Learning Outside the Classroom Policy

This policy document is a statement of the intent, implementation and impact of the teaching and learning of Learning Outside the Classroom at White Ash School.

Intent

At White Ash School Learning Outside the Classroom contributes to THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE WHOLE CHILD. It is an essential part of the curriculum. It is a part of every subject and area of learning. Incorporating Learning Outside the Classroom into all aspects of the curriculum enables effective communication to take place. Through the development of our pupils' confidence and communication skills we are giving them the broadest, deepest and richest experience of life they can possibly have.

We believe 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.

These are often the most memorable learning experiences, helping us to make sense of the world around us, and make links between feelings and learning. They allow us to transfer skills taught and learned in the classroom and vice versa.

Learning outside the classroom is about raising achievement through an organised and powerful approach to learning in which direct experience is of prime importance. This is not just about what we learn but importantly how and when we learn. (LOtC Council, 2015)

The five core themes for Learning Outside the Classroom are:

- Participation – providing opportunities and experiences which are challenging, stimulating and easily accessible.
- To build self-confidence and achievement
- Differentiation and progression- providing high quality outdoor learning to engage all pupils at a level that matches their ability and development.
- Residential experiences – providing valuable opportunities for pupils to engage in activities in unfamiliar settings with their peers.
- Balancing risks and benefits in the outdoors- developing risk management skills which will be valuable in school and in adult life.

Aims

Through the Learning Outside the Classroom curriculum we aim to:

- Raise pupil achievements in all subjects.
- Improve pupil behaviour and self-esteem.
- Improve pupil's confidence.
- Raise levels of independence in all our pupils.
- Give pupils the opportunity to try new activities.
- Give pupils a sense of responsibility in a safe and well managed environment.
- Improve pupil's social skills.

- Improve pupil's knowledge of the environment and their local community.
- Engage with the local community.

White Ash has a strong commitment to the added value of Learning Outside the Classroom, some of which takes place beyond the statutory school day and beyond the school premises.

Every term we arrange a number of educational visits and activities that take place off the school site and/ or out of school hours, which supports the aims of the school.

The range of opportunities and activities are outlined in the school prospectus along with the criteria by which the pupils are able to access them, and also the methods by which parents will be notified and asked for their consent.

The Governing Body has given approval for the following types of activities that are arranged in support of the educational aims of the school:

- Out of hours clubs (music, drama, art, science, sport, rebound therapy, etc).
- School teams and inter school events.
- Regular local visits (libraries, shops, parks and places of worship).
- Educational day visits.
- Residential visits.
- Adventurous activities, which might be classed as higher risk.

These activities may be available by open access to class or year groups or by invitation following a risk assessment.

Implementation

Teaching and Learning

Learning outside the classroom is an integral part of our curriculum and a regular part of teaching and learning. To make sure that happens, each class teacher builds learning outside the classroom into curriculum planning at every stage.

It is essential for every learner to have **frequent**, continuous and **progressive** learning outside the classroom experiences. To provide this in KS1 and KS2 all pupils have an allocated weekly half day session to improve pupils knowledge of the environment and the local environment. Within these sessions there is a good balance between whole class, group work and individual tasks to develop social skills, team work and independence. Learning Outside the Classroom is included across the curriculum and not just on the allocated session as it contributes to many subjects, and opportunities should be sought to draw experience out of a wide range of activities across the curriculum. This will allow children to begin to use and apply skills in real contexts.

The teaching of Learning Outside the Classroom, is taught within other subject lessons when appropriate, which will provide cross curriculum links within the creative curriculum and these links will be identified on planning. See specific curriculum policies for details on Outdoor Learning.

Planning

At White Ash planning is carried out in three stages:

Long Term Planning

- Identifies the main strand and themes to be covered
- Offers an overview to the breath and balance across the curriculum
- Ensures continuity and progression

Medium Term Planning

- Plans in detail what will be taught each half term and are constantly reviewed in line with pupil assessment.
- They will summarise typical activities and show progression in terms of new skills/contexts for practicing existing skills

Short Term Planning
- To aid the teacher and learning support staff in carrying out the lesson
- To show differentiation within the group
- To show links to educational visits etc.

Woodland Skills

A major part of 'Learning Outside the Classroom' at White Ash School is the 'Woodland Skills' sessions. 'Woodland Skills' sessions are included in the whole school timetable where every class take part in some 'Woodland Skills' sessions every half term.

Woodland Skills is about exploring and experiencing the natural world through practical activities. The children go out in all weathers, all year round, exploring and learning through and from the seasons and environment changes. The outdoor environment provides a unique space and freedom for deeper learning, supporting our skills-based curriculum.

This powerful approach enables children to be independent, self-motivated, courageous, considerate, team-players and sets them up for lifelong learning. It boosts self-esteem and self-confidence. It empowers children to take ownership of their learning, allowing their minds and bodies to thrive**.** It provides a safe and secure environment in which children can assess and take risk. It encourages children to care for and respect their environment and wildlife.

LOtC challenges

At White Ash we have devised 2 LOtC challenge awards. These are 'The World around Me Challenge' and 'Woodland Challenge'. These involve the children carrying out a range of activities appropriate to them on several occasions. When the pupil has carried out each challenge the teacher/ TA will record and date what they have done. When they have complete all of the challenges, the pupil will be rewarded with a certificate and a badge which can be sewn onto the arm of their school jumper.

Wildlife Award- RSPB

As a school we will be taking part in the 'Wild Challenge' through the RSPB where we will work through the scheme to gain bronze, silver and gold awards from the continuous work we will carry out and evidencing as a school. All the activities are intended get the children outside and using the school grounds, therefore complementing the schools Learning Outside the Classroom and first-hand experiences perfectly.

In practise:

The teacher and other practitioners will ensure all individuals (children, staff, and volunteers) are safe and protected. The school grounds have been risk assessed for Forest School.

- We will abide by our Woodland Skills rules.
- All staff are aware of the school's Health & Safety, Child Protection, Equal Opportunity and First Aid policies.
- Children will wear suitable clothing for the conditions (e.g. long sleeves and trousers; sunscreen and hats in the heat). We believe: *There is no such thing as bad weather, just inappropriate clothing.*

Resources

Each class has its own stock of Learning Outside the Classroom resources to enable them to teach outside the classroom on an everyday basis. There is also resources available in school contribute to the implementation of 'Woodland Skills' sessions.

Additional resources are stored in the central resource area.

Each year the Learning Outside the Classroom Subject Leader revises and updates an action plan with resources in mind.

Equal Opportunities

We incorporate Learning Outside the Classroom into a wide range of cross curricular subjects and seek to take advantage of multicultural aspects of Learning Outside the Classroom. All children have equal access to the curriculum regardless of their gender or ethnicity. This is monitored by analysing pupil performance throughout the school to ensure that there is no disparity between groups.

Learning Outside the Classroom in the Early Years

Please refer to the EYFS curriculum document

Impact

Assessment

The assessment of Outdoor Education is linked to the 10 key outcomes for outdoor learning (English Outdoor Council, 2015). These are:

1. Enjoyment
2. Confidence and character
3. Health and well-being
4. Social and emotional awareness
5. Environmental awareness
6. Activity Skills
7. Personal qualities
8. Skills for life
9. Increased motivation and appetite for learning
10. Broadened horizons

Within each of these outcomes there is a list of indicators where staff can assess the quality of learning and value of the experiences provided to each pupil. Staff can record written evidence and photographs to support each indicator within EFL making it personal to each pupil and their learning.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- Teachers will record the learning from each session within EFL with photos, comments and annotations personal to the pupils learning.
- The pupils will reflect upon their LOtC session with an outdoor learning journal. They will create a recount of their learning including information from the day and photographs.
- LOtC ideas and good practice regularly shared and reflected upon at staff meetings.
- SLT will monitor LOtC learning journeys to ensure progression of skills and progressive learning.
- Staff to gather feedback on LOtC and its impact on pupil's self-confidence etc from parents and the children themselves during circle times, pupil voice and scribing comments.

Cross Curricular Elements through LoTC

LOtC provides opportunities for pupils to develop skills of:

Communication
Teamwork
Problem solving
Well being
Social and Emotional Mental Health
Environmental Awareness
Resilience

ICT

- Pupils will be given the opportunities to apply and develop their ICT capabilities through the use of a variety of ICT equipment including ipads/ cameras/ walkie talkies and Geo mapping.

Citizenship

LOtC plays a significant role in promoting citizenship through:

- Developing knowledge and understanding of the local environment relating to cultures and traditions.
- Providing opportunities for links within society.

Spiritual, Social and Cultural Development

LOtC provides opportunities to promote:

- Spiritual development through building a stronger sense of self-fulfilment and link pupils experiences with nature.
- The understanding of keeping safe in a variety of different situations.
- Recognition of their success and achievements.
- Improved self-esteem and confidence.
- Working collaboratively to develop social skills.
- Cultural development, through helping pupils recognise differences and similarities between cultures.

English

- Pupils will have the opportunity to practice skills in – reading words/ recognising symbols / Logos within the local environment.
- Writing/ mark making using a range of writing implements.
- Communication- opportunities to discuss ideas with peers, following instructions, using imagination.

Maths

- Pupils will have the opportunity to practice skills in number recognitions, shapes recognition, problem solving, use of money with the local community, measure and length.

History and Geography

Pupils will be given opportunities to:

- Reflect on historical periods and change.
- Develop an understanding of the local areas and wider world.

The Role of the Subject Leader

The Learning Outside the Classroom subject Leader is responsible for co-ordinating Learning Outside the Classroom throughout the school. This includes:

- Advising on in-service training to staff where appropriate. This will be in line with the needs identified in the Development Plan and within the confines of the school budget
- Advising and supporting colleagues in the impact, intent and implementation of Learning Outside the Classroom throughout the school.

- Responsibility for the requisition and maintenance of resources required for the teaching of Learning Outside the Classroom. This will be within the confines of the school budget.
- To regularly scrutinise pupil work and how outdoor learning is being followed up within the classroom.
- To maintain a Subject Leader file with examples of work across the ability range through EFL.
- Review and revise subject action plans on an annual basis to contribute to the school development plan.
- Review and revise the subject policy and schemes of work.

Role of the Class Teacher

- To develop and update skills, knowledge and understanding of Learning Outside the Classroom.
- To identify inset needs in Learning Outside the Classroom and take advantage of training opportunities
- To keep appropriate on-going records through jouranls and EFL.
- To plan effectively for Learning Outside the Classroom, liaising with Subject Leader when necessary.
- To inform parents of pupils' progress, achievements and attainment.
- To provide all young people with a wide range of experiences outside the classroom.
- Provide inspiring activities that meet the needs of all young people, whatever their age, ability or background.
- To ensure these activities offer first-hand experience of the world outside the classroom.
- To ensure activities offer practical and relevant learning and progression across all key stages.
- To provide a range of experiences that help develop key life skills, including personal, learning, enquiry and thinking skills; and that deepen and enrich subject learning.

Educational Visits

The school has a strong commitment to the added value of learning outside the classroom, some of which takes place beyond the statutory school day and beyond the school premises.
Every term we arrange a number of educational visits and activities that take place off the school site and/or out of school hours, which support the aims of the school.
The range of opportunities and activities are outlined in the school prospectus along with the criteria by which pupils are able to access them and the methods by which parents will be notified and asked for their consent.
The Governing Body has given its approval to the following types of activities being arranged in support of the educational aims of the school:

- Out of hours clubs (music, drama, art science, rebound therapy etc)
- School teams and inter-school events
- Regular nearby visits (libraries, shops, parks and places of worship)
- Educational day visits for particular classes
- Residential Visits
- Adventurous activities, which might be classed as higher risk.

These activities may be made available by open access to class or year group or by invitation following a risk assessment.

Approval Procedure and Consent

The Headteacher and Assistant Heads are the nominated EVC. The Governing Body has approved this appointment. The Governing Body has delegated the consideration and approval of educational visits and other offsite activities to the Headteacher/ Assistant Heads and as signatory, as necessary, on behalf of the Governing Body.

Before a visit is advertised to parents the Headteacher/ Assistant Heads must approve the initial plan. Visits that include adventurous activities and/or a residential element will require approval by the

Local Authority via the on-line Visit Notification and Approval system. Usernames and Passwords will be managed by the Headteacher/ Assistant Heads.

Where approved Local Authority providers are involved in organising all or part of the visit the contract will be made with the school on behalf of the pupils. All payments for the visit will be made through the school's accounts.

For out of hours clubs and school teams, parents will be asked to sign a general letter of consent for participation in these activities when their son/daughter are involved. For local visits and swimming, parents are required to sign one form which will be renewed annually.

Parents will be given the timetable for the activities that pupils are involved in and will be informed by letter or phone call if an activity has to be cancelled.

For any visit lasting a day or more, parents will be asked to sign a letter which consents to their son/daughter taking part. This will include a separate medical consent form. The school has a standard model letter which should be used for this purpose.

Emergency Procedures (In line with LA policy)
The school will appoint a member of the senior management team as the emergency school contact for each visit. All major incidents should be immediately related to this person.
An EVOLVE form with details of the visit and 'Form 5' with lists of staff and pupils on the visit will be left in the 'Educational Visits' file on the morning of the visit. The visit leader will also take a copy of 'Form 5' on the visit.

Any incidents and accidents occurring on a visit will be reported back through the school visits 'Evolve' system. Parents will be informed via the usual school methods of any minor accidents and first aid intervention, ie bump to head letter, note in 'Home/ School diary' or telephone call home.

Hannah Heyes
Learning Outside the Classroom Subject Leader
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