

# Clee Hill Community Academy Early Years Policy

Reviewed: May 2025

Next review: May 2027

## Introduction

Early Years education is the foundation upon which young children build the rest of their schooling. It is a holistic education that encompasses all learning and development. This policy outlines the purpose, nature and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) at Clee Hill Community Academy. The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of practitioners working in the EYFS settings.



In the policy the term 'settings' refers to the Early Years educational provision in the Nursery and Reception class at Clee Hill Community Academy. This is available to children who enter Nursery following their 2nd birthday and those who enter Reception from September of the academic year in which they will turn five years old. These children are in the final year of the EYFS. In the policy the term 'practitioner' refers to the members of staff working with children within the setting.

More information about the school Nursery setting, including declaration forms and support with funding can be found on the school website.

## Our Aims

In our EYFS settings we believe that all children are entitled to the best possible start to their school life, both intellectually and emotionally, in order to enable them to develop their full potential. We aim to support each child's welfare, learning and developmental needs by:

- Recognising that all children are unique and special.
- Understanding that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates - physical, cognitively, linguistically, socially and emotionally.
- Providing a safe, secure and caring environment where children feel happy and know that they are valued by the practitioners looking after them.
- Fostering and nurturing children's self-confidence and self-esteem through their developing awareness of their own identity and role within the community.
- Teaching them to express and communicate their needs and feelings in appropriate ways.
- Encouraging children's independence and decision-making, supporting them to learn through their mistakes.
- Developing children's understanding of social skills and the values and codes of behaviour required for people to work together harmoniously.
- Supporting children to develop care, respect and appreciation for others, including those with beliefs, cultures and opinions which differ to their own.

- Understanding the importance of play in children's learning and development.
- Providing learning experiences in play which reflect children's personal interests and areas of curiosity in order to encourage and develop their natural desire, interest, excitement and motivation to learn.
- Providing experiences which build on children's existing knowledge and understanding in order to challenge, stimulate and extend their learning and development.
- Providing effective learning opportunities in a range of environments, inside and outside.



## The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum (EYFS)



Teaching in the EYFS setting is delivered in accordance with the Government's statutory document "*The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage*". This document is a principled approach to Early Years education, bringing together children's welfare, learning and development requirements through four themes: "A Unique Child", "Positive Relationships", "Enabling Environments with teaching and support from adults" and "Learning and development" (Children Learn in Different Ways and at Different Rates).

The Curriculum is centred on 3 prime areas of learning:

1. Communication and Language
2. Physical Development
3. Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Providers must also support activities through 4 specific areas which strengthen the prime areas. These are:

1. Literacy
2. Mathematics
3. Understanding of the World
4. Expressive Arts and Design

### Our EYFS Curriculum

We developed our own curriculum for both the Nursery and Reception setting using Development Matters and the Statutory Framework as a foundation. We carefully constructed milestones and goals to reflect our own dynamics and environment to meet our children's needs, whilst ensuring a stimulating, challenging and diverse curriculum. We established core books and key rhymes to support and enhance our curriculum. Click link below to access our curriculum goals and core books.

<http://chcacademy.co.uk/curriculum/eyfs-curriculum>

## Early Language Development

Early language development is a very important aspect of the children's development and has a great impact on their future learning. In our early years setting we place a great deal of emphasis on the importance of this in order to ensure that the children reach their potential. Assessments are in place to identify delay in understanding and spoken language skills. In Nursery we use Communication screening (Stoke Speak Out), these results enable staff to plan appropriate interventions/ measure progress. We use Early talk boost as an intervention programme. In Reception class we sometimes use Nuffield Early Language Intervention (NELI) programme to identify and improve language skills of those children who need support. We also sometimes use talk boost as an intervention programme.

The EYFS provides a language rich environment and the children participate in **'Talk4writing'** activities. **Talk4writing** is a way of supporting children's writing development. It develops their self-confidence as story tellers and improves their ability to write. This approach is undertaken throughout Cleve Hill Academy from Nursery to Year 6.

In Reception the children begin to learn the actions to stories that they listen to and become familiar with. They are able to follow a story map and will quite often begin to attempt their own story maps. The Talk4writing approach suggests the following list of books to promote good story telling skills.



## Facilitating Learning

During the Early Years we facilitate learning through a timetable that integrates:

- Whole group rich, active teacher led learning experiences.
- Linked learning which adults facilitate.
- Continuous provision which includes child led play where adults develop key skills and facilitate and scaffold learning.

### Characteristics of Effective Learning

The Characteristics of Effective Learning and the Prime and Specific Areas of Learning and Development are all inter-connected. Different elements of learning are identified in the EYFS, to make the complex picture of learning clearer. But children's learning is not compartmentalised and many or all of these elements are in action at the same time as children interact with people and things. We encourage the children to think and talk about the skills they are using when they are learning such as creating and thinking critically, playing and exploring and active learning. This feeds into our 'Growth Mindset' teaching and learning as the children progress through the school.

### Timetables

This is a guide as times and activities change daily depending on different children in the setting. Below shows what we expect to cover in a day both inside and outside.

### Nursery

8.40 - 10.35	Registration During this session we will have child-initiated learning with staff supporting, encouraging, questioning (where appropriate) and observing children in self-chosen activities. We have a short focus activity and/or a story or rhymes and some adult directed activities and games.
10.35	Snack and chat
10.50- 11.50	During this session we will have child-initiated learning with staff supporting, encouraging, questioning (where appropriate) and observing children in self-chosen activities. We have a short focus activity and/or a story or rhymes and some adult directed activities and games.
12.00 - 12.45	Lunchtime
12.45 - 2.30	During this session we will have child-initiated learning with staff supporting, encouraging, questioning (where appropriate) and observing children in self chosen activities. We have a short focus activity and/or a story or rhymes and some adult directed activities and games.
2.30-3.10	Tidy up time, story and songs

### Reception:-

Time	Lesson
8.40am - 9.00am	Register/Morning activity (kinetic letters/maths)
9.00am - 9.30am	Little Wandle (Phonics)
9.30am - 10.30am	Child initiated play with a Literacy Focus, including snack and chat.
10.30am - 10.45am	Outside breaktime
10.45am - 11.05am	Little Wandle practice read (time may vary due to staffing)
11.05am - 11.50	Maths Focus/Child Initiated
12.00pm - 1pm	Lunch and Play Outside
1pm - 1.30pm	Register/assembly / interventions
1.30pm - 1.50pm	Focused Task
1.50pm - 2.50pm	Child Initiated Activities
2.50pm - 3.05pm	Outside breaktime
3.05pm - 3.15pm	Home time routine/story/singing

## Enabling Environments

We recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. The settings are organised to allow children to explore and learn fluidly, securely and



safely. The Nursery and Reception classrooms have discrete learning areas, where the children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. Both settings have enclosed outdoor areas and when appropriate the children are able to free-flow between the indoor and outdoor spaces. The children are encouraged to use equipment fluidly by moving equipment and resources throughout the areas to promote creative thinking. We actively encourage children to use writing, maths and reading resources in all areas of learning.

## Planning, Observation and Assessment

Regular ongoing assessment is an essential aspect of the effective running of the EYFS setting.

Regular, planned and focused assessments are made of children's learning and individual needs. A



record of each child's progress in all areas of their learning is kept by retaining and filing their assessment data.

The main EYFS assessment method is through practitioners' observations of children in different teaching and learning contexts, including both adult focused and child-initiated activities. Observations take place on a daily basis (both formally and informally) and these are recorded in different formats eg post-it notes, photographs, narrative form, class dojo, annotation of children's work.

Weekly planning of challenging, achievable activities and experiences which extend the children's learning towards their next steps (which are informed by the children's assessments) is completed by the teachers and discussed with all practitioners. Photo retrospective planning is displayed within the Nursery setting.



## Parents as Partners

We recognise the importance of establishing and maintaining positive relationships with parents and carers and that, together, we can have a significant impact on children's learning and development. Informal chats, between parents/carers and practitioners, at the beginning and end of the day are an invaluable way of parents sharing their unique knowledge of their child, providing further insight into their child as an individual. This supports us in establishing interesting and stimulating learning experiences, responding to children's needs and interests.

Parents/carers are kept informed of what is happening in the settings through Class Dojo, parent evenings, reading records, parent workshops and termly parent interviews. This provides an excellent opportunity for both parents and practitioners to share information about children's development and to make judgements of the child's progress within the EYFS curriculum.

In Nursery parents receive a 2 year check when their child is between the ages of 2 years to 3 years (Nursery 1).

In Nursery and Reception we have termly written reports, including targets.

Parent Workshops are usually held termly to provide parents/carers with information regarding the teaching and acquisition of Phonic skills, Maths and Writing. These are very practical sessions and the parents undertake activities alongside their children.

The settings have a friendly, "open door" ethos and practitioners are available to talk to parents/carers at the beginning and end of the day. A senior member of Staff greets all children

and parents/carers at the gate every morning and this provides a daily, instant point of contact. Parents are always welcomed into school and encouraged to discuss any concerns they might have.

In Nursery and Reception parents are able to view children's learning journeys online and see what their children are doing in the setting. They can also send their own observations and photos from home to the setting to contribute the learning journey. For Reception, additional observations/work can be viewed in books/floor books.



## Admissions and Induction

### Nursery

Our nursery admits children after their second birthday. All children of **three** and **four** years old are eligible for up to 15 hours of free early years provision each week, for up to 38 weeks of the year. Some children will be eligible for an additional 15 hours depending on family circumstances. This is called a 30 hour code.

Some **two** years old, depending on their family circumstances, are entitled to up to 15 hours of free early years provision each week for up to 38 weeks of the year, starting the term after they are 2. . See link below for details.

<http://chcacademy.co.uk/classes/nursery>

During the first few days parent/carers are welcome to stay with their children. Children and parent/carers are informed of their key worker once children have settled and started to form relationships with staff. We strive to ensure that each child's introduction to Nursery is a positive experience for both children and their parent/carer.

### Transition

We provide full-time Early Years education for children in their Reception Year. This is for children who enter school from September of the academic year in which they will turn five years old.

In the first half of the summer term parents are invited to an evening meeting to meet the Reception staff and to learn more about the school setting in a relaxed and informal environment. Following this the parents and children are invited to spend an afternoon in the setting.

This provides an opportunity for practitioners and parents to share information and for the children to become familiar with the environment and resources. It also provides parents with the opportunity to observe the relaxed, happy and productive environment in action.



All children are offered a series of visits during the summer term - they are invited to attend an afternoon every week during the second half term. The purpose of these visits is for the children to meet their new practitioners and start to become familiar with the environment. These children are accompanied by a member of staff from Nursery. For children who do not attend our Nursery, practitioners, with parental permission, will also go to visit the children in their current pre-school setting or arrange a meeting with the pre-school leader to discuss their development in detail. These children will also be invited to attend the afternoon sessions in the Reception class.

From September children attend the setting full-time, though parents can opt for their child to attend part time should they see fit.

## **Equal Opportunities**

We value all of our children as individuals, irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, social circumstances, ability or gender. We provide all children with the opportunity to experience a challenging and enjoyable programme of learning and development within the EYFS settings. *(See Equal Opportunities Policy for more information)*

## **Special Educational Needs**

The early identification of special needs is vital and procedures listed within the SEN code of Practice are followed.

Early Years staff liaise with parents/carers, SENCo (Miss Sian Pugh) and any other Outside Agencies in order to meet the needs of individual children.

*(See Equal Opportunities Policy for more information)*

As a trust we have developed a curriculum intent to show how we aim to meet the range of SEND within our teaching in the Early years.

## **Review**

This policy is reviewed every 2 years