

Little Ridges Nursery Admissions Policy: *2021 Year of Entry*



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On behalf of:	Local Governing Body

Context

Green Ridge Primary Academy is set on the Berryfields Estate, north of Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire and is part of REAch2 Academy Trust. This admissions policy was finalised following public consultation on a Trust-wide approach to admissions. Our aim is to ensure all our academies have simple, consistent admissions arrangements that focus on serving the local community, reflect our vision and values and are as easy as possible for parents/carers of potential pupils to understand. More information about REAch2 is available on our website: www.reach2.org

Green Ridge is a school which is designed to meet and be responsive to the needs of the local community it serves. The academy rightly prides itself on the high expectations it places on the academic achievements and behaviour of all children, whatever their need, as well as a broad, diverse and engaging creative curriculum which will underpin all that it does. Green Ridge strives for the best outcomes for our children and wants to give them every opportunity to succeed, whatever their barriers may be. Green Ridge is an academy where every child is respected and treated as an individual, with no limits placed on their learning – just opportunities to continually improve with a growth mindset approach. The academy does not 'label' children or group them by perceived 'ability'; instead it gives all children equal opportunities to challenge themselves through the range of tasks and activities presented to them – empowering children to take ownership and responsibility for their own learning. For further information, please see the academy website: www.greenridgeacademy.co.uk

The academy is situated on a new housing development and is the second primary school to be built within the area to meet the demand for school places. The academy will initially be two-form entry. However, as demand for places grows this may increase to three-form entry. Planning permission for the school has been granted, and the building designed, with this future expansion in mind.

There is a separate policy statement for admissions to the main school which includes the Reception class (Foundation Stage 2) and Key Stages 1 and 2.

All parents and carers must be made aware that a place in the nursery does not automatically guarantee a place in the school and that they must still apply through the Buckinghamshire Council co-ordinated admissions procedure, within the appropriate timeline, when their child is ready to start in the Reception year intake.

Overview of Little Ridges Nursery

Green Ridge offers Nursery provision, known as 'Little Ridges' to the following ages of children:

- Little Acorns - for children whose *fourth* birthday falls between 1st September 2021 and the 31st August 2022;
- Little Berries – for children who are aged two/three*

**see more details on pg. 3 about the ages children can join in Little Berries.*

As a registered provider, Green Ridge's Nursery provision is legally bound to meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework and Ofsted regulations.

All children and families are welcome into the setting, regardless of their background and we promote equal opportunities and support children with SEND.

Little Ridges runs morning and afternoon classes for children who have already had their third birthday by the start of each school year in September (known as the Little Acorns class). Most children will join the nursery in the September after they turn three and will attend for five sessions each week in either the morning or afternoon (for 15 hours), or for a full day each day (for 30 hours), although there will be the option for additional paid places for parents/carers to top-up their child's hours, depending on availability.

There is an additional morning and afternoon class for two/three year olds (Little Berries) where places are given to those entitled to 2-year-old funding from the term after which they turn two, as well as optional paid places.

The academy coordinates admissions for children joining its nursery and parents/carers are invited to register their interest using the nursery registration form, which can be accessed via the admissions section of the school's website <https://www.greenridgeacademy.co.uk/admissions>

Little Ridges Nursery operates between 7.30am and 5.30pm with funded childcare available at the designated times as specified below for each class. The academy operates its own wrap-around care between 7.30-8.45am and between 3.15-5.30pm (subject to demand) where parents/carers are able to leave their children, with additional costs payable separately to the academy. These places are subject to availability, pre-booking and payment in advance. Costs for these are outlined in Appendix 1.

Little Berries – two/three-year-old provision

There are up to 8 morning and up to 8 afternoon sessions available (assuming that all children are aged two, and not yet three, spaces above this number may become available as the cohort have their third birthdays, and the staff to child ratios change, in line with early years provision). The number of places offered each term may be adjusted to respond to any needs that arise with each cohort).

A morning session is from 8.45-11.45am. Afternoon sessions are from 12.15-3.15pm.

Two-year-old funded places

These are allocated through the year (for autumn, spring or summer term entry) based on the child's date of birth. Funded places begin the term after the child turns two and parents/carers need to pass an eligibility check through the local authority (Buckinghamshire Council) and have a code confirming they are eligible for a place for the 15 hours funded provision for two-year olds. Further information can be found via their website

<https://www.bucksfamilyinfo.org/kb5/buckinghamshire/fsd/family.page?familychannel=2>

Children remain in the Little Berries class until the September of the academic year in which they turn four, when they transfer automatically into the next class, Little Acorns. Parents/carers do not need to apply again when their child moves between Little Berries and Little Acorns and are given the opportunity to request additional/changed hours ahead of any new starters. It is not our policy to automatically move children to Little Acorns based on aptitude or ability, and movement to this class is based on a child's date of birth, to keep them in the correct age cohort, ready for starting school.

For those children who have turned two but are not eligible for the 15 hours free funding for two-year olds, places can still be applied for in Little Berries privately, but note that the places each term are offered initially to those children who are eligible for the funding. Prices for Nursery can be found in Appendix 1 if your child attends with us privately.

Little Acorns – three/four-year-old provision

Little Acorns has one major intake in September, for those children who turn four within the academic year 2021/22. The September intake will be staggered over the first week or so of term (depending on whether they have been attending Little Ridges Nursery the year previously);

- Any spare places will be allocated during the year, if they should become available.
- Places within Little Acorns are reserved for children who are already in the setting as part of our 2/3-year-old provision (Little Berries).

A morning session is from 8.45-11.45am. Afternoon sessions are from 12.15-3.15pm.

The academy will admit no more than 52 children into the Little Acorns each academic year (26 for the morning sessions, and 26 for the afternoon sessions). Please note that places may be reduced if:

- The academy needs to respond to any needs that arise with each cohort; and/or
- Those children eligible for 30 hours' free childcare remain all day, and so take up one place in the morning as well as the afternoon.

All Children:

With part time applicants, parents will be asked for a preference. Places are offered based on availability and a preference cannot be guaranteed. If a preferred session is not available an alternative will be offered.

Three-year-old Universal (15 hours) funding

Children are eligible for 15 hours' free childcare from the term following their third birthday. 15-hour provision is offered as five sessions of three hours (either five mornings or five afternoons).

A daily lunch club operates where children bring their own packed lunches and have these together as a group. For those parents/carers not eligible for 30 hours childcare, these sessions are payable and you can request the option for your child to have lunch at school between 11.45-12.15pm, before or after the morning/afternoon session which your child attends.

For those children who are eligible for the 15 hours' free childcare but not the 30 hours, additional sessions can still be applied for privately, but note that the places each year are offered initially to those children who are eligible for the 30 hours funding. Prices for Nursery can be found in Appendix 1 if your child attends with us privately.

Extended (30 hours) funded places

Parents will need to provide an eligibility code for the 30 hours extended entitlement; the school will not be able to confirm a 30-hour place until the code has been validated and it remains the parent/carers responsibility to renew this code via the website found [here](#), before the start of each term, ie. By 31st August for the Autumn term, by 31st December for the Spring term and by 31st March for the summer term. For those parents/carers eligible for the 30 hours' free childcare, this will mean that your child is attending fulltime between 8.45am and 3.15pm daily and the lunch session is included at no additional charge if they stay all day.

To find out what support with childcare you may be entitled to, please visit www.childcarechoices.gov.uk

Anyone may apply for admission to the Nursery for their child(ren). If there are more applications than places available, the academy will allocate places in the following priority order: (Rules should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes).

Admissions Criteria

Little Ridges Nursery has a maximum admission number of 52 for entry in Little Acorns and a maximum admissions number of 32 for entry into Little Berries. This may be reduced depending on the age of the children (two or three) the needs of the cohort and individual children's needs.

The academy will accordingly admit this number of pupils if there are sufficient applications. Where fewer applications than this are received, the academy will offer places at the nursery to all those who have applied.

When the nursery is oversubscribed (that is, there are more applications than places available), after the admission of pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan that names the school, priority for admission will be given to those children based on the criteria set out below, in the order shown:

1. Looked after children or previously looked after children i.e. children in foster care, care homes or who were before being adopted
2. Children with siblings in the main school (YR and above at the point of admission)
3. Children of school staff fulfilling a skills shortage role
4. In Little Berries - Children eligible for two-year old funding (15 hours)
5. In Little Acorns - Children eligible for the three/four-year-old extended funding (30 hours)
6. If there are more children than places to be allocated in any of the categories, priority will be given to the children by the age of the child in relation to their start date and/or the distance from their usual place of residence.

Definitions relating to the criteria

1. 'Looked after children' are (a) in the care of a local authority or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989). 'Previously looked after children' are children who were previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to adoption, a child arrangements order, or special guardianship order. These definitions are set nationally, by the Department for Education.
2. 'Siblings' are defined as one of two (or more) individuals who have one or more parents in common, or any other child (including an adopted or fostered child) who lives at the same address and for whom the parent also has parental responsibility, or (in the case of a fostered child) delegated authority. The sibling must be at the school at the point of proposed admission. Note – this definition is the one used by the Local Authority in relation to admissions to schools that they maintain - REAch2 schools adopt the same definition to avoid any confusion and keep arrangements as simple as possible for local parents and carers.
3. This option is only available for staff with a permanent contract to work at the school (and not employees in REAch2 regional or central teams); it will be subject to confirmation by the Local Governing Body, on the evidence available, the post does indeed relate to a skills shortage in the area.
4. Two-year old funding: Parents/carers need to pass an eligibility check with the local authority (Buckinghamshire Council) Early Years team who will provide them with an eligibility code. Parents will need to provide this code to be checked by the academy.

5. Three/four-year-old 30 hours (extended) funding: Parents will need to provide an eligibility code for the 30 hours Free Entitlement; the school will not be able to confirm a 30-hour place until the code has been validated.
6. Children will be admitted in relation to their age and start date. For example, in the summer term entry to Little Berries, preference would be given to a three-year-old who would move up to Little Acorns in the autumn term over a two-year-old who could defer to a September start in Little Berries. Where children are of equal criteria, preference would be given to the child living closest to the school.

Tie-breaker

Where the admission number given above is reached part way through one of the above over-subscription criteria, the remaining places available will only be allocated after any applications are considered where there is third party evidence (e.g. from a medical specialist or a social worker), provided at the time of the application, setting out the exceptional medical/social need of the child (or their parent/carer) and why only this school, rather than any other, is able to meet that need; the final decision on such applications will be made by the school's governors.

Admissions timeline

The nursery has the following deadlines for applications for this academic year:

Deadline	For admission in:
Friday, 23 rd April 2021	Autumn Term 2021 (Please note this is our main intake for Little Ridges and we cannot guarantee any further availability in subsequent school terms)
Friday, 15 th October 2021	Spring Term 2022
Friday, 11 th February 2022	Summer Term 2022

Please note that additional places may be offered to children as requested to increase occupancy of the nursery, outside of the admissions timeline (subject to space).

Late applications

All applications received by the academy after the deadline will be considered to be late applications. These will be considered after those received on time. If all available places are allocated to children whose applications were received on time, parents or carers who have made a late application may request that their child is placed on the school's register of interest list to be considered after the following deadline.

Appeals

If you have not been allocated a place for your child in one of the nursery classes, there are no grounds for appeal.

Continuing Interest List

- A register of continuing interest will be kept by the academy to include names, addresses, D.O.B., preferred sessions of children and parents/carers personal and contact details who are interested in attending the nursery. Please contact the academy if you wish to have your details removed from this list or if your circumstances/preferences change.
- The register of continuing interest **will not** operate on a "first come, first served" basis. The length of time children are on the continuing interest list in no way influences the decisions about places. Places are allocated based on the admissions criteria given.
- Children under 2 at the next point of entry cannot be added to the register of interest.
- All applications will be re-ranked each term for allocating any spaces available.
- Parents will be notified by the school office via email or letter when a place becomes available.
- Parents can arrange to visit the Nursery, prior to submitting a completed application by emailing nursery@greenridgeacademy.co.uk (subject to COVID restrictions in place at that time).

Decisions on places at Little Ridges Nursery

Decisions will be made by Admissions in the school office, through discussion with the Head of Learning for Early Years and the Headteacher if required. Decisions to offer a place will be based on the criteria and procedures laid out in this admission policy. Being offered a place does not guarantee first preference with regards to session options.

- Decisions will be final and there is no right of appeal.
- The offer of a nursery place DOES NOT in any way mean automatic entitlement to entry to the main school. Reception year school applications are made through online admissions to Buckinghamshire Local Authority.
- Parents who accept a place will be expected to commit to taking up the place for the rest of the academic year and to ensure good attendance, please see *Attendance and Loss of Nursery Place*.

Free Entitlement Funding

- A signed parent/provider agreement must be in place for each child who attends the Nursery. This is a contract for the minimum of one term and the maximum of a year. A new parent/provider agreement will only need to be completed at the start of a new term if any information, including the number of free entitlement hours being accessed, changes.
- Parent/Carers will need to give notice to leave half-termly. If they wish to leave sooner they are able, but parents/carers will not be eligible to claim funding with another provider for the remainder of that half-term unless the child meets exceptional criteria.
- Full details of any additional providers must be completed by the parent/provider agreement by the parent, if they are splitting their free entitlement between more than one setting.
- Free entitlement funding is not intended to cover the cost of consumables. Parents/carers will be invoiced for a nominal fee each term in order to cover the cost of consumables, depending on the number of hours they attend.
- Parents/carers may use a maximum of two sites in a single day to access the free entitlement.

- If parents/carers decide to split the Universal and Extended free entitlement between two providers then parents must inform the providers which setting they are claiming the universal hours from and which ones is claiming the extended hours.
- There will be a grace period to enable parents to retain their childcare place for a short period if they have become ineligible for the extended entitlement. A child who becomes ineligible in the first half of the term will retain their childcare until the end of that term. A child who becomes ineligible in the latter half of the term MUST renew their eligibility by the 31st of the month of the end of that term.
- If a child became ineligible half-way through the summer term, they would retain their place until the end of the term. However, if they became ineligible in the latter half of the summer term, they would not retain their place from the start of the following term in September unless the code was renewed before 31st August.
- At the end of the grace period, parents/carers have the option to reduce sessions or will become liable for fees.

Payments and fees

- Please note that sessions are invoiced half-termly in advance, and all payments that are due are payable in advance of attending those sessions. If payment has not been made, parents/carers have the option to reduce sessions so that they may be offered to another family on our waiting list. If a parent/carer is having difficulty in meeting the payment, they must make an appointment to discuss options with the School Business Manager; if they do not engage with this, they may ultimately be asked not to attend booked sessions until their account is settled. Refunds are not available if your child is unable to attend due to illness or any other reason.

Transition

For children starting in September:

- Children will be offered an opportunity to attend a stay and play session with their parents before taking up their place.
- Home visits or a 1:1 discussion will be arranged for children starting in September. If home visits are arranged then two members of the school staff will attend the home visits. While these visits are being made the nursery may need to be closed. If a 1:1 discussion takes place instead of home visits then these will usually take place with the teacher/ room leader or lead learner and will either be in person or via telephone.

Attendance and Loss of Nursery place

If attendance and punctuality is poor or erratic the academy staff will talk to parents/carers and remind them that for the child to benefit fully from nursery education, attendance needs to be regular and punctual. Refunds are not available for unattended sessions, no 'holiday periods' can be booked during term time and funded hours registered with Little Ridges on the parent/provider agreement cannot be transferred to another setting if not used. This conversation will be recorded and dated in the child's pupil file.

If a child is absent for a period of three weeks without any contact from the parents and the school has been unable to make contact within this time, the child may lose their place and it may be offered to someone else. This will be decided by the Headteacher, and a letter explaining the situation will be sent to the parents.

Transfer from Little Acorns to Reception

- All parents and carers must be made aware that a place in the nursery does not guarantee a place in the school and that they must still go through the Buckinghamshire Council co-ordinated admissions procedure.
- The Nursery staff will liaise closely with colleagues in Reception classes to plan for a smooth transition to their chosen or allocated school. Nursery staff will send on reports and other agreed records to the school admitting the pupil as appropriate.
- Children moving into the school Reception class will visit in small transition groups during the end of the summer term.
- Children attending other schools will have all records passed onto the school and staff at the new school will be offered opportunities to visit children in the nursery.

Admissions Policy Review

- Please note that the Nursery admissions policy is subject to regular review.

Appendix 1: Childcare cost for Little Ridges 1st September 2021-31st August 2022

Breakfast Club

Time	Cost	What's included?
7.30-8.45am	£6.50 per session	All children arriving before 8.20am are offered a healthy, nutritious breakfast. We regret that breakfast will not be available after this time. The children are then taken to their classroom.

Lunch Club

Time	Cost	What's included?
11.45am-12.15pm	£2.50 per session	Children are supervised with their lunch and have the opportunity for free-play. Excludes meal; parents/carers to provide packed lunch.

After-School Club (charges per session)

Time	Cost	What's included?
3.15-4.30pm	£8.00	Children are offered a range of activities and can choose to participate or engage in their own preferred activity.
3.15-5.30pm	£14.00	A healthy light bite is provided at 4.00pm such as beans on toast, crumpets, pizza muffins or an assortment of sandwiches.

Sessional charges – Little Berries (2/3-year-olds)

Time	Cost	What's included?
8.45-11.45am	£21.00 per session	Children receive a fruit snack and drink.
12.15-3.15pm	£21.00 per session	Children receive a fruit snack and drink.

Sessional charges – Little Acorns (3/4-year-olds)

Time	Cost	What's included?
8.45-11.45am	£18.00 per session	Children receive a fruit snack and drink.
12.15-3.15pm	£18.00 per session	Children receive a fruit snack and drink.

N.B – Nappies, nappy cream and wipes are not included within sessional charges and parents/carers are requested to provide these for their children.

Appendix 2: Late Fees and Collection

Principles

This framework is for protection of children who have been left at the Nursery over the agreed collection time or once the nursery has closed. The nursery has a duty of care to the children and parents to ensure that collection of very young children is made at the agreed time or within normal nursery opening hours. Late collection causes additional overhead costs for the nursery and potentially unnecessary distress to a child. Children remaining in our care after the agreed collection time or after normal opening hours must be supervised by a minimum of two members of staff, one of whom must be qualified. We appreciate that sometimes there may be circumstances beyond parent / carer control affecting the prompt collection of your child. If you know you are going to be late collecting the child in our care, please call at the earliest opportunity and discuss with the staff the arrangements for the collection. Please note that a late stay fee will still be chargeable, unless agreed otherwise, for example in exceptional circumstances.

Procedure

All parents/carers will be given a ten-minute grace period on late collection of their child. If you are late collecting your child, they will be cared for where possible, by their key person and a senior member of staff. Your child will be inside the Nursery and reassured by the staff members. Any specific needs will be addressed.

If your child(ren) remains uncollected 10 minutes over the set time:

Senior staff will be made aware of the situation. No late fee is charged unless this becomes a regular occurrence. If your child(ren) remains uncollected 10 minutes over the set time: The parents or carers will be contacted; late stay fees will be charged at £10.

If your child(ren) remains uncollected 15-20 minutes over the set time:

Staff will contact the first emergency contact on your child's contact details. Please note this will not happen if staff have been successful in contacting the parent/carer due to collect the child; late stay fees will still be charged at £20.

If your child(ren) remains uncollected 20-25 minutes over the set time:

Staff will call the second emergency contact on your child's contact details. Please note this will only happen if staff were unable to contact the first emergency contact and the parent/carer has not contacted the Nursery; late stay fees will be charged at £30.

If your child(ren) remains uncollected 25 minutes over the set time:

A senior member of staff will contact the local authority's Duty Assessment Team for advice on their next course of action. This will only happen if none of the child's emergency numbers have made contact with the nursery. Please note that late stay fees will be collected and charged at a level relative to the circumstances and lateness.

Escalation

Ofsted will be notified in the event of collections after 25 minutes where no notification was given. Late fees will be added to your child's account and collected with the next fee invoice.

N.B – All late charges are at the discretion of the Nursery and School and are per child.