

Shakespeare Primary Beach School Policy

Introduction to Beach Schools

At Shakespeare Primary School we have one member of staff who has been awarded an 'Archimedes Training and Beach Schools Practical Skills and Environmental Management' Level 3 qualification. This allows them to work with groups of children at local beaches throughout the school year. Children are given time to explore the surrounding environment. However, priority is given to group discussions regarding boundaries, dangers and safety which are paramount to learning safely. Beach School activity encourages independence, turn taking, communication, negotiation and an element of risk taking within safe and risk-assessed sessions. The adult/child ratio is kept low to enable staff to work and supervise children appropriately.

What is Beach School?

Following the same ethos as Forest School, Beach School aims to use the coast as a platform for a whole new learning experience in order to provide children with the opportunity to explore their natural surroundings in an organised setting. Beaches have always attracted a large variety of people for a number of different reasons. At Shakespeare we believe that every child should experience the wonders of their local beach environment. Living by the coast does not mean that everyone accesses this environment in their daily lives. Our aim is to remove this barrier and provide children with the opportunity to visit, learn and fall in love with the beach. By providing a hands-on inspirational learning environment we will see the positive effects which outdoor learning has on our children.

What does Beach School involve?

Beach School sessions provide fantastic opportunities for learning across the National Curriculum and beyond. We aim to support children to explore and experiment, develop an interest in their environment, stay healthy and to have fun. During sessions, children access a wide range of stimulating activities. They may:

- Learn about seasons and tides
- Explore creativity making environmental art and sculptures using natural materials.
- Learn about marine animals and the threats to them
- Develop survival skills including shelter building, fire lighting and outdoor cooking
- Play games
- Identify marine fauna and flora
- Develop their sensory skills and observation,
- Improve scientific knowledge of coastal habitats
- Explore mathematical concepts in an outside environment.
- Develop language for writing
- Participate in mini beach cleans
- Learn about current environmental campaigns, pressures on the marine environment and what they can do to help

Aims of Beach School

Within these activities our aims are:

- To provide children with experiences that encourage an appreciation, awareness and knowledge of the natural environment.
- To learn to respect and care for the local environment.
- To explore, experiment and stay safe.
- To abide by rules and set standards of behaviour, to work cooperatively in groups and to respect each other's ideas.
- To develop children's self-esteem, self-confidence and perseverance through the setting of small achievable tasks.
- To develop children's communication and language through developing questioning skills, reasoning and descriptive vocabulary

- To develop fine and gross motor skills, coordination and dexterity.

Outline of Beach School Experience

- Beach School takes place throughout the year and in most weather conditions.
- The Beach School Leader will ensure that all children are suitably clothed.
- The sessions will vary in duration from two hours to a full day, depending on the age and experience of the children, the planned activities and the weather conditions.
- A variety of activities are planned, which cater for all abilities and needs.
- The children are taught a variety of skills through practical hands on activities
- The children learn the care and safe use of a wide range of tools.
- Children are encouraged to listen attentively to instructions and to take responsibility for their actions. They are also encouraged to have respect for the environment.
- A NOP is in place and held by the Beach School Leader.

Resources

- The Beach School Leader holds a level 3 qualification in Beach Schools and Environmental Management. They also hold an up to date Outdoor First Aid certificate.
- The Beach School Leader is responsible for planning, organising and running all Beach School Sessions. Staff who assist regularly on sessions will be given training by the Beach School Leader and have read the Beach School Policy and Handbook. All staff are DBS checked.
- All adults will wear a high visibility vest.
- The Beach School Leader carries a 'Beach School Happy Bag' containing, first aid kit, wipes, tissues, mobile telephone, emergency contact details, antibacterial gel and other resources depending on the planned session.

The role of the Beach School Leader

- The Beach School Leader will ensure the safety of the children at all times. The leader will carry out a detailed safety check before each session and comply with health and safety risk assessments. These assessments are continuous and are updated regularly.
- The leader will also check tide times and weather before the trip.
- The Beach School Leader will ensure that all documentation is relevant and up to date.
- The Beach School Leader will carry an emergency pack at all times.
- The Beach School Leader is responsible for all equipment and will ensure that it is checked before each use.
- The Beach School Leader will keep an accident book and record any incidents that may occur during a session, e.g. trips, falls, stings, etc. If there has been a 'near miss', this will also be documented.
- The Beach School Leader will liaise with staff who accompany them on the trips on session details, risk assessment, and policy procedures.

Our Beach School sessions are delivered locally on Fleetwood Beach, from Rossall Tower to Marine Beach. We also use links with other coastal education facilitators like the RNLI, Rossall Point, Love My Beach, The Wildlife Trusts, and the Wyre Rangers.

Environmental Impact

Beach School has environmental awareness at the heart of its ethos. Wherever possible, environmentally friendly products and recycled materials are used when appropriate. Good practice is modelled by adults showing children that the world in which we live should be cared for. We always leave the beach as we found it.

Health and Safety

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The Beach School programme will support children to develop responsibility for themselves and others. It will encourage early risk management strategies that will ensure children start to consider the impact of their actions on themselves and on others.

A site risk assessment has been carried out and a copy is held by the Beach School Leader. The Beach School Leader has an up-to-date certificate in Outdoor First Aid and is in charge of first aid arrangements. A number of first aid kits are taken on all visits and a separate burns kit is taken when incorporating fire pit activities. In the case of an accident requiring further assistance, emergency contact numbers are carried with a mobile phone. An EAP is in place and held by the Beach School Leader.

Fires are a valuable part of the Beach School experience but will only be lit according to the procedures and permission from the local authority or landowner.

Child Protection

Beach School sessions are led by a trained Beach School Leader, supported by members of staff and volunteers. All adults are fully briefed on health and safety, risk assessment of sites and activities. Staff and volunteers are made aware of the relevant Beach School policies, Child Protection policies and procedures and ensure that they adhere to the guidance contained in them. All staff and regular volunteers will have DBS checks.

Equality and Inclusion

Beach School sessions are inclusive and all needs and abilities are catered for. We aim to provide a safe and secure environment in which children can flourish and in which children feel able to share their ideas. Additional risk assessments are carried out for children with Special Educational Needs.

Behaviour

At Beach School we operate within the Behaviour Policy of the school. When a child's behaviour threatens the well being of him/herself or others, and he/she does not respond to a verbal warning, he/she may be returned to school.

Weather Conditions

Beach School sessions will go ahead in all weather conditions with only a few exceptions:

- Strong winds that make beach areas hazardous.
- Dangerous travelling conditions such as snow or ice.
- Very wet or extremely cold conditions.
- During very hot periods, where sun burn and heat stroke could be a high factor.

During cold weather, hot drinks are taken down to the beach, to ensure the children are comfortable and warm. Cold drinks and ice packs are taken in the summer to ensure children stay cool.

Clothing

To ensure that the children are sufficiently protected from the weather and the beach environment we require children to wear appropriate clothing and footwear. The Beach School Leader will ensure all the children are appropriately dressed before leaving for the beach.

Winter Clothing

The general rule is to wear layers which keep in the heat and can be removed if needed.

Children will need:

Long sleeved t-shirt/shirt
Jumper/fleece
Warm hat
Gloves - not mittens
Wellies with warm socks
Waterproofs

Summer Clothing

Sun hat
Sun cream applied before session
Wellies

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