# CLAYTONS
# PRIMARY SCHOOL

## A policy statement for

# Early Years Foundation Stage

Updated Spring 2026

# Intent

**Introduction**

This policy outlines the provision Claytons Primary school offers to all its pupils aged three to five years old. Children within this age are taught in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The EYFS has its own framework and is therefore treated as a separate key stage. The Nursery caters for three to four-year olds whilst Reception is for our four to five-year olds.
The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is mandatory for all schools and all Early Years providers.

The EYFS is important as it sets the standards that all early years' providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. The EYFS seeks to provide:

- Quality and Consistency in all early years' settings, so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind.
- A secure foundation through learning and development opportunities which are planned around the needs and interests of each child and are assessed and reviewed regularly.
- Partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers.
- Equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included.

The EYFS specifies requirements for learning and development and for safeguarding children and promoting their welfare. The Learning and development requirements cover:

- The areas of learning and development which must shape activities and experience for children in all early years' settings.
- The early learning goals that providers must help children work towards
- Assessment arrangements for measuring progress
- The safeguarding and welfare requirements cover the steps that providers must take to keep their children safe and promote their welfare.

The EYFS has four overarching principles which shape practice in the early years' settings. These are:

- A unique child who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- Positive relationships through which children learn to be strong and independent.
- Enabling environments - Children learn well in environments in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/ or carers.
- Learning and Development - Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.

The EYFS covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities.

**Aim**

At Claytons we aim to provide the highest quality care and education for all our children thereby giving them a strong foundation for their future learning. We create a safe and happy environment with motivating and enjoyable learning experiences that enable children to become confident and independent. *"Pupils enjoy learning at Claytons Primary School. They say the teachers 'are the best', and that staff 'look after us really well" Ofsted 2017.* We value the individual child and work alongside parents and others to meet their needs and help every child to reach their full potential.

# Implementation

**Curriculum**

Our curriculum enables the child to learn and develop skills, attitudes and understanding in these areas of learning:
The Prime areas being: Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED); Communication and Language (C&L); Physical Development (PD).
The Specific areas are: Mathematics; Literacy; Understanding the World; Expressive Arts and Design.

**Characteristics of Effective Learning**

The characteristics of effective learning describe factors which play a central role in a child's learning and in becoming an effective learner. They are vital elements of the EYFS as well as providing support for the transition process to Year 1. The characteristics of learning run through and underpin all seven areas of learning and development, representing processes rather than outcomes. The characteristics are divided into three parts:

- Playing and exploring- Finding out and exploring; playing with what they know and being willing to 'have a go'.
- Active Learning – Being involved and concentrating; keep trying and enjoying and achieving what they set out to do.
- Creating and thinking critically – Having their own ideas; making links and choosing ways to do things.

Throughout the EYFS we plan activities to give children learning experiences and opportunities to work towards the Early Learning Goals (end of Reception) and prepare them for the National Curriculum. Teaching and learning will take place within the classroom and outside areas. Within these areas children will participate in a variety of activities, both with an adult and independently. We use schemes for the teaching of early reading and maths. For teaching phonics and reading we follow the validated Systematic Synthetic Phonics (SSP) scheme, Little Wandle Revised Letters and Sounds. In Nursery, we focus on Phase 1 and in Reception the children will start on Phase 2 and continue up to and including Phase 4. For mathematics we follow the White Rose scheme of learning.

For writing we follow the 'I'm a clever writer' scheme, which focuses on developing key skills through a weekly focus book.

We believe that play, both indoors and outdoors, are the fundamental ways in which young children learn. Play can be enjoyed and challenging. When playing, children behave in different ways.

Sometimes, their play can be boisterous, sometimes they will describe and discuss what they are doing, and sometimes they will be quiet and reflective as they play. Through play, children will be developing skills across all the prime and specific areas of learning, working towards achieving the Early Learning Goals.

In a secure environment with effective adult support, children will be able to:

- Explore, develop and represent learning experiences that help them make sense of the world.
- Practice and build up concepts, ideas and skills.
- Learn how to control impulses and understand the need for rules.
- Be alone, be alongside others or co-operate as they talk to rehearse their feelings.
- Take risks and make mistakes.
- Think creatively and imaginatively.
- Communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems.
- Express fears to relieve anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

Adults in the setting will support play by:

- Planning and resourcing a stimulating environment.
- Supporting children's learning through planned play.
- Extending and supporting children's spontaneous play.
- Extending and developing children's language and communication in their play.
- Listening to all forms of children's communication and their ideas and taking these into account when developing play and planning.
- Narrating children's play.
- Asking questions about children's play.

**Planning**

We use each child's individual interests to help us plan. We use our observations and assessments to inform our planning for each week. This then helps guide planning for the future.
Reception class use a mixture of adult led planning and continuous provision according to the children's interests to help extend learning. Children have the opportunity to work in each of the areas of learning within the classroom and outdoors. Whole class, group and individual activities are used to develop skills in all areas of the curriculum as appropriate.

**Induction/Settling in**

Nursery- Prior to their start date, parents/carers will be invited to attend a shorter session, where nursery procedures & routines are discussed. They will be introduced to all staff who will be responsible for the care of their child; they will also be allocated their key person. Parents/carers will be asked a series of questions about their child, this will enable the staff to be aware of the child's individual needs & how the child may need supporting during their first few weeks. The nursery staff work in partnership with parents/carers to ensure that the child settles into Nursery as smoothly as possible.
Early in the Autumn term there is a 'meet the teacher' evening, that gives parents/carers the opportunity to have an informal discussion with the Nursery staff.

Reception – In July the children, parents/carers are invited to attend an induction morning. The children will spend some time in their new class with their new teacher, whilst the parents/carers attend a talk given by the Head Teacher.
By the end of the school term, all children will receive an information pack that includes photos of the staff, classroom and areas of the school. This help the children and parents/carers become familiar with their setting and is a starting point for discussions at home.
In September all children start on the same day and attend full time unless there are exceptional circumstances. In the first two days of the school term the Early Years teachers will arrange a time to meet with parents and their child individually to introduce themselves and the staff and give the parents and child a chance to see the classroom.
In the autumn term, the whole school have a 'meet the teacher' evening. The Reception teachers deliver a talk about reading and phonics. It also gives the parents/carers the opportunity to have an informal discussion with their class teacher.

**Parental Involvement**

We value the involvement of parents in school. Parental involvement with school begins even before children start Reception with an opportunity to tour the school with the Head Teacher. The children and parents are then invited to a transition day in July and a talk for the parents is organised. There is a Parent meeting in September to meet the teacher and to introduce the Phonics and Reading scheme.
Parent consultation meetings are held in the spring and summer terms at which parents are invited to discuss their child's progress. A report is sent out at the end of the summer term and parents are invited into school to discuss this report if they wish. It is important to stress that if parents are concerned in any way about their child they should telephone or call into the school to make an appointment to discuss their concerns with the class teacher. Throughout the year, parents and carers are invited in for various sessions such as school plays, tea parties and child-led open evenings. Parents are kept informed of all happenings in the school through Tapestry (our online Learning Journey). The Early Years teachers send out a weekly letter informing parents what the children have been doing in the week as well as the plans for the next week. Weekly newsletters from the Head Teacher are also sent out.
In addition to this we have found that using Tapestry has added to parent/practitioner partnership as we are both able to get a clearer view of each child's experiences at school and at home, as parents receive regular pictures and videos of their children's activities at school, and parents can upload pictures and comments from their device that we can see at school.

**Behaviour**
We use the STAR approach to recording any behaviour issues that may arise. Any behaviour issues are discussed with the parents, and a joint strategy agreed for home and school/

# Impact

**Assessment**

In the first six weeks of children joining Reception each child will be taking part in the Reception Government Baseline. All children joining Reception will complete the same assessment with their class teacher, using a tablet and some physical resources.
Ongoing assessment through the year is carried out through observations, and through adult led activities. We observe the children working independently both indoors and outdoors, and parents are able to have some of these photographs, videos and notes on their child's learning straight to their chosen device.
In Nursery each child's learning and observations are on Tapestry, which is available for parents to access at all times.

In Reception each child has examples of their learning and observations on Tapestry, and they also have a paper Learning Journey which contains examples of their achievements and work throughout the year. Information gained through recording and assessment will be shared with parents, other school staff and outside agencies as appropriate.
We use Insight to input the children's data each term against the relevant age band using the terms 'beginning' 'developing 'secure' or 'exceeding'.
At the end of Nursery, the children will be assessed against the relevant age/stage band. They will be assessed using an 'beginning', 'developing', 'secure' or 'exceeding' band.
At the end of Reception teachers are required to complete an Early Years Pupil Profile which assesses children according to a 'typical' level of development. Each child's level of development is recorded against the 17 Early Learning Goals as 'emerging 'or 'expected'. For a child in Reception a 'Good level of Development (GLD) is if they achieve the expected level in all of the Prime Areas plus Literacy and Mathematics from the Specific areas.

*"The large majority of children have achieved a good level of development in the early years." Ofsted, July 2017*

**Monitoring and Review**

It is the responsibility of the EYFS staff to follow this policy. The Senior Leadership Team will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring system. It is the role of the Early Years leader to support colleagues and inform them of current developments and changes to practice. The Early Years Leader meets regularly with the Early Years governor to review progress and to report back to the Governing body.

**Roles of trips, residential visits, speakers and out of school learning**

The children in the Early Years Foundation Stage get the opportunity to hear from external visitors to the school, and Reception children do regular walks into the village to go the local library. Reception children also have a summer trip.

**Inclusion/Equal Opportunities (SEND and Gifted and Talented)**

We value all our children as individuals at Claytons irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender. We plan a curriculum that meets the needs of the individual child and supports them at their own pace so that most of our children achieve and even exceed the Early Learning Goals. We strongly believe that early identification of children with additional needs is crucial in enabling us to give the child the support that they need. To enable this, we work closely with parents and outside agencies.