

## Our Curriculum Vision

Everything we do, at Lanercost CE Primary School, stems from our children having a lifelong love of learning. We are proud of our inclusive environment, which is firmly rooted in a shared Christian ethos and fosters the care and nurture of our school community. As a school, in partnership with parents and carers, we strive to build strong foundations for an excellent education. We enable our children to achieve all of their divine potential by inspiring them, and promoting opportunities to delight in their learning, as well as allowing them to grow into successful, compassionate, young adults who recognise their role in the community and the ever-changing wider world.

We aim to accomplish this through a loving, structured and joyful environment with consistently high standards of teaching. Our engaging and immersive learning is based upon the National Curriculum (2014), developed from a love of reading and reflects our school's unique circumstances. We make the most of our beautiful location, which is a stone's throw from Hadrian's Wall, Lanercost Priory, Naworth Castle and close to Northumbria National Park.

This brave, broad and rich curriculum motivates all of our children to build concepts, skills and knowledge for life. They become curious learners who are led by enquiry and inspired by a range of real-life experiences and cultural enrichment. Each of our subject leaders has worked hard to craft their subject curriculum to ensure this within their subject.

We know that the greatest way to understand school-life is to become a part of your child's learning journey. We aim to run several shared learning events, workshops and cultural enrichment moments that you can participate in, allowing you to see your child's progress and ventures in school. Please see our school website, social media platforms and school newsletter for the latest parent and community events.

Our vision for our curriculum comes directly from our whole school vision. It has been carefully crafted by our teaching staff in order to ensure that we provide an education that helps every child reach their divine potential and enables them to have a life-long love of learning. Each of our subject-leaders has then designed their subject to stem from an evidence-basis where our vision is threaded through at every point.

## Our Vision for Early Years at Lanercost

At Lanercost C of E Primary School we encourage inquisitive, curious and creative minds through the 'Curiosity Approach'. We create a sense of awe and wonder inside and outside the classroom, laying the foundations for future learning and creating "thinkers and doers" of the future.

All children deserve the best start in life and should have a safe, inviting and nurturing environment to come into each day. We believe that curiosity is a powerful driver for all learning, leading to imagination and creativity. Alongside our carefully crafted progressive curriculum, we provide the children with the opportunity to touch, handle and investigate, authentic artefacts, natural and recycled materials, loose parts and toys. They are able to follow their own interests in their own individual learning style. Within our attractive and inviting classroom we offer subliminal messages to come and play, laying the foundations for future learning. Our classroom is carefully designed and resourced to reinforce previous learning, inspire new ideas and promote emotional well-being, togetherness and friendship. It is a place where children can feel comfortable to explore with confidence. We believe each child, and their family, should be respected and valued as unique individuals and as members of our school community. Building positive partnerships with children and their families is key to understanding how we can maximise learning opportunities for each and every child in our care.

## Our Teaching and Learning in Early Years

Our Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum has been designed to provide our children with the range and scope of opportunities needed to ensure they can successfully develop across all seven areas of learning and development, ensuring the growth of the whole child. This is enriched by cementing firm foundations in communication and language, physical development, phonics, and number, in order for every child to be able to access and excel in the Key Stage One curriculum when they leave the Foundation Stage.

At Lanercost C of E Primary School we provide a careful balance of child-initiated play opportunities and direct teaching experiences which build the foundations for future learning, as well as following the children's interests and building on what they already know. Through promoting the development of the 'characteristics of effective learning', we aim to

inspire our children to become enthusiastic, resourceful and inquisitive 'lifelong learners'. We believe that adults play a crucial role in shaping and extending the learning moments found in children's play through the use of well facilitated discussion and open-ended questioning. Through nurturing self-confidence, imagination, creativity, problem-solving abilities and socialization, the children become successful and resilient learners, as well as valued members of our school community.

Our EYFS Curriculum aims to:

- Provide children with a range of knowledge and skills, which are built upon progressively as children move through Nursery and Reception, and which prepare them well for the Key Stage One curriculum and the rest of their educational journey.
- Develop children's language and communication skills including their use and understanding of vocabulary.
- Identify any specific learning needs early through effective observation and assessment, so we can address any potential barriers to learning and ensure all children can make good progress from their different starting points.
- Provide quality systematic synthetic phonics teaching daily through the use of Read Write Inc. Phonics to equip children with a good foundation to reading and writing.
- Develop a love of reading through the use of quality core books in Literacy which inspire learning across other areas including our continuous provision, and through reading a diverse range of quality storybooks, nursery rhymes, poems and non-fiction books just for pleasure.
- Provide quality early maths teaching which includes practical activities in different contexts to master number skills and develop their use of 'maths talk' and reasoning skills when problem solving through the use of Mastering Number and White Rose Maths.
- Develop children's confidence, independence and curiosity through enabling environments, child-led experiences and responsibilities within the classroom.
- Provide children with a good understanding of their own and others emotions, and the impact of their behaviour on others through discussion and direct teaching of the School's Christian Values linked to British Values, use of well facilitated circle time and modelling to teach how to resolve friendship issues and minor conflicts, and the use of our School Zones of Self-Regulation to help children explain their emotions.
- Enable all children the best opportunity to meet the Early Learning Goals across all 17 areas of Learning and Development.

Our EYFS curriculum design has been informed by:

- Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (Effective September 2023)
- Birth to Five Matters (Non-statutory Guidance, 2021)
- Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage (Non-statutory Guidance) (Revised July 2021)
- RWI Phonics programme (Nursery and Reception), Making a Strong Start: a guide for Reception Teachers
- Mastering Number and White Rose Maths
- 'Can I go and play now?' - Drawing Club and Story Dough.

The seven areas of learning and development that shape the Early Years curriculum are all individually important, but are also inter-connected. Every opportunity is built upon through purposeful teaching and provision. Our provision (whether that be taught, continuous, enriched, linked or in the environment) supports and extends knowledge, skills, understanding and confidence: giving children the best foundations for their school lives. Our bespoke and evidence-based approach in Early Years provides the opportunity to have enriched provocations for the children to explore, develop and extend their learning through play within our indoor and outdoor environments.

The Prime Areas of Learning (communication and language, physical development, personal, social and emotional development) make up a crucial part of early development, and are the focus for all of our EYFS children. Playful interactions which encourage talking, as well as open-ended, carefully timed questioning, actively support the development of children's language and communication skills, including their use and understanding of vocabulary. Bringing our school's Christian Values to life within the classroom through the use of stories, activities and modelling, promotes excellent behaviour as well as moral, spiritual and social development. This is further enhanced through the use of the whole school 'Zones of Regulation' to facilitate the children's emotional literacy skills. Through adult modelling and sustained shared thinking, the children learn how to look after their bodies by eating healthy and managing personal needs independently. Opportunities for the children to practise gross and fine motor movements are embedded within our outdoor and indoor learning environments for children to access freely during 'Busy Time'. These are enhanced with carefully planned adult led activities such as Move to Write, Dough Gym, Write Dance and Story Dough.

The children also take part in weekly Woodland Schools sessions which provide opportunities for them to develop physical stamina, balance and climbing, as well as promoting their social and emotional well-being. The children also take part in more formal PE sessions, some of which are led by specialist coaches. These lay the foundations in coordination and movement as well as ball skills. Supporting our children to master the 'basics' ensures they grasp the underpinning skills they need to exceed in specific learning areas in the future.

The four Specific Areas of learning are Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding the World and Expressive Arts and Design. These cannot be developed alone, and rely on the skills gained in the Prime Areas of Learning.

## Literacy and Phonics

Both Nursery and Reception take part in structured Literacy sessions following the guidance from Drawing Club and Story Dough; immersing children in the world of stories, sharing a treasure trove of vocabulary and developing the children's creativity and imagination to show them that they are extraordinary. Based around the 'Golden Blend' of picture books, tales and animations, it involves a short period of time together as a whole class followed by time with children exploring their ideas and creativity. We also select additional high-quality texts to fit with our curriculum aims, inspire the children around the classroom and develop their life-long love of reading.

In Nursery the children follow Read Write Inc. Nursery guidance, focusing on developing language alongside phonics teaching, through stories, nursery rhymes, poems and songs. We use Fred Games to develop sound discrimination and phonological awareness. When Nursery children are developmentally ready, they learn the names of the pictures and the letter-sounds. This enables them to go on to make a strong start in Reception Phonics. Inputs may be delivered as a whole nursery cohort or within smaller groups which reflect their phonic knowledge, confidence or age.

The children in Reception follow the Read Write Inc. Phonics Scheme. Through half termly assessments children are grouped and taught in Read Write Inc. groups which match their phonic knowledge and are mixed with children in Key Stage One. We ensure children only take home books that include the sounds they have been practising within school and that they are confident in reading. These begin with word books, and move on to Ditty sheets and

then to Read Write Inc. Story Books and Book Bag Books. Their ability to read 'tricky red words' increases gradually with each set of books and they experience early reading success: gaining confidence that they are readers. Children are gradually taught to spell these 'tricky words' throughout the year.

## Mathematics

Throughout their time in Nursery and Reception, we provide our children with as many opportunities as possible to develop their mathematical knowledge and skills across the following key mathematical areas: cardinality and counting, comparison, composition, pattern making, shape, space and measure. Maths sessions are taught daily following the White Rose Maths long and medium term-plans, and an additional Mastering Number session. They include whole class carpet time, group activities and provocations within the learning environment. Resources from NRich, Numicon and the use of Numberblocks ensure the children access a range of different mathematical representations. An important aspect of our approach to teaching maths is to actively develop our children's ability to talk about maths when solving problems: we call this 'maths talk'. For more information on how we implement our Early Years Maths Curriculum see 'Early Years Maths at Lanercost'.

## Understanding the World

At Lanercost, we provide opportunities for children to make sense of their physical world and community: making the most of the school's rural location. Woodland School sessions allow the children freedom to explore and learn useful skills, manage risk, and observe similarities and differences. Understanding the World sessions are based on the whole school/ KS1 Geography or History theme. To facilitate this learning about the past and present, our local area and other cultures and countries around the world, we use first hand observations and explorations, artefacts, discussion, stories, photographs, non-fiction texts, aerial photographs and maps. These can be used as provocations for the children to explore and develop their learning through play, sparking their curiosity to ask questions and to explore further, or as part of an adult-led activity. Books and experiments are also used to provide opportunities for children to develop their understanding of key scientific concepts such as floating and sinking and growth, often linking scientific exploration and the children's curiosity. This also actively develops the children's enquiry skills for 'working scientifically'. The children receive a specific Religion and World Views input each week which also helps them to value themselves as unique individuals and to develop their understanding of our

school's Christian values. It is also an opportunity to learn about other faiths and cultural celebrations the children experience outside of school such as Diwali, Chinese New Year and Sukkot.

## Expressive Arts and Design

Throughout the indoor and outdoor environments, we provide a safe and nurturing space for children to develop their own sense of identity and preferred forms of expression. There are chances for the children to experience a wide range of design opportunities to construct not only models, but music and dance, with a purpose in mind, using a variety of resources. The design process is often intuitive and the making process is fluid. Children can independently access the creative area and choose their own resources to follow their own interests and ideas, following their own curiosity. They are encouraged to evaluate their own creations including thinking about adaptations they could make, as well as evaluating each other's work. Sometimes the context for design is set by the teacher in order to challenge and help progress the children's planning and construction skills and resourcefulness. Children are encouraged to engage in imaginative role play as a way of recreating and exploring familiar experiences and stories.

## Supporting Teaching and Learning within the Early Years

Through providing consistent high-quality hands-on learning experiences all children, including those with SEND, are able to make good, if not accelerated, progress. Developing a strong partnership between the school and the parents and/or carers, ensures that every child is included and supported. Assessing and reviewing what the children have learned regularly using progress checks aims to ensure no child gets left behind. The early identification of a child's need is paramount in ensuring early intervention is put in place to support them in an inclusive way by removing barriers to learning.

## Furthering the Teaching and Learning of during the Early Years

It is fundamental within the Early Years that learning is brought to life. Ensuring concepts and ideas are introduced through real life situations, objects, artefacts and people. Opportunities to visit places within our local community are used as building blocks for future learning, and ensure children develop a strong sense of place. At Lanercost CE Primary School we also ensure children take part in celebration festivals from around the world, participating in real life events and activities, as well as taking part in Christian celebrations with the rest of our school community.

## Assessment of Early Years

We monitor, measure and record each children's learning and development in a variety of ways:

- Informal ongoing observation of learning moments to build up a dynamic picture of each child's current level of development to inform our planning and how to support their next steps of development,
- Progress Check's which contain a short commentary about each individual child's learning assessed in relation to the EYFS 'Development Matters' 2021 statements for learning and development across areas: considering the child's individual approach to play and learning, referring to the Characteristics of effective learning. A judgement as to whether a child is working at the expect level of development is made, and if extra support is needed this is documented and put into place. Progress Checks are completed on entry (at the end of the first half term), followed by the midpoint of each term thereafter, and shared with parents during Parent's Evenings. At the end of each full term these assessments are reviewed by discussion between the Teacher and other adult support.
- All assessment data is logged, tracked and analysed on Insight.
- Individual, group and class observations, as well as records of activities, are logged using Tapestry, an online learning journal. These are flagged against areas of learning and shared digitally with parents and carers. Parents and carers also add their own observations to add to the overall picture of each child's learning.
- Completion of the Statutory Reception Baseline Assessment at the beginning of Reception, and the EYFS profile at the end of Reception.



## *The Impact of our Early Years approach*

From their differing starting points, children make good progress academically, emotionally, creatively, socially and physically. Evidence of the range of activities the children participate in are recorded and communicated to parents via Tapestry. Ongoing observations of the children enable teachers to make formative assessments of their knowledge and skills and inform the future planning of our carefully-crafted and progressive curriculum. Progress Checks are completed on entry (at the end of the first half term), followed by the midpoint of each term thereafter. At the end of each full term these assessments are reviewed by discussion between the Teacher and other adult support and data is added to Insight. This summative assessment enables the teacher to compare children's attainment to age related expectations (taken from Development Matters 2021), and make decisions as to if a child is working within the expected levels of development, or if more support is required.

The overall impact of our curriculum can be measured by the way in which our children are inspired and excited about their learning. We aim for every child to leave foundation stage with a love of learning that cannot be deterred. Our children actively ask questions about the world around them, are keen to engage in new challenges and are not put off by difficulties. They develop and nurture strong, positive attitudes towards learning and take pride in their achievements. They are able to communicate their thoughts and feelings and are respectful of themselves, others and their environment. We endeavour to ensure that our children leave the Early Years Foundation Stage ready to move with confidence and excitement into Key Stage One and have a lifelong love of learning.