reception	
5 to 6	Year 1	Lower School	Year 1	KS 1
6 to 7	Year 2		Year 2	KS 1
7 to 8	Year 3	Middle School	Year 3	KS 2
8 to 9	Year 4		Year 4	KS 2
9 to 10	Year 5	Upper School	Year 5	KS 2
10 to 11	Year 6		Year 6	KS 2

Whole School Session Times

Nursery and Kindergarten	8.30 a.m. for 8.55 a.m. – 3.15 p.m.
Lower School	8.30 a.m. for 8.55 a.m. – 3.20 p.m.
Middle and Upper School	8.45 a.m. for 8.55 a.m. – 3.40 p.m.

Nursery Session Times

Your child can attend nursery for either:

1. Morning session
2. Morning session plus lunch
3. All day session

Children are not able to attend just in the afternoon and we advise a minimum of 3 sessions a week.

Each term we will ask if you would like to amend your number of sessions and, where possible, we will accommodate these changes.

Nursery Door Opens	8:30am
Morning Registration	8:55am
Morning Session Ends	12.00 (children not staying for lunch should be collected at midday from the front office)
Lunch	12:00 noon
Morning Session Ends for children staying for lunch	12:45pm (children to be collected from the front office)
Afternoon Registration	12:55pm
Nursery End of Day	3:15pm (children to be collected between 3:15-3:25pm)

It is essential that children who attend for the morning only are collected at 12:00 noon or they will be provided with lunch and parents will be charged.

Children who go home after lunch are collected between 12.30 and 12.45 p.m or they will be entered in for the afternoon session and parents will be charged for the extra session.

If, therefore, you know you are running late at collection time please inform the office as soon as possible with an estimated time of arrival.

Kindergarten Session Times

Kindergarten Door Opens	8:30am
Morning Registration	8:55am
Lunch	12:00 noon
Afternoon Registration	1:30pm
Kindergarten End of Day	3:15pm (children to be collected between 3:15-3:25pm)

Beginning and End of the School Day

Punctuality is a valued aspect of school life. Children should arrive in Nursery and Kindergarten between 8.30 a.m. and 8.50 a.m. in order to be ready for registration at 8.55 a.m.

In Kindergarten the children are heard reading daily from 8:30am and children arriving late tend to be unsettled and unprepared for the start of the day.

Early Room

Children arriving in school before 8.10 a.m. must be supervised by a parent or guardian until the School is opened.

Children may be dropped off at school from 8.10 a.m at the front of School and they are taken to the dining room where Nursery, Kindergarten, Years 1 and 2 will be supervised until 8.30 a.m. At 8.30 a.m. Nursery and Kindergarten children will be escorted to their classrooms.

Nursery and Kindergarten children arriving at school after 8.30 a.m. should enter via the Early Years Side Gate (off Touchwood Hall Close) where they can be escorted to their classroom by parents or guardians.

Children arriving after registration will be marked as LATE in the class register.

Collection of your child

At the end of the day, children may be collected from the front doors of Nursery and Kindergarten. In the case of the morning session / morning and lunch sessions, Nursery children are to be collected from the front office.

We have clear procedures in place to ensure that children are only released into the care of individuals who have been notified to the School by the parent. We ensure that no child ever leaves the premises unsupervised.

The Class Teacher must be handed a letter of consent if a child is to be collected by a person other than the parent. The other person must have a password which has been made known to the Class Teacher by the child's parents in advance.

Telephone calls regarding the collection of a child can only be accepted in an emergency and the person collecting the child should be familiar to the teacher.

The small playground between Nursery and Kindergarten classrooms is out of bounds after 3.15 p.m. as 'Playpals' will be supervising the children in their care. Please ensure your child stays with you at your side at all times once collected from Nursery or Kindergarten.

For safety reasons we ask that the children do not play on the climbing frames or playground equipment. School accepts no responsibility for injuries incurred.

Please be aware that some children suffer from serious allergies. With that in mind we ask that 'after school' snacks be eaten **off** school premises.

Late Room

Children should be collected from their classrooms between 3:15-3:30pm. If this is not possible, children will then be taken to the "Late Room" which is located in the dining room where the children will be supervised until collected from the front of school.

Children can attend Late room til 4:15pm to wait for older siblings or parents if they are not collected by 3:30pm. However for Nursery and Kindergarten it is encouraged that they are collected from the classroom where possible. Children are expected to sit quietly in the late room whilst waiting for collection which can be difficult for younger children, especially after a long day.

Policy on non-collection of children in EYFS

If a child is not collected they are taken to the Late Room. If not collected from the Late Room by 4:15pm then phone calls are made to parents. If a parent cannot be contacted within a reasonable time, then the school will contact social services or the Police.

Parking

- Touchwood Hall Close – restricted times, please check street notices.
- Side streets around the school.
- Town Centre car parks.

The school strives to maintain good relations with motorists and pedestrians on Lode Lane and neighbours in Touchwood Hall Close. There is no doubt that thoughtless parking is a major obstacle to achieving this; please ensure that it is possible for traffic to move freely at all times. In order to keep the traffic 'in' and 'out' of the Close flowing, we suggest cars turn left at the junction of Touchwood Hall Close and Lode Lane.

Absence from school - Illness and planned

If your child is absent through illness, the school office should be informed between 8.30 a.m. and 9.15.a.m. on the first morning of absence. If you have not informed us of an absence by 10:00am the office will contact you.

An email to the office or a letter explaining the absence should be given to the Class Teacher on the child's return .

Parents should be aware that school work missed during the child's absence may not be re-visited or repeated in class.

We ask that children are in school at the beginning and end of each term and especially at the beginning and end of the academic year.

Parents planning to take children out of school in term time are required to complete an Absence Request Form, which needs to be authorised in advance by the Headmaster. This request is at the Headmaster's discretion and will only be granted in genuinely exceptional circumstances.

Consideration will be given to cultural needs and exceptional family circumstances, such as children returning to their country of origin. In these cases, granting leave for longer periods than normal may be considered justified. In all cases though, parents will be required to justify why the absence needs to be taken during term time.

To request an absence from school please fill in the "Absence Request" form on the parent portal and School will confirm if it can be authorised. If you do not complete this form, your absence will be deemed unauthorised.

Child leaving the premises during the school day

The 'Signing Out' folder is located in the main School office and should be completed by parents or guardians of all children leaving the school premises, for whatever reason, once they have been registered in the normal way. Parents or guardians must enter the time the child leaves the school, the reason and then, if appropriate, on returning, the time the child returns.

OTHER INFORMATION

Uniform

School uniform must be strictly adhered to and should be purchased from the official school supplier School Colours Direct: <https://www.schoolcoloursdirect.co.uk/>.

The Summer Uniform is expected to be worn from the start of the summer term until the end of the Autumn half term (October) and the winter uniform for the remainder of the year.

Kindergarten children are expected to have a School book bag but do not require a pencil case or stationary.

The above named retailers have copies of the required uniform/shoes and parents will have received a copy with the information pack. Should you require further copies please contact the school office.

Nursery children will also need:

- Wellington boots for rainy days
- Warm outer clothing, hats and gloves on cold days
- A bottle green pump bag (with spare clothing in case of accidents)
- Sunhat (for safety reasons no sunglasses). Parents are asked to apply sunscreen on children before arriving in class

Kindergarten children will also need:

- Regulation school wear warm outer clothing, hats, scarf and gloves on cold days
- White trainers for P.E.
- A bottle green pump bag (with spare clothing in case of accidents)
- Sunhat (for safety reasons no sunglasses). Parents are asked to apply sunscreen on children before arriving in class

Open-toed sandals are not permitted, as they can be dangerous during outdoor activities.

P.E. Kit

Kindergarten children undertake PE on a Friday so should come to school wearing their P.E. kit on that day. They should come wearing their school joggers over their shorts. They are not required to wear their school cap or hat when wearing PE kits. School houses are allocated after registration, please contact the school office if you are unsure of which house your child is in as this determines the PE kit you will need to purchase.

Nursery children complete physical activities as part of their normal learning and therefore do not require a PE kit. You will be informed if and when you need to purchase PE pumps.

PLEASE ENSURE THAT ALL ITEMS OF CLOTHING ARE CLEARLY NAMED

Hair

Hair styles should be tidy.

Long hair should be trimmed in a neat, sensible style. Hair longer than collar-length must be worn tied back. Hair accessories should be plain bottle green.

Short hair should be trimmed in a neat style above the shirt collar. Tram lines/shaved heads are not acceptable.

Jewellery

In the interests of safety, no jewellery is to be worn in school.

School accepts no responsibility for injuries resulting from wearing jewellery, this includes earrings. Earrings should only be of a small stud design. Nail varnish should not be worn in school.

Kara

The Sikh Kara may be worn but the School accepts no responsibility for injuries resulting from wearing it.

Toys

Unless specifically requested by Nursery or Kindergarten Staff, for topic work or 'Show and Tell' sessions, children are discouraged from bringing their own toys to class as they can get lost or accidentally broken.

Birthday cakes and other treats

Due to the significant number of children who have food allergies, known and sometimes yet to be discovered, we need to know the ingredients of birthday cakes and other treats brought into school. All cakes/treats should be taken to the Class Teacher so that the ingredients may be checked.

To avoid any potential disappointment, please remember that we operate a STRICTLY NUT-FREE POLICY IN SCHOOL. (This includes certain chocolates within mixed selections such as 'Celebrations', 'Quality Street' and 'Roses'). Also, please be aware that certain sweets (e.g. Haribos) contain gelatin and are therefore not suitable for vegetarians, so please consider a vegetarian alternative, again to avoid potential disappointment.

Break time snacks

As a school, we promote healthy eating and a healthy lifestyle. All meals, snacks and drinks are healthy, balanced and nutritious. Before admitting a child, we obtain information about special dietary requirements, preferences and food allergies. Fresh drinking water is available at all times.

Nursery:

- School will provide milk, water or squash and fruit for snack time
- Your child is able to bring in a named water bottle each day.

Kindergarten:

- Please provide your child with fresh fruit, vegetables or dried fruit. Fruit snack bars and fruit pouches are not allowed. We encourage the children to eat fruits and vegetables as part of our Healthy Eating Campaign.
- No products containing nuts; no crisps, chocolate, biscuits, yoghurt pouches or sweets are allowed to form part of a child's snack.
- Children may bring prepared fruit in a foil wrapper or small plastic box. Foil wrappers, rather than cling film, enable the child to have easy access to the contents and so promotes independent learning.
- Children need to bring in a named water bottle daily
- School will provide milk or water

School meals

Nursery and Kindergarten children eat lunch in the school dining room at 12 noon. The school strives to balance a healthy eating policy and a menu that will appeal to children. Salads and fresh fruit are always available. Meals are cooked on the premises and where possible special diets are catered for, e.g. allergies, religious reasons.

Menus are displayed in the dining room and on the Thomas Franks website. Our Catering Manager is available to speak to parents who have any concerns regarding their child's eating habits and may be contacted through the school office. Dietary requests should be directed to the Headmaster.

Please ensure you update your child's dietary information on the Parent Portal as this information is used by the kitchen staff to inform their preparation of food.

Toilet training

All children joining Ruckleigh are to be fully toilet trained and able to toilet themselves. We recognise children do have occasional accidents and therefore should have a set of named spare clothes in school. In certain circumstances it may be necessary for parents to collect children if repeated soiling occurs.

The Proprietor follows the regulations to ensure that appropriate facilities are in place. Adults will never use bathroom areas designed for children.

After School Care / Holiday Club

Playpals run an 'After School Club' on the school premises for families who require extended day childcare. They are available until 6:00pm daily.

They also offer a holiday provision run on our school site during the main School holidays. Children must be registered in advance. Information regarding Playpals is available from the school office or can be found on their website <http://playpalschildcare.co.uk>.

SEND (Special Educational Needs & Disabilities)

If at any point, progress in one of the prime areas gives cause for concern, staff will discuss this with the child's parents and agree on practical ways to support the child. Where a concern is raised that a child has any learning delay or possible special educational need or disability, it is referred to the Early Years Leader who will seek advice from the SENCO and it may be in their best interest to be allocated an individual support plan. Where necessary, it may be recommended that school / parents seek advice from external agencies and the SENCO will support parents should this be the case. For children that receive funding from the local authority, the school will have regard to the SEND Code of Practice. See [SEND Policy](#)

EAL (English as an Additional Language)

For children whose home language is not English, we encourage children to develop and use their home language in play and learning. Alongside this it is the work of staff and parents to ensure that children catch up and close the gap so that English is developed to unlock other areas of learning. When assessing communication, language and literacy skills, School must assess children's skills in English as per the Early years Statutory Framework.

Where there are concerns about delay in the development of English language learning, we will explore the child's skills in their home language with parents, to establish whether there is cause for concern about language delay. See [EAL Policy](#)

Homework

Home based challenges are set half termly in both Nursery and Kindergarten that are linked to the next topic. Ad-hoc homework can be sent home where it supports the child's learning.

Reading books are sent home in Nursery and Kindergarten as per the [English policy](#) and parents are expected to hear their child read at least weekly in Nursery, and daily in Kindergarten.

Phonics is sent home daily in the autumn term and spring term in Kindergarten. Spellings will be introduced when appropriate for the child in Kindergarten; this is normally in the summer term. Maths homework is sent home weekly in Kindergarten.

Homework is expected to be signed by a parent and a comment added if appropriate.

Please check your child's school bag regularly for any notes or homework from the Class Teacher.

Visitors / Entry to the premises

We have a clear system for visitor management. All visitors are required to sign in at the school office. No visitor will ever have unsupervised access to children unless the appropriate background checks are in place and verified. All visitors are expected to wear a visitor lanyard for purposes of identification. When attending events, parents are asked to fill in reply slips or inform early years staff to show that they will be on the premises at set times and dates. This is monitored by a member of the Early Years team on the gate and a register is kept.

Off-site learning

We have clear procedures in place for learning off-site, these are outlined in our [Educational Visits Policy](#). Before taking any children off site, the group leader will risk assess the opportunity, gain approval for the visit and ensure that all adults accompanying the children understand the risk assessment and requirements placed on them. The assessment includes consideration of adult to child ratios.

Smoking

Smoking (including vaping) is not allowed in or on the school premises at any time.

Animals

Animals will not be allowed on site, even when carried, unless for an educational purpose.

Complaints

We have a clear [Complaints Procedure](#) in place which is made available to all parents on the School website. The Headmaster maintains a written record of all formal complaints.

We make available to parents and/or carers details about how to contact Ofsted if they believe the provider is not meeting the EYFS requirements.

Where complaints relate to the fulfilment of the EYFS requirements, they will be investigated and the outcome of the investigation will be shared with Ofsted within 28 days of having received the complaint.

Payment of Fees

Fees are payable termly on or before the first day of each term. Alternatively, they may be paid:

- Monthly through School Fees Plan; details available from the school office
- Monthly through the school office, by arrangement with the Bursar.
- Annually, on or before the first day of the academic year

Queries regarding fees should be directed to the Bursar.

Withdrawing a Child from School

According to the terms and conditions of the School, it is a requirement to give a full term's notice if you are withdrawing a child or if a child is registered but the place is no longer required. Such notice should be in writing to the Head and must be received no later than the first week of the term preceding the term to which the notice relates.

Failure to comply with this requirement will result in a full term's fees being charged in lieu of notice.

HEALTH**Medicines**

We actively promote good health for all children in our setting. We have clear policies and procedures in place to support this area.

See [Administration of Medication Policy](#)

See [Supporting Children with Medical Conditions Policy](#)

See [Accident and Incident Recording and Reporting Policy](#)

The policies include:

- guidance on administering medication
- guidance on the storage of medication
- the need for written permission from parents
- the need for record keeping

There is no legal requirement for staff to administer medicines to pupils and no medicine should be sent to school with children without office staff being informed. If it is necessary for a child to take a dose of medicine during school hours, we ask that you come to the school office at lunchtime and administer the medicine personally. If this is not possible, please speak to staff in the school office.

Self administration by children of medicine such as Calpol or Nurofen is strictly prohibited.

Medicines provided for emergency treatment such as reliever inhalers for asthmatic pupils, EpiPens or glucose tablets for diabetics are kept safely in the classroom in a locked First Aid cabinet, for immediate use. These must be prescribed for the child and be clearly named for their use only.

A care plan will be created for any child who requires specific medication e.g. an EpiPen, and the plan will need to be signed by parents and agreed prior to the medicine being administered.

These steps are taken to alleviate any possibility of medical incidents.

Accident or injury

We have clear guidance in place for the administration of first aid. See [First Aid Policy](#)

The first aid box is accessible at all times with appropriate content for children. We keep clear written records of all first aid administered. The First Aid box is accessible in the Kindergarten classroom.

Records are kept in Kindergarten and Nursery classrooms.

Most injuries which are sustained at school are minor but parents and carers will be informed of an accident or injury sustained by a child which required first aid treatment. They will be informed on the same day and of the treatment given.

See [Health and Safety Policy](#)

See [Guidance on Serious Incident Reporting](#)

Not really an illness...Head lice can be a recurring problem. Please check your child's scalp regularly. It would be appreciated if any occurrence of head lice is made known to the Class Teacher or the School Office. Medication is available from chemists. Children's hair should be clear of lice before they return to school.

Medical Regulations

Period of exclusion:

Chickenpox	until all spots are dry
Diarrhoea/vomiting	excluded <u>until clear of symptoms</u> for 24 hours
Measles	5 days from onset of rash
Mumps	5 days after onset of swelling
Rubella (German Measles)	5 days from onset of rash

Other serious infectious illnesses:

- Child will be excluded until pronounced clear by a Doctor to be free of infection
- The school should be informed immediately if an infectious illness occurs at home

COMMUNICATION BETWEEN SCHOOL AND PARENTS

The school aims to maintain a continuous relationship with parents. The main methods of communication include:

- Email and SMS
- Early Years Parents' Handbook
- Teacher/parent Home/School Book (Nursery)
- Teacher/parents communication by letter/note
- Reading Record Books (Kindergarten)
- Autumn and Spring Term Parents' Evenings
- Written report at the end of Summer Term prior to moving on to the next class
- Daily availability of the Headmaster
- Termly Newsletter including calendar of school events. We ask that you make note of dates of school events so that parties etc. involving children / families from school do not clash with events organised by school or the Parents' Association
- Information letters during term time
- Meetings between staff and parents
- Letters from the Parents' Association
- Parents of children in all Year Groups are invited to a meeting towards the end of the Summer Term to meet teachers and be informed about the class routine for the following year. This is usually a good opportunity for parents to ask questions and to meet other parents
- Curriculum information for the following term is included with the child's Report
- Email: Please register in the parents area of the school website
- School Policies may be viewed on the website
- School website – www.ruckleighschool.co.uk. The website contains general information which parents may find useful

We are moving towards a paperless communication system so it is important that you keep your details up to date on the parent portal as this is our main form of communication with yourselves.

The school welcomes suggestions and comments from parents. All worries and concerns and complaints are taken seriously. Parents are encouraged to mention these as soon as possible so that school has the opportunity to rectify a problem or explain the school's position before a matter of concern becomes more serious.

Parents are encouraged to approach the Class Teacher on matters of social relationships or academic query. Should the matter remain unresolved it then should be discussed with the Deputy Head or Headmaster. All matters, no matter how minor, will be brought to the attention of the Headmaster by the Class Teacher.

It cannot be over-emphasised that if a pupil expresses anxiety or worry to parents this should immediately be brought to the attention of the school. The school's paramount aim is to create an atmosphere where all the pupils are happy, relaxed and feel totally secure. The school will immediately respond in such situations.

Parents' Evenings

The Class Teacher has the responsibility for overseeing the academic development and pastoral care of your child. It is the Class Teacher to whom you should initially turn to if you wish to seek advice regarding the curriculum, your child's work, or social relationships.

Attendance at Parents' Evenings is encouraged in order to discuss your child's progress and personal development. Please be aware that appointments for Parents' Evenings are issued and the teacher will be committed to seeing several parents on the allocated evenings. It may be necessary for parents to arrange another day to continue conversations with the teacher if the allocated time is not long enough. Interviews between teacher and parent may overrun and we ask for your patience and understanding should this occur.

October: Nursery – Year 6 **March:** Nursery – Year 5

Should you at any other time wish to discuss an aspect of school life with a member of staff, please contact the school office, as it may be necessary to make an appointment.

Parental Involvement

Although your child attends Ruckleigh School they spend a higher proportion of the week outside of the school environment and often this is where learning can demonstrate itself in wonderful ways. Parents or carers are asked to inform staff about events occurring outside of the school day via WOW notes, which are shared at WOW Wednesday assembly, where we celebrate with the children the things that made you go WOW!

Workshops are run across the year, primarily in the autumn and spring term to educate parents on specific areas of development and how they may help their child with their learning at home. Feedback is sought and future workshops are planned based on parental requests and needs of the class.

ASSESSMENT

Attainment on entry/Baseline

We assess the attainment upon entry of all children in both Nursery and Kindergarten. This assessment is through play based activities and observations and is completed within the first 4 weeks of entry. This helps us plan for next steps in learning and evidence progress throughout the Early Years.

Any emerging concerns with this must be discussed with Miss Hayley Clark, the Early Years Leader, who will liaise with the SENCO for further support and guidance. See [SEND Policy](#)

Assessment: Early Years Foundation Stage Profile

In the final term of the Early Years foundation stage (summer term of the Kindergarten year), i.e. the year in which the child reaches age five, and no later than 30th June in that term, the school will complete the EYFS Profile for each child.

The EYFS Profile assesses each child against the Early Learning Goals (ELG). These are the national government guidelines and expectations for all children at the end of the Foundation Stage. For each ELG, practitioners will judge whether the child is working at: expected level, not yet reaching expected level or exceeding expected level.

The EYFS profile is completed for all children including those with special educational needs or disabilities, with reasonable adjustments made to the assessment process as appropriate.

The outcomes of the EYFS Profile are shared with parents at the end of the Kindergarten year. Parents are always given an opportunity to discuss the profile with the class teacher. Outcomes from the EYFS Profile are shared with the local authority, for those children still in receipt of Early Years funding.

Transition into Year 1

Outcomes from the EYFS Profile are shared with the receiving Year 1 teacher. In addition, Kindergarten teachers share a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective learning via the end of year report. Year 1 teachers use this information to ensure that they appropriately plan for learning as children move into Year 1, making transition as smooth and stress free as possible for the children.

SAFEGUARDING AND WELFARE

Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met and when they have positive relationships with the adults in the setting. This section states how we create a high quality setting that is welcoming, safe and stimulating and how we meet the safeguarding and welfare requirements.

Safeguarding and Child Protection

Providing a safe and secure learning environment for our children is always our number one priority. All staff take a key role in ensuring that our children are safe and that we take immediate action when there are any concerns about a child's safety or welfare. We have clear procedures for this which every adult in the setting must follow.

The whole-school **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy** applies to children in the Early Years. Every member of staff is required to read this and sign a declaration to state that they have read and understand how to implement the requirements. Our policy is aligned with the requirements of our Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). The **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy** outlines clear steps to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff. The key points from our policy are outlined below:



Within our setting, we have designated staff who lead on all aspects of safeguarding – see the staff section for these details. These staff are trained in line with expectations set by our LSCB. Our school will always work in partnership with external agencies linked to safeguarding children, following government guidance in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'. We will always notify agencies with statutory responsibilities without delay.

Use of mobile phones, cameras and devices

We have clear expectations for all adults, staff and parents alike, in the early years setting regarding the use of mobile phones, cameras and devices. These expectations must be adhered to all times and are outlined in the School [Code of Conduct](#).

Managing behaviour

Staff are responsible for managing children's behaviour in an appropriate way. This will always be based on positive reinforcement and praise, with reminders where behaviour falls short of expectations. The School [Behaviour Policy](#) provides clear guidance on our whole school expectations and procedures.

Corporal punishment, or the threat of such punishment, is illegal. Any adult that uses or threatens to use corporal punishment will be suspended immediately and will be subject to the School's [Disciplinary Policy](#). The use of, or threat of, corporal punishment will be deemed gross misconduct and result in dismissal.

An employee will not be deemed to have used corporal punishment (and therefore will not have committed an offence), where physical intervention (*where practitioners use reasonable force to prevent children from injuring themselves or others or damaging properties*) was taken for the purposes of averting immediate danger, of personal injury to any person (including the child) or to manage a child's behaviour if absolutely necessary.

A written record will always be kept when physical intervention is used, and parents and/or carers must be informed on the same day, or as soon as reasonably practicable. Any use of physical intervention must be reported to the Early Years Leader immediately.

Child protection

In order to support our Child Protection Policy a Pre-CAF (Common Assessment Form) is completed by all parents.

The school's prime concern is the well-being and safety of the children. It is the duty of the school to report children thought to be at risk from abuse or neglect. School will discuss any concerns with the family and, where possible, seek their agreement to make a referral to Social Services. However, parental agreement will only be sought if the Headmaster decides that such discussion will not place a child at increased risk of danger or significant harm.

RUCKLEIGH SCHOOL PARENTS' ASSOCIATION

The Purpose of the Parents' Association (P.A.)

The Parents' Association was started over 60 years ago to provide support for the school, organise events and enable parents to meet each other informally; to bring everyone together and to have some fun. These aims are ongoing and currently the Association organises both fundraising and social events for the benefit of pupils and parents.

Events organised have included a Christmas Fayre, Summer Fayre and Barbecue, discos for the children, Quiz Evenings and Autumn/Summer Ball. The main fundraising events are the Christmas and Summer Fayres and the Association aims to raise funds which are used to support the School in a variety of ways such as the purchase of sports and classroom equipment, outdoor benches, books for the library, break-time toys and computing equipment. Occasionally the P.A. helps School with a major project; campaigns have included: resurfacing the tennis courts with an all weather surface, equipping classrooms with interactive white boards and the purchase of the School minibus.

The P.A. is run by a committee which meets two or three times each term and is made up of parents of children in Foundation Stage through to Year 6. School takes a very keen interest in the Association and the staff provide help and support for the events organised.

The committee itself is very sociable and offers an ideal opportunity to parents from all parts of the school to meet each other. The work is very rewarding and the help the P.A. provides enhances the happy and well-motivated environment of the school.

Parents with ideas/suggestions or who are interested in joining the committee and/or helping in any way, please contact committee members or the school office.