EYFS teaching and learning Policy

Review Cycle;	Annual
Responsible group:	Head teacher, EYFS lead
Implementation date:	September 2025
Next Review Date:	September 2026

Small steps to big dreams

Mark 4: 30-32

Vision

We aim to provide educational excellence inspired by the world around us. To grow curious, responsible and confident learners within a caring community, in partnership with our families, upholding our Christian Values.

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Introduction

"When we succeed in giving every child the best start in their early years, we give them what they need today. We also set them up with every chance of success tomorrow." Development Matters Sept 2021

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) refers to the learning and development of all children from birth to the end of the Reception Year.
Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. It is not just a preparation for the next stage but is vitally important in itself.
Learning for children is a rewarding and enjoyable experience in which they explore, investigate, discover, create, practice, rehearse, repeat, revise and consolidate their developing knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes. During the Foundation Stage, many of these aspects of learning are brought together effectively through playing and developing language skills.

Aims

At Clearwater Primary Academy 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 learners. We value the individual child and work alongside parents and carers to help every child reach their full potential.

This policy aims to ensure:
- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the broad range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life;
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind;
- A close working partnership between staff and parents/carers;
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice;

Staffing

Our Reception team consists of:
- EYFS Lead and Teacher - Mrs B Hounsell
- EYFS Teacher - Miss K Williams
- EYFS Teacher (maternity cover) – Miss Dowdeswell
- EYFS Teacher – Mrs Fitzgerald
- Teaching Partner – Mrs Johnson

- Teaching Partner – Miss Cassidy-Adams
- One-to-One Teaching partner – Mrs Hynes-Payne

- All children with additional needs also access support and guidance from our SENCo Mrs Harris.

Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) that applies from September 2021.

Early Years Foundation Phase Curriculum

Our Reception curriculum has been developed in line with and follows the curriculum as outlined in the EYFS document. The EYFS is based on seven key features of effective practice as set out in Development Matters 2020/1.

1. The best for every child
2. High-quality care
3. The curriculum: what we want children to learn
4. Pedagogy: helping children to learn
5. Assessment: checking what children have learnt
6. Self-regulation and executive function
7. Partnership with parents

As part of our best practice we:

- Provide a balanced curriculum, based on the EYFS, across the seven areas of learning (detailed below);
- Promote equality of opportunity;
- Provide early intervention for those who need additional support;
- Work in partnership with parents and where needed outside agencies;
- Plan challenging learning experiences for all our children, based on the individual needs of the child and cohort;
- Provide opportunities for children to engage in adult led learning and self-initiated learning;
- Provide a secure and safe learning environment indoors and outdoors;
- Plan an exciting and challenging curriculum based on our observations of children's needs, interests and stages of development across the seven areas of learning;

Areas of Learning: The EYFS is made up of three prime areas of learning:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development.
- Communication and Language.
- Physical Development.

There are four specific areas of learning:

- Literacy.
- Maths.
- Understanding the World.
- Expressive Arts and Design.

All seven areas of learning and development are important and interconnected. At Clearwater Primary Academy we provide a well-balanced curriculum and our planning ensures that each child has the opportunity to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding in every area of the EYFS

through a range of rich, meaningful first hand experiences. Each area of learning is implemented through planned, purposeful activities and through a mix of adult led and child initiated learning. Our exciting and challenging curriculum is designed to embed firm foundations in the learners within our school and adequately prepare them for the challenges of the national curriculum. Our curriculum is driven by high quality core texts, each core text is introduced in an active and interesting way, learning experiences are expanded from these and complimentary texts are explored. We create long and short term plans to ensure a consistent and in-depth coverage of all seven areas of learning. We aim to develop and foster positive attitudes towards learning, confidence, communication skills and physical development.

Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:
1. Playing and exploring - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.
2. Active learning - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties.
3. Creating and thinking critically - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas and develop strategies for doing things.

At Clearwater Primary Academy, we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. We provide stimulating resources which are accessible and open-ended so they can be used, moved and combined in a variety of ways. We plan a curriculum around key, enriching texts, both fiction and non-fiction to engage the children and enrich their vocabulary and language. Within the continuous and enhanced provision, we remain flexible to allow for unplanned circumstances and children's responses and ideas

Positive Relationships

At Clearwater Primary Academy we recognise that children learn to be confident and independent through the development of secure relationships. We develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parents as Partners

We recognise the central importance of parents/carers as children's first educators. We believe they have a significant role to play in the lifelong education of their child. We strive to create and maintain partnerships with parents/carers as we recognise that together, we can have a significant impact on a child's learning. We welcome and actively encourage parents to participate confidently in their child's education and care in numerous ways.

- Holding information evenings before the children start school;
- Talking to them about their child's interests and needs during our home visits carried out each September;
- Holding relevant curriculum information sessions including information on how we teach phonics and early maths;
- Being welcoming and approachable and having an open-door approach for parents to voice concerns/ask questions;
- Inviting them to a parent consultation in the Autumn and Summer Terms to discuss how their child has settled and share progress and next steps for learning;
- Valuing parents' contributions to learning journeys;
- Inviting parents into timetabled 'learning journey sessions' to see their child's work and classroom in action;
- Encouraging parents to read with their child at home and make comments in their reading record books;
- Providing curriculum maps for each half term;

- Inviting parents into WOW assemblies to showcase children's learning;
- Welcoming parents as volunteers into our school;

Staff develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. We have good links with the local feeder playgroups and regular visits are undertaken throughout the year. The EYFS teachers meet with staff to discuss new intake children.

Assessment

At Clearwater, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests, progress and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning. It is vital that all adults in the classroom are aware of children's different needs and are therefore able to ensure all children can succeed. The classroom is enhanced across the year to cater to and suit the differing needs of the children at different stages. A collection of children's independent learning is collated in their own 'learning journey' folders. Parents/carers are encouraged to add their own comments to this during learning journey sessions and are regularly encouraged to send in WOW vouchers to include children's achievements at home. Children's more focused activity learning is recorded in a workbook and classroom floor books.

Within the first six weeks that a child starts reception, teaching staff will administer the Statutory Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA, May 2021). At the end of the EYFS, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child.

Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The profile reflects ongoing observations, and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are shared with parents and/or carers for their child. The profile is moderated internally (referring to the Development Matters guidance) and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority.

Inclusion

We value all our children as individuals, irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender. We plan a curriculum that meet the needs of the individual child and support 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 and in doing so, work closely with parents/carers and outside agencies. We have a highly skilled SENCO. in school who supports us with any additional needs a child may have.

Monitoring of the EYFS

We are committed to providing the best possible experiences for our children. The EYFS Leader is responsible for monitoring provision, teaching and learning and children's progress. Information is shared with the Head teacher, Assessment Leader and Reception team as appropriate and any necessary actions are taken.

All adults in the Reception team have a key role in children's learning and development. Therefore, they are required to be knowledgeable and skilled in the EYFS curriculum. Any training needs for

existing or new members of staff are identified and addressed as part of performance management targets.

Transitions

Transitions are carefully planned for and significant time is given to ensure continuity of learning and care. At times of transition, we acknowledge the child's needs and establish effective partnerships with those involved with the child and other settings. Our Reception staff visit the local nurseries and preschools to familiarise themselves with the children and to discuss any particular transition needs.

Parents/carers are encouraged to take up the offer of a home visit, conducted in the first week of the Autumn Term by up to two members of the EYFS team. This is a valuable time to talk 1:1 with a member of the team, allowing them to answer any concerns/queries they may have.

At the end of the EYFS, our Reception teachers meet with the Year 1 teachers to liaise with them and discuss the individual children and their specific needs. Children's assessment data is sent with them to Year One so that their new teachers are able to plan for their 'next steps in learning' from the moment they enter their new class. Relevant floor books also transition with the children allowing them to review and discuss previous learning. Children spend a number of sessions towards the end of the school year in the Year One classroom to ensure that they are familiar and comfortable with their new teacher and are 'next year ready'.