



Our Curriculum

At Clare House Nursery, we are passionate about providing a nurturing, inclusive and inspiring environment where every child feels safe, valued and supported. We recognise that every child is unique and work closely with families to ensure all children have the opportunity to thrive, achieve their full potential and develop a lifelong love of learning.

Through high-quality interactions, meaningful play and secure relationships, we aim to provide children with the knowledge, skills and confidence they need to flourish during their time at Clare House and to make a successful transition to school.

We aim for every child to:

- Feel happy, safe, secure and valued.
- Develop confidence, resilience and independence.
- Build positive relationships and learn to cooperate with others.
- Recognise, understand and express their thoughts, feelings and emotions.
- Develop curiosity, creativity and a love of learning through play and exploration.
- Become confident communicators and active learners.
- Develop the skills and knowledge needed for a successful transition to school and the next stage of their learning journey.

Influences on Our Practice and Curriculum Development

At Clare House Nursery, we are committed to continuous professional development and reflective practice. All staff participate in whole-team, room-based and individual training to develop their knowledge, skills and practice in line with the needs of the children, the nursery and current best practice.

Our curriculum and teaching approach have been influenced by a range of respected theories and research, including:

- Reggio Emilia – child-led learning and enabling environments.
- Communication Friendly Spaces (Elizabeth Jarman) – promoting communication and independence.
- Anna Ephgrave's In the Moment Planning – following children's interests through responsive interactions.
- Tapestry – celebrating children's achievements and strengthening partnerships with families.
- Inclusive Communication Approaches – ensuring every child can participate, communicate and thrive.

We regularly review our curriculum to ensure it remains inclusive, ambitious and responsive to the needs of all children attending Clare House Nursery.

Parent partnership

At Clare House Nursery, we recognise that parents and carers are a child's first and most important educators. We value working in partnership with families to ensure every child feels secure, supported and able to reach their full potential.

We believe that open, honest and respectful communication is at the heart of successful partnerships. We welcome parents' knowledge of their child and encourage them to share information about their child's interests, achievements, routines and any changes at home. This enables us to provide personalised care and learning experiences that meet each child's individual needs.

We communicate with families in a variety of ways, including:

- Portal
- Tapestry
- Nursery website
- Facebook
- Notice boards
- Focus month meetings
- Annual parent satisfaction surveys
- Committee meetings and the AGM
- Online platforms, where appropriate (e.g. Zoom or Microsoft Teams)

Working together enables us to celebrate children's achievements, identify any additional support that may be needed and ensure children receive consistent care and learning between home and nursery.

We are committed to creating a welcoming and inclusive environment where every family feels listened to, respected and valued. Information relating to children's learning and development is shared with parents regularly and, where required, information can be made accessible through translation services or alternative formats, including British Sign Language (BSL) and Braille.

Finding Out About Clare House

We believe that first impressions are important and that building positive relationships with children and their families from the very beginning helps children feel safe, secure and ready to learn.

Before a child starts at Clare House, families are invited to visit the nursery for a show-round and an informal discussion with a senior member of staff. This provides an opportunity for parents to learn about our ethos, routines and curriculum, ask any questions and share information about their child. Families are also directed to the Clare House website, where they can access key information, policies and procedures to help them prepare for their child's start at nursery.

When Children Start with Us

Clare House Nursery provides care and education across four age-appropriate rooms: Little Bees (Babies), Bumbles (Two-Year-Olds), Busy Bees (Rising Threes) and Big Bees (Pre-School). Children are allocated to a room according to their age and stage of development.

We believe that a gentle, well-planned settling-in process helps children build secure relationships and feel confident in their new environment. During the week before their start date, children are invited to attend four one-hour settling-in sessions. The first session is attended with a parent or carer, allowing the key person to begin building relationships, complete any outstanding paperwork and gather valuable information about the child's individual needs, interests and routines.

Parents are invited to complete an 'All About Me' form to help us get to know their child and share details of any other professionals or services involved with the family. Throughout the settling-in sessions, parents receive regular verbal feedback about how their child is settling and engaging in nursery life. Photographs and observations are shared through Tapestry, and parents are encouraged to contribute to their child's learning journey from the very beginning.

We recognise that every child is different, therefore settling-in arrangements can be adapted to meet the individual needs of each child and family.

Starting Point Assessment

From their first week at Clare House, each child's learning and development is carefully observed to establish their individual starting points. Planning is personalised to reflect each child's interests, strengths, needs and stage of development, with initial learning priorities discussed and agreed in partnership with parents.

Following the settling-in period, attendance arrangements remain flexible where appropriate to support the needs of the child and their family.

During the first six weeks, parents are invited to contribute to their child's starting point assessment by completing the relevant sections of the 'What to Expect, When?' guidance. Key persons are available to support families with this process, and where appropriate, additional communication profiles or other assessment tools may be used to gain a fuller understanding of the child's development.

Throughout the first six weeks, key persons hold regular 'Getting to Know You' conversations with parents to build strong relationships and ensure planning reflects each child's individual needs. Where children attend another early years setting, and with parental consent, the key person will liaise with the child's other setting to support continuity of care, learning and development.

Six-Week Review

Approximately six weeks after a child starts at Clare House, parents and the child's key person are invited to attend a planned review meeting. This provides an opportunity to reflect on the child's settling-in period, review their wellbeing, learning and development, and ensure families feel confident with nursery routines, communication systems and access to information, including Tapestry.

The review is based on observations, assessments, parental contributions and the key person's knowledge of the child. Together, parents and practitioners celebrate achievements, share observations in photograph /video form and identify next steps to support the child's ongoing learning and development.

Where appropriate, parents may be signposted to additional services or, with their agreement, referrals to other professionals may be discussed. If a child's needs are identified as additional to or different from those of their peers, individualised planning will begin in partnership with parents and in line with the SEND Code of Practice.

For children attending Clare House alongside another early years setting, and with parental consent, information will be shared and staff from the other setting may be invited to contribute to the review to support a consistent approach to the child's learning and development.

Ongoing Assessment and Personalised Planning

At Clare House Nursery, assessment is an ongoing process that is embedded within everyday practice. Our key persons use their knowledge of each child, alongside observations and in-the-moment planning, to respond to children's interests and support their individual learning and development.

Each child has two Focus Months each year: one during the month of their birthday and a second six months later. These provide an opportunity to celebrate progress, complete a summative assessment and review each child's personalised learning journey.

Before each Focus Month, parents are invited to complete an updated 'All About Me' form to share any new interests, achievements or changes at home. Throughout the month, the key person gathers observations, photographs and examples of learning through everyday play and interactions. Where appropriate, planned experiences may also be used to gain a deeper understanding of a child's development.

At the end of the Focus Month, parents and practitioners work together to celebrate achievements, discuss progress and agree personalised next steps. This information is used to plan enjoyable, challenging and meaningful learning experiences that build on each child's strengths and interests. Observations and learning are shared with families through Tapestry.

Where a child's learning is identified as additional to or different from that of their peers, planning is adapted in partnership with parents and, where appropriate, other professionals, in line with the SEND Code of Practice. For children attending another early years setting, information is shared with parental consent to ensure continuity in learning and development.

Room Meetings-Getting together

Room meetings are held monthly to review children's progress, evaluate the quality of the learning environment and monitor the effectiveness of the curriculum. Room Supervisors use their knowledge of the children, alongside observations and tracking information, to identify strengths, emerging needs and any gaps in provision.

These meetings provide an opportunity for staff to reflect on practice, discuss individual and group progress, review the learning environment and make any necessary changes to routines, resources or experiences. This collaborative approach ensures our provision remains responsive to the interests, needs and development of the children in each room, supporting continuous improvement in the quality of education we provide.

Two-Year Progress Check

The Two-Year Progress Check is a statutory assessment completed in partnership with parents to review a child's development within the Prime Areas of Learning of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). At Clare House Nursery, this review is usually completed when a child is approximately 2 years and 6 months old, alongside their Focus Month, allowing us to use a wide range of observations to provide an accurate picture of their development.

Parents are informed about the process in advance and are encouraged to contribute their knowledge of their child's learning and development. Where appropriate, and with parental consent, the completed progress check may also be shared with the child's Health Visitor to support joined-up working.

During the Two-Year Progress Check, the key person will:

- Observe and assess the child's development within the Prime Areas of Learning.
- Work in partnership with parents to celebrate achievements and discuss progress.
- Use observations, professional knowledge and parental contributions to identify the child's strengths and any areas where additional support may be beneficial.
- Agree personalised next steps to support the child's ongoing learning and development at both nursery and home.
- Where appropriate, discuss any concerns with parents and, with their agreement, seek support from other professionals in line with the SEND Code of Practice.

Health Visitor Links

Clare House Nursery has strong links with the local Health Visiting Team and values the importance of multi-agency working to support children's health, wellbeing and development.

Termly liaison meetings provide opportunities to share updates, discuss local initiatives and, where appropriate and with parental consent, work together to support individual children and families. These collaborative partnerships help to ensure that children receive timely support and that any emerging concerns are identified and addressed at the earliest opportunity.

Transition To and From Other Settings

At Clare House Nursery, we recognise that positive transitions are essential to children's wellbeing and continued learning. We work closely with parents and, where appropriate, other early years settings to ensure that transitions are carefully planned, consistent and centred around each child's individual needs.

With parental consent, we share relevant information about children's learning, development and wellbeing to support continuity of care and education. Children joining Clare House from another setting are offered settling-in visits as part of our induction process. Likewise, when children move to another early years setting, we work in partnership with parents and the receiving setting to share up-to-date information and support a smooth transition.

Where appropriate, we are happy to host or attend transition meetings with parents and other professionals to ensure every child experiences a positive and successful move between settings.

School Entry Planning

Preparing children for their transition to school is an important part of our curriculum. Once parents have confirmed their child's school place, we work closely with the receiving school to support a smooth and positive transition.

With parental consent, we share relevant information about each child's learning, development and wellbeing, and welcome school staff to visit children within the nursery. For children with SEND or additional needs, we work collaboratively with parents, schools and other professionals to plan a personalised transition. Although transition meetings are usually held at the receiving school, Clare House Nursery is happy to host meetings where this best supports the child and their family.

Our aim is to ensure that every child leaves Clare House feeling confident, secure and well prepared for the next stage of their learning journey.

Developing Our Curriculum – Our Teaching and Learning Journey

At Clare House Nursery, our curriculum is guided by the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and is designed to provide every child with the knowledge, skills and experiences they need to thrive. We believe that children learn best through play, secure relationships and meaningful experiences that build on their individual interests, strengths and stage of development.

Our curriculum supports children to become school ready by developing the knowledge, skills, confidence and attitudes they need for a successful transition into Reception and lifelong learning. We place equal importance on children's personal, social and emotional development, communication and language, independence, curiosity and resilience, recognising that these are the foundations for future success.

The Characteristics of Effective Learning are at the heart of our curriculum. We value not only *what* children learn, but *how* they learn. Through carefully planned environments, high-quality interactions and responsive teaching, we encourage children to become curious, creative, resilient and confident learners who enjoy exploring, solving problems and thinking for themselves.

Our curriculum is influenced by In the Moment Planning and Loose Parts Theory, enabling children to lead their own learning through exploration, investigation and play. Practitioners observe children's interests and respond sensitively, extending learning through thoughtful questioning, sustained shared thinking and carefully planned experiences.

Our approach to In the Moment Planning follows three key stages:

- The Child's Spark – observing and recognising a child's genuine interest or curiosity.
- The Teachable Moment – responding through skilled interactions that deepen and extend learning.
- Documentation – recording significant learning to celebrate progress, inform future planning and continually develop our provision.

Through personalised planning, we provide a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum that reflects each child's interests, abilities and individual needs. Our consistent routines, enabling environments and nurturing relationships ensure children feel safe, confident and motivated to learn, while developing the skills they need for the next stage of their learning journey.

Our Curriculum Framework

Our curriculum framework provides a clear and progressive pathway for children's learning across all areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). It is designed to build children's knowledge, skills and understanding over time, while remaining flexible enough to respond to each child's individual interests, strengths and stage of development.

The framework links the Characteristics of Effective Learning, the EYFS Educational Programmes and the Early Learning Goals, supporting practitioners to monitor children's progress and plan meaningful next steps. It is reviewed annually to ensure it remains relevant, ambitious and responsive to the needs of the children attending Clare House Nursery.

Children move through our four nursery rooms as they grow and develop. Our curriculum framework supports smooth transitions between rooms, ensuring continuity in learning while recognising that every child progresses at their own pace.

Each time a child moves into a new room, families receive a copy of that room's curriculum. This helps parents understand the learning experiences, skills and knowledge their child will be developing and encourages sustained shared thinking between home and nursery. By working together, we create consistent opportunities to extend children's learning, interests and development across both environments.

Key persons use their professional knowledge, observations and photographs to record children's progress within their individual learning journeys. Alongside this, Room Supervisors use children's developmental outcomes to monitor and audit the quality of provision within each room. This enables us to evaluate our curriculum, learning environment and teaching practice, ensuring that experiences are carefully planned to meet children's needs, address any gaps in learning and provide every child with the opportunity to reach their full potential.

Planning combines our core learning experiences with In the Moment Planning, allowing practitioners to respond to children's interests while ensuring a broad and balanced curriculum.

Our core experiences, both indoors and outdoors, include:

- Messy play and mark making
- Creating, making and constructing
- Books, stories and early literacy
- Singing, music and rhythm
- Early mathematics and pattern
- Exploring and caring for the natural world
- Role-play and imaginative play
- Physical development and keeping safe
- Building friendships and learning to cooperate
- Developing independence and self-care skills

These core experiences provide children with consistent opportunities to develop key skills while inspiring curiosity, creativity and a lifelong love of learning. Through ongoing monitoring and evaluation of children's developmental outcomes, we continually review and enhance our provision to ensure every child is supported to make the best possible progress.

