

## Parents' Overview of Clowns Nursery Curriculum

**Clowns Nursery is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.**

### **Areas Of Learning**

At Clowns our curriculum is designed to challenge and support the development of children's knowledge and skills. Our curriculum intent is to facilitate high quality teaching and learning opportunities; enable moments of awe and wonder; embody a growth mindset; support wellbeing and prepare children for the next stage of their educational journey.

The Government's statutory Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework is the core of our curriculum. The Seven Areas of Learning detailed in the framework and listed below, form the fundamentals of teaching and learning opportunities across the nursery.

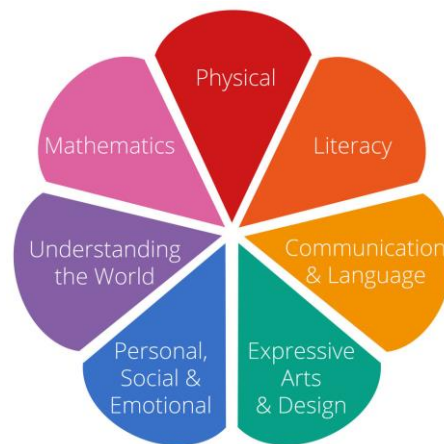
### **The Seven Areas of Learning:**

#### **Prime:**

- ✓ Communication and Language
- ✓ Physical Development
- ✓ Personal, Social and Emotional Development

#### **Specific:**

- ✓ Literacy
- ✓ Maths
- ✓ Understanding the World
- ✓ Expressive Arts and Design



The Prime Areas of Learning lay the foundations for all children's learning. They ensure children can relate to others, communicate effectively and engage with their environment. These areas are therefore a greater focus for children in the early stages of development. The specific areas build on development made through the Prime areas and provide important contexts for learning.

### **Characteristics of Effective Learning**

The Characteristics of Effective Learning are the ways in which the children engage with other people and their environment. The Characteristics of Effective Learning underpin all areas of learning and development. These are:

- **Playing and exploring:** Children are given opportunities to investigate and make sense of the world around them through structured play. They initiate their own activities and engage in those set for them by the practitioners. They are encouraged to take risks, seeking challenge in what they do.
- **Active Learning:** Children maintain focus, staying on task and persevering when they are facing challenges such as learning skills that require more than one attempt. They value the process of what they are doing, as well as taking pride in whatever they produce.
- **Creating and Thinking Critically:** Children are encouraged to have and develop their own ideas. They make decisions, link their thoughts and plans, develop their thinking (practically and/or verbally), make predictions and test out their ideas.

### **Clowns Educational Programme**

At Clowns we have a unique educational program which is tailored to support the learning and development needs of every child. Our educational program is informed by two documents: Birth to 5 Matters and bespoke learning maps.

Birth to 5 Matters is used to give further guidance on how to support children's learning and development across the 7 areas of learning. It outlines a developmental pathway and supports practitioners by giving them guidance on what a child might be doing (a unique child), what adults might do (positive relationships) and what adults might provide (enabling environments) at each stage of development. Practitioners use the Birth to 5 Matters document and Clowns Learning Maps to inform planning, quality interactions and the enabling environment they create.

Clowns learning maps are organised into the 7 areas of learning. They highlight progression across the key knowledge, skills and understanding that each child acquires as they move through the educational program delivered at Clowns. The learning maps incorporate the enriching initiatives embedded throughout the nursery and the maps ensure there is consistency in pedagogy.

### **Specialist Subjects**

At Clowns our curriculum is enhanced through the specialist teaching of Drama, Music and P.E. Within these areas, the children are given rich opportunities to develop subject specific knowledge and skills on a regular basis.

### **Early Reading and Writing**

We use Pie Corbett's Talk for Writing scheme as a framework for teaching storytelling and inspiring a love of reading. The scheme involves children imitating, innovating and inventing stories. By the time children leave our nursery they have a rich bank of stories to draw upon. We also use Tales Toolkit as a method of teaching children to become storytellers themselves – this is a fantastic way to develop imagination and creativity.

To teach Phonics, we follow the guidance and progression set out by Letters and Sounds, a DFE publication, and we use this in conjunction with elements of Ruth Miskin's Read, Write, Inc. scheme.

### **Vocabulary**

Children are given a wealth of opportunities to develop their communication and language skills and learn a range of ambitious vocabulary. We use story as a powerful means of teaching new vocabulary in meaningful contexts. We also have a non-fiction library to give the children opportunities to learn subject specific vocabulary. Curiosity cubes are used within the classrooms to stimulate discussion and provide further opportunities for new vocabulary.

### **Enriching Initiatives**

Our curriculum is enriched to support personal development through a number of initiatives. Our enriching initiatives focus on supporting children's wellbeing and teaching tools and skills required to support their emotional development, as they move through their educational journey.

### **British Values**

At Clowns we are passionate about encompassing and celebrating 'British Values' within our learning environment. These values are democracy, rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance for all. The values are woven into everyday practice within the nursery.

### **English As An Additional Language**

At Clowns we celebrate the diversity of languages spoken within the setting. We encourage families to share their cultural heritage, so we can use this as a rich and meaningful context for learning. We work in partnership with parents to ensure children's needs, wants and interests are being met and we differentiate learning opportunities to ensure it is accessible to all.

### **Planning**

#### **The Planning Cycle**

Planning is an integral part of the teaching and learning cycle at Clowns; we use it to strengthen, deepen and challenge children's current learning and development. The planning cycle is as follows:

- **Intent** – Learning intentions are set from the curriculum (alongside an in-depth knowledge of the individual child as a learner and their stage of development).
- **Implementation** – Learning intentions are then planned for and high-quality teaching and learning

opportunities are facilitated.

- **Impact** – Progress is reviewed (through observation and assessment) against the set intention. This information is used to inform and generate next steps for the child.

### **Spontaneous Planning**

Alongside our planning cycle, we also dedicate a proportion of our teaching and learning time to spontaneous planning. This involves children leading their own learning in the enabling nursery environment. Practitioners are skilled at recognising teachable moments and enhancing these.

### **Parental Input**

On a termly basis, parents are encouraged to complete a form to outline essential knowledge and skills they would like their child to develop. This information is used to inform planning and set intentions for individual children.

### **Themes**

The curriculum is planned and delivered through a thematic approach. Classes follow themes based on children's arising interests, as well as topics which inspire and ignite teaching and learning opportunities. Themes may include topics such as Space Explorers, Winter Festivals or Around the World!

### **Wellbeing (Personal Development)**

#### **Growth Mindset**

Our practice at Clowns is influenced by Dr Carol Dweck's Growth Mindset theory.

#### DEFINING A GROWTH MINDSET

"In a growth mindset, people believe that their most basic abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work—brains and talent are just the starting point. This view creates a love of learning and a resilience that is essential for great accomplishment,"

Carol Dweck

We have four puppets who embody elements of the Growth Mindset. They are:

1. Tilly the Team Player
2. Betty the Believer
3. Persistent Percy
4. Sally-Ann - not quite there yet

The puppets are used throughout the nursery as a method of teaching children to embrace challenges; learn from mistakes; enjoy effort and keep on learning.

### **Quality Circle Time (QCT)**

Trained by Jenny Mosley, we follow an exciting, democratic and creative approach to the teaching and learning of Personal, Social and Emotional development. Each class engages with QCT. This involves practitioners implementing Circle Meetings with the intention of children developing a range of key communication skills, through engaging in whole group activities and games.

### **The Golden Rules**

At Clowns we follow 6 Golden Rules to protect the safety and wellbeing of the children:

1. We are gentle
2. We are kind and helpful
3. We listen
4. We are honest
5. We work hard
6. We look after property

We use a collection of engaging stories and puppets, based on the tales of Miss Beanie the hippo and her class of animals, to teach and explore the moral messages behind the rules.

### **Mindfulness**

At Clowns we value teaching children the tools to support their own wellbeing through mindfulness. In every class, children engage in a 'mindful moment' at several points throughout the day. This is a guided exercise, led by practitioners, to encourage the children to focus on their senses, deepen their breathing and listen to the relaxing sound of a chime.

In the rising 4 classes the children follow the MINDUP program, which is designed to foster social and emotional awareness, enhance psychological well-being, and promote academic success. This is implemented through a series of sessions which teach children about the function of the brain, sharpening their senses and considering their attitudes.

### **Puppets**

We use puppets as a powerful tool to support teaching and learning, as well as personal, social, and emotional development within the nursery. Each room has their own special class puppet and Sealey the Seal lives in the Management Office and visits all the classes with Mrs Landy.

The puppets are part of the children's everyday routines, and they provide a range of benefits, from increasing children's sense of security when engaging with whole group learning, to encouraging them to talk about their emotions.

### **Social and Environmental Responsibility**

At Clowns we recognise that we have a responsibility toward our environment as our existence, as a nursery, is not solitary. We are part of a bigger system of people, values, other organisations, and nature, and accept that we have a social and environmental responsibility, as an organisation/business, to give back to the world just as it gives to us.