Welcome to Claytons

September 2023

Dear Parents/Carers,

Welcome to Claytons Nursery. We hope you find our 'Meet the teacher' session helpful. For those who were unable to attend we have put some notes below about what was discussed. You may also find the Nursery page on the school website useful.

Topic

Our topic for this term is 'Knowing me Knowing you' as we will be getting to know each other and becoming more familiar with the nursery environment and the routines. Our topic will provide opportunities for the children to recognise how we look after ourselves and one another. Our initial observations will inform how we adapt our plans to meet the children's needs.
Over the coming weeks we will also be learning some traditional stories and nursery rhymes. We hope your child will share these with you at home. Long Term Plans can be found on our website.

Adults in the classroom

Every family has received a "Welcome to Claytons" set of photographs of the Nursery staff. We hope you have found these helpful. Children have the opportunity to interact with all staff during the morning. Miss Russell assists with Lunch Club and the afternoon sessions are staffed by Mrs Cox and Mrs Jones. We hope the children are telling you all about the fun they have had with us.

The EYFS Curriculum

During the Early Years Foundation Stage, children are offered opportunities to learn through play. Early Years practitioners work closely with the children to observe not only what they are learning, but also *how* they approach their play.
The curriculum is split into 3 Prime Areas of Learning and 4 Specific Areas of Learning:-

The Prime Areas

- Personal, Social & Emotional Development
- Communication & Language
- Physical Development

The Specific Areas

- Literacy
- Maths
- Understanding The World
- Expressive Arts & Design

The EYFS is a very open curriculum, allowing freedom to support the children's learning and development through assessing their individual needs and interests. We will focus particularly on children's development in the Prime Areas over the next six weeks to establish a secure foundation for learning across the year.

The 'Characteristics of Effective Learning' are also used when making observations. These look at how your child learns and how they create and adapt as they go along. We are able to link your child's observations to the characteristics, which you will see when we upload the observations to Tapestry.
We recognise and want to celebrate the fact that your child is unique and so will their learning journey be. We also recognise you as essential partners in this journey and hope to build a strong relationship with you too. Please do use Tapestry to comment on the observations that we post and also share your own learning moments at home.

Additional information on the EYFS Curriculum and the Characteristics of Effective Learning is included in your pack and is available on the Nursery page of the Claytons website.

Assessments

Regular assessments take place through observation. We reflect on how the children are progressing and adapt our planning and the environment to ensure that the children are taking the appropriate next steps in their individual development. We can assess whether the children have met a learning objective through formative assessment (photographs, observations, discussions with children or parents etc), and we will summarise their progress in their end of year report.
In addition, the school use an assessment system called Insight, which tracks the children's attainment as they work towards the Early Learning Goals (goals that the children should achieve by the end of the Reception Year). We use the terms 'beginning, developing, secure, exceeding' to track children's attainment and progress through the year.

Learning Journey

We use an online Learning Journey called 'Tapestry'. This online system enables us to directly upload our observations of your child throughout the year, allowing you to access it at home. You will also be able to send us pictures of your child at home which will help support our planning and assessments, as well as enabling us to get a more holistic view of each child. We hope you find this form of communication accessible and informative.
We send a weekly newsletter via Tapestry on a Friday. The school also send a weekly whole school newsletter by email. Please do let us know if you are experiencing any issues accessing Tapestry, or if you are not receiving the newsletters. They may contain important information.
Some examples of the children's work may also be kept for display or for their Nursery Learning Journey book, which will be sent home when they move on to Reception.

Our Daily Routine

A normal day at nursery will run to a familiar timetable. The children spend much of the morning choosing activities that interest them. Adults will be on hand to observe, encourage and extend the play that children choose. Activities that are on offer provide learning opportunities across the seven areas of learning within the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum. Some activities are led by adults. Some are initiated by the children. We have lots of activities to choose from so we would kindly request that children do not bring toys in from home to play with at nursery (unless these are a particular comfort item).
We have two "carpet time" sessions where the children will enjoy some teacher led learning, sing songs together and engage with stories related to our topic. Children will be offered a fruit or vegetable snack and will be given the opportunity to play outdoors. **Please supply a named water bottle each day. Please name everything.**

We are not put off by the weather so please send appropriate clothing for the season and a coat every day, as the weather is changeable. As we progress into Autumn, we would ask parents to **please provide a pair of**

named wellington boots to wear outdoors. These can be left at Nursery or brought in each day. We also suggest packing a change of clothes in your child's bag, just in case their clothes get very wet or dirty during the session. Learning opportunities in the outdoor area mirror and link to our indoor opportunities. The morning ends with a singing and/or story session. The children are encouraged to join in with rhymes and actions as they have fun singing and moving together.

Lunch

Some children stay for "Lunch Club". This is a lovely opportunity for the children to enjoy eating together with their friends. If your child attends lunch club, please provide a healthy lunch and please **no nuts, nut products or seeds**. **This includes Nutella and cereal bars. Please name any containers and lunchboxes where possible.** Thank you.

Collection Arrangements

Please inform a member of staff at drop off, if your child is going to be collected by a different adult at the end of the session. If you are running late or if there is a last minute change of plan, please call the school office on 01628 525277. If the adult is unfamiliar to us we would ask that you agree a password (it can be the person's name) and share it with the office when you call. Thank you for your co-operation with this request.

Developing Maths Skills

Maths is more than just learning to count. Awareness of measuring and shapes etc. also plays an important part in your child's development. We make use of White Rose Maths planning in line with the other year groups. An overview of the White Rose Maths phases for maths planning is included in your pack.

Phonics and Reading

Throughout the Nursery year, we will use activities from the 'Little Wandle' programme to prepare children for learning their phonic sounds. Phonics sessions in Nursery will involve playing games with sounds, words, rhyming and alliteration. As the year progresses activities will encourage children to hear the initial sounds in simple words. Children are also encouraged to recognise words in the environment, starting with recognising their own name on their name card at self registration each morning, with plenty of adult support.
We regularly share stories with the children at carpet time and plan adult led activities related to our key texts. Children have access to a range of books to browse in different areas, both indoors and outdoors.
More information about the Little Wandle programme can be found here:-

https://www.littlewandlelettersandsounds.org.uk/resources/for-parents/

Supporting Learning at Home

You are your child's first teacher. We can make suggestions, but any playing, reading and talking that you do with your child will benefit them. We would suggest that you encourage your child to be independent where possible – you could encourage them to help with dressing themselves, allowing a little more time for them to try doing up their own coat, for example. Go for walks together and talk about what you see or find. Talk about what you did on your adventures when you get home. Draw pictures together. Value any marks your child makes and ask them to tell you about what they have drawn. Talk to your child and involve them in what you are doing. More information on the benefits of talk and the stages of speech development is available on the Nursery page of the school website.
We would love you to share your experiences with your child with us on Tapestry.

Here are some specific ideas for supporting Maths and Literacy.

Counting / Calculating

Your child may start to recognise numbers at an early age. They will go on to learn how to count, and will use their skills with numbers to solve problems.
To help develop your child's counting skills you could:

- Help your child count items around the home – tins in the cupboards, toys in the toy box or pencils in the drawer - show them how to touch each item as you count it – you could count the stairs to bed
- Sing counting songs and nursery rhymes like '5 Little Ducks'
- Point out numerals in everyday life – on the front door, birthday cards or clocks
- Ask your child to give you a small number of objects – count them out carefully
- Play games like Snakes and Ladders that involve using a dice

Measuring

Your child naturally learns to use words to compare the things they see, for example 'bigger' or 'smaller' and 'taller' or 'shorter'.
To help develop your child's measuring skills you could

- Place a small number of objects in order, from smallest to biggest
- Compare objects to see which is heavier
- Fill and empty containers

Shapes

There will be lots of opportunities for children to explore shapes at Nursery. They will use 3D shapes to build towers or make models. They may use 2D shapes to create pictures or patterns. We will talk about how shapes are similar and different, match and compare them and will introduce the names of shapes that we are using.
You can encourage your child's interest in shapes by

- Comparing the shape of street signs that you see on the way to the shops
- Looking at and holding everyday objects of different shapes - find words to describe their shapes
- As they become familiar with shape names, ask them to find everyday objects that are squares, circles, rectangles or triangles

Reading

Sharing books with your child is a great way to encourage your child to be interested in reading. Listening to you read and talking about stories can develop your child's communication and language skills, widen their vocabulary and instil a love of reading that will benefit them throughout their learning journey. Talk about the pictures too.
Sing nursery rhymes together or make up your own versions. We hope the children will share the rhymes they have learnt at nursery with you.
Children will be encouraged to borrow books from our Nursery Borrow Box. These books can be shared together at home and returned to us when you have finished and swapped for another book.

Resources and Useful Information

The following websites contain some very useful information that can support your child's development at this preschool stage.

Bucks Family Information Service
https://familyinfo.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/

Local information including courses and drop in sessions to support different aspects of your child's development and to support parents. Links to make a self referral for additional family support.

Bucks Children and Young People Therapy
https://www.buckshealthcare.nhs.uk/cyp/therapy/
Links to resources to support your child's preschool development, particularly their speech and language and advice line to book online advice sessions with a speech therapist or occupational therapist to discuss any concerns.

Tiny Happy People
https://www.bbc.co.uk/tiny-happy-people/preschool-development
A wealth of suggested indoor and outdoor activities to support your child's development in their preschool years.

Reminders

- Please bring a **coat, a change of clothes and a pair of wellies** (nappies/pull ups/wipes if needed)
- Please bring in a **named water bottle everyday**
- Please **leave own toys safely at home**
- **No nuts, nut products or seeds** in lunch boxes please and please **slice grapes into quarters**
- **Please name everything**

A Final Note

We hope that you feel able to speak to any member of nursery staff about any concerns you may have. Please keep us up to date with any changes and share any of your own observations via Tapestry. We look forward to working with you over the coming year.

The Claytons Nursery Team