

# Candidate Information Pack



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# Welcome

I am delighted to welcome you to learn more about Ridgeway Academy.

Our school has a strong sense of community. We are a caring, happy school, with an energetic and talented staff committed to the achievement of our young people. We are proud that our students describe us as 'a school with a big heart'.

At Ridgeway we aspire to be an outstanding school in every regard. Our team of teaching and support staff are passionate about driving real change and progress and support our aim that 'Everyone can achieve'.

Everyone has a part to play at Ridgeway Academy and everyone is listened to. The very highest standards of conduct, respect, effort and personal attainment are our goal for all members of our school.



In our recent Ofsted inspection we are pleased that Inspectors recognise the journey we are on in improving Ridgeway Academy.

Whilst we are disappointed with the 'Requires Improvement' rating; we are confident that we are on the right path to bringing positive and rapid change.

We are clear on key focus areas in order to achieve a 'Good' grading at our next inspection and these are already key priorities in our School Improvement Plan.

We are delighted with the Good grading for Personal Development and this reflects the excellent work and progress already achieved in this area.

In new team members, we look for individuals who will share our drive and dedication to make a real difference and who are committed to supporting the achievement of young people. Roles at Ridgeway are extremely rewarding and each member of our team makes a powerful contribution to our success.

If you would like to talk to us about any of our roles or arrange a visit we would welcome the opportunity to speak with you and show you around. Please contact us [admin@ridgeway.aetrust.uk](mailto:admin@ridgeway.aetrust.uk) to make arrangements.

Sarah Mitcherson  
Headteacher

# School Snapshot



## Size:

We are an 11-18 mixed comprehensive school and Sixth Form with over 900 pupils.

## Team:

Our leadership structure includes a Headteacher, x 2 Deputy Headteachers, x8 Assistant and Associate Assistant Headteachers and School Operations Manager. In total we have over 50 teaching and over 40 school support roles.

## Site:

We have an impressive campus with two school halls, sports complex, plenty of rooms to accommodate the wide range of subjects and significant amounts of outdoor space between the buildings. In 2018 a £1m capital refurbishment was completed, transforming the site resulting in a wonderful learning campus.

## Our staff say:

“The best thing about Ridgeway is seeing and experiencing the incredible persistence and diligence of our staff, and genuine care for every student.”

## Our parents say:

“All the effort and care really is appreciated, we’re so glad to be part of the Ridgeway Family.”

## Our students say:

“At Ridgeway, every lesson makes me feel like I want to learn more.”

## Ofsted say:

Requires Improvement 2023

“Pupils experience a supportive environment, with trusted adults who care about their welfare. This helps pupils to feel happy and safe.”

“Leaders have identified the important knowledge and skills that pupils need to learn in each subject. Teachers have secure subject knowledge. They understand the curriculum they teach, as they participated in its development.”

“Leaders are ambitious for pupils with SEND, who have their needs accurately identified.”



# Working at Ridgeway Academy

At Ridgeway our belief is that 'Everybody can Achieve and we recognise and value everyone as an individual.

Our school values of RELATIONSHIPS, RESPECT and RESPONSIBILITY encourage positive attitudes and behaviours and it is important to us that all staff share and promote these in all that they do.

We encourage a 'can-do' culture. We provide a secure, safe environment in which all our young people feel valued, where they can develop the skills, attributes and confidence which will serve them well throughout their life.

We work hard at Ridgeway Academy and our expectation is that everyone endeavours to do their best in all that they do.

Staff are empowered to hold autonomy over their own professional development and encouraged to participate in a wide variety of training and sharing of good practice. Teaching staff are encouraged to train as subject specific examiners and share their knowledge within subject teams and across the Trust.

## Teaching and teaching support

We are committed to offering our students the best educational experience possible, taught by highly skilled and specialist staff. We encourage all teaching staff to become reflective practitioners who strive to continually improve their own subject knowledge and pedagogy, as well as embracing ideas from educational research.

Our teaching and learning programme focuses on holding high expectations of all students and staff and ensuring that every lesson counts; every student can achieve; every opportunity is available to our young people.

Successful learning thrives when students feel safe, confident, respected and valued. We take the welfare of each student seriously because we recognise that social and emotional well-being are crucial to promote outstanding learning and achievement.

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 Development which includes career guidance, personal, social and health education.

We will develop every student's capacity to learn so that they become increasingly independent as they progress through the school.

The strength of positive relationships between students and staff allows everyone to achieve in their learning.

We are committed to working with parents/carers in partnership so that all our students make maximum progress in their learning. A key part of this partnership is providing parents/carers with accurate and regular feedback about their child's progress which is achieved through Progress Reports and Parents' Evenings.

### Support Roles at Ridgeway

Support roles outside of the classroom play a vital and integral role within our school and school community. There are various departments within Ridgeway who support the daily operations of the school. We have teams within Finance, HR, Site Management & Maintenance and Technicians who support within specific departments. Our additional administrative roles support areas such as school communications, the smooth running of trips, and student attendance and wellbeing. Each member of our Ridgeway team is highly valued and makes a difference to our school.



# Ambition Education Trust

**At Ridgeway we are pleased to be one of ten schools that form the Ambition Education Trust, a close community of five primary and five secondary schools within Hertfordshire.**

Therefore when you join our school you are also becoming part of our wider organisation.

The Trust's mission is to create a learning community which provides **educational excellence for all**.

We bring that to life by working collaboratively as a group of schools to develop best practice and continuously improve what we do.

In being part of the Trust, our colleague and support networks reach beyond our school, enabling professionals from all areas to share ideas and work together to raise standards.

With Trust schools located in close proximity, we benefit from being able to work together in person and can shape great opportunities for development and progression both within our school and across the wider Trust, providing truly rewarding internal careers.

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## Our vision at Ambition is to:

Ensure that every young person has the best possible start in life; aspiring to become successful, confident and responsible individuals

Provide safe, stimulating and aspirational environments to enable all young people to flourish and realise their full potential

Ensure that all families are confident that every young person is receiving a high-quality fully inclusive education

Grow a supportive and sustainable Trust which serves the diversity of our local communities

Be an employer of choice; where all are valued and thrive in the richness of opportunities available and are proud to be a member of our Trust

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# Careers & Professional Development

**We are passionate about providing rewarding careers and opportunities for personal development.**

Development for our teaching and school support staff is linked to our school improvement priorities and individuals' personal needs and aspirations.

Development initiatives are wide ranging and include professional networking, coaching and mentoring, stand in and secondment opportunities, training courses and formal qualifications.

Some of our regular cross school activities include teaching and learning leads forums, middle leader events and our Great Practice Forum's for those who want to refine their teaching practice, share successful tried and tested ideas, or new initiatives that are being trialled and developed.

Each year we hold an annual Trust conference which brings together all colleagues from our ten schools in a day of professional development. As well as the opportunity to partake in a wide selection of workshops and listen to engaging keynote speakers, it provides a fantastic opportunity to share good practice, build networks and relationships, and learn from each other.

***"We know that every setting has valuable skills and knowledge that could improve the experience of all children and young people in our Trust schools"***

## **Alban Teaching School Hub and Alban Federation**

We are proud that within the Trust, we are home to the Alban Teaching School Hub, one of 87 designated school-led centres of excellence for teacher development, and the Alban Federation, an accredited Initial Teacher Training provider.

The work of the Teaching School Hub is focused on the golden thread of teacher development from Initial Teacher Training to school leadership.

The Hub offers established Continuous Professional Development delivery underpinned by evidence-based research and National Professional Qualifications in school leadership and specialist areas of teaching practice.



# Here's what some of our colleague's across the Trust have to say



*The support, encouragement and opportunities offered have led to my progression from NQT to Key stage 3 Coordinator of English in my RQT year, followed by the roles of Second in English, Head of English and then on to my current role of Assistant Headteacher. Part of the reason I have stayed at the school for as long as I have is the opportunities offered. In addition to career progression, I have also been offered a range of CPD opportunities to develop in areas beyond my specific role.”*



*“Working in a Trust has given me the opportunity to take on a dual role in school business management across Secondary and Primary, expanding my skillset and giving me additional experience to grow and develop. This career path would not have been open to me in a standalone school and will provide greater career progression in future.”*



*“Through the trust’s unwavering support, I started my journey as an Early Careers Teacher, armed with tools and time to reflect on my pedagogy and practice. In this nurturing environment, I have thrived, gaining confidence to pursue my aspirations. Supportive conversations fuelled my professional growth, and opportunities to explore my interests emerged.’*



*“Working within the Trust has been a fantastic experience for me that has led to many CPD opportunities and career progression and diversification. I began working at my current school as a humanities coordinator and progressed to curriculum coordinator. More recently, I undertook the role of Acting Assistant Headteacher. I have also enjoyed an exciting and rewarding secondment position with the Alban Federation School Based Initial Teacher Training, leading the Primary Teacher Training.”*



*“What I enjoy most about my role working in school support is the shared desire of our teams to continuously improve what we do. We don’t stand still and are always working to make improvements to our processes and practices which enables me to continuously develop professionally.”*



*“I have always found the leadership team hugely supportive of my career progression. I joined as a Teaching Assistant and later became PA to the Leadership team. I now hold a counselling role within the school after qualifying as a student counsellor. My managers were supportive of time off for study and allowed me to volunteer whilst I completed my client hours, actively following and encouraging my progress. I believe the Trust really values their staff- encouraging them to increase their skill sets and helping staff to identify further career opportunities.”*

# Your Benefits

We offer some great employee benefits throughout the Trust to support you in a variety of ways:



## Salary

Salaries are aligned to national pay rates through the school teachers pay scales or National Joint Council for support staff



## Employee Assistance Programme

Our programme gives access to proactive wellbeing tools to boost wellness, improve wellbeing and challenge you to achieve your wellness goals



## Pension schemes

We offer generous pension schemes through TPS and LGPS which include Death in Service benefits



## Employee helpline

A confidential employee helpline provides you with 24/7, 365 days a year access to advisors and counsellors on a wide range of issues, including structured counselling services



## Holiday entitlement

Support staff holiday entitlements increase with length of service



## Eyecare vouchers

If you use visual display unit equipment we provide a voucher for a free eye examination and discount on selected glasses



### Retail offers and discounts

Helping employees reduce everyday spending and supporting financial wellbeing is important to us. You can save with retailers, restaurants and supermarkets



### Free onsite parking

Staff parking is available on site



### Employee referral bonus

We are always looking for great people to join our teams, and we would love for you to help us find them

## At Ridgeway we also offer :

- **Children of staff admission rule** –our admissions policy provides for a children of staff rule
- **Tea and coffee** – free tea, coffee and refreshments are available in the staff room all day
- **Books for busy staff** - borrow books for you or your family from the library free of charge
- **Wellbeing committee**– we are passionate about the wellbeing of our team and regularly meet to discuss what we do
- **Cycle to work scheme** - Our cycle to work scheme enables employees to save on the cost of a new bike and accessories



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