



'Doing our best to achieve our best'

Clarendon Primary School and Nursery

Settling in Policy

Introduction:

For most children, starting nursery or reception is their first separation from their main carer, as a result we recognise that 'parents are a child's first and most enduring educators'. Starting in a new setting is a major event in a child's life and this time of transition can be stressful for both children and parents.

To ensure that both children and parents feel supported as they work towards feeling at ease in their new setting, at Clarendon Primary School we seek to ensure a smooth transition by working in close partnership with parents. We believe that it is important for staff to take time to get to know the children, their parents and their home environment.

The EYFS aims to be fully accessible to children and families from all sections of the local community. With this in mind we recognise that each child will start school with a diverse range of individual experiences, attitudes, expectations and developmental differences. These need to be taken into account when settling each child into their new learning environment.

Clarendon Primary School aim to:

- Make the children feel happy and secure in their new environment in the absence of their parent/carers.
- Make the children feel confident to explore and experiment in their new physical surroundings.
- Help the children to develop the independence required to freely access all of the resources available in their new environment.
- Support the children to develop positive relationships with both adults and other children.
- Help children to communicate their needs to others in an appropriate way.
- Promote appropriate behaviour, with clear expectations and positive reinforcements.
- Work in partnership with parents in their child's learning.
- Support children to build upon the prior experiences and knowledge they have gained in their home environment.
- Encourage and welcome open and honest communication between staff and parents/carers.

As a staff we aim to:

- Show empathy and sensitivity towards new parents and children.
- Be responsive and flexible by taking into account the individual needs and experiences of the children and parents/carers.
- Take time and provide the space to get to know new children and their parents/carers whilst they are settling in.
- Organise and manage the environment in such a way that the children can operate independently, safely and imaginatively.

Guidelines and Procedures:

- The children and parents/ carers are always warmly welcomed into the school.
- All children and their parents / carers are made aware of their teacher and support staff before they start in the EYFS.
- When a child starts, they will have a 'keyworker' to support them become familiar with the EYFS and to feel safe and confident within it.
- Once a child has settled and know the staff, they will be supported to choose their own key person.
- Each practitioner develops a genuine warm and caring professional relationship with each child in their class as well as the child's parents/carers.

- Each practitioner responds sensitively to the feelings, ideas and behaviour of each child in their class and endeavours to meet each child's particular needs and those of their parents.
- Information is provided to the parents to familiarise them with daily routines and an overview of the termly and yearly events.
- Parents are asked to complete an 'All About Me', questionnaire before their child starts in the EYFS in order to give us additional information about each child.
- We encourage the parents / carers to leave their child after a short period of time, with the understanding that if the child has been upset at the separation, we will contact them soon after to reassure them that their child has settled.
- If the child continues to be upset staff will contact the parent/carer to discuss and decide, in partnership, the best next steps / course of action. This is because we feel that each child is individual and therefore needs any subsequent plan developed with this in mind.
- For the initial half term at nursery school, parents / carers are able to choose to send their child / children for a reduced period of time, if they feel their child is not ready for the full 2 ½ day session. (This will be agreed between staff and parents and reviewed on an ongoing basis to ensure the agreed plan continues to best meet the needs of the child.)
- For some children in reception settling in may be, for various reasons, an upsetting or traumatic experience. In these cases the reception teacher and parents will discuss and agree an individual settling in plan which may include a parent supporting in sessions or the child having shorter session times for a short period of time. These plans will be reviewed regularly, based on the child's progress and development.
- We offer and undertake ongoing, regular, informal discussions with parents / carers to enable us to build up a picture of their child and the previous experiences they have on arrival to nursery and share how each day is progressing and how their child is settling in.
- Parents are given opportunities to share what they know about their child either in written form or through informal interviews. This is used to help plan appropriate activities for the children.
- During the settling in period, activities and experiences provided in the EYFS are geared towards helping the children settle into their new environment and learn their new daily routines. (These are planned in response to how each child is progressing.)
- During the first few weeks, regular ongoing informal catch up discussions take place with parents/carers to share how their child is getting on in nursery and, where required, explore how best to help their child fully settle if they are finding this more difficult than other children, e.g. use of a transition toy / object.

Ongoing policy review

Our Policy and Procedures for 'Settling-in' are always open and responsive to feedback from parents/carers and staff. If it is felt worthwhile and helpful additions and changes will be made to the process.

Policy Review:

Date reviewed: Autumn term 2025
Review date: Autumn term 2028