



Lumen Learning Trust

Learning together for a brighter future

Early Years Policy

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SIGNED DEPUTY EXECUTIVE PRINCIPAL	Sarah Kober 	DATE	14/07/2026
SIGNED CHAIR OF DIRECTORS	Jo Roberts 	DATE	14/07/2026

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.

Transition into Nursery

School will offer opportunities for parents and carers to attend a meeting prior to their child's start. This will vary from school to school but will ensure families have the right information to help make the transition into nursery as smooth as possible.

In some cases additional transition may be necessary. Schools will offer a second opportunity to visit the setting so that more information is gathered. This will help ensure any additional support/ actions are in place prior to a child starting nursery. If a child is moving from an existing Nursery, contact will be made with the previous setting to gain relevant information on the child to support with their settling period. Home visits will also form part of this process. Whilst the Nursery teacher will have a settling plan in place, the pace of this will vary child by child depending on their needs. The child's needs are always placed at the heart of our decisions.

Transition into Reception

Parents attend an introductory meeting, Stay and Play sessions as well as 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. Class teachers will also contact Nursery settings and speak to the child's key worker, SENCO or Nursery Manager. If necessary, class teachers will visit Nursery settings to gain further information about a child and strengthen the transition process further.

Children attend a number of half days prior to attending full time. This will vary from school to school. 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 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 aspects 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. All LLT nurseries will work with local primary schools to ensure that they have all the necessary information to ensure a smooth transition to the next stage in the child's education.

Home School Link Worker (HSLW)

All LLT nurseries and schools have a HSLW to support families. A HSLW can support with sleep routines, setting boundaries, toilet training and other aspects of family life that impact school. Our HSLWs are available to support our families throughout the year and can also signpost families to specific support and organisations as required.

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 Early Years 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.

In Nursery - whilst all areas of the EYFS are assessed - the following key areas will be the focus for any monitoring of assessment outcomes across the LLT:

- Listening & Attention
- Fine Motor
- Speaking
- Self-Regulation

These have been selected as they are key indicators to potential outcomes in the prime areas later in the child's EYFS 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 Reception class has a qualified class teacher and support staff determined by the needs of the children in the cohort. 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 schools. 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 schools and the settings that our children experience prior to joining one of our schools.

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' these aspects run through and underpin all seventeen 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.

Nursery specific policies

There are certain policies and working practices that are specific to individual nurseries within the trust.

The following trust-wide policies are to be adopted across all school nurseries:

- Sleep Policy
- Use of dummies
- Bottle & Milk policy
- Snacks & Mealtimes
- Intimate Care

See Appendices for more details.

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.

Appendix 1: Lumen Learning Trust Sleep Policy

Aims

The sleep policy aims to provide a clear framework to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of all children who require support to sleep or rest whilst at nursery.

Safeguarding context statement

This policy forms part of our whole-school safeguarding approach. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility, and all staff have a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action. Sleep and rest times are periods when children may be particularly vulnerable, and we ensure appropriate safeguarding measures are in place at all times.

Principles

- We ensure that all children are able to optimise their ability to learn and develop whilst attending nursery.
- We believe that good sleep routines support the development of good physical health and mental well-being.
- We promote safe and healthy practices to help children to rest and sleep safely.
- We work in partnership with families to ensure children receive a good routine that suits their child's needs.

Why is sleep important?

Good sleep routines are an important part of a child's development. Sleep patterns will be different for each child depending on their age and stage of development. Children need sleep to maintain a child's physical, mental and emotional wellbeing. Good sleep also supports better brain function, improving concentration.

It is recommended that children aged 2 years old need between 12 to 14 hours of sleep, including naps in the daytime.

Children aged 3 to 5 years old require about 12 hours of sleep. Some young children may still need a nap during the day.

During nursery hours it may be necessary for children to have a nap to support the correct amount of sleep throughout their day. The requirements for each child will be different, and the nursery will work with parents and carers to ensure it supports their child's needs.

At Lumen

- We plan sleep routines in partnership with parents and carers.
- We provide a calm and quiet environment to optimise good sleep.
- We supply sleep mats and bedding for each individual.
- We will support your child in engaging in sleep, in a manner that mirrors the provision at home.
- Sleeping patterns will be reviewed in accordance with the parent and carers request.
- Written records are kept of all support for sleeping. Sleeping children will be monitored by staff every 10 minutes. The time a child is put down to sleep, when they wake and ten minute monitoring checks are recorded by staff.
- Staff with a Level 3 qualification or above will be responsible for monitoring and recording the above.
- Staff training will be kept up to date in line with government guidelines and the Safe Sleep guidance.

Sleep Environment

In accordance with the Safe Sleep guidance, children will be offered their own separate sleep space on a firm, flat surface. This will be a waterproof mattress on the floor.

Lightweight bedding such as a sheet or blanket will be used, tucked in and around the child's body and below their shoulders to prevent head covering.

If a sleep bag is provided by parents or carers, the manufacturer's recommendation will be checked before use. Only items conforming to NHS safety standards can be used in the nursery.

Children will be placed on their back. If a child then chooses a different position they will be left and the regular

monitoring will take place.

All nursery toys and equipment will be removed from the mattress.

Comforters can be used and dummies will be stored in a clean storage container when not in use.

Children should not get too hot or cold. The recommended room temperature for babies is 16 – 20°C. Nursery settings will have access to an appropriate room thermometer to monitor the above and best efforts will be made to raise or lower the temperature to ensure the best conditions.

Written records are kept of all support for sleeping. Sleeping children will be monitored by staff every 10 minutes. The time a child is put down to sleep, when they wake and ten-minute monitoring checks are recorded by staff. This information is available to parents/ carers at all times and will be checked periodically.

Policy information referenced from the following sources:

- Lullaby Trust: https://www.lullabytrust.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/Early-years-safer-sleep-booklet_Digital.pdf
- NHS: <https://www.uhsussex.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Bsuh-Sleep-and-Rest-policy.pdf>

Appendix 2: Use of Dummies in the Nursery Policy

Use of Dummies

As a school, we recognise that a dummy can be a source of comfort for a child who is settling and/or upset, and that it may often form part of a child's sleep routine.

We also recognise that overuse of dummies may affect a child's language development as it may restrict the mouth movements needed for speech. As babies get older, they need to learn to move their mouths in different ways, to smile, to blow bubbles, to make sounds, to chew food and eventually to talk. As babies move their mouths and experiment with babbling sounds, they are learning to make the quick mouth movements needed for speech. The more practice they get the better their awareness of their mouths and the better their speech will be.

Our nursery will:

- When necessary, discuss the use of dummies with parents as part of children's individual care plans
- Only allow dummies for comfort if a child is upset (for example, if they are new to the setting or going through a transition) and/or as part of their sleep routine and they cannot be comforted using other strategies
- Store dummies in individual hygienic dummy boxes labelled with the child's name to prevent cross-contamination with other children
- Immediately clean any dummy or bottle that falls on the floor or is picked up by another child using warm soapy water then rinsing with clean water
- Dummies will be disposed of if they become damaged and/or when they are required to be disposed of.

When discouraging the dummy staff will:

- Make each child aware of a designated place where the dummy is stored
- Comfort the child and, if appropriate, explain in a sensitive manner why they do not need their dummy
- Distract the child with other activities and ensure they are settled before leaving them to play
- Offer other methods of comfort such as a toy, teddy or blanket
- Explain to the child they can have their dummy when they go home or at sleep time.

We will also offer support and advice to parents to discourage dummy use during waking hours at home and suggest ways in which the child can be weaned off their dummy through books and stories (when appropriate).

Appendix 3: Use of milk & bottles

Our nurseries recognise the importance of milk as part of a healthy, balanced diet and aims to ensure that all children have access to safe and appropriate milk according to their age, dietary needs and parental preferences.

Milk will be offered to children in accordance with current nutritional guidance and food safety regulations. The nursery will work closely with parents and carers to meet individual dietary requirements, however milk is unable to be warmed up in our Nursery settings.

Provision of Milk

- Fresh milk will be offered to children daily as part of snack times in Reception.
- Milk will be stored and served in accordance with food hygiene and safety regulations.
- Drinking water will be available to children at all times and families are required to provide their child with their own water bottle.
- Alternative milk options may be provided where medically required or requested for dietary, cultural, or religious reasons.

Allergies and Dietary Requirements

- Parents must inform the nursery of any allergies, intolerances, or dietary requirements before their child starts attending.
- Written medical evidence may be requested where specialist dietary provision is required.
- Staff will ensure that children with allergies or dietary needs receive appropriate alternatives.
- All staff will be made aware of children's dietary requirements and allergy management procedures.

Storage and Food Safety

- Milk will be stored in a refrigerator at the recommended temperature of 5°C or below.
- Milk will be checked regularly for expiry dates and signs of spoilage.
- Opened containers will be dated and used within recommended timescales.
- Cups and serving equipment will be cleaned and sanitised appropriately.

Parental Communication

- Parents will be informed about the nursery's milk provision arrangements upon enrolment.
- Any changes to a child's dietary needs must be communicated promptly to nursery staff.
- Parents are encouraged to discuss any concerns regarding milk provision with the nursery manager.

Appendix 4: Snack time and Mealtime Provision

Our Nursery and Reception classrooms promote healthy eating habits and ensure that all children have access to safe, nutritious snacks during the school day.

Children will be offered a healthy snack each day. Sugary snacks, sweets, chocolate, and fizzy drinks are not permitted. If families want to bring in different snacks, this needs to be discussed with the Nursery Manager beforehand.

Snacks may include:

- Fresh fruit and vegetables
- Plain crackers, breadsticks, or rice cakes
- Milk and water

Drinks:

- Fresh drinking water will be available at all times.
- Milk may be provided in accordance with school and government schemes.

Children should bring only water in their water bottles unless otherwise agreed for medical reasons.

Allergies and Dietary Requirements

Staff will maintain an up-to-date record of children's allergies and dietary needs.

Foods containing known allergens will be managed according to the setting's allergy procedures.

Parents must inform the school of any changes to dietary requirements.

Hygiene

Children and staff will wash or sanitise their hands before snack time. Food will be prepared and served in accordance with food hygiene guidelines.

Special Occasions

Birthdays and celebrations will be recognised in ways that do not rely on sugary foods where possible.

Any food brought into the setting must be agreed with staff in advance and comply with allergy and safeguarding requirements.

Mealtimes

During snack time and lunchtime, children will be observed at all times and will sit at a table whilst eating to ensure their safety and establish good routines. Highchairs will be available to children who require these.

Partnership with Parents

Parents are encouraged to support healthy eating habits at home.

Information about healthy snacks and packed lunch guidance will be shared with families.

Appendix 5: Intimate Care in nursery and reception

Our nurseries and reception all have an Intimate Care Policy. This policy sets out how staff support children with personal care needs while protecting the child's dignity, privacy, safety and wellbeing. This includes:

- Nappy changing and toileting support
- Changing clothes after accidents
- Washing and cleaning children when necessary
- Supporting dressing/undressing
- Certain medical or personal care procedures where required
- Key principles of an effective intimate care policy
- Respect and dignity
- Children are treated sensitively and respectfully.
- Privacy is maintained as much as possible.
- Children are encouraged to participate in and understand what is happening.

Safeguarding

- Staff follow clear procedures to protect both children and adults.
- Appropriate supervision and recording procedures are in place.
- All staff receive safeguarding and intimate care training.
- Partnership with parents
- Parents are informed about the setting's procedures.
- Individual intimate care plans may be agreed for children with ongoing needs.
- Parents are informed of significant accidents, toileting issues, or concerns.
- Promoting independence
- Staff encourage children to manage their own toileting and personal care wherever developmentally appropriate.
- Support is tailored to the child's age and needs.

Reception-aged children

In Reception, staff should have procedures for managing accidents discreetly and sensitively and some children may require an individual care plan if they have additional needs or delayed toileting development.