



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 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 your child's intellectual, social and physical development along with their emotional wellbeing. 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, which have an important and equal weighting, in which we explore our rich and extensive school grounds (including our school woods, pond and garden). Play and Learning are a crucial part to our learning and meeting every child's individual needs – the children will have so much fun they will not notice how much they are learning and developing! We look forward to welcoming your child into our fun, vibrant, stimulating, safe and nurturing environment.

“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, 2017

Aims

- We aspire to support and promote children's holistic growth and development, with each child realizing their full potential.
- The well-being of the child is paramount.
- The child-family bond is of primary importance, and parents/carers have primary responsibility for the child. We value partnerships with parents.
- Children are understood and supported in terms of their family, culture and wider community. Diversity is celebrated.
- Relationships based on trust and respect are central to the child's emotional and physical health and learning.
- Children are active, capable learners, through exploration, play, talk and interacting with environment and with others.
- We are committed to ensuring that children are safe and healthy, make positive contributions, enjoy and achieve.
- We are committed to reflecting on our practice, continuing to develop our knowledge and evolving understanding of our pedagogy.

Staffing and Organisation

At Claremont Primary School, there are two Reception classes (Acorns and Saplings) that each have their own classroom and dedicated shared outdoor area. There is a cloakroom that is shared by both classes and separate toilets for boys and girls. The classroom has a

carpet area and the rest of the space is organised into learning zones for the children to access independently. Each class has two teachers that teach the class over the week, supported by teaching partners (TPs). 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. Practitioners are aware of the need to be flexible in order to respond to unplanned events that the children are interested in.

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, we organise opportunities for each child to have a 'taster session' at Claremont School. School staff make additional visits to talk to pre-school staff. There is a coffee morning where the Early Years Team give a presentation for new parents in the Summer term, where we outline daily routines and expectations. Home visits (where possible) may be undertaken; the objective of the visit/meeting is to give parents the opportunity to talk openly about their concerns and ask questions in a private and non-pressured environment. It also allows the children to get to know their teacher in their own familiar setting.

The children start school gradually to support their wellbeing. They then progress to full time. Parents are encouraged to talk to Claremont staff before making decisions around whether their child might be part time. This will help to support your child's wellbeing and to ease their transition into school. It is very different to being in nursery all day. A lot of children ease naturally into being full time by Christmas and they make smoother transitions happily and confidently. If children are feeling anxious about lunchtime, it can be much harder for them to learn and make friends. It is much easier to transition from Part Time to Full Time rather than the other way around.

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

Careful planning ensures 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 show case 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

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. Practitioners 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

The emphasis on how children learn has huge potential to transform Early Years practice and empower children as confident, creative lifelong learners. 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

Providers must also 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

At Claremont Primary School, we use a range of strategies to gather information about the children's learning and development, and use this information to ensure that the staff planning meets the needs of all learners. All of the Early Years staff team make observations about the children in both, teacher directed and child led activities. Each child has a 'New Learning Journal' and all new observations are gathered here along with new examples of work to celebrate the child's journey in their time in Reception.

This allows the team to consistently identify and track areas of progress for each child, and allow them the opportunity to be challenged and make improvements in line with the Early Learning Goals.

All 17 Early Learning Goals are tracked on our Assessment portal, OTrack, three times a year.

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. At the weekend, the children take home their 'Friday folder' which has their sharing book and any other information the team feel they may need to share with you. We welcome the children putting in new achievements or anything special that has happened at home, such as a family birthday or learning to ride a bike – it might be a drawing or a photo – and can be done on an ad hoc basis. Each term, there is a curriculum newsletter (on the website) to inform parents of what their child will be learning and how they can be supported at home. In the Autumn and Spring terms, reports are sent home and hold parents' evenings and in the Summer term we send home a detailed report. When the child is ready, they will take reading books home to read at home and we ask for parents to comment in their child's reading record book and they can also choose a picture book each week from our library at school.

Community Links and the Wider World

Over the year, visits are arranged for members of the local community to support the children's interests. Trips are also arranged for the children in the local community, for example, visiting the fire station or walking to the post office. The children may take part in educational visits linked to their topic work such as visiting the Blue Reef Aquarium in Hastings. 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 would be very grateful if you

can support us with this by letting us know any religious cultures and/or traditions that you celebrate with your family.

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. Using our wonderful grounds to inspire outdoor learning and teaching in creative and active ways also supports the wellbeing of teachers and children alike. Through all these initiatives we are preparing 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 life 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 EYFS

The national expectation is for children to achieve a 'Good Level of Development' (GLD). At the end of EYFS GLD is when a child achieves 'expected; within all strands within the prime areas of learning as well as all strands within literacy and maths'. However, 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 at least make good progress from their relative starting points).

Useful documents linking to this policy include:

- Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage April 2017.
- Reception timetable – and transition timetable
- Reception Curriculum Web
- Home School Agreement
- Agenda for Home Visits
- Reception Booklet – to support with home learning
- 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 involves visits to the Year One classroom, discussion with current Year One children, walks to look at where they will enter school and opportunities to ask any questions about the next year. 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.