



Claremont Primary School

A hub of educational excellence and innovation,
supporting and valuing everyone

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

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Responsible governor	Matt Lowe Chair of T&L
Responsible governor team	T&L
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At Claremont we believe and recognise that the diversity of our community is one of our greatest strengths and assets. We are committed to ensuring that our pupils are treated fairly, and we have carefully considered and analysed the impact within this policy to promote equality of opportunity for all and we will use our position of influence as a school to work with all stakeholders to eliminate discriminatory barriers and ensure that our pupils have a sense of shared, common belonging and understanding.

Ethos

Our Early Years Team will support and extend a child's intellectual, social and physical development along with their emotional wellbeing. At Claremont our aim is to foster a love of lifelong learning in the precious first year of their school life. We believe that all children can be creative, explore, take risks and follow their own interests and develop a love of imaginative play. Our curriculum is embedded across all areas of learning; these areas have an important and equal weighting, in which we explore through our rich and extensive school grounds (including our school woods, pond and garden). Play and Learning are a crucial part of learning and meeting every child's individual needs.

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.”

“Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage”
Department for Education, 2021

Context for Early Year Reforms

In the academic year 2020/21 Claremont was granted participation as an early adopter of the new Early Years Foundation Stage Reforms. Around 2,900 schools were involved across England. In September 2021, the EY Reforms became statutory.

The 17 Early Learning Goals (ELG) are clearer and more specific. As before, these are not the curriculum, but support how the children are assessed at the end of the year.

There is a clear focus on some of the current ELGs with some new additions. There is an additional welfare section that promotes good oral hygiene.

The reforms allow for practitioners to stretch the more able without limitation as they deliver and plan for the characteristics of effective teaching and learning and build knowledge of the child across the whole year:

Aims:

- to ensure that all children are safe and healthy, make positive contributions, enjoy and achieve.
- to support and promote children's holistic growth and development, with each child realizing their full potential.

- to support the well-being of the child is paramount.
- to value partnerships with parents. The child-family bond is of primary importance, and parents/carers have primary responsibility for the child.
- to ensure that all children are understood and supported in terms of protected characteristics including family group, culture and wider community. Diversity is celebrated.
- to build and sustain relationships based on trust and respect which we consider to be central to the child's emotional and physical health and learning.
- to provide opportunities for all children to be active, capable learners, through exploration, play, talk and interacting with environment and with others.
- to reflect relentlessly on our practice and continue to evolve our knowledge and understanding of current pedagogy through evidence-based research.

Staffing and Organisation

At Claremont Primary School, there are two Reception classes that each have their own classroom and dedicated shared outdoor area. There is a shared cloakroom and separate toilets for boys and girls. We aim to have 1 teacher, 1 teaching partner (TP) at all times in each class. Other teaching support assistants (TSAs) may be deployed in Reception based on the needs of the children.

Staff are organised to support the children in a balance of adult-led and child-initiated experiences throughout the day. All staff are trained to respond to unplanned events that the children are interested in in-line with the Early Years ethos.

Transition from Pre-school to Reception

The Claremont team work closely with our feeder settings to ensure that the children make a smooth transition to school.

In the Summer term each child is offered a 'taster session' at Claremont School. School staff make additional visits to nurseries/ pre-school settings.

New parents have a planned opportunity to visit the school during the Summer term before their child's September start to meet staff and receive key information.

Every parent/ carer is offered a scheduled visit the school with their child (in September) to give them the opportunity to discuss with the class teacher any concerns or ask questions in a private and non-pressured environment. This replaces the home visit approach.

At Claremont, we operate a gradual school start as we believe this supports a successful transition both for the child's wellbeing and learning.

Parents are encouraged to talk to Claremont staff before making decisions around whether their child might be part time.

Planning

The EYFS curriculum underpins all future learning by supporting, fostering, promoting and developing children's learning through seven areas, three 'prime' areas and four 'specific' areas.

Prime

Personal, social and emotional development
Communication and Language Development
Physical development

Specific

Literacy
Mathematics
Understanding the world
Expressive Arts and Design

At Claremont all staff plan carefully to ensure a cross curricular approach, teaching all seven areas of learning through an overarching theme or 'topic' that is then led by the interests of the children in the class.

At the end of each full term there is a whole school Exhibition to showcase what the children have been learning about over the term; this is open to parents and carers.

All members of our team encourage the children to play an active role in shaping their learning experiences. Adults engage in discussions with the children about what they are interested in, which skills they would like to develop further and which resources they need to support their learning.

Learning Environment

At Claremont we strive to provide an attractive, challenging learning environment that offers high quality opportunities for the children to learn through play, both indoors and outdoors.

Resources are labelled and organised into learning zones, enabling the children to access them with a high level of independence. All staff regularly evaluate the effectiveness of the learning zones and make adaptations as necessary.

There is a range of "continuous provision" available in the classroom, that is designed to offer open-ended, practical learning opportunities that allow the children to explore, investigate and learn through first-hand experiences. The children are supported to think creatively and imaginatively and explore how resources can be adapted. The provision is enhanced with additional resources, based on the previous week's observations.

The children are supported to develop problem-solving skills through open-ended tasks and opportunities to share their thinking with others. The number of adult-led activities that the children do increases throughout the year, as their concentration and focus develops.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

We consider the emphasis on how children learn has huge potential to transform Early Years practice and empower children as confident, creative lifelong learners. At Claremont the children are encouraged to follow their interests, make independent choices about their

learning and are supported to develop their thinking skills through skillful, adult interactions.

The characteristics are interconnected but each has distinct features. The characteristics are:

Playing and exploring (Perseverance) – children investigate and experience things and are willing to have a go.

Active learning (Motivation) – children concentrate and keep on trying when they encounter difficulties and enjoy their achievements.

Creating and thinking critically (Resilience) – children have and develop their own ideas, are able to make links between ideas and develop a range of strategies for doing things.

Observation and Assessment

There are seven areas of learning and development that are important and inter-connected.

Three areas are particularly important for building a foundation for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, making and managing relationships and thriving. These are all of vital importance to the holistic development of the child.

The prime areas are:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development

At Claremont we support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. The specific areas are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

The Early Years team use a range of strategies to gather information about the children's learning and development, and use this information to ensure that all learner's needs are met. All of the team make observations about the children in both, teacher directed and child led activities. Quality interactions with the child enables the staff to build a picture of the child's development, to move on the child's learning and identify any areas to support.

Parent Partnerships

At Claremont we value the contribution that our parents and carers make to their child's learning and take every opportunity to work in collaboration with them.

There are frequent opportunities for the children to share their learning at home. Contributions from home to showcase and celebrate learning or experiences are encouraged and we consider that to hold vital evidence of a child's progression.

Community Links and the Wider World

During the reception year, visits may be arranged for members of the local community to come to Claremont to support the children's interests and extend their experiences. Educational trips are also arranged within the local community, for example, visiting the fire station or walking to the post box. The educational visits will be planned to link to topic work. Film clips, non-fiction texts and artefacts are also used to introduce new concepts in real-life contexts.

At Claremont, we aim to develop the children's awareness of other cultures by exploring different countries and celebrations. We encourage families to inform us of any cultural traditions and religious celebrations which are particular to them.

Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

Claremont Primary School has a responsibility to ensure positive attitudes to diversity and difference.

Our team can support each child's needs by:

- removing or helping to overcome barriers where these already exist;
- being alert to the early signs of needs that could later lead to difficulties and responding quickly and appropriately, involving other agencies as required;
- stretching and challenging all children.

Wellbeing is at the forefront of Claremont Primary School's drive for success. We care about the mental and physical wellbeing of every member of our school community. Every child needs to feel safe to be able to access the quality first teaching that Claremont staff provide. Claremont caters for this through various ways, worry boxes in every classroom, thought provoking assemblies that cover issues around wellbeing, the daily mile initiative, regular circle time, and strong relationships between staff, children and parents.

We aim to inspire outdoor learning and teaching in creative and active ways to support the wellbeing of all. Through all these initiatives we prepare children to make the right choices, become more independent thinkers and learners, believe they can be the best they can be and can face the next stage of their learning with confidence and self-belief.

Please refer to the school's 'Accessibility and Equality Action Plan', Equalities Policy and SEN Disability Policy for more details.

At the end of Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

At the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage the child is assessed against all 17 Early Learning Goals.

The primary purpose of assessment at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage is to support a successful transition to Year One and the National Curriculum.

Each child is assessed as either:

- meeting the 'expected' levels or
- not yet reaching the expected levels ('emerging').

The national expectation is for children to achieve a 'Good Level of Development' (GLD) at the end of EYFS. A GLD is when a child meets the expected standard within all strands of the prime areas of learning as well as all strands within literacy and maths.

At Claremont we recognise that every child is unique. Some will exceed this expectation, while others may still be working towards it. Our aim is for all children to progress to their full potential and make good progress from their relative starting points.

Useful documents linking to this policy include:

- Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage April 2021.
- Reception timetable – and transition timetable
- Home School Agreement
- 'Welcome to Claremont' booklet – to support the transition to Reception
- Induction Pack for new parents

Transition from Reception to Year One

During the Summer term, the Claremont teaching staff will plan a programme of transition to support the children with their move to Year One. This might involve visits to the Year One classroom, discussion with current Year One children and teachers.

The children have a 'transition morning' to give the children a taste of their new class and teacher and we also arrange a transition meeting for parents.