



Stoke Holy Cross Primary School

Learning outside the classroom policy

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Learning Outside the Classroom Policy

Our learning outside the classroom policy aims to foster the children's love of learning. At Stoke Holy Cross Primary School, we believe that all children have the right to experience the unique and special nature of being outdoors and of taking their learning outside the classroom. We further believe that it is important to enable children to use the outside environment as a context for learning and also to develop an understanding that learning is not something that is restricted to a classroom environment.

What do we mean by Learning Outside the Classroom?

Learning outside the classroom is a broad term that includes: outdoor play, learning in areas outside the classroom, including other places in school buildings, school grounds, environmental education, personal and social development, outdoor lessons, and trips to other places. Such learning does not have a clearly defined boundary but it does have a common purpose. Learning outside the classroom can provide a dramatic contrast to the children's normal classroom. There is strong evidence (*American Institutes for Research, 2005*) that good quality learning outside the classroom adds much value to classroom learning. It leads to a deeper understanding of concepts that span traditional subject boundaries and which are frequently difficult to teach effectively using classroom methods alone. In addition such learning builds an understanding that we learn at all times, in all places. The results from learning outside the classroom can be instantaneous as well as active and therefore impacts on behaviour as well as tapping into the learning styles of the more kinaesthetic learner. Learning outside the classroom can help to bring learning alive. For that reason such learning can have an impact on areas of the curriculum as diverse as imaginative writing and personal and social development.

Benefits of Learning Outside the Classroom

- It helps to ensure that children are successful learners, enabling children to develop knowledge and skills in ways that add value to their everyday learning experiences.
- It contributes towards creating independent learners with high self-esteem and self-sufficiency.
- It can have a positive impact upon children's behaviour.
- It contributes towards the promotion and children's understanding of the importance of developing a healthy lifestyle.
- It promotes and strengthens communication skills, team work and sense of cohesion.

Aims

- To raise the profile of Learning Outside the Classroom.
- To empower children to take ownership of their learning.
- To encourage children to develop the skills to solve problems, developing resilient and reflective learners.

- To develop skills of communication, cooperation and collaborative learning.
- To provide a challenging, safe and secure environment within which children can take and manage risks.
- To encourage children to care for their school environment and the wider environment beyond.

Planning

Opportunities exist throughout the curriculum for promoting outdoor learning through a combination of:

- Dedicated curriculum time (One lesson or parts of lessons outdoor weekly)
- National whole school /class activities and events (Empty classroom day)
- Assembly themes
- Involving pupils in the life of the school and wider community (such as Green Team, Eco-Schools, outdoor Fund Raising Events)
- Pastoral care and guidance

When planning, we consider which components of the curriculum are appropriate for outdoor activities. These links can be detailed on the class teacher's medium term planning. Advantage is taken, when an opportunity arises, to promote Learning Outside the Classroom and after the session this may be documented in the teacher's daily planning or field notes. Teaching outside of the classroom, when and where appropriate, will involve the children, motivate them and give them ownership of their academic, personal and social development.

Teaching approaches and learning styles

Our philosophy on teaching and learning is encapsulated in our Teaching and Learning Policy to which reference should be made.

A range of teaching strategies is needed to provide the breadth of effective learning opportunities in the Framework for all pupils. These include an emphasis on active learning enquiry, discussion and participation in activities outside the classroom.

Equalities

All children have equal access to Learning Outside the Classroom, regardless of their ability, ethnic group, gender or social background. Delivery will be differentiated appropriately by class teachers, where it is safe and reasonable to do so. This will ensure access by all children in every activity.

Children who may have special needs will be supported by the class teacher, with the possible involvement of the Special Needs Coordinator (SENCO)

Adults in our school are entitled to support from: whole school planning; support from colleagues including the subject leader; INSET within and out of school; and by the provision of support materials and resources.

The Nature of our Provision

- We are committed to learning in all parts of the school. This includes planned activities outside the classroom, e.g. mathematical challenges, phonics lessons, MFL work outside the classroom (Summer term).
- In Foundation all children have a weekly Forest School session - L3 activities.
 - Other groups of pupils, from across the school, have Forest School sessions, offered as part of our intervention/supporting specific needs – L1 activities.
 - Foundation and key stage 1 children also enjoy an outdoor play area with a range of play equipment. Key stage 2 have the terrace as an extension of their classrooms.
- All children will experience learning tasks in areas of the school beyond the classroom. Lessons are planned in all subjects to provide such experiences.
- We have developed a strong understanding of the need to build in high quality learning experiences using all school areas, both indoors and outdoors.
- Trips are organised annually for all classes.

Opportunities are used throughout the curriculum to use the outdoors in all subjects.

- There is an outdoor classroom for use throughout the year. Classes can be based there to take part in learning that uses the school grounds.
- All children in Year 6 take part in a residential visit to support their learning

Recording assessment and reporting

Through the monitoring of teaching and learning e.g. forward planning, observations, teacher's self-evaluations, summative assessment records and other school procedures. We encourage resilience in our response to all learning activities. We recognise and give importance to the part played by learning experiences outside the classroom at the school. We actively encourage teachers to plan opportunities for children to engage in Learning Outside the Classroom.

Monitoring and review

Monitoring and Evaluation Assessment of the children's learning will be valued equally indoors and outdoors and should be part of the same process. This policy should be considered alongside other relevant policies, particularly the Curriculum Policy, the Educational Visits Policy and the PSHE Policy. Managing the Delivery of Learning Outside the Classroom

Health and Safety

We will support children 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 schools 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 equally important, however, that all involved, including parents acknowledge that a degree of residual risk remains. However, we believe in evaluating risk benefits: the positive benefits of any activity should always be balanced against the risk that is involved. Our children are taught to manage risks in regard to outdoor learning. All pupils are regularly reminded about the importance of staying safe. Being safe is a school expectation and children are reminded of the importance of keeping themselves and members of the school community safe.

The following expectations are understood by all pupils, creating a shared understanding of how pupils safeguard themselves and others when undertaking outdoor learning:

- Learning Outside the Classroom is an important part of our learning journey.
- We must prioritise safety at all times when we participate in any learning.
- We must stay with our group when told to do so.
- Rules relating to use of equipment must be followed.
- Suitable clothing should be worn when outside.
- We must be sensible and ensure that we achieve our learning objectives.
- If we follow the expectations above, we will enjoy learning and stay safe.

Year group	Subjects	Types of activities for LOtC
F	Mathematics, Expressive Art and Design, Understanding the World, Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Communication and Language, Literacy, Physical Development	Forest School, writing week (Grinch story Santa's sleigh etc), leaf collecting, making outdoor pictures, number recognition, problem solving, memory activities, Advent circle, counting, hopscotch, graphs, measuring, Mile a day, shape walk, chalk numbers, 5 activities used daily for playful learning,
Y1	English, Maths, Science, Topic, PE, Geography, Art, computing	Writing week activities, list making, ordering, senses, timeline, timed maths activities, odd/even sorting, story looking at adjectives, Mile a day, manmade and natural materials, finding halves and quarters, PATHS –Twiddle games, scavenger hunt, creating seascapes, weather station, weather walks, jumping on a number line, counting leaves (subtracting), Role play explorers, 3D shape hunt, Robot/teacher (programming instructions)
Y2	History, RE, Geography, Maths, PE	Ring o' ring o' roses, walk to church, Autumn leaves, Halving, Snow, tracks, teamwork, Mile a day, poetry walk, role play talk for writing, PE on trim trail, Role play of Captain Plank
Y3	PE, Science ,Maths, MFL, PE, computing,	Cross country, seed dispersal, multiplication array, colour, numbers, times tables number hunt, planning e-safety slides, investigating parts of a plant,
Y4	Maths, Art, Science, English, History, PE, Art	Roman numerals, leaf colours patterns etc, sounds, angles, experiments, role play, times tables, verb actions, historical enactments, (William Morris) leaf collecting, story stepping, Money orienteering, mile a day.
Y5	Maths, MFL, English, PE, Science, Computing, Geog, Art	shapes, word trails (French words), poetry (senses),maths games, apps looking for constellations, traffic survey, sketching, empty classroom day, orienteering, finding the area, Paper helicopters investigation, planets relative sizes, friction sticks, irregular/regular shapes,
Y6	Science, topic, PE, English	Leaves, trees, lightning strikes, Shadows, autumn/winter differences, world war 2, pupils reacting to light, Materials respond to light.

Lower school have daily opportunities to access outdoor learning activities