

## Flourish With Us Independent School

*'Creating better futures for children and young people, building resilience, and developing self-esteem and well-being.'*



## Curriculum Intent and Rationale

### Intent

At Flourish With Us we aim to offer a curriculum that is experiential, engaging and creative. We want to develop the child's learning through fun and memorable experiences. Our creative approach is designed to nurture our pupils, so they become more resilient, develop higher self-esteem and can enjoy celebrating their successes. We also want them to become confident individuals with a positive mindset.

With this in mind, we have implemented a cohesive, sequential curriculum model built around human flourishing, through which we aspire to embed a culture of success. It encourages pupils to develop a broader vocabulary which enables them to discuss their learning, connect and make progress, empowering them to feel ready for their transition to their next school.

We believe our curriculum should look to raise pupils' aspirations, by providing them with a wide range of practical learning experiences, developing their cultural capital, as well as teaching them about what is possible in terms of human creativity and achievement. We want to be able to send our pupils out into the world with developing employability skills, in order to help break negative cycles and low aspirations. We want to open the doors of opportunity to each pupil, helping them to recognise the potential they have to make a positive contribution, not only within their own community, but on a global scale. In short, we want them to achieve amazing things!

### Rationale for Implementation

We use Dimensions 'Learning Means the World' Curriculum as the main vehicle for achieving our outlined intent.

This curriculum is underpinned by four highly relevant world issues, known as the four Cs:-

**Culture**

**Communication**

**Conflict**

**Conservation**

### Communication

Communication underpins how our pupils access their learning. Most of them have not yet developed positive social skills and they don't have the correct vocabulary they need to communicate with others in appropriate ways. Some children also have speech and language delay. Because of this, we believe it is important to actively model positive communication and demonstrate how to talk and listen to each other. We have had to go back to the basics of communication and use scripting in most cases. This involves the teacher saying, 'I am speaking' and the pupil saying, 'I am listening'. We find that the children often get angry borne out of frustration, due to a lack of understanding. Our aim is to change patterns around communication and provide children with the language to be able to communicate effectively whilst feeling they are heard, and that their feelings are validated.

## **Culture**

By the time they get to us, pupils have a negative mindset about school. When they arrive at our school, they also often already have fixed ideas and opinions about people. Unfortunately, there is a lack of tolerance towards anything that is different to what they have experienced. We have a very diverse demographic and children come from a wide variety of backgrounds. We have a wide range of neuro diversity within our school community and children learn in different ways and at different rates of progress. Our children do not have many experiences outside of the street where they live, so we are passionate about providing them with as many opportunities as we can, whilst keeping them safe.

## **Conflict**

There are some established behaviour patterns when pupils arrive at Flourish. They have learned that physical conflict gets them what they want and we are determined to change this mindset.

For example, our children often don't have appropriate skills to initiate friendships. They have a lack of social skills and can often be seen pushing or hurting someone they really want to be friends with; they simply don't know how to communicate their intentions. Their first response is often a physical response to a situation and we try to explain that there are different ways to sort things out.

Their life experiences have often involved abuse, either directly or indirectly. We see that part of our job is to model restoration and provide the children with the tools to be able to resolve conflict in a calm manner by talking through a situation and providing a platform for discussion. Our children play computer fighting games and often struggle to differentiate what they see in gaming and real life. They need to know that you can't shoot people to get what you want.

## **Conservation**

At Flourish With Us, having respect for our belongings and our school is so important. Their attitude is often such that, if they break something, they can simply get a new one. One of our biggest problems is that our pupils do not value property. They have no concept about how to look after things and respecting resources. Their experiences are very narrow and they are quite rigid in their thinking.

We believe it is our role to teach our pupils the basics of looking after things.

It is our plan to build new wooden raised beds so that we can teach them to plant bulbs and take care of them as they grow in spring.

We are also aiming to have a school pet in order to teach them about responsibility and the importance of taking care of living things. This curriculum provides a platform for our pupils to gain an understanding of the role they can play in taking care of our world and the importance of doing so. In turn, we believe that this focus will have an impact on their behaviour and overall learning.

Our curriculum narrative begins with **Communication**, as this underpins and links to the other three focus areas. We have followed this with **Conflict** which has a focus on the past, specifically learning from our mistakes. **Next, Culture** because we believe that understanding identity is so important. on the past, and finally **Conservation** which looks to the future and a better, sustainable world.

We also encourage our pupils to have high aspirations by teaching them about human creativity and achievement through additional Competency Units about famous figures that focus on Creativity, Commitment, Courage and Community.