



Ridgeway Academy

'Everybody can achieve'

School information 2018/19

Respect | Responsibility | Relationships

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The School Day

Key Staff

Headteacher	Mr J Whelan	Business Manager	Mrs P Diop
Deputy Headteacher	Miss J Smith	Site Manager	Mr R Colmenares Diaz
Assistant Headteacher	Mr S Booth	Site Manager	Mr P Ephgrave
Assistant Headteacher	Mrs L Hyde	ICT Manager	Mr C Bonti
Assistant Headteacher	Mrs C Maddocks	Headteacher's PA	Mrs H Smith
Assistant Headteacher	Mr J Milne	Office Manager	Mrs K Biss
Chair of Governors	Mrs A Garland		

The School

'Everybody can achieve'

Ridgeway Academy is an inclusive, comprehensive school. As a member of the Alban Academies Trust we are committed to becoming an outstanding school. We are a growing school, with over 600 students, aged 11-18, including a Sixth Form.

Our site has had a number of recent significant developments, with a new Sports complex, a window refurbishment programme across the school site and updated computer rooms. We constantly develop our buildings to create an improved environment for learning.



School Admissions

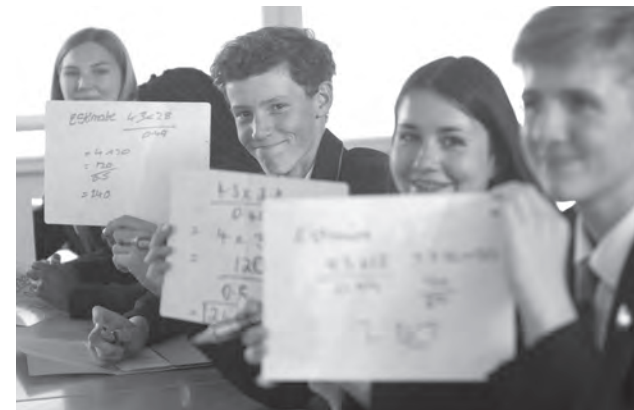
Hertfordshire Local Authority manages the transfer and entry to Ridgeway Academy.

You will have received the booklet 'Moving on'; this outlines the Local Authority admissions policy and gives advice and information on finding the right school for your son or daughter. If you have decided that you would like your son or daughter to come to Ridgeway Academy you will need to complete a Secondary Transfer Form naming the school as your preference. Step by step guidance on filling in this form and how to apply online is given in the 'Moving on' booklet.

We welcome visits from parents and would encourage you to visit the school in action between Monday 24th and Friday 28th September 2018, appointments not necessary, please arrive for 9.00am. On arrival in Reception you will be met by a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

The Curriculum

We offer a personalised and flexible curriculum so all our students can achieve to their full potential. This is constantly reviewed and updated so it is relevant to the needs of our students.



Key Stage 3 (Year 7 - 9)

We offer a balanced and broad curriculum in line with the National Curriculum. We place significant emphasis on the development of students as rounded individuals and all students follow a programme of study including Philosophy and Ethics and Personal, Social, Health and Careers Education (PSHCE).

In Key Stage 3 students study:

- Computer Science
- Dance
- Drama
- English
- French/Spanish
- Geography
- History
- Mathematics
- Music
- PE
- Philosophy & Ethics
- Science
- Technology (*Food, Graphic Design, Resistant Materials*)
- Visual Arts

In Year 7 some students will have additional literacy and numeracy teaching to support their rapid progress in these important curriculum areas. Some students may also study as part of a nurture group to support development of social skills, confidence and leadership qualities.

Key Stage 4 (Year 10 - 11)

At Key Stage 4 students continue to receive a broad and balanced curriculum leading to GCSE or Level 2 equivalent qualifications. Students have the opportunity to select from a wide range of optional courses as well as completing statutory subjects.

Compulsory subjects:

- English Language
- English Literature
- Humanities (Geography or History)
- Mathematics
- PE (Core)

Additional Key Stage 4 subjects:

- Business Studies
- Computer Science
- Dance
- Drama
- Fine Art
- Food Technology
- French
- Geography
- History
- Media studies
- Music
- Product Design
- Philosophy and Ethics
- Vocational courses in conjunction with Oaklands College

Key Stage 5 (Year 12 – 13)

Ridgeway Academy is part of the thriving Welwyn and Hatfield Sixth Form Consortium and this enables us to offer a wide range of Level 3 courses.

Extra-Curricular Life

We recognise the importance of extra-curricular enrichment activities in supporting the growth of skills, qualities and attributes in our students. The main programme of activities includes:

- An extensive programme of educational visits, offered through our curriculum and by our Directors of Learning, support our students in learning outside of the classroom. These range from culture based museum and heritage site visits, to theatre performances and opportunities to see elite performers in action. Modern Foreign Languages offer a cultural visit to France, where students can practise their speaking and listening skills and embed themselves in the culture.
- A strong extra-curricular sports programme provides sporting opportunities for everyone and includes a Sports Tour to a European destination, during which students learn aspects of different cultures, languages and compete against international school teams. School teams have reached many district and county finals.
- Out of school activities such as Young Enterprise, The Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DoE) and a Cambodia Trek Expedition develop teamwork, communication and leadership skills.
- The Performing Arts annual stage production provides opportunities for our students to develop and showcase their talents in drama, dance and music.
- A comprehensive House programme includes a number of events each year.
- A number of subjects offer Student Leadership programmes, which provide opportunities for our students to lead activities to their peers and to children in our Primary feeder schools. Our Student Literacy Leaders support our Accelerated Reader Programme as well as facilitating other literacy initiatives. Competitions are entered in Maths, which pitch our students against their peers across the country. We invite guest speakers to inspire our students with their achievements and how they have overcome barriers to achieve success. As part of Student Voice a visit was made to the Houses of Parliament.

It is important for us that these opportunities are inclusive for our students and we operate systems which support access to this enrichment.

Academic Support

We are totally committed to working with parents in partnership so that all our students make maximum progress in their learning.

A key part of this partnership is providing parents with accurate and regular feedback about their child's progress which is achieved by:

- **Progress Reports**
- **Parents' Evenings**

One of the strategies used to achieve the best outcomes for students is effective data tracking and intervention. This requires targets for students to be set in each subject. We set all students new targets each year which will challenge them to attain above national expectations.

Students should be aware of their targets for each subject and progress towards them will be shown on the termly reports that are sent home.

Recognising Achievement

Recognising and rewarding achievement is central to our philosophy for success and supports our core values of respect, responsibility and relationships. We have a powerful system of rewards to encourage positive attitudes to work and learning. The system develops as students progress through the school and we expect all students to be fully involved in receiving the various rewards for their endeavours.

Throughout the year students receive achievement points for excellent work

which contributes towards various levels of awards presented to students.

We monitor attendance closely and special prizes are given to students with exceptional attendance.

At the end of each term there is an assembly to celebrate our successes where students receive recognition for their achievements. There is also a formal awards evening which is held for students to receive their examination certificates and other prestigious awards.

Home Based Learning

All students are expected to complete home based learning, to support their studies. Students should record their home based learning in their Student Planner and also use the online "Show My Homework" platform to organise themselves. Parents should check the planner regularly, signing it each week.

Public Examinations

It is school policy that all Year 11, 12 and 13 students are entered at GCSE/BTEC and A Level for all subjects in which they have followed a course. The only exceptions to this are where the school believes that a student will not achieve a pass because they have failed to complete a compulsory element of the course. In these rare circumstances parents will always be informed of the decision to withdraw an entry.

Meeting the needs of all students

It is Ridgeway Academy's belief that all students should be catered for according to their needs. Students of all abilities may, at some time, need extra support or encouragement with particular aspects of their work. At transition, information received from Primary Schools is carefully noted and baseline testing on entry ensures that we identify students with additional learning needs. More able students are also identified early by data analysis and teacher recommendations. Departments are aware of the more able students and plan for their provision, including extension tasks within their schemes of work.

We have a dedicated Learning Support Team of Teaching Assistants and Higher Level Teaching Assistants led by our SENDCO. They work with our students in the class room to support students, give guidance and challenge throughout their time in school. This enables them to experience a curriculum which is challenging and accessible. The diversity of skills within the team ensures we are able to support specific learning difficulties, for example, dyslexia. Our staff play an important pastoral role within the school; they provide excellent essential support for all students. This is especially important for students transferring from Primary School and mentoring our older students as they approach their final exams.

Growth mindset

At Ridgeway Academy we encourage students to develop a Growth Mindset. Growth Mindset is not a new curriculum but simply an approach to learning in school and life beyond. Research by Developmental Psychologist Dr Carol Dweck of Stanford University points to people having one of two mindsets:

- **Growth**
- **Fixed**

A child's belief about intelligence is an important factor in whether they become an effective learner. We all hold beliefs about concepts such as 'intelligence', 'ability' and 'personality', with roughly half of us holding a 'fixed' mindset and the other half a 'growth' mindset.

Although most people will undoubtedly have a mixture of these mindsets in different aspects of their life, research highlights very important evidence that most teaching professionals can instantly recognise this in their class. From a practical point of view, staff recognise children with a fixed mindset who are scared to contribute to class discussion for fear of looking silly; who take one bad test result as a sign that they cannot do the subject, are going to fail and therefore give up; who will not try anything new for fear of getting it wrong; who will persevere with the same approach to their learning even when it is not working rather than being creative and finding a different solution.

Developing a Growth Mindset is designed to remove such barriers to learning as the children realise they can grow their ability rather than being told they can.

Pastoral Care

In our experience, problems that arise can usually be dealt with most effectively through a discussion with your child's Form Tutor, who is best placed to resolve most difficulties. The Director of Learning will also be able to help if you are unhappy about any aspect of your child's education or their experience in school. However, when problems cannot be resolved in this way we would advise parents to contact the member of the Senior Leadership Team who is linked to your child's year group.

Behaviour and Discipline

Any large community needs a set of clear, simple guidelines in order to ensure there is a calm and purposeful environment in which to work and learn. Ridgeway Academy's Code of Conduct is constructed around the 3 'Rs' of:

- **Respect**
- **Responsibility**
- **Relationships**

Ridgeway Academy does not tolerate bullying. Students are encouraged and expected to report all incidents and parents can be assured that the school will deal with such incidents swiftly and effectively.

The school's Anti Bullying Policy is available on the school's website. Our Behaviour for Learning Policy sets out, in detail, how general discipline is maintained in the school. This is achieved principally through the pastoral curriculum and is firmly based on positive reinforcement; our rewards system further enhances this. Ridgeway Academy does not tolerate inappropriate or unacceptable behaviour and students are constantly reminded about the standards of behaviour expected. A copy of the school's Behaviour for Learning Policy is available on the school's website.

Philosophy, Ethics and Collective Worship

Assemblies are an important part of our school day providing an opportunity for students to reflect on a wide variety of moral, philosophical, religious and social issues. It is also an important time for the staff and students to gather as a community.

Philosophy and Ethics is a strong curriculum area at Ridgeway Academy. In line with statutory requirements, students at Key Stage 3 study aspects of the six major world faiths of Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism and Sikhism. In the course of their study we try to ensure that students are able to relate the beliefs and practices to areas of their own lives. For example, when studying Pilgrimage, we encourage students to reflect on journeys that have significance for them.

Some students at Key Stage 4 study GCSE Philosophy and Ethics, which involves a comprehensive study of Christianity and Islam. Topics include attitudes to the media, abortion and social injustice. At Key Stage 5 A Level Philosophy and Ethics is offered as part of the Welwyn and Hatfield Sixth Form Consortium. Philosophy and Ethics is also taught as part of the Sixth Form Enrichment Programme.

It is very rare for a parent to exercise their statutory right to withdraw their child(ren) from this valuable and rewarding experience. Where this is the case, however, parents should contact the Headteacher in the first instance in order to discuss the type, quality and standard of work that they need to provide as an alternative.

Careers Advice and Guidance

All students from Year 7 onwards have a formal careers programme which they follow in PSHCE lessons and through enrichment days. In addition, all students and their parents meet with staff to discuss their options for GCSE and the implications of these choices for their Post-16 education, training or employment. These individual interviews are also conducted in Year 11 to support students with their Post-16 choices. Information and the careers library is based in our Careers Room. We also work with Oaklands College to ensure students have a full understanding of the options they offer.

The school offers an individual support programme for students utilising the expertise of external careers advisors. This takes place from Year 9 on a referral basis. All students in Year 10 have the opportunity to undertake a week of aspirational/career experience. Local business, industry and service organisations are very supportive of the school and we are always able to place our students in worthwhile workplaces.

Break & Lunchtime

A cashless canteen and catering pod, operated by Edwards and Blake, provides hot and cold meals and snacks before school and during their mid-morning and lunchtime breaks. Full details of the cashless system are issued to all parents of new students. We provide indoor and outdoor spaces for students who bring packed lunches.

Health Education

We have a Sex and Relationships Policy in line with legislation. Our aim is to prepare students for the physical and emotional changes that they will undergo during their time at school and for the future. Sex and Relationships education is taught both by the Science Department and by PSHCE teachers. The School Nurse also visits the school to discuss the health aspects of Sex Education. It is unusual for parents to exercise their statutory right to withdraw their child from Sex and Relationships Education.

School Uniform

All students in Years 7 to 11 wear school uniform. The uniform is very smart and distinctive and encourages a sense of pride in Ridgeway Academy. A high standard of appearance is expected at all times as students are excellent ambassadors for the school. We ask that all items are clearly labelled with the student's name.

Students in the Sixth Form have a smart dress code which reflects their role as lead learners in the school and prepares them for the world of work. A detailed uniform list is available on our website and in the Student Planner.

Ridgeway School Policies

Attendance

We place a very high value on attendance and expect all students to attend the full school day. There is a clear link between student attendance and attainment – if a student is not in school they will not be learning to reach their full potential.

When it is necessary to withdraw students from education a letter must be sent to the Headteacher. Please note that permission for holidays will not be granted and as such, will be noted as unauthorised absence.

Charging and Remissions Policy

The Board of Governors recognises the value of the contribution that a wide range of additional activities can make towards a student's personal, social and educational development. The Board of Governors reserves the right to make a charge in certain circumstances for activities organised by or on behalf of the school which includes:

- Residential activities
- Individual instrumental tuition
- Activities outside school hours
- Examination Fees

The full policy is available on the school website.

Accessibility and Equality

Ridgeway Academy is totally committed to equal opportunities for all and we strive to ensure that no student is discriminated against or treated less favourably than any other student. The arrangement for the admission of students with disabilities is in line with Hertfordshire Schools Admissions Policy. (See 'Moving on booklet').

The Board of Governors monitor the School's commitment to equality and accessibility and have a Single Equality Policy in place that ensures that the curriculum, facilities, information and procedures comply with statutory accessibility and equality requirements.

Communications

All parents and students are asked to sign the Home School Agreement/Partnership. This document sets out what parents and students can expect from the school and details the responsibilities of both parents and students. The intention of the partnership is to ensure that the basis for supportive relationships between home and school are established.

Complaints

Any parent contacting the school with a complaint can be sure of an efficient and courteous response. The complaints procedure is available on the school website.

Child Protection

At Ridgeway Academy we recognise that we have a duty of care for the welfare and safety of all students. We attempt to create an ethos in which students feel secure, valued, listened to and taken seriously. All staff employed by the school are subject to Enhanced DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checks. Supply staff employed on a daily basis are from agencies that carry out the same checks. Staff are trained by the Local Authority in how to recognise and report child protection issues to our Designated Senior Person (DSP).

We operate within a statutory framework set out by 'Working Together to Safeguard Children (March 2015)'. This requires all schools to follow the procedures for protecting children from abuse, which are established by the Herts Safeguarding Children Board. Our DSP for Child Protection, Mr S Booth, deals with all matters surrounding the safety of our students. We also have two Deputy DSPs, Mrs S Akers and Mrs L Simmonds, who support the DSP and work closely with the School Counsellors. The Child Protection Policy follows the Local Safeguarding Board's guidance and is reviewed annually.

The School Day

The daily timetable is:	
8.30am to 8.50am	Registration/Assembly
8.50am to 9.50am	Period 1
9.50am to 10.50am	Period 2
10.50am to 11.05am	Break
11.05am to 12.05pm	Period 3
12.05pm to 1.05pm	Period 4
1.05pm to 1.55pm	Lunch
1.55pm to 2.55pm	Period 5
3.00pm to 4.00pm	Clubs/Detentions



Ridgeway Academy

Headteacher - **Jed Whelan**

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Alban Academies Trust

A member of the Alban Academies Trust

Please note that the information given in this brochure was correct as at September 2018. It should not be assumed that there have been no subsequent changes before the start, or during, the academic year 2018/2019.