



St. Clement's C. of E. Academy

Learning for Life, Anchored in Christ

EYFS Policy

Updated January 2024

St. Clement's C. of E. Academy Charging and Remission Policy

Our vision is to inspire happy, **courageous**, independent, curious, and creative life-long learners. We aim for all to achieve their full potential, striving both academically and socially with **humility** and **dignity**.

We believe that being anchored in Jesus Christ will guide us all with **hope**, **compassion**, and **wisdom** in becoming successful members of a global community.

Learning for Life, Anchored in Christ

Serving the local community in the name of Christ since 1859

Introduction

This policy outlines the management of the Early Years Class in our school.

The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of all the staff. Definition The Foundation Stage is a vital time in a child's life. "The child is at one and the same time a thinker, a member of the community beyond the family, a social being with responsibilities and a person in the process of making him or herself at home in the world.." At St. Clement's, we believe that children are active learners who learn through their senses, through investigation, experimentation, listening, watching, social interaction, questioning and exploring. A safe, secure environment is provided for the children in which to interact and explore rich and diverse learning and developmental opportunities. During their time in our Early Years class, all children are given the opportunity to gain independence and a positive self-image. They develop skills and understanding of the world around them through a range of planned activities both in the classroom and outdoors, broadening what they know and deepening their knowledge. As an Early Years provider, we are required to follow the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. Latest edition effective from January 2024.

Structure of the EYFS

From September 2023 we are running a combined Nursery and Reception class.

Nursery follow the same school day -8.45-3.30 Monday-Wednesday and Reception complete a full week Monday – Friday.

Parents/carers can also bring pupils to Breakfast Club from 7.45.

Children enter and are collected from the playground area, which is easily accessed from the Stuart Street side of the building.

Principles & Aims:

'A child's early experience of learning and development, especially during their first five years of life, is a critical springboard to their future success in education, work and life' (Unseen Children, Sir Michael Wilshaw June 2013). Every child matters, so our principles and aims are as follows:

- To provide a solid foundation in the seven areas of learning through well planned activities.
- To provide a balanced range of experiences and activities to enable each child to develop emotionally, socially, physically, creatively, intellectually, spiritually, and morally.
- To enable children to make an effective and happy transition from home to Nursery, into the Reception Class and then into the Year 1 Class, through proactive liaison.
- To prepare children for their continuing education through effective communication with their next teacher.

- To value children's own experiences, their imagination, their curiosity, and the range of skills that they bring into school and to use these as starting points in their learning.
- To ensure the children feel safe and secure within their learning environment.
- To provide a caring, stimulating, challenging and well-structured environment in which children are motivated towards independent learning.
- To ensure equal access and opportunity for all children and families.
- To value parents and carers as partners in the education of their child.
- To assess the progress of each child and ensure that each child is given differentiated and challenging activities.
- To keep parents well informed about the curriculum and their child's progress.
- To value early childhood itself.
- To ensure that children with special needs are identified and receive appropriate support.
- To promote an atmosphere that encourages confidence, independence and risk taking.
- To plan and structure engaging activities with clear learning intentions and objectives.
- To reflect upon, and plan for, the different ways that children learn.

The three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are as follows:

- o playing and exploring
- o active learning
- o creating and thinking critically

Principles into Practice Staff will:

- Plan stimulating activities using the Statutory Framework's educational programmes and children's interests for guidance.
- Provide a curriculum that has a balanced approach to both child initiated and adult directed activities.
- Make use of the extended classroom (outdoor provision) throughout to provide challenge across the seven areas of learning.
- Use observations and assessments to enable all staff to be aware of the differing needs and abilities of the children.
- Plan for differentiation, including necessary support for children with SEND and ensuring that more able children are given tasks that will challenge and stimulate their thinking.
- Ensure, through planning and providing appropriate resources, that all children have equal access and opportunities.
- Record significant moments in children's learning and development.
- Track data to ensure that all groups of children are making at least typical progress and that most are making good progress.
- Discuss children's progress in Parent Consultation Evenings (two times a year).

The Class Teacher will complete an EYFS Profile for each child, stating whether a child has achieved the Early Learning Goals. This information will be communicated to parents/carers in the written report.

- Pass on up-to-date records and assessments to the next class teacher.
- Staff will attend transition meetings.
- Plan visits, joint learning experiences and transition meetings to ensure a smooth transition between Nursery, Reception and Key Stage One classes
- Staff will engage in CPD so that children are offered the best possible start to school life.

The EYFS Curriculum the Early Years Foundation Stage consists of 7 areas of learning and development, outlined in the table below:

Prime Areas			
Communication & Language	Personal, Social & Emotional Development	Physical Development	
Specific Areas			
Literacy	Mathematics	Understanding the World	Expressive Arts & Design

There are seven areas of learning and development. They are split into prime and specific areas. The three prime areas of learning and development are:

Personal, Social and Emotional Development -Children will be encouraged to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.

Communication and Language- Children will be provided opportunities to experience a rich language environment, to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves and to speak and listen in a range of situations.

Physical development -Children will be provided with opportunities to be active and interactive; and to develop their co-ordination, control, and movement. Children will also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity and to make healthy choices in relation to food.

The four specific areas of learning and development are:

Literacy -Children will be taught to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children will be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest.

Mathematics - Children will be provided with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding, and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems and to describe shapes, space, and measures.

Understanding the World-Children will be guided to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology, and the environment.

Expressive arts and design-Children will be enabled to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas, and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play and design and technology.

Each area of learning and development will be planned for and taught using a variety of teaching approaches. There will be a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. We believe that play strengthens learning and underpins all aspects of child development. So, children are given opportunities to play for extended periods of time. This play will allow children to develop key communication and language skills, as well as to develop creativity and improve social, emotional, and intellectual skills. Children will be supported by practitioners to develop and extend their thinking through sustained shared thinking strategies.

Planning

Class Teachers create long-term (yearly) and medium term (termly) plans, as well as short-term (weekly) plans which are guided by the educational programmes (outlined in the Statutory Framework) and Birth to five matters (non statutory). The Early Years Team work together to ensure that all aspects of the seven areas of learning and development are considered and that children are receiving a broad and balanced curriculum, which is supplemented with valuable educational visits throughout the year. Staff also consider the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care and use this information to ensure challenging and enjoyable experiences for all. Where children have a special educational need or disability, staff will consider whether specialist support or resources are required to allow access to the same broad curriculum.

Learning through play

We believe that play strengthens learning and underpins all aspects of child development. So, children are given opportunities to play for extended periods of time. This play will allow children to develop key communication and language skills. Children will be supported by practitioners to:

- practise and build up ideas, concepts, and skills,
- learn to control impulses and understand the need to follow rules,
- be alone, alongside others or co-operate as they talk or rehearse their feelings,
- explore and develop social-emotional skills, general cognitive development, and self-regulation abilities,
- take risks and make mistakes,
- think creatively and imaginatively,
- communicate with others as they investigate or solve problems,
- express fears or relive anxious experiences in controlled safe environments,
- establish warm, caring relationships, raise self-esteem and confidence.

At St. Clement's, the learning environments (both indoors and outdoors) are well planned and well organised allowing children to explore, experiment, plan and make decisions for themselves, thus enabling them to learn, develop and make good progress. The practitioners use sustained shared thinking strategies to encourage children to think critically and to be independent, which prepares children for learning and development in Key Stage One

Reading

Staff in our Early Years classroom will focus on instilling a life-long love of books. Children will be read high quality texts to daily. A variety of books including story books, non-fiction books, poems and rhymes will be available throughout the setting (indoors and outdoors). Children will be encouraged to take home a book of their choosing from the class library each week. Children will also have opportunities to visit the school library throughout the week.

Phonics: Throughout the year for Reception and when appropriate for Nursery, staff will begin to teach phonics using the Read Write Inc. (RWI) literacy programme. Year one will continue to teach phonics using the RWI literacy programme. Children who are ready to read are given reading scheme books (which include the sounds that they are familiar with), in order to be able to practise their reading skills at home. Parents/Carers are encouraged to listen to their children read at least 5 times a week. Progress will be monitored and assessed on a regular basis and children will be grouped according to their ability. Some children in the Reception Class may work with Key Stage One children of a similar ability.

Writing

Throughout the EYFS, children are encouraged to mark-make using a wide range of high-quality tools, including felt-tips, crayons, chalk, pencils, paint brushes etc... When children are making these early marks, they are practising to hold a pencil and are attempting to control their marks with their muscles. This enhances their physical development by improving their fine motor skills and helps to develop their hand-eye coordination. Other activities to enhance muscle development and fine motor control are also planned as part of continuous provision, including playdough manipulation, model building and threading etc... As part of the RWI lessons, children are taught how to form the alphabet letters using the handwriting pattern outlined in the RWI literacy programme. Opportunities to write for a variety of purposes are planned for and are provided by a range of stimuli, including stories and role play. Reception aged children will also complete the Get Writing activities which are part of the RWI literacy programme.

Mathematics

Children working at Nursery level, are taught through a variety of practical adult-led and adult-directed activities. Children are also encouraged to develop their understanding of mathematical concepts through play-based learning, with support from staff. Staff are familiar with the six key areas of early mathematical learning (Counting & Cardinality, Comparison, Composition, Pattern, Shape & Space and Measures). They use the Typical Progression Charts for each of these key areas (created by NCETM) to inform planning. Children are provided with opportunities to explore and investigate using a wide variety of maths manipulatives, which will prepare them for mathematics

that are Reception age appropriate. For example, Numicon shapes, five/ten frames. Play based learning is still very much appropriate for Reception aged children. In addition to this, maths skills are taught daily through whole class lessons, using the maths mastery approach (See the school Mathematics Policy for more details).

Planning is adapted from NCETM and the White Rose scheme. Children also participate in Mastering Number sessions throughout the week and maths manipulatives are available for use throughout the classroom (indoors and outdoors). Number formation is taught explicitly, and the number formation pattern is adhered to throughout the EYFS.

The Learning Environment

We aim to create an attractive, welcoming, and stimulating learning environment which will encourage children to explore, investigate and learn through first-hand experience. We also aim to make it a place where children feel secure and confident and are challenged to develop in independence. Children are encouraged to become independent learners and to take some responsibility for initiating their own lines of enquiry and investigation. Here are some of the zones we have in each indoor space: • Construction • Water • Small World • Domestic role-play • Reading • Mark-making/Writing • Maths • Creative.

Outdoor Provision

In the Early Years class, children have free flow access to the outdoor space. This learning environment is set up to support and extend children's learning in all areas of the curriculum. Waterproof clothing is provided for the children and the children are asked to provide wellington boots, so that they can access the outdoor area all year round. Some examples of the zones we have in our outdoor spaces: • Sand area • Water play • Planting • Construction area.

Staffing

Staffing arrangements are in line with the requirements set out in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage document (effective from September 2023 and updated January 2024). All staff have the appropriate qualifications to meet statutory requirements. We are always aiming to improve our teaching, skills, and knowledge and understanding through training opportunities, which comprise of in class support, observations of colleagues, professional dialogue, and attendance at network meetings. Mrs Nizamis is responsible for the EYFS phase.

Assessment

Assessment plays an important part in helping parents, carers, and key workers to recognise children's progress, understand their needs and to plan activities and support. We analyse and review what we know about each child's development and learning, and then make informed decisions about the child's progress. This enables us to plan the next steps to meet their development and learning needs. All staff who interact with the child contribute to the assessment process.

Formative assessment

This form of assessment is an integral part of the learning and development process. EYFS staff observe children to understand their stage of development, interests, and learning styles, and to then shape learning experiences for each child reflecting those observations.

Formative assessment may take the form of formal observations, informal observations, other focused assessments e.g. sound/number, annotated examples of work, photographs, and information from parents/carers. Each child has an individual Learning Journal in which this evidence is recorded. Next steps in learning are identified. Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development through daily contact with EYFS staff and regular meetings. In the EYFS we use 'age related ranges' to make judgments about children's progress, on-going assessments feed into this. For example, we typically expect a child to enter Reception working within the 'range 6' band: this is based on guidance from the 'Birth to 5 Matters' document.

Summative assessment

When children start in Reception, they must undertake the statutory 'Reception Baseline Assessment.' This will provide an opportunity for your child to have valuable one to-one time with their teacher at an early stage, so the teacher can get to know your child better. It will provide a helpful snapshot of where your child is when they enter reception, so they can be supported in the most appropriate way. The EYFS Profile is used to summarise all the assessment undertaken and makes statements about the child's achievements in the seven areas of learning at the end of the reception year. The profile provides parents/carers, and Family Group Key Workers with a summative assessment of a child's attainment against expected levels. Each child's level of development must be assessed against the early learning goals. EYFS staff must indicate whether children are meeting expected levels of development or are not yet reaching expected levels (emerging). This information is submitted to the local authority.

Books and Marking in EYFS

Every child in Reception has a Maths, phonics and Learning Journal book that showcase the child's learning throughout the academic year. Nursery children have their own folders that showcase their work across the Early Years curriculum. A lot of the activities that are planned for children in the EYFS are very practical or done on a much larger scale than an A4 exercise book and therefore will not be recorded in the books. The Learning objective for formal activities in books will relate to the 'Age Related Development Bands.' The practitioner will either write a comment in the child's book reflecting on the child's understanding of the work they have completed and if it's relevant the child's next steps or they will verbally tell the child how they did.

Monitoring of teaching and Learning

Monitoring of teaching and learning is carried out in accordance with school policy. This includes observations of teaching and learning, pupil conferencing, learning walks and learning journal scrutiny. The Senior Leadership Team carries out monitoring.

Parent/Carer involvement

Parents are invited to attend events such as our 'Meet the Teaching Team' event, workshops and Stay and Play sessions, where they receive details about their child's class and be given the opportunity to ask questions. The EYFS staff believe that it is extremely important to develop good relationships with parents/carers. Staff are available for parents/carers at the beginning of each day, for questions or if they have concerns. When a child can take reading books home parents/carers are asked to comment about their child's progress through reading diaries. Parents are also invited to the weekly reading together sessions, to share books with their child. Robust communication systems are in place to keep parents/carers up to date. Parents/Carers are also regularly invited to attend special events and celebration assemblies.

Transition

We aim to ensure that the children experience a smooth and positive transition as they move from pre-school/home setting to Nursery, Nursery to Reception and Reception to Year 1.

The aim is for all staff to have: -

- A shared understanding of what the principles of the EYFS look like in effective practice
- Understand and value the EYFS • Promote best practice for transition by considering the transition experience of the children and effective transfer of information, including the EYFSP and characteristics of effective learning.

- Use information about children to plan a relevant curriculum

To support this, we provide opportunities for staff to: -

- Observe the children in their current groups
- Take part in moderation of profile books and writing assessments
- Discuss each child's individual needs
- Hold induction stay and play sessions for new children and their parents (Nursery and Reception)
- Have regular slots in the Summer 2 term curriculum where children visit their new class.

Equal Opportunities

At St. Clement's we aim to provide all pupils, regardless of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability, equal access to all aspects of school life and work to ensure that every child is valued fully as an individual. Staff, as role models, are aware of the influence of adults in promoting positive attitudes and use that influence to challenge stereotypical ideas. Children with special educational needs will be given support as appropriate to enable them to benefit from the curriculum. This includes children that are more able, and those with specific learning difficulties and disabilities. Individual Teaching Plans identify targets in specific areas of learning for those children who require additional support. Provisions in Nursery and Reception include a changing room, which contains shower and toilet. The school's SENDCO is responsible for providing additional information and advice to key workers and parents/carers, and for arranging external intervention and support where necessary. For further information see the school's accessibility/ equality policy.

Safeguarding and Welfare procedures

Our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in whole school policies and are in line with the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage document and KCSIE 2023 (effective from September 2023 and updated January 2024).

At St. Clement's, we take the necessary steps to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. We follow the EYFS Statutory Framework, legal requirements. We also follow the Child protection/safeguarding policy of the school and staff are fully trained and aware of procedures in this area.

Risk assessments for the indoor and outdoor environments and particular activities are carried out on a regular basis. All staff are involved in this process. Additional risk assessments for the Nursery and Reception are carried out by the Site supervisor. It is our policy at St. Clement's to have all personal mobiles stored in a safe place whilst supervising children. Cameras and iPads are used to record progress and to enable the engagement of parents in their child's learning, parents give permission for this to take place. Mobile phones are never used to take photographs of children, staff have school equipment, and this is used. Once the photographs are uploaded, they are removed from the camera. (see Use of mobile phones/ cameras in EYFS Policy)

At St. Clement's we comply with the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000 we use photographs taken with permission on: • The school web site • On display in school • Learning journals.

Complaints Procedure

If a parent has a concern or complaint school policy will be followed. Any complaints are treated seriously and are investigated. Details are also provided in the complaints policy which can be found on the school website, or a hard copy can be provided if requested.

Writing and reviewing the Early Years Foundation Stage policy

Our Early Years Foundation Stage Policy has been written by the academy, with due regard to statutory requirements, and has taken account of the guidance within the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, Setting the Standards for learning, development and care for children from birth to five document (DFE, 2021/ updated January 2024). It has been agreed by senior management and approved by Governors. This policy relates to other policies including those for Safeguarding and Intimate Care. The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored and evaluated by the Governors and SLT and will be reviewed on an annual basis.