

Welcome to the Foundation Stage



Cliftonville Primary
and Pre-School

What is the Early Years Foundation Stage?

At Cliftonville Primary and Pre-School our children in both the Pre-School and Reception year follow the EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage).

Children follow the EYFS framework from birth to 5 years old and all professionals (nurseries, child-minders, teachers etc.) use this framework to plan for children's next steps and support their holistic development.

The EYFS is a very important stage for children as it helps prepare them for more formal teaching and lifelong learning. Children's early years' experience should be a happy, active, exciting, fun and safe time which enables every individual child to achieve their full potential.

Here at Cliftonville, we aim to ensure that all children learn by 'doing' and leave both our Nursery and Reception year with a love of learning and feeling safe and excited by the opportunities that learning offers.

The EYFS ensures that children learn new skills, acquire new knowledge and demonstrate their understanding through 7 areas of learning and development.

There are **3 prime areas** which are:

- ✓ Communication and Language
- ✓ Physical Development
- ✓ Personal, social and emotional development

The prime areas help children to develop skills in **4 specific areas**.

These are:

- ✓ Literacy
- ✓ Numeracy
- ✓ Understanding the world
- ✓ Expressive arts and design



The 7 areas are used to plan your child's learning and activities. The teachers and teaching assistants make sure the activities are suited to each child's needs. Children in the EYFS learn by playing and exploring, being active and through creative and critical thinking which takes place both indoors and out. We sustain high standards of achievement through careful planning, continuous assessment and tracking of children's learning. This ongoing process enables us to build a picture of all aspects of each child's development. We believe in creating a colourful, rich, challenging and fun learning environment. If children are happy they will want to learn. We have high expectations for all our children and do everything possible to allow them to fulfil their potential.

Learning opportunities are developed:

- ✓ Through play which is structured at times to enable new skills to develop
- ✓ Through children's interests noted by staff and suggestions from parents
- ✓ Through allowing children to make their own decisions and choices
- ✓ Through providing a range of stimulating resources that children are encouraged to explore freely and through direction from staff
- ✓ Through incorporating drama and role-play into sessions
- ✓ Through catering for different learning styles and needs so that all children are engaged.
- ✓ Through offering very high quality pastoral care so that children feel confident, valued secure.

Our Aims:

- ✓ To provide a secure, caring and stimulating environment
- ✓ To ensure that all children are valued
- ✓ To build on what the child already knows and to encourage a positive attitude and enjoyment of learning.
- ✓ To provide a range of opportunities to learn through direct first-hand experience and active exploration, in the classroom and outdoors, using a variety of equipment and materials.
- ✓ To value the role families can play and work together in partnership.

How do we do this?

We want children to be engaged in the learning process and for their learning to be relevant and purposeful. Therefore, our philosophy is centered around the notion that children learn best by doing. We believe that play, both indoors and outdoors, is an ideal vehicle for young children's learning. Play helps children to be challenged in their thinking and helps them to practice and rehearse skills and to be motivated in their learning. Children are inquisitive and curious and we wish to build upon this in a positive and enjoyable manner.

Outside Learning

We believe that children should have regular access to outside learning opportunities. The use of the outdoor environment compliments and extends the learning which takes place indoors. The outside environment can offer unique opportunities for learning and the children have more space to move freely which is crucial for their physical development, social and emotional development.

At Cliftonville Primary we have a secure designated outdoor area for our Pre-School and Reception children. Each day there will be a variety of activities set up outside for the children to explore and develop their learning. The areas will be well resourced and there will be systems in place ensuring equal access for all children to this area. The children also have supervised access to other outdoor facilities on the school site including the Forest School, playing field, courtyard and playground for trucks and trikes.



Working in partnerships with families



At Cliftonville Primary and Pre-School, we work hard to develop an active partnership with parents where we build and nurture relationships and often draw them in through social events. We see the parents of children at our school as partners and we greatly value the contribution that parents make to their children's learning and continual development. We aim to work in partnership with parents even before their children start their learning journey at Cliftonville by talking to them about their children and their needs at our open evening and during our Rising 5s sessions in term 6.

One evening in June before the children start with us in Reception, we invite all parents into school for our yearly 'New Entrants Meeting'. They have the opportunity to meet the Reception teachers and Teaching Assistants as well as find out about the transition process to year R. This is a really relaxed yet informative opportunity for parents to understand what they might expect from the first year of their children's school lives. Each family receives a learning pack so they can support their children's learning at home.

Our successful **Rising 5s** programme is held over the last few weeks of term, offering parents and their children three opportunities to come into school for up to an hour at a time. The children will be able to take part in an activity with their new teacher and other children that will be in their new class and for the parents to take part in a workshop centred around school readiness.

Through our 'open door' ethos parents have the opportunity to talk to either Mrs Wilson (Deputy Head Teacher and Early Years Leader) and the Year Group Leader as their child enters school in the morning or the class teacher at the end of the day. Appointments can also be made to see class teachers and members of the Senior Leadership Team through the school office.

We also send out termly newsletters informing families of events and learning that will take place during the forthcoming term.

We invite our Year R parents into school at least once a term to celebrate learning with us. This may be a celebration assembly where the children share what they have learned, perhaps sing some songs and have out on display their writing or creative pieces of art. We also invite families to our Nativity at Christmas time, to our Sports Day and other celebrations throughout the year. Parents are also invited to read with their children in the classroom on a regular basis.

We will also have designated parent-teacher meetings twice a year and write a full end of year report which is sent home to parents in July.

We welcome parental support at school and have a number of volunteers who either read regularly or play games with our Reception children.

We have an excellent Pastoral team who are on hand to support any families in their children's learning and wellbeing both at home and at school. Our Parent Support Advisors - Ms McAvoy, Mrs Griffin and Mrs Fourie - provide care and provision for all our families and their children.

Encouraging Independence

Your child will need to become independent in many of their everyday activities. They can be helped to achieve this during the time leading up to their entry to school.

As parents you can support your child by preparing them in the following ways:

- ✓ Encouraging your child to dress and undress themselves - fastening buttons, doing up buckles and zips, tying shoelaces.
- ✓ Getting your child to use the toilet independently and wash and dry their hands without the help of an adult.
- ✓ Teaching your child appropriate table manners and to use a knife and fork.
- ✓ Encouraging your child to tidy up, as this is a very important part of life in the classroom.



Some activities to do at home

There are many activities your child can take part in at home which will prepare them for some of the tasks they will be expected to do at school, such as;

- ✓ Drawing, tracing, colouring and painting
- ✓ Using scissors for cutting out
- ✓ Playing with jigsaw puzzles, play dough, building bricks, cars etc...
- ✓ Recognising and writing their name
- ✓ Learning and joining in with nursery rhymes and simple songs
- ✓ Playing physical games e.g. running, hopping, jumping, throwing, kicking balls.
- ✓ Helping with shopping - opportunities for looking for letters/ numbers, counting money and writing lists
- ✓ Sharing books together with your child and talking about what they see in the pictures
- ✓ Recognising and naming shapes and colours
- ✓ Using counting rhymes, counting objects and recognising and writing numbers



In the first few weeks...

We work really hard to make sure that the transition to 'big school' is as smooth and comfortable for your children as possible. We do this by;

- ✓ Meeting with your child's Pre-School setting to talk about your child, their likes and dislikes, styles of learning
- ✓ Sending your child a booklet in the post with some information about starting school as well as a picture of their new teacher and some information about themselves.
- ✓ Meeting your child at our Rising 5s days to ensure we get to know them as well as possible for when they first start with us.
- ✓ Allowing the children to come into school on a part-time basis for usually the first two weeks, incorporating lunchtime sessions before starting full time the week after.

We need you to also support us by:

- ✓ Encouraging your child to walk into their classroom and putting their belongings away on their own - leaving you at the door.
- ✓ Trying not to watch them through the classroom door
- ✓ Ensuring that you ask about your child's day at school and make it clear that if there are any problems you want to share these and will try to help.
- ✓ Actively fostering friendships your child has begun to make and getting to know the children by allowing your child to see them outside of school.

Some practical points...

- ✓ Mrs Wilson or a member of the Early Years team open the doors to the Reception building at 8.40am with learning starting straight away. The door is closed at 8.50am when registers are taken. If your child arrives after this time, please take them to the Wellbeing Hub/ The House.
- ✓ If your child is poorly, please telephone the attendance team (07540686882) on the first day of absence and preferably before 9am.
- ✓ All items of clothing should be labelled - this includes shoes, coats, lunch boxes, water bottles and PE kits.
- ✓ Your child will need a blue book bag with their name on - no rucksacks please. This can be bought from The Schoolwear Centre in Margate.
- ✓ We aim to change your child's reading book 2 times a week or when a book has been read at least twice. Please take some time at home to read with them and then sign their reading record every time.
- ✓ It would be helpful if PE bags had a name label on the outside. The children should bring their P.E kit to school with them on the first day of term. This includes a plain, white t-shirt, black shorts and a pair of plimsolls. No football shirts please!
- ✓ Please notify us of any changes to arrangements in the collection of your child from school. Only a named adult on the contact list can collect your child.
- ✓ If any of your contact details should change, please inform the office as soon as possible.



What equipment will my child require?

At Cliftonville Primary and Pre-School, we do have a school uniform. This is made up of;

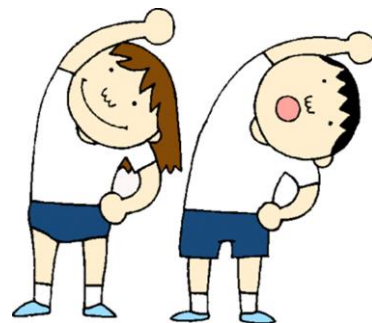
- ✓ A royal blue school jumper (available at The SchoolWear Centre in Margate)
- ✓ A plain white t-shirt or shirt
- ✓ Grey trousers or skirt
- ✓ Black (flat) school shoes

Please make sure that all articles of clothes are labelled with your child's name.

Physical Education

The children need only a pair of plimsolls for indoor and outdoor PE which are kept in your child's PE bag on their peg. NO JEWELLERY should be worn for PE. We ask that your child's PE kit stays in school until the end of term when we will make sure they take it home to be washed.

If your child does have pierced ears, please take them out on the day of PE or provide micropore tape that can be used to cover earrings up.



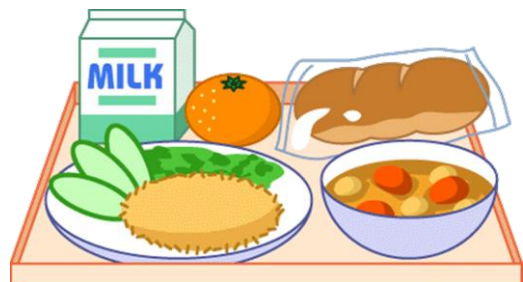
Lunchtimes

We offer all pupils in Reception, year 1 and year 2 a free school meal. We have experienced a very high uptake of this initiative and in order to help us to plan for such high numbers of children eating school lunches the following will apply:

For free school lunches in Year R, 1 and 2:

- ✓ You will be required to make an initial commitment for at least one seasonal term (Sept-Dec/Jan-April/May-July)
- ✓ If you decide not to take up the offer initially and then choose to do so, we will need four week's notice in *writing before we are able to offer your child free school lunches.
- ✓ There will be hot meals and cold meals (packed lunch) provided each day. However, the school cannot guarantee your child's first choice. We will, of course, continue to respect religious dietary practices.

Sample menus can be found on our school website or in the main school office.



Ten top tips to help when your child starts school

- ✓ Going to school for the first time is a big and exciting event for children, but do not be alarmed if they find the changeover difficult at first.
- ✓ It is normal for a child's behaviour to change. Parents may see a difference in a child's moods: dependent one minute, independent the next.
- ✓ A child who feels loved and secure will feel ready to learn and become strong and independent.
- ✓ Some children at this stage learn to manage situations and master their feeling through play. Some children prefer to talk about their thoughts and feelings.
- ✓ Children need to help progress at their own pace. Reading a storybook about school can help your child feel reassured or to deal with a new situation.
- ✓ Parents also have to take a step back as they watch their children make their own friends and try to find their place in a social group.
- ✓ One of the main adjustments that children must make in school is to being one among many. Give plenty of praise and love at home and, as far as possible accept your child for who he or she is. Your child is unique.
- ✓ Some children take time to adapt to school.
- ✓ Show genuine interest in everything your child does, both in school and at home. The home environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development and learning.
- ✓ Make a point of talking to your child's teacher if you are worried or unclear about anything.

