2c. Curriculum Policy

Rationale

The Lyceum School provides a rigorous and creative curriculum that empowers every pupil to excel academically, athletically and artistically. Our curriculum integrates the best elements of the National Curriculum while fully addressing the requirements for Independent school entrance exams. Pupils engage in a wide range of interdisciplinary topics that encompass history, geography, science and other subjects with an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) lense. This holistic approach not only fosters essential connections across disciplines but also deepens pupils' understanding of the world around them, preparing them for future challenges and opportunities.

Relationship to the National Curriculum

While The Lyceum School does not strictly adhere to every aspect of the National Curriculum, from Year 1 onwards we align with the revised statutory frameworks for English and Mathematics to ensure a robust foundation.

Our Aims

The Lyceum Curriculum aims to:

- Inspire a positive attitude towards learning, making it both enjoyable and rewarding.
- Develop a strong work ethic by emphasising independent learning skills and critical thinking.
- Provide a comprehensive, topic-based curriculum with a significant focus on reading, writing and Mathematics.
- Promote the arts and creativity as essential components of a well-rounded education.
- Ensure opportunities for physical activity for all pupils, with particular emphasis on dance, yoga and sports.
- Foster the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of each pupil.

Planning

Our curriculum is structured around set topics for each year group, including the Early Years Foundation Stage (Reception), Key Stage 1, and Key Stage 2. The Whole School Curriculum Plan (2b) serves as a framework for teachers' planning, outlining the topics and estimating the number of lessons allocated to each subject. Long Term Plans for each year group clearly delineate the topics covered within each curriculum area.

At the beginning of each term, teachers develop Medium Term Plans for Mathematics and topic-based lessons, including English. Teachers are encouraged to create additional planning documents in formats that best align with their teaching approaches and the unique requirements of their classes.

11+ Preparation

We provide targeted support to prepare pupils for the 11+ entrance examinations, emphasising essential areas

such as creative writing, Mathematics, reading comprehension and both Verbal and Non-Verbal Reasoning. Our focus on 11+ preparation ensures that pupils are well-equipped for the next stage of their education. Whilst we prioritise this preparation, we do not routinely prepare pupils for 7+ examinations, allowing us to concentrate our resources and efforts effectively.

Homework

Homework is an important component of our curriculum. Every week the homework tasks and instructions are emailed to all parents to ensure expectations are clear. We encourage parents to actively support their children in completing homework tasks, fostering a collaborative approach to learning. All pupils, including those attending the homework club, are expected to take their work home to share with their parents.

In our commitment to prioritising the well-being of our pupils, we have 'Well-being Wednesdays' whereby no homework is assigned. This initiative allows pupils to engage in activities that promote mental and emotional health, encouraging relaxation and balance in their lives. By dedicating this day to well-being, we aim to create a supportive environment that nurtures resilience and fosters a healthy approach to education. For further details, please refer to the Homework Policy (3g).

Curriculum Areas

English

Speaking and Listening

At The Lyceum, we prioritise speaking and listening skills as fundamental components of effective communication and oracy development. Our curriculum encourages pupils to engage in discussions, presentations and group activities that foster confidence and articulation. Through collaborative learning experiences, pupils are taught to listen actively, respond thoughtfully and express their ideas clearly. We provide numerous opportunities for speaking and listening, including assemblies and productions, as well as role plays and hot seating activities in lessons, which enhance their ability to articulate thoughts in various contexts. By creating a supportive environment, we ensure that every pupil feels valued and empowered to contribute, cultivating a culture of respectful dialogue and active participation.

Handwriting

We believe that proficient handwriting is essential for effective written communication. Our handwriting approach focuses on developing legible and fluid writing styles from an early age, using the Letter Join scheme to guide instruction. Pupils are taught the correct formation of letters, consistent sizing and spacing through structured practice and engaging activities every week. Regular feedback and encouragement are provided to help pupils refine their handwriting skills, fostering a sense of pride in their written work.

Reading

We provide a rich variety of texts, including fiction, non-fiction and poetry, to engage pupils' interests and expand their understanding of different genres and styles. Our curriculum includes Whole Class Reading lessons, where pupils explore texts together, discussing themes, characters and vocabulary in depth. Paired reading activities are conducted not only across year groups but also across houses, promoting collaboration and peer support while allowing pupils to learn from one another. Each year group has a scheduled time in the library, dedicated to developing reading for pleasure and learning essential library skills. Independent reading is encouraged through a diverse selection of age-appropriate books, enabling pupils to choose texts that resonate with their interests and reading levels. We also incorporate regular comprehension exercises and discussion-based activities to develop critical thinking skills, ensuring pupils can analyse, interpret and respond to texts

effectively. Additionally, we mark World Book Day each year with special activities and events that celebrate the joy of reading, encouraging pupils to engage with literature in creative ways.

Writing

We aim to cultivate creativity and proficiency across various genres and formats, empowering pupils to become confident and expressive writers. We encourage pupils to explore and articulate their thoughts and ideas through narrative, persuasive, descriptive and informative writing. Our emphasis on the writing process is integral to our approach; we guide pupils through each stage—from brainstorming and drafting to editing and publishing—allowing them to refine their ideas and develop their individual voices.

To enhance their writing skills, we integrate targeted lessons that focuses on grammar, punctuation and vocabulary, ensuring pupils have the essential tools to craft coherent and compelling texts. Regular opportunities for peer assessment and constructive feedback foster collaboration and self-reflection, helping pupils understand the value of revising their work. We celebrate writing weekly by recognising a 'Writer of the Week' in each class. Exceptional writing is often further honoured by being sent to the Headmaster, for a Super Student Award, which instils a sense of pride in their achievements.

Additionally, we conduct termly assessments through our 'Little Authors' writing assessments, from Reception to Year 6, to monitor progress over time and identify areas for further development. We also incorporate cross-curricular writing projects that connect to themes in subjects such as history, science, and the arts, enabling pupils to apply their writing skills in meaningful contexts.

Topic (History and Geography)

At The Lyceum, our curriculum is centred around a topic-based approach to teaching History and Geography, allowing pupils to explore interconnected themes across both subjects. This approach encourages a deeper understanding by providing context and making learning more relevant to real-world situations. In Autumn 2025, we integrated key elements of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) into our curriculum, ensuring that pupils will not only study historical and geographical topics, but also explore how diverse perspectives and global interconnectedness shape the world.

For example, when studying World War II in Year 6, pupils will continue to map the locations of the Allies and Axis powers in Geography, identifying key countries involved in the conflict. In History, they will explore the causes of the war, the major battles and the impact on civilians. By linking historical events with geographical factors such as terrain, climate and refugee movements, pupils will gain a broader perspective of the war's global impact. Looking ahead, we will also emphasise how these events intersect with issues of EDI, helping pupils understand the diverse experiences and perspectives of people during the war and beyond.

Recently, our curriculum was revised to ensure that one of the three main topics for the year will focus on Sustainability, where pupils across the school will examine environmental, social and economic aspects of sustainability within both History and Geography. This topic will allow pupils to explore how past and present actions have shaped the environment and which sustainable practices are necessary for the future. It will provide an opportunity for pupils to understand the interconnectedness of sustainability with global issues such as climate change, resource management and environmental justice.

Through these focused topics, we aim to nurture critical thinking, global awareness and a more immersive learning experience, preparing pupils for future learning while encouraging curiosity about the world around them.

Maths

At The Lyceum, we recognise the importance of developing strong calculation and problem-solving skills to ensure pupils become confident and proficient mathematicians. Our curriculum focuses on building fluency, accuracy and reasoning abilities, in line with the National Curriculum, and where possible, we integrate AI-driven platforms to enhance personalised learning. The structured progression begins with foundational number understanding, progressing through to mental calculation strategies, formal written methods and multi-step problem-solving approaches. Pupils are encouraged to engage with real-life mathematical contexts, apply efficient calculation strategies and develop logical reasoning and resilience, with a focus on fluency in basic operations (e.g. multiplication and division), and more complex areas such as fractions, percentages and algebraic reasoning.

Our teaching approach incorporates the Concrete, Pictorial, Abstract (CPA) model, alongside opportunities for mathematical discussion and real-world application. Platforms like Times Tables Rock Stars and Atom Learning support personalised learning and track individual progress. Regular assessments, both formative and summative, ensure that pupils are consistently monitored, with targeted interventions provided when necessary. This comprehensive approach aims to build a deep understanding of mathematical concepts, empowering pupils to apply their skills confidently across all areas of learning.

Science

Pupils engage in a wide range of topics across biology, chemistry and physics, including the study of living organisms, materials and their properties, forces and energy. Through carefully planned units, we explore key concepts such as ecosystems, the human body, states of matter and principles of light and sound. This approach ensures that pupils not only acquire factual knowledge but also understand the relevance of science in everyday life.

In addition to content knowledge, we place a strong emphasis on developing essential working scientifically skills. Pupils engage in conducting investigations, where they formulate questions, design experiments and gather data. The write-up of these investigations includes detailed sections on methodology, results and conclusions. We specifically incorporate mathematical statistics to enhance their understanding of data representation; pupils learn to create bar charts and line graphs to visually display their findings, reinforcing their mathematical skills in a scientific context.

We also focus on building pupils' science capital—an understanding of the relevance of science in their lives and the broader community. By connecting classroom learning to real-world applications and encouraging discussions about scientific concepts, we help pupils see themselves as part of the scientific community. We mark British Science Week each year with engaging activities and events that celebrate the wonders of science, such as experiments, guest speakers and interactive workshops. These experiences enrich their learning and inspire a passion for scientific inquiry. Through hands-on investigations, collaborative projects, and exposure to various scientific careers, we nurture a culture of curiosity and critical thinking, enabling pupils to engage deeply with scientific concepts. Regular opportunities for reflection and discussion support their ability to evaluate their work and consider improvements. Pupils are encouraged to think like scientists, develop problem-solving skills and explore real-world applications of science, fostering a lifelong love of discovery and innovation.

STEAM

The Lyceum is dedicated to delivering a dynamic and integrated STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics) curriculum that encourages creativity, resilience, critical thinking and problem-solving skills. By promoting multi and interdisciplinary learning, pupils engage in hands-on projects that blend scientific inquiry, iterative design and construction techniques with artistic expression, allowing for a deeper understanding of concepts and fostering innovative thinking. Technology and tools are seamlessly integrated into the curriculum, enabling pupils to develop essential skills in coding, software and hardware.

To enhance the STEAM experience, we organise STEAM fairs to provide pupils with opportunities to showcase their work and connect with the wider community. By cultivating a culture of inquiry, exploration and experimentation, our STEAM curriculum aims to produce confident learners who are prepared to embrace challenges, collaborate effectively and thrive in an ever-evolving world.

Computing

The Lyceum is dedicated to delivering and developing an exciting, adaptive, relevant and forward-thinking curriculum that includes elements of computational thinking, data collection and mining, programming, digital literacy and e-safety using a diverse range of digital tools.

Pupils will engage with software and hardware through physical computing programmes and projects using products that include BBC micro-bits, Raspberry Pi Picos and Makey Makeys. Pupils move from block coding software that includes Scratch and Makecode to text-based coding like Javascript and MicroPython.

The Lyceum integrates AI responsibly and ensures pupils use these tools to analyse, research and create work that is credible, imaginative, interesting and nuanced.

Media tools such as Canva, CoSpaces and Flexclip allow pupils to enhance their digital literacy and creative skills and understand how these tools are used by people and creative industries to impact individuals, communities and societies.

E-safety is a vital part of the Lyceum's Computing curriculum and pupils will learn about online safety, data protection, and responsible use of technology through instruction, interactive workshops and analogue and digital media.

Through these tools, agency and powerful learning experiences pupils will become critical, confident, creative and responsible users of technology. They will develop problem solving skills and techniques, logical and algorithmic thinking and will understand how technology is ubiquitous in many societies. Computing is increasingly vital in today's world and learning it offers numerous benefits. Computing education empowers pupils to understand, use and create technology, preparing them for success in a rapidly changing world.

Spanish

The Spanish programme at The Lyceum immerses pupils in the language through interactive activities, games, and songs, focusing on developing speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. Beginning in Reception through Year 2, pupils build a foundational vocabulary, covering topics like numbers, colours, family, and animals. In Years 3 and 4, they explore more complex themes, such as greetings, classroom vocabulary, and clothes, while

learning basic grammar concepts like articles, gender and personal pronouns. By Years 5 and 6, pupils revisit grammar and learn present tense verbs, descriptive adjectives, and expressions like "I like" and "there is/are." Cultural awareness is fostered through themed lessons on food, travel, school, sports and Hispanic traditions. Collaborative learning, pen pal exchanges, and a Year 6 trip to Spain provide pupils with real-world language practice.

Latin

Latin introduces pupils to the foundations of classical language and culture, enhancing their understanding of language structure and etymology. Starting in Year 6, pupils engage with a variety of texts, including classical literature and historical documents, fostering an appreciation for Roman culture. Through interactive activities such as translation exercises and group discussions, they develop critical thinking and analytical skills that support their overall literacy and enrich their studies in English and modern languages.

Personal, Health, Social, Economic Education (PSHE)

Our Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) curriculum is rooted in the Jigsaw framework, which promotes emotional literacy, resilience, spiritual development and social skills. This comprehensive programme is designed to equip pupils with the knowledge and understanding they need to navigate both their personal and social lives. Through engaging lessons, pupils explore a variety of themes, including relationships, health and well-being and living in the wider world, fostering a holistic understanding of themselves and their communities.

We follow a whole-school approach, with all year groups exploring the same themes (Jigsaw puzzles) simultaneously. Each puzzle begins with an introductory school assembly, creating a whole-school focus for both adults and children. This approach also ensures clear progression across year groups, with learning tailored to be accessible to all children while providing appropriate challenges for each individual. The Jigsaw puzzles/themes are:

- Being Me in My World
- Celebrating Differences
- Dreams and Goals
- Healthy Me
- Relationships
- Changing Me

In each of these topics, the Jigsaw approach encourages active participation and collaborative learning, allowing pupils to engage in discussions, role-plays and group activities that promote empathy and understanding. Through this, pupils cultivate kindness by considering different perspectives, creativity by expressing their thoughts in innovative ways, community by working together to support one another and confidence by developing their voice in a safe and respectful space.

In addition, we provide pupils with ample opportunities for reflection, enabling them to connect their learning to real-life situations and reinforcing the importance of making informed choices. Therefore, by creating a supportive environment rooted in these values, we aim to empower pupils to develop their emotional intelligence, build positive relationships and understand their role as responsible citizens.

Religious Education (RE)

The RE curriculum at The Lyceum is designed to promote the spiritual, moral, social, cultural and intellectual development of all pupils, reflecting the diverse and multicultural community of our school. We implement the Jigsaw RE scheme, which encourages pupils to explore various religions and human experiences while raising fundamental questions of belief and value.

Weekly RE lessons for Years 1 to 6 provide a dynamic and engaging platform for discussion on themes related to spirituality and ethics. These lessons, along with whole-school assemblies, foster a sense of community and shared learning. Pupils are encouraged to participate in discussions, drama activities, as well as trips to places of worship that enhance their understanding of different faiths. Our curriculum not only promotes 'British Values' but also prepares pupils for life in modern, multicultural Britain by encouraging them to ask questions and recognise the rights of others to hold their own views. Through the Jigsaw RE framework, pupils learn about a variety of world religions and philosophical perspectives, including Humanism, empowering them to think critically and explore meaningful questions about life, beliefs and global citizenship.

Physical Education (PE) and Sport

We are promoting physical fitness and overall well-being through a dynamic and comprehensive PE and sports curriculum. Our programme is designed to inspire a love for physical activity and equip pupils with the skills and knowledge to lead healthy, active lives. We utilise outstanding facilities at Shoreditch Power League, Bunhill Fields, York Hall Centre, Finsbury Leisure Centre and local parks to provide a diverse range of activities, including swimming, Football, Cricket, Rugby, Gymnastics and Dance.

Lessons are delivered by a specialist PE teacher who offers tailored support to enhance skills, build confidence and promote teamwork. We emphasise regular participation, encouraging pupils to engage in structured lessons, creative dance and recreational games.

To cultivate teamwork and a competitive spirit, the Head of Sport organises fixtures with other schools in Cricket, Football and Rugby. We are dedicated to exploring innovative approaches to physical education, integrating yoga and mindfulness to support mental well-being. Our aim is to create a supportive and inclusive environment where all pupils feel encouraged to participate and celebrate their achievements, ultimately instilling a lifelong love of physical activity and helping them develop resilience, confidence and social skills.

Art

Our Art curriculum introduces pupils to a wide range of techniques, materials and styles through hands-on activities such as drawing, painting, sculpture and printmaking. This encourages experimentation, allowing pupils to explore their individuality while learning about key art concepts and the works of various artists from different cultures and time periods.

Emphasising the creative process, pupils are guided from initial ideas to final pieces, with regular opportunities for reflection and critique to help them articulate their artistic choices. Achievements are celebrated through exhibitions and displays, instilling a sense of pride in their work. Collaborative group projects and community art initiatives further enrich the curriculum, fostering teamwork and creative thinking.

Music

At The Lyceum, Music is at the heart of our creative curriculum, inspiring a love for performance and developing musicianship from the very start. Our Music lessons are dynamic, immersive and filled with hands-on

experiences, using methods such as solfège and Dalcroze to build strong musical foundations from Reception. Young learners begin by exploring rhythm sticks and handbells while learning to read basic rhythms. As they progress, they develop instrumental skills year by year: Year 1 children master the glockenspiel and treble clef notation, Year 2 take up the recorder and Year 3 dive into ukulele playing and chord reading. Alongside instrumental learning, children explore great classical works through the BBC's Ten Pieces, fostering an appreciation for orchestral music.

As pupils move through the school, their skills broaden and deepen, culminating in confident, expressive musicians. Year 4 introduces African drumming, bass clef reading and time signatures, while Year 5 sees whole-class instrumental performances, as well as explorations of samba and jazz. By Year 6, pupils refine their understanding of composition and theory, preparing them for the next stage of their musical journey. The older three year groups all enter the London Sinfonietta's Composition Competition every year and we have had several pupils successful and have their pieces performed by members of this professional orchestra. During their time at The Lyceum, all pupils engage with a range of composers and styles, and they have rich opportunities to perform in our Big Band, orchestra, and three choirs. Our curriculum ensures every child experiences the joy of making music, developing not just technical skills but also confidence, creativity and a lifelong love of music.

Drama

At The Lyceum School, drama and performance play a key role in developing pupils' confidence, creativity and communication skills. Drama is embedded across the curriculum, particularly within English and Topic lessons, providing regular opportunities for pupils to engage in role play, storytelling and performance-based learning.

The school works in partnership with external theatre companies to deliver age-appropriate workshops that enhance pupils' understanding of drama and the performing arts. Through our topic-based curriculum, pupils are encouraged to immerse themselves in historical contexts, using drama to deepen their understanding of past events. Residential trips for pupils in Years 3 to 6 further support this by incorporating historical role play, allowing pupils to experience life as World War II evacuees or Tudor villagers.

All pupils participate in termly class assemblies, which provide regular opportunities for developing public speaking and performance skills. These assemblies feature poetry recitals, dramatic interpretations, group presentations and solo performances. Parents are invited to attend and celebrate pupils' achievements.

Whole-school productions form a significant part of the drama provision at The Lyceum. Reception pupils participate in an annual Christmas Nativity, and pupils in Years 3 to 6 take part in a large-scale musical production each year, directed by the Deputy Head Teacher.

Additionally, pupils have the opportunity to attend LAMDA (London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art) lessons, which support the development of performance skills and prepare pupils for external examinations.

The Lyceum School is committed to ensuring that drama and performance opportunities contribute to pupils' personal development, nurturing confidence, creativity, and a lifelong appreciation for the performing arts.

Trips

We believe that educational trips are vital for enriching pupils' understanding and engagement with the curriculum. Teachers carefully organise these trips in alignment with our Long and Medium Term Plans, ensuring that each visit

is purposeful and relevant. Pupils have the opportunity to explore galleries, museums and theatre shows, which enhance their learning experiences and bring classroom topics to life. For example, a visit to Milden allows pupils to immerse themselves in Tudor life, providing hands-on experiences that deepen their historical understanding. All trips are thoroughly vetted and approved by the Senior Leadership Team to ensure safety and alignment with our educational goals.

Extra-Curricular Activities

The Lyceum is committed to offering a diverse and extensive extra-curricular programme that caters to a wide range of interests and talents. These activities, which take place before and after school, provide pupils with opportunities to explore intellectual pursuits, creative endeavours and physical activities. Led by both our dedicated staff members and external coaches and specialists, the programme encourages pupils to develop new skills, build confidence and foster a sense of community. From art clubs and music lessons to sports teams and drama clubs, our extra-curricular offerings are designed to complement the curriculum and support the holistic development of every pupil, promoting a well-rounded educational experience.

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