





# Lumen Learning Trust

Learning together for a brighter future

## Early Years Policy

<b>DATE APPROVED BY LUMEN LEARNING TRUST</b>	17 <sup>th</sup> July 2024		
<b>REVIEW DATE Biennial</b>	17 <sup>th</sup> July 2024		
<b>SIGNED DEPUTY EXECUTIVE PRINCIPAL</b>	Mary Ellen McCarthy 	<b>DATE</b>	17 <sup>th</sup> July 2024
<b>SIGNED CHAIR OF DIRECTORS</b>	Ray Vango 	<b>DATE</b>	17 <sup>th</sup> July 2024

Lumen Learning Trust puts the children's needs at the heart of its provision. Our whole school community is committed to enabling the children to become successful lifelong learners and happy, fulfilled adults who can make positive choices about their future.

## **Transition**

Our aim is to establish a smooth and successful transition into school. This is facilitated with a carefully planned programme that begins in the summer term prior to a child starting school.

Parents attend an introductory meeting and workshops to help support their child's transition to school. Children attend an introductory session and "move up morning". This provision allows families the opportunity to meet the class teacher and teaching assistant and familiarise themselves with the classroom environment as well as their class peers.

Home visits are also made by school (ideally by the child's class teacher and teaching assistant). This enables the children to build their relationship with the school staff on a 1:1 basis whilst also providing parents and children the opportunity to share information with the Reception team.

Children attend a number of half days prior to attending full time. We work closely with parents and if a child is finding full-time attendance difficult, they may continue on a part-time basis until they feel more ready for full-time.

When leaving Reception and entering into Year One children will have spent several sessions in their new class, met their teacher and be familiar with how Year One is organised and the expectations required of them. In Year One the children will still have access to an outside learning environment and other facets of Reception provision.

We adhere to the Statutory Framework of the EYFS and the four guiding principles that shape practice within Early Years settings:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Fostering the characteristics of effective early learning

## **Transition for a Nursery Setting into our Early Years setting**

The transition from Nursery into Reception encompasses the same principles and processes as above.

## **A Unique Child**

At Lumen we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured and develop in individual ways, at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

### *Inclusion*

- We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of 'differences'. All children are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school. In our schools we work hard to give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning. In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, and by providing children with a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- Using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- Planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills;
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.

It is important to us that all children in the school are 'safe'. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid

hazards.

## **Positive Relationships**

We recognise that children learn to be strong & independent as a result of secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

### *Parents as Partners*

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this through:

- Talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school;
- Giving the children the opportunity to visit and spend time in their Reception classroom during the half term before starting school;
- Inviting all parents to an induction session during the term before their child starts school;
- Inviting parents to a curriculum evening with their child's class teacher to share what children will be learning and daily routines.
- Encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns.
- Providing Stay, Play and Learn sessions throughout the year for parents to share their child's learning.
- Consistently share the children's Learning Journeys with the parents throughout the year.

### *We meet the needs of all our children through:*

- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- Using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs;
- Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively;
- Encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns.

There is a formal meeting for parents in the Autumn and Spring terms at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress together. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of the Foundation Stage.

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. At our school the EYFS teacher acts a 'Key Person' to all children in EYFS, supported by the Teaching Assistant.

In Nursery, each child is allocated a key worker whose role is to be responsible for an individual group of children within the Nursery and who have the aim of supporting children to feel safe and cared for.

## **Enabling Environments**

We recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. Through observation we assess the children's interests, stages of development and learning needs, before planning challenging, achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning within their environment.

### *Observation, Assessment and Planning*

The Planning within the EYFS is based around half termly themes. These plans are used by the EYFS teacher as a guide for weekly planning; however the teacher will alter these in response to the needs (achievements and interests) of the children. This will be indicated on weekly planning.

We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of observation these observations are recorded in a variety of ways. Teachers, parents and other adults within the school setting are encouraged to contribute and discussions take place to ensure a clear understanding of where a child is in their development and what their next steps are. Observations of children's achievements are collated in their own personal learning journey.

Within the final term of the EYFS, we provide a written summary to parents, reporting their progress based on their child's development against each of the 17 Early Learning Goals as either emerging or expected. A

commentary on the child's skills and abilities in relation to the three characteristics of effective learning will also be included. This will also be given to the appropriate Year One teacher and will inform a dialogue between your child's Reception teacher and Year One teacher about your child's stage of development and learning needs and will assist planning in Year One to ensure an effective transition.

#### *The Learning Environment*

Each class has a class teacher and teaching assistant. The Early Years classrooms are organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. The classrooms reflect the EYFS curriculum and are set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently.

The Early Years classrooms have their own enclosed outdoor area and 'free-flow' is enabled both inside and outside. This has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers the children further opportunities to explore, use their senses, develop their language skills and be physically active. We plan activities and resources both inside and outside enabling the children to develop in all the areas of learning.

### **Learning and Development**

We recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and rates and have their own learning styles. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are often linked.

#### *Teaching and Learning Style*

Our policy on teaching and learning defines the features of effective teaching and learning in our school. These features apply to teaching and learning in the EYFS just as much as they do to the teaching in Key Stage 1 and 2.

Features that relate to the EYFS are:

- The partnership between teachers and parents, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- The understanding that teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching;
- The range of approaches used that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication;
- The carefully planned curriculum that helps children work towards the Early Learning Goals throughout EYFS;
- The provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities;
- The encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence;
- The support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment;
- The identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations;
- The good relationships between our school and the settings that our children experience prior to joining our school;

In the EYFS we encourage children to develop their characteristics of effective learning which move through all areas of learning. As outlined in the EYFS 'the characteristics of effective learning run through and underpin all seven areas of learning and development'. These support the child to remain an effective and motivated learner. These are:

- Playing and exploring (engagement)
- Active learning (motivation)
- Creating and thinking critically (thinking)

#### *Playing and exploring (engagement)*

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They have the opportunity to practise skills, develop ideas and think creatively alongside other children as well as individually. The children communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They have the opportunity to express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

#### *Active learning (motivation)*

We believe children need to have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction and deepens the quality of learning as they take ownership of it.

*Creating and thinking critically (thinking)*

We understand that children should be given opportunities to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through the arts. Adults can support children's thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Children can access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the classroom to extend their learning.

**Foundation Stage Curriculum**

Exciting and challenging curriculum based activities are planned based on our observation of the children's needs, interests, and stages of development across the seven areas of learning to enable the children to achieve the early learning goals.

All the seven areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. These three areas are the prime areas:

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

Children are also supported through the four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. The specific areas are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

All areas are delivered through both adult-led and child-initiated activities. In each area there are Early Learning Goals (ELGs) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS.

**Monitoring and review**

It is the responsibility of the Early Years Foundation Stage teachers to follow the principles stated in this policy. Governors support the leadership team in monitoring the impact of the provision through visits to the classes and discussions with the EYFS practitioners. They are encouraged to provide feedback to the whole governing body, raising any issues that require further discussion.

The Head teacher and the Senior Leadership team, along with individual subject leaders, carry out monitoring of the EYFS through observation and discussion as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.