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**11.3 Statement on our Pedagogy**

**Pedagogy (definition):** *the strategies, approaches, research and techniques that influence how we teach and support children to learn*

We have four key elements to how we care for and educate children:

* Exploration
* Discovery
* Independence
* Community

At Ridgemount Cottage nursery, we value play and autonomy and encourage independence, freedom of movement, courtesy and respect. We believe working in the garden to be paramount to the child’s development and well-being.

We also consider the community to be very important. We are located in a rural area, and we know many of the families very well – some children attending now have parents who also attended – and we are also a growing community with new housing and new children and families to be made to feel welcome.

We enjoy project work which gives our days in nursery a series of exciting new things to find out about and discover. All ages share in the one project, and families are encouraged to share in them too. Our projects usually last a full term and are likely to include trips out, dance, music, expressive arts and design, literacy and language, numeracy, knowledge of the world and much more. Across the duration of the project, the rooms offer a range of linked resources, and both children and staff make new discoveries each day.

We especially value and encourage independence.

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

Our children are encouraged to participate in dressing themselves, washing themselves, tidying away, cleaning shoes, arranging flowers, preparing food and many other tasks, and this brings them pleasure, improves self-esteem, and equips them not just for school but for life.

Our plans for beyond 2021 include offering more opportunities for independent learning, (more) gardening, as well as baking, woodwork, dance or yoga, STEM and maths excellence in particular. We aim to extend our outdoor provision, with an expectation going forward that every child and staff member will arrive on site “outdoors ready” (wellies, rainwear etc.)

1st December 2021

Reviewed by Amanda Kemp

To be reviewed 1st December 2022