

The Curriculum at Lanterns Nursery School



Lanterns Nursery School Curriculum Intent

Our Curriculum Aims and Aspirations

Lanterns Nursery School is a unique nursery, and as such has a unique curriculum which meets the needs of our diverse community of children and families. We want our children to leave our nursery well prepared for the next stage of their education and have carefully designed a broad and balanced curriculum with the following aims.

All children will -

- Feel happy, safe and secure, aware that adults will support and protect them.
- Feel a sense of belonging within the school and wider community.
- Develop a love of learning, make progress and achieve their full potential.
- Become effective communicators- children communicate in different ways and are all supported to find ways to express themselves.
- Be creative, active, motivated, inquisitive and curious learners.
- Treat others fairly, with kindness and without discrimination.
- Make friends and form positive relationships.
- Have a strong sense who they are and what makes them special and unique.
- Be resilient and confident, take risks and to learn through trial and error.
- Enjoy new experiences and adventures, embrace challenge.
- Make choices and follow their own interests and fascinations.
- Develop a relationship with the natural world and an understanding of the need to respect their environment.
- Take pride in what they do and feel a real sense of accomplishment.

We are very proud of our school and the standard of care and education we provide. Please get in touch if you have any questions, or would like to arrange a visit. We look forward to welcoming you into the Lanterns family.

Lanterns Nursery school approaches to teaching and learning

The unique child

At Lanterns Nursery School, we value all children as unique individuals. We identify their strengths and interests and the way they learn and continually adapt as we strive to ensure their learning needs are met. This includes children with SEND and those who are more able. Our curriculum is continually developing. How it is delivered and what children are being taught can change throughout a day, as we respond to children's needs and fascinations. All children are unique; they learn and develop at different rates and in different ways. Through careful observation and planning, practitioners build on what children already know and can do in order to help them with their next steps of learning. Our curriculum is fully inclusive, and we continually strive to remove barriers to learning so that all children can access the full curriculum at a level appropriate to them.

Our unique community

At Lanterns Nursery School, our school community is made up of a diverse range of children and families. Our resourced provision for children identified as having special educational needs and disabilities accounts for approximately a third of our school population. We are a multicultural community, and typically have around 15 different languages spoken at our nursery, with some children learning three languages. Our children's parents and their family structures are equally diverse. Some of our families are experiencing poverty and some are very affluent. Our children grow up in different home environments including single parent, nuclear, LGBTQ+, extended and blended. At Lanterns Nursery School we recognise that the culture of school may be quite different from that of home and the community. We welcome and value a diversity of people, and believe that children's academic and social wellbeing is best served by parents/carers and staff working together on behalf of the child. We work with parents to understand different cultures and to ensure our curriculum and environment reflect the diversity in our community.

Getting to know you and your child

A child's personal development are the important relationships that shape their social world. Attuned, responsive and nurturing relationships are crucial for children to lead healthy and happy lives and are fundamental to cognitive development. Early secure attachments contribute to a broad range of outcomes, including stronger cognitive skills, a love of learning, a sense of self,

social skills, and enable children to learn how to understand their own feelings and those of others. We facilitate this through home visits, settling in sessions, partnerships with parents and a key person approach.

Partnership working

We work closely with parents/carers, therapists, other nurseries, schools and preschools, and professionals involved with families. Supporting parents to understand their vital role as their child's first educators and to support them in their parenting journey to ensure that all children have what they need.

Trauma informed practice

Through research and experience, we know that a history of trauma impacts a child's development, learning, emotions and behaviour. Lanterns Nursery School practitioners have received additional training and utilise a trauma informed approach in their interactions with children, their families and each other.

At Lanterns Nursery School, a strong emphasis is placed on children's personal, social and emotional development. This forms a core part of the nursery school curriculum. We want every child to grow and develop into resilient, capable, confident learners who feel successful in life. Our holistic approach to personal, social and emotional development begins with the child. Secure attachments can buffer children from traumatic stress and trauma sensitive strategies will promote healing over time, create a sense of trust, build relationships and create safe and predictable environments.

Adults are emotionally available to children and seek to support children through their big emotions, validating all emotions and being there in the moment for the child, co-regulating and helping children as they begin to learn to self-regulate. Practitioners understand behaviour from the context of sensory integration, attachment, trauma and communication and language difficulties. Practitioners are 'behaviour detectives' and always seek to understand what a child is attempting to communicate through their behaviour.

Learning through play

Play encompasses children's behaviour which is freely chosen, personally directed and intrinsically motivates. It is performed for no external goal or reward and is a fundamental and integral part of healthy development. The key characteristics of play are fun, uncertainty,

challenge, flexibility and non-productivity. Play can happen indoors or outdoors and with or without the oversight of adults. The UN committee on the Rights of the child provides clear guidance that supports children's play and learning. Article 23 of the Convention on the rights of the child relates to the rights of children with additional support needs and the committee recognises the value of inclusive play both as a right and as a means of achieving children's optimum development. The right to play is expressed in article 31 of the convention.

Self-initiated play and investigation

For the majority of their time at Lanterns Nursery School, children are engaged in self-chosen, play-based learning which can take place indoors or outside. Children are motivated to learn and discover through a wide range of fun, well-planned, open-ended activities. They are encouraged to make independent choices in their play, and through their self-directed play, children develop their independence, self-esteem, perseverance, resilience and social skills. Practitioners carefully observe children's self-chosen play, and are readily available to support and extend learning, facilitate new or developing ideas and support social interactions.

Adult guided teaching and learning

In addition to their own self-chosen play, children need adult-guided learning and direct teaching in order to learn key skills and concepts. At Lanterns we provide opportunities for the children to sit together each session for adult-led story and singing times. Stimulating adult-directed activities are provided each day and practitioners encourage children to access these activities, with extra help when needed. We call this extra help 'scaffolding' and we believe that 'scaffolding up' supports our commitment to inclusion, and enables all children to access our broad, balanced curriculum.

Experiential learning

Children learn best through experience, and at Lanterns Nursery School children learn through exploring, experiencing, discovering, creating, relating to and interacting with the world around them. When children have real experiences, they learn much more about how things work. This element of learning is unstructured, and children are allowed to learn naturally. Experiencing the world independently enables children to think for themselves, and by doing so they gain a sense of achievement and improved confidence.

Continuous provision

At Lanterns Nursery School, our well planned, well-resourced continuous provision is carefully designed using a system of 'common play behaviour' identification to ensure an enabling,

accessible and challenging learning environment for all children. This continuous provision approach enables us to provide challenging resources, which allow children to consolidate and rehearse what they know, experiment and find their own way of doing things. It supports adults in their teaching and interactions with children and continues the provision for learning in the absence of the adult. Utilising supports us in providing challenging resources to complement our open-ended play spaces. Continuous provision is enhanced around children's interests and fascinations, seasonal or cultural topics or themes, skill development, early learning focus, or to provide a direct challenge, or to appeal to an emerging schema. Practitioners carefully observe how children are utilising the continuous provision and plan, assess and review it regularly to ensure it is meeting the needs of children using the space.

Loose parts play and open-ended resources

Ambiguous, open-ended resources and experiences encourage children to think, investigate and explore. Loose parts allow children to be curious, follow their interests and go wherever their imagination takes them and interpret what they are experiencing and handling in a way that is meaningful to them. For adults, facilitating and supporting loose parts play requires a sensitive role that recognises children's play process and resists the urge to step in too soon or too frequently.

Characteristics of effective teaching and learning

The characteristics of effective teaching and learning are statutory and are referenced in the EYFS (2021). They are referred to in the Overarching Principles section.

The three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

- playing and exploring (engagement) - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'
- active learning (motivation) - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements
- creating and thinking critically - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things'

The characteristics of effective teaching and learning are central to our curriculum and are reflected throughout our environment and are facilitated and enhanced through our environment and adult interactions.

Being independent

Children at Lanterns Nursery School are encouraged to become as independent as possible. This fosters children's self-confidence as they begin to develop the belief in their ability to do things for themselves. Through adult modelling and guidance, children learn how to look after their bodies, manage their own personal needs independently, make their own choices. The environment at Lanterns is set up to ensure children can be as successful as possible, through visual cues, to child-height furniture, tools and equipment. Adults always place a high value on children learning to do things for themselves, whilst also encouraging them to ask for help when they need it. Extra time is always allowed to ensure children can try to do things for themselves.

Learning through daily routines

Daily routines provide young children with the comforting predictability that is part of high quality early years provision. Whether taking part in snack time, engaging in story time or putting their coats on to go outside, children benefit from well planned and organised routines that form part of our curriculum and support development and learning.

Observation assessment and planning

Planning – Every class team plans opportunities to support children's learning and development. This involves our knowledge of child development, early year's pedagogy, children's interests and our knowledge of the children. As part of our planning cycle we use the children's interests, our observations of their development and hooks such as seasonal changes and what is happening in our environment to enhance learning. This is then reflected in the experiences on offer, the indoor and outdoor environment and the interactions that adults have with children.

Making learning visible - We use walk and talk boards to share the learning and experiences that take place every week so parents can talk to their children about what they have been doing at nursery. This is also shared through Tapestry and also details core stories, vocabulary and songs that have been a focus. This supports parent's engagement in communication and their knowledge of the curriculum we offer. We also use display boards to make learning visible to children and parents and to enhance language and communication.

Assessment - We use an online early year's documentation tool (Tapestry). We use Tapestry to share 'wow' moments. Key people get to know their children really well and as such know when they have achieved something new. These wow moments are documented on tapestry and

shared with parents. This could be the first time a child tastes something new, or joins in with a group session, or rides a bike for the first time. Practitioners meet termly to review all the pupils progress with a member of the senior management team. This enables us to see how children are progressing overall and to identify gaps or areas which could be further developed to support individuals, groups and particular cohorts further.

Identifying barriers to learning

Some children may need extra support to enable them to access the full curriculum and to make the curriculum accessible. We know that the earlier we identify any barriers, the sooner we can endeavour to remove them. Our SEND policy explains our key principles and approach to supporting children with SEND and our SEND strategy document sets out the different strategies and interventions we use to support the diverse range of needs that we support at Lanterns Nursery School.

Reflective practice

We constantly review our practice to ensure our provision remains current, relevant to our community and appropriate to the needs of our children. Children who have attended Lanterns Nursery School are confident, curious about the world and are eager to continue their learning journey into primary school. To provide effectively for the needs of all our children we use the 'Statutory Framework for The Early Years Foundation Stage' to inform our practice alongside a range of other evidence-based tools, support strategies and interventions.