



# **OUTDOOR LEARNING POLICY FOR SHAKESPEARE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

To be reviewed: Annual

Adopted: September 2016

To go to: Curriculum Committee

Approved by Governors: 25<sup>th</sup> April 2022

Amended and Reviewed: HB January 2024

The **Natural Connections Project 2016** reported positive impacts of outdoor learning;

- Makes lessons more enjoyable
- Improves social skills
- Improves pupils health and well being
- Engages pupils with learning
- Has a positive impact on behaviour
- Leads to a greater understanding of nature

*'The outdoors can provide a scale and freedom for a type of play that is difficult to replicate indoors'*.

#### **Curriculum Framework for Children 3 to 5**

In November 2006 the DCSF launched the **Learning Outside the Classroom Manifesto** through which commitment by them and other bodies has been emphasised that every young person should experience the world beyond the classroom as an essential part of learning and personal development, whatever their age, ability or circumstances. Learning outside the classroom is about raising achievement through an organised, powerful approach to learning, in which direct experience is of prime importance. This is not only about what we learn, but importantly how and where we learn.

'There is strong evidence that good quality learning outside the classroom adds much value to classroom learning. It can lead to a deeper understanding of the concepts that span traditional subject boundaries which are frequently difficult to teach effectively using classroom methods alone'

#### **Learning Outside The Classroom Manifesto**

There is current consultation by the FSA for the government to support a Nature Premium as lockdown showed inequalities of access to nature crucial for mental health and well being. This statutory right of regular nature experience throughout a child's education would address tackling obesity, promoting resilience, social functioning and inclusion, as well as reducing anxiety, creating more self worth and happiness.

"No one will protect what they don't care about, and no one will care about what they have never experienced"  
David Attenborough. In essence children need to grow up 'greener'

#### **Aims**

Our Outdoor Learning Policy aims to foster children's love of learning. We believe that all children have the right to experience the unique and special nature of being outdoors. We further believe that it is important to enable children and staff to use the outside environment as a context for teaching and learning.

#### **Objectives**

- Use the outdoor environment as a context and a natural resource for learning, this includes Fleetwood Beach and Fleetwood Memorial Park.
- Include the outdoor environment when planning for learning.
- Enable children to access the outdoor areas on a regular basis.
- Ensure that the outdoor areas offers children the opportunity to investigate and explore, problem solve, use their imagination and creativity.
- Ensure the outdoor areas offer children opportunities to develop their gross motor skills.
- Ensure that children enjoy energetic activity outdoors and the feeling of wellbeing that it brings.
- Observe, assess and record the learning that happens in the outdoor areas.
- Give children the opportunity to plan and have ownership for their learning in the outdoor environment.
- Help children to care for the outside environment through the context of the outdoor classroom areas.
- Enable children to work on their own and with others.
- Enable children to develop an appreciation of natural beauty and a sense of wonder about the world.
- Respect the outdoor environment and to care for living things.
- Enable children to manage and use the space and freedom afforded by the outdoor environment.
- Give children the opportunity to relax, enjoy and have fun outdoors.
- Use tools safely and effectively and to follow individual and class risk assessments.

#### **Equal Opportunities**

Outdoor education, visits and off-site activities should be available and accessible to all whom wish to participate, irrespective of gender, religion, ethnic origin, social background, medical need or physical ability. All young people should be encouraged to participate in as wide a variety of visits and activities as possible. Planning for visits and activities must take account of the Special Educational Needs (SEN) and Disability Act 2001 and The Disability Discrimination Act 2005. Schools should seek to anticipate the needs of pupils who are disabled as well as the needs of specific pupils.

#### **Health and Safety**

Children will be supported in taking risks within a safe and secure environment. Pupils will be taught to manage risks. It is important to ensure that the outdoor environment offers challenges and teaches the children how to be

safe and aware of others. Outdoor learning opportunities will be grasped when available and teachers will assess risk. In the first instance the school's policies relating to Health and Safety and Risk Assessment should be referred to and applied prior to any outdoor learning activity that may require additional support beyond the reasonable activities one would normally apply within the classroom. It is also important that the school applies robust safety measures to effectively manage and minimise risks. It is equally important, however, that all involved, including parents acknowledge that a degree of residual risk remains. Children are taught to manage risks in regard to outdoor learning. All pupils are regularly reminded about the importance of staying safe. Children are reminded of the importance of keeping themselves and members of the school community safe. The following expectations are understood by all pupils. There is a shared understanding of how pupils safeguard themselves and others when undertaking outdoor learning.

### **Guidelines**

#### **To enable each child to participate at their own level**

- Staff will support each child in taking responsibility for their own actions.
- The particular learning needs and styles of each child shall be recognised and noted in the planning process.
- Staff should take opportunities to observe and assess the learning of each child.
- Staff or other adults should take opportunities to work on a one-to-one basis with each child.
- Co-operative work with peers should be supported and encouraged.
- Children in the role of tutor for others less skilled should be supported.

#### **Involve and engage children**

- Develop opportunities with children to extend indoor learning to the outdoors and vice versa.
- Observe children closely and interact with them to understand and celebrate what and how they are learning.
- Promote children's collaboration and partnership.
- Set challenges and problems to solve.
- Understand and appreciate what children are experiencing and learning from their outdoor environment and help them to build on this.
- Use photographs, video records or children's work to help them to recall and think about their experiences, bringing their outdoor experiences inside.
- Find ways to encourage children to wonder, imagine, hypothesise and think together.
- Ensure that children have opportunities to return to and persist with challenges and exploration over time and to deepen their experiences and understandings.

#### **To encourage independence and responsibility**

- Staff will ensure that each child has opportunities to plan and develop their own learning.
- Staff will support children in the safe and careful use of tools, equipment and living things.
- Children will be encouraged to be aware of their own needs and safety and the needs and safety of others whom they may be working.
- Staff will model good practice in their care for plants and for any animals that may be encountered.
- Staff will encourage children to ensure that they have good personal hygiene.
- Staff will ensure that their interventions are appropriate.

#### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

- The Outdoor Learning Coordinator will monitor plans on a termly basis.
- Staff meeting time to be given to share practice.
- Wear and tear of equipment will be monitored by staff and OL Coordinator and replacement and repair will be carried out when necessary
- Discussions and feedback from children and staff.
- Discuss and review the validity of the policy to ensure it is meeting the needs of the children.
- Health and safety guidelines to include individual and class risk assessments.
- The use of photos, videos will provide evidence of outdoor learning.

### **Assessment**

The outdoor areas will provide the basis for assessment practice. Outdoor Learning practice is a tool to support Teaching and Learning. Assessment will be provided via informal observations and pupil voice which may be used to respond to children's interests and experiences and inform future planning. Photographs will illustrate children's experiences and may be included as evidence of learning. All pupils will be matched against the National Curriculum for the Foundation Stage or The National Curriculum in all key areas of learning.

### **Extra-curricular activities**

Clubs will be provided to support Outdoor Learning. Additionally children are encouraged to develop their interests in the outdoors by being given the opportunity to play/work in them at other times of the school day e.g lunchtimes/playtimes.

### **Community**

The EVC Coordinator is responsible for the coordination of visits outside of school. Regular visits to Fleetwood beach and Memorial Park are encouraged. Engagement with other agencies i.e. Wyre Park Rangers, Rossall Point, RNLI, Keep Britain Tidy, Friends of Memorial Park are also actively encouraged to support Outdoor Learning.

### **Our Commitment to Outdoor Learning.**

We use weekly sessions of Beach School as a learning tool throughout all year groups. OL opportunities are highlighted in each year group's Curriculum Map. We have invested in an outdoor canopy so that learning is not restricted to fine weather.

### **EYFS Provision**

There are no boundaries to outdoor learning within the EYFS. Outdoor learning is integral part of our day. Children have free access throughout the sessions, with range of free flow and planned activities. Children wear appropriate protective clothing.

### **KS1 Provision**

In KS1 we try to utilise the outdoor space as much as possible. Opportunities to take learning outside are seized and taken full advantage of. KS1 have access to the KS1 playground where they can participate in seasonal/topical outdoor activities.

### **KS2 Provision**

KS2 teachers endeavour to take lessons outside whenever possible. For example, science lessons involve studying the weather, and geography lessons may involve work in the locality, orienteering, and following maps.

We advocate that the pace of learning can be enhanced by using the outdoors and that children who may find the classroom too constraining will perform and behave better outdoors, reducing the time spent on explanation and behaviour management. There is clear evidence that boys in particular, are more active in their learning in an outdoor environment. The school will communicate the benefits to parents and the wider community of outdoor learning so that there is a greater understanding of its value and importance and provide a greater awareness of the safety standards the school adopts.

**This policy should be reviewed annually and rewritten every three years or as and when necessary.**

**Reviewed by HB April 2023**

**Reviewed by HB January 2024**