

Welcome to Clifford Bridge Academy



A booklet for children who are joining
Clifford Explorers

This is a booklet made just for you and your family, to tell you all about what to expect when you start at Clifford Bridge Explorers.

We look forward to meeting you and being part of your learning journey.



Settling in Sessions

Before you start Nursery properly, we will invite you in to meet us and to see your new classroom. There will be lots of toys out that you can play with and lots of new friends that you will get to meet. We will invite your grown-ups in on this day too so they will be able to see your classroom as well.

What to Wear

You can wear your own clothes to Explorers but we ask that you wear something which is comfortable and practical. As we often organise messy activities in Nursery, you will need to feel comfortable and know that it is not a disaster if paint or glue is accidentally spilt on your clothing. Your shoes need to be comfortable and easy to fasten e.g. Velcro. We do have plenty of spare clothes to lend you if your clothes get wet but you will need to bring some spare clothes which you keep on your peg.

As we play outside in the outdoor area every day, you will need to wear a waterproof coat, gloves and a woolly hat in the winter. You also need to have a named pair of wellington boots that can be kept in Nursery. In the summer you will need to wear a sun hat and clothes that keep your neck and shoulders covered.

Please do not wear jewellery or bring toys to Nursery in case they get lost or broken.

We cannot emphasise enough the importance of naming everything. It is far easier to locate a missing jumper in the classroom if it is named! Also remember to put a name label in shoes and wellies as many children often have similar or the same ones.

Independence with Toileting

Before you begin Nursery, please ensure that you are working towards using the toilet on your own, including wiping yourself, and washing your hands. The toilets in our Nursery are easily accessible for you to use by yourself. We also work closely with the team of NHS Health Visitors.

We advise your parents to help train you to be dry throughout the day and encourage independence when using the toilet. It is important that you can independently wipe yourself; wet wipes can be useful for this. If you are still in the early stages of toilet training we would recommend the use of pull-ups as they simulate the feeling of pants/knickers. When you are confidently using pull-ups, try wearing pants/knickers under pull-ups as this gives you the necessary sensory feedback you need to know you are wet.



If you do have an accident, staff will change your wet clothes. If you should soil yourself then we will change you but if it should happen again in the same Nursery session we would call your parents/carers to come and collect you as this may be a sign that you are unwell.

We ask that your parents/carers keep a spare set of clothes on your peg which you will have in the classroom. It is much more comfortable for you to wear your own clothes, in the case of a little accident, than school spares (which can vary in size). If you go home in your spare clothes please make sure your grown-ups send a new set into nursery the following day to be put back on your peg.



Lunch Time

We ask that your grown-ups provide you with a packed lunch if you attend for 30 or 35 hours. Currently we do not provide hot meals. At lunchtimes you will be cared for by one of your teachers and an additional adult in school. We ask that your grown-ups supply packed lunches as this ensures that you eat a meal tailored to your individual preferences, allergies or dietary restrictions. At lunch time in Nursery we will support you in developing the appropriate social skills and manners to enjoy a leisurely lunch with your friends.

A Healthy Lunch

Lunches should be healthy consisting a filling meal which you will enjoy. In Nursery we prepare you for lunchtime in the wider school. This includes encouraging you to eat food in a specific order.

We recommend that you eat your lunch in the following order;

1. Sandwiches/crackers
2. Fruit
3. Yoghurt
4. Rice cakes/crisps
5. A special treat (no sweets please)

***Please do not send in any food that requires heating as this is not permitted**



Safety

Please ensure that grapes, cherry tomatoes and cocktail sausages are cut in half (lengthways) as these can become a choking hazard.

Summer Months

As we do not have the facilities to refrigerate packed lunches, when the weather turns warmer we ask that your grown-ups provide an ice-pack in your lunch box to stop food from spoiling. This specifically applies for meat or fish foods e.g. a ham or salmon sandwich.



Infection and Illness

PLEASE DO NOT COME TO NURSERY IF YOU HAVE:

1. Sickness
 2. Diarrhoea
 3. A heavy cold and runny nose
 4. Persistent cough
 5. Infectious illness e.g. chicken-pox, mumps, German measles etc
 6. Head lice that has not been treated with medicated shampoo
- } Please stay at home for at least 48 hours following sickness or diarrhoea

If you are absent for any reason please get your grown-up to contact the school by phone on 02476 451720 or by email Clifford.Admin@cliffordbridgeacademy.org

It is important that we can always contact parents in cases of emergency.

Please inform school immediately if your telephone number changes.



Other Notices

CAR PARKING

To ensure the safety of your child
please do ***not*** bring your car into the school car park

Voluntary Contribution

- The majority of Nursery education is funded and provided free of charge to parents, however we do have a voluntary 'Nursery Fund' of £1 per week. The contribution enables us to buy ingredients for cooking, other resources such as **food colouring, flour for playdough and ingredients for cooking** etc. This can be given weekly (£1), termly (£10) or yearly (£30). Thank you!
- We also request that one full pack of **wet wipes** and a **box of tissues** is provided at the beginning of the year. These can be particularly handy with encouraging independent toileting.
- Free fruit and milk is available and we encourage all children to access this each day.





The Early Years Curriculum

In September 2021 a new Early Years Statutory Framework and curriculum guidance was introduced. For us at Clifford Bridge this felt like a big opportunity to modify our practice and continue to develop all the things that we believe are so brilliant about Early Years at Clifford Bridge.

Our Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum is organised to take care of and develop the whole child and not just their academic learning. Our EYFS curriculum is split into 7 areas of learning, 3 prime areas and 4 specific areas.

- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**
- **Physical Development**
- **Communication and Language**
- **Literacy**
- **Mathematics**
- **Understanding the World**
- **Expressive Arts and Design**

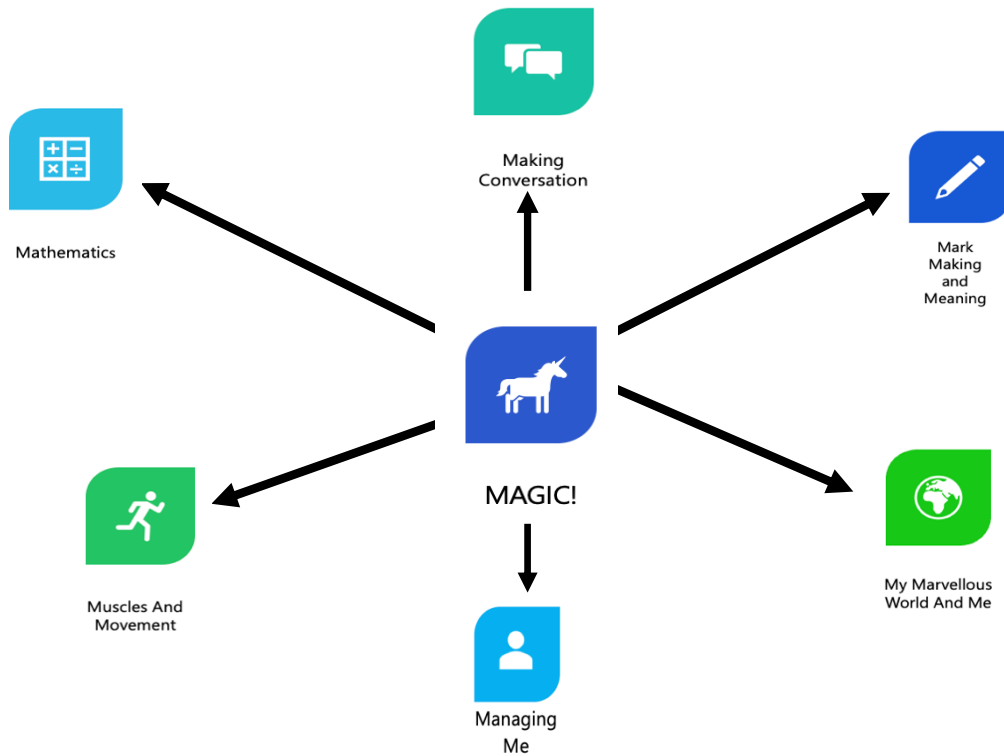
Our EYFS curriculum also includes the **Characteristics of Effective Learning**. These focus not on what children know but **how** children learn.

- **Playing and Exploring** – our children investigate and experience things and events around them and ‘have a go.’
- **Active Learning** – our children concentrate and keep trying if they experience difficulties, as well as enjoying what they achieve.
- **Creating and Thinking Critically** – our children have and develop their own ideas, make links between different and experiences and develop strategies for doing things.



The Ms

At Clifford Bridge Explorers this is just the start. We have designed our own bespoke curriculum that encompasses the 7 areas of learning and the characteristics of learning in an engaging and exciting curriculum that we call **The Ms**.



We prioritise **making conversation** and learning to communicate, teach and support children to **manage** themselves and their friendships, **mark making** and understanding the **meaning** of marks, developing secure early **mathematical** skills, exploring the **marvellous world** around them, and giving children the opportunities to use and develop their **muscles and movement**.

Magic is at the heart of all we do, making sure that our children are engaged and excited in all their learning. This does not mean we will be teaching your children card tricks but that we find engaging and exciting ways to introduce topics and themes to your children. This could be anything from building Superhero dens in Nursery to finding a beanstalk has grown in one of the Reception classrooms as part of their learning about Jack and the Beanstalk.



How will my grown-ups know about all the fun I have been having in Nursery?



The adults in Nursery will record the amazing learning you do on an online Learning Journal called Tapestry. Your grown-ups will be given a secure log in which will give them access to Tapestry and see all the fun you are having in Nursery. They will be able to see the friends you play with, as well as all the learning that you do. Your grown-ups will also be able to add their own photos or comments about the adventures and achievements you have outside school, we can't wait to see them!

Staff observe each child at play because it helps us to understand and support their individual wellbeing and development. We really get to know the children as unique people with special skills, interests and ideas. The more we understand about your special child, the better we can support them in the way that is right for them. We hope that we can work together to build this Learning Journal as a record of your child's Early Years. Once you have completed your Tapestry Online User Agreement you will be emailed with log in details. You will then be able to access your child's learning journal whenever you would like to. Separate accounts can also be created for grandparents or parents living away from home or overseas.

We strongly encourage you to contribute and look through your child's Journal on a regular basis. We also encourage you to talk with your child about their Learning Journal and feel free to add special events or other things of significance for your child.

If you have any questions about Tapestry or need any support accessing your account, please speak to a member of the team.



What will I do when I am at Clifford Bridge Explorers?

Below is a list of some of the activities you will be able to do in Nursery.

BOOKS

Sharing books, listening to stories and looking at pictures are an important part of learning to read.

ROLE PLAY AND IMAGINATIVE PLAY

The role play area is a wonderful place for make-believe, dressing up, trying out different roles. It provides scope for developing imagination, language, sharing, co-operation and mathematics.

There are opportunities to enter a world represented in miniature such as the farm, dolls house, and the railway. Through this play you can relive and recreate situations already experienced organising them in your own way.



CONSTRUCTION TOYS AND GAMES

We have a variety of construction toys and games in the Nursery. They help to develop concentration and co-ordination and observation of similarities and differences. You can share, discuss and plan your ideas together.

COOKING

You will gradually learn the skills and processes of cooking simple recipes independently. Through cooking, you will be able to develop language, mathematical and scientific skills. You will also develop personal, social and emotional skills through having to share and take turns in following our recipe cards.

OUTSIDE PLAY

You will have the opportunity to play outside every day. It is important that you develop your climbing, sliding, and jumping skills. Being outside also provides the opportunity to be loud, move fast and make a mess! You will also be given time and occasion to grow things, recycle and compost, make dens and build large structures.

WRITING

You will have many opportunities to develop your mark making skills ready for writing. We will provide you with many mark making materials such as chalk, felt tips, large and small paintbrushes and paint rollers. You can make marks and symbols and tell us what they say. We encourage the correct tripod grip from the moment you enter Nursery but don't worry we will give you plenty of opportunity to strengthen the necessary muscles in your fingers, hands, arms and upper bodies.





PAINTING, DRAWING AND MODELLING

You will gain the experience of colour, shape and texture through painting, drawing and modelling. You will be encouraged to think, create things for yourselves and solve simple problems. By using such tools as pencils, scissors, paintbrushes, etc you are developing essential fine-motor skills.

CONTAINER PLAY

We will provide you with many materials to explore, transport, pour, lift and solve problems with. These materials may include water, sand, wood pellets, straw, compost, pulses, rice, and sometimes a mixture of 2 or more of them! We will also provide a variety of tools to effect change to the different types of materials on offer.

GROUP TIME

This takes place after the first half-term where you will be divided into groups. Group time takes place twice daily for approximately 15 minutes. We often undertake tasks related to our topic of the term e.g. food topic – we taste a variety of fruit and vegetables. Group time helps to develop your skills in all the seven areas of learning.

Later in the year we undertake an additional group time each day, where we create music and share conversation books.

PHONICS

At Explorers, we use the 'Letters and Sounds' program to encourage listening skills and sound discriminations. This includes environmental sounds, instrumental sounds, body percussion, rhythm and rhyme activities, alliteration, voice sounds and oral blending and segmenting. All of these aspects help to prepare you for when you start phonics in order to be able to read and write when you are in Reception.





MOVING ON

When you leave Explorers you can choose to move into our Clifford Bridge Nursery the year before you start school.

Please note: You will still need to register your child for a place at Clifford Bridge Nursery. Please register your child's details at the school office as soon as possible.

THINGS YOU CAN DO TO GET READY FOR NURSERY

- **Have a go at doing these things independently.....**
 - go to the toilet and wash and dry your hands.
 - put on and take off your coat.
 - put on and take off your shoes.

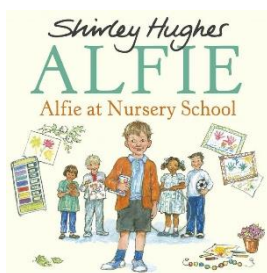
- **Do lots of speaking and listening activities with your grown-ups.**
 - Sing songs and Nursery rhymes.
 - Play games with your grown-ups.

- **Read books with your adults.**
 - Visit your local library.
 - Take care of your books.

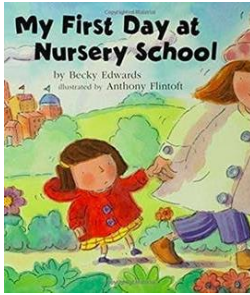
- **Count regularly**
 - e.g. How many buttons on your dress/shirt?
 - How many cups on the table?
 - Talk about shapes and colours.
 - Sort and match objects.

- **Writing and Drawing**
 - Write, draw and scribble using pens, crayons, felt tips and pencils.

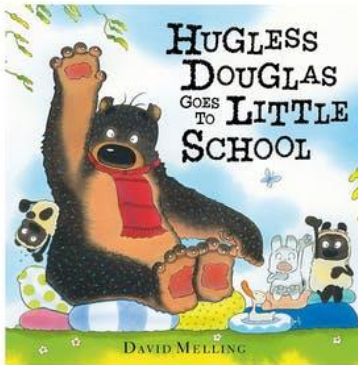
Below are some lovely books that you could use to start talking about starting Nursery.



Alfie at Nursery by Shirley Hughes



My First Day at Nursery School by Becky Edwards



Hugless Dougless Goes to Little School by David Melling



Spot Loves Nursery by Eric Hill

Thank you!

Thank you for reading our Explorers booklet. We hope that it has provided you with a clearer picture of some of the things we do at Nursery and put your mind at ease. If there is anything else you need to know, please do not hesitate to ask

Mrs O'Brien
(EYFS Phase Leader)