**St Clement’s C. of E. Primary School**

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**Early Years Foundation Stage Policy**

**Approved by the Full Governing Body: 14/10/2019**

**Due for review: October 2020**

***Growing Together To Let Our Light Shine***

**Mission Statement:**

**We encourage and inspire children to aim high and challenge themselves in everything they do.**

***As a compassionate, Christian school, we are strong in our faith. We believe in love and forgiveness and are thankful for the opportunities we have to live and learn in our community.***

**Our Christian Values Reflected In This Policy**

**Faith**

**Hope**

**Love**

**Respect**

**Thankfulness**

**Compassion**

**Forgiveness**

**DDA STATEMENT**

***At St. Clement’s we will aim to:***

* **Promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and others.**
* **Eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Act.**
* **Eliminate harassment of disabled pupils that is related to their disabilities.**
* **Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people.**
* **Encourage participation by disabled people in public life.**
* **Take account of a disabled person’s disabilities, even when that involves treating a disabled person more favourably than another person.**

**1.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 St.Clements C of E Primary School.

In the policy the term ‘setting’ refers to the Early Years educational provision at St.Clements Primary which includes both Nursery and Reception classes. In the policy the term ‘practitioner’ refers to the members of staff working with children within the setting.

**2. Aims of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

In EYFS we believe that all children are entitled to the best possible start in 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 - physically, cognitively, linguistically, socially and emotionally.

• Providing a safe, secure and caring environment where children feel happy and know that they are valued.

• 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 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.

**3. The Early Years Foundation Stage framework**

Teaching in the EYFS setting at St. Clements Cof E Primary School is delivered in accordance with the government statutory document ’The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage’ (March 2014). 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’ and ‘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 four specific areas which strengthen the prime areas. These are:

1. Literacy

2. Mathematics

3. Understanding of the World

4. Expressive Arts and Design

Educational programmes which practitioners deliver in the setting must involve activities and experiences from one of the following seven areas. These are:

1. Communication and Language

2. Physical Development

3. Personal, Social and Emotional Development

4. Literacy

5. Mathematics

6. Understanding of the World

7. Expressive Arts and Design

These Areas of Learning and Development address children’s physical, cognitive, linguistic, social and emotional development. No one aspect of development stands in isolation from the others as all Areas of Learning and Development are all closely interlinked. This ensures the delivery of a holistic, child-centred curriculum which allows children to make lots of links between what they are learning. All Areas of Learning and Development are given equal weighting and value.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

The EYFS also includes the characteristics of effective teaching and learning. The Nursery and

Reception teachers plan activities within the Nursery and Reception classrooms with these in mind.

They highlight the importance of a child’s attitude to learning and their ability to play, explore and

think critically about the world around them.

The three characteristics are;

 **Playing and Exploring** – children investigate and experience things, and ‘have a go’

 **Active Learning** – children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties,

and enjoy achievements

 **Creating and Thinking Critically** – children have and develop their own ideas, make links

between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

**4. Active Learning through Play**

At St.Clements we recognise that young children learn best when they are active. We understand that active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods. Therefore, we believe that Early Years education should be as practical as possible and our EYFS setting has an ethos of learning through play.

We recognise the importance of children’s play. It is an essential and rich part of their learning process, supporting them in all areas of development. Play is a powerful motivator encouraging children to be creative and to develop their ideas, understanding and language. Play is also flexible and able to suit the preferred learning style of the child. It can provide multiple ways for children to learn a variety of different skills and concepts. In providing these active learning opportunities through play we understand the central position of play within the EYFS framework. This is essentially a play based curriculum and pedagogy as the provision of play opportunities underpins its delivery.

**5. The Learning Environment**

The EYFS classroom is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are specific areas where the children can be active, be quiet, creative etc. A high quality learning environment enables children to access a range of both guided and open ended activities.

Children have access to both inside and outside area across the day; this has a positive effect on the children’s development. Both reception and nursery classes have their own undercover outdoor classroom area as well as access to a large outdoor area. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and in different scales than when indoors. The children can explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. All areas of the curriculum can be explored outside. Teaching and learning is planned for outside and in all weathers.

**6. Assessment and Record Keeping**

The main EYFS assessment method is through practitioners’ observations of different teaching and learning contexts, including both adult focused activities and child initiated play. Observations take place on a daily basis indoors and outdoors (both formally and informally). Planned observations of child- initiated learning are undertaken on a 5/6 weekly cycle. Children are grouped and observed as VIP’s for a full week during the cycle. Practitioners meet to discuss the VIP group and review progress, learning observed and next steps. An “Observation Summary” is produced to highlight next steps and targets in learning. Evidence for this can come from a range of sources including planned observations, feedback from whole class teaching, assessments e.g. from guided reading or small group sessions. Parent and carers are invited to attend VIP meetings where this information is fed back to them about their child.

Practitioners also make spontaneous observations in order to capture significant moments of children’s learning. They use observations to support their developing knowledge of individual children. It informs them of children’s abilities, needs, interests, play schemas and learning styles and characteristics. Observations are evaluated, children’s learning priorities are identified and relevant learning opportunities are planned to support children to make the next steps and progress.

Learning Journeys record children’s progress over both academic years in all Areas of Learning and Development of the EYFS framework. The online assessment tool Target Tracker is used to record photographic and videoed evidence of learning and observations.

There is continuous monitoring and assessment of each child’s development using the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (2012). At the end of the year it provides a summary of every child’s development and learning achievements. Teachers update assessment records on each child’s profile through Target Tracker throughout the year. This provides detailed information and analysis of children’s progress and attainment which is closely monitored. Progress and attainment in phonics is also rigorously recorded, tracked and monitored.

Baseline assessment is carried out using the EYFS Profile during the children’s first six weeks upon entering nursery. Baseline assessments of children in reception are sometimes carried out especially if the child is new to our school. Judgments made on children’s development in the Profile are based on practitioners’ evidence of children’s behaviour observed independently and consistently in their self-initiated activities across all Areas of Learning and Development. Individual progress is rigorously tracked throughout the foundation stage. Practitioners will meet regularly to discuss pupil progress and to highlight relevant developmental statements on individual pupil progress trackers. This can be done as part of the VIP cycle and during VIP meetings between staff. Children will be placed onto a class tracker which will be monitored closely .This tracker will be updated every term. Class action plans will be produced termly to allow practitioners to monitor specific groups of children more closely in different subject areas.

In EYFS, language development is also assessed and tracked using WellComm, a tookit designed to identify children who might be experiencing delays with speech and language. Nursery children (and children new to reception) are assessed within the first 2-3 weeks of starting school. Those requiring further intervention are tracked and assessed throughout the school year until they acheive the required language level for their age.

**7. Planning**

The EYFS framework provides a long term plan to follow by ensuring that all Early Learning Goals are covered throughout the academic year. All Areas of Learning and Development are planned for and available to access within the setting.

We believe many children need to be given a starting point to learn new things and find topics are a great way to fire the imagination. We have a two year topic cycle so both classes are working together on the same theme; topics are usually based on the following areas of learning,

‘Understanding the World’, ‘Literacy’ and ‘Communication and Language’; and range from a topic on Dinosaurs to Transport or Traditional Tales. The topics are flexible to ensure we also follow the children’s interests. Staff plan half termly experience days that introduce, enhance or consolidate learning and skills related to the current topic e.g. making clay dinosaur fossils or designing and making a banquet for a castle. Children have the opportunity to dress up on some of these days which allows them to really immerse themselves in the topic e.g. dressing up as characters from traditional tales. We aim to promote learning further through occasional visits and by having visitors into school e.g. police officer and midwife as people who help us or a visit to the beach to enhance learning about the seaside. Regular outings in the local area are planned to enhance learning further e.g. a trip to the fruit and vegetable shop, post office or local café.

Medium term planning is created and takes into account the individual children’s learning and developmental needs. A weekly overview plan is created which includes daily plans for whole class teaching and carpet times. Opportunities for outdoor lessons are highlighted on planning. Indoor and outdoor enhancements and weekly rainbow challenges in reception within the continuous provision, are also included on the weekly planning format. Practitioners ensure that weekly objectives feed directly and seamlessly into whole class, adult led sessions and child initiated indoor and outdoor opportunities. Planning highlights where children are in their learning journey. Activities are planned indoors and outdoors to allow children to explore, learn, practise, apply and deepen their understanding of skills.

All practitioners are involved in the planning process through weekly meetings. Planning is designed to be as flexible and responsive as possible so that practitioners can adapt sequences of lessons to suit the needs of the children in the groups they teach.

**8. Parents as Partners**

At St.Clements we recognise the importance of establishing positive relationships with parents, as highlighted by the EYFS framework. We understand that an effective partnership between school and home will have a positive impact on children’s learning and development. We value the role of parents as children’s primary educators. We encourage parents to share their unique knowledge of their child, providing further insight into the child as an individual (e.g. characteristics, interests, experiences, likes, dislikes). This supports practitioners in establishing interesting and stimulating learning experiences, responding to children’s needs and interests. Parents and carers encouraged to access their child’s online learning journey where they can keep up to date with their child’s progress and achievements in school. Parents and carers are invited to feedback to practitioners at VIP meetings. Parent and carers will be informed of their child’s next steps in learning and how they can support at home.

Class dojo is an online tool which will also keep parents and carers informed of rewards that children have received during the school day. Dojo also enables staff to inform parents and carers about activities and incidental things that have happened in the classroom through photos and videos. Staff can send group messages via Dojo to alert parents and carers about events that are happening e.g. experience days, trips etc.

Parents are kept informed of what is happening in the setting through class newsletters, reading records and informal chatting at the beginning and end of the day. Whole school newsletters are available on a weekly basis.

Parents are given opportunities during the year to attend sessions to gain information and advice on how to support their child at home in key areas of reading, writing, phonics and mathematics. Transition workshops are carried out in the Autumn term in nursery where parent/carers are supported in understanding the importance of key skills for school readiness.

Parents are invited to attend parents’ evenings during the course of the academic year. The first of these takes place during the Autumn term to allow practitioners and parents to discuss how children have settled into the setting. Another parent’s evening takes place during the Spring term where practitioners will feedback on children’s learning and development progress.

Parents are also invited to get involved with school life. There are opportunities for them to help with activities such as educational visits.

The setting has a friendly, open-doors ethos and practitioners are available to talk to parents at the beginning and end of the day. Parents are always welcomed into school and encouraged to discuss any concerns they might have.

**9. Admissions and Induction**

St Clements C of E Primary School provides full-time Early Years education for children in the Nursery and Reception Years. In Nursery this is for children who enter school from September of the academic year in which they will turn four years old. We endeavour wherever possible to make the induction and transition period as positive and smooth as possible.

Before they start in the setting, all new nursery children and their families are invited to join “Little Learners at St.Clements” sessions. Initial sessions start for 3/4 weeks in March and are continued again June running on a once weekly basis for about 5 weeks. The purpose of this is to allow children and their families to time and space to get to know the school setting, play, socialise and make friends, meet school staff and have informal conversations. Any issues or concerns that parents and carers have can also be addressed at this point. The children will also have the opportunity to visit the nursery setting informally during the Summer term. A transition toy and bank of transition activities are provided for each child after completion of these sessions to allow parent/carers to work with their children during the Summer break to support school readiness. Work is continued using these toys during the Autumn term providing a vital link between home and school.

A lunch time visit is offered at the end of the Summer term for parents and carers to attend with their child and become familiar with the routines and kinds of foods on offer.

The school works closely as much as possible with local PVI feeder settings to gather information. The nursery teacher aims to visit each child in their pre-school setting during the Summer term. The school also requests permission from parent/carers to ascertain children’s two-year check assessments from providers so that accurate information is collected and concerns can be identified and addressed quickly.

During the first week of the Autumn term home visits are offered. The purpose of these initial visits is for the children to meet their new practitioner (or key worker) and for practitioners to have informal conversations about the individual child and their needs and interests. General information about school will be shared during this visit.

In the first weeks of the Autumn term, new nursery children will be invited to attend a “Rhyme Time” session and pre-entry visit. Parents will attend along with their child. During the pre-entry visit the nursery teacher will provide an information session for parents where matters such as routines, expectations, the curriculum, uniform and medical issues will be discussed. Paperwork will be given out and parents and carers will be supported in completing this at the meeting so that all important information can be gathered and processed quickly. ‘All About Me’ induction packs will also be given out to parents as another way to support practitioners’ knowledge and understanding of each individual child.

New nursery children are inducted over several weeks. Most children typically start school part time initially and build up to attending full time over the period of three weeks. However, the length of induction may vary between individual children depending on their needs and ability to cope. These decisions are made with close consultation with parents. New Reception children are offered opportunities to visit the school during the Summer and Autumn terms and parent/teacher meetings are arranged. Every effort is made to make children feel safe, secure and happy. Established routines, a calm atmosphere and encouraging talk are some of the strategies practitioners use to maintain children’s positive feelings about school.

**10. Safeguarding & Welfare**

*‘Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them.’*

*(Statutory Framework for EYFS 2014)*

At St.Clements C of E Primary School, we understand that we are legally required to comply with welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2014.

* To provide a setting that is welcoming, safe and stimulating where children can grow in confidence;
* Promote good health;
* Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children’s stage of development and individual needs
* To ensure that all adults who look after the children, or who have unsupervised access to them, are suitable to do so;
* Ensure that the setting, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for the purpose it was intended for;
* Maintain records, policies and procedures required for the safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

Keeping Safe - It is important to us that all children in the school are ‘safe’. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. We encourage children to take risks and highlight the importance of keeping themselves safe by teaching them how to recognise and avoid hazards. The outdoor environment is particularly effective as a way of promoting risk taking and safety for young children. Activities and opportunities are carefully planned for outside with this in mind.

 Half termly risk assessments of the wider environment and resources are carried out. In addition to this, staff work on a rota basis to undertake daily checks of the indoor and outdoor environment and equipment such as sockets and wires and rubbish in the outdoor area. The bathroom and toilet areas are checked regularly throughout the day to ensure they are safe and fit for use. All daily and bathroom checks are recorded.

Good Health - All children are provided with a healthy snack each day as well as being given the choice of milk. They have access to water at all times.

Intimate Care - “Intimate” care is any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure that most children are able to carry out themselves. However, depending on a child’s age and stage of development, they may need some support, for example dressing and changing underwear following an accident.

Every child has the right to privacy, dignity and a professional approach from all staff when meeting their needs and it is important that staff work in partnership with parents to give the right support to an individual child. No intimate care is to be given without parent or carers consent and they will be asked to provide that permission when their child joins Nursery or Reception at St.Clements. Any intimate care given is recorded and logged.

We follow whole school procedures for child protection (see separate policy). Staff are aware of reporting procedures through our C-POMs system.

Accident and first aid procedures are followed in accordance with whole school procedures.

**11. Monitoring and Review**

It is the responsibility of the EYFS staff to follow this policy. The EYFS lead will ensure that the policy is implemented and will carry out monitoring throughout the year. The Senior Leadership Team will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring system.

The policy will be reviewed annually.