

Seaham Trinity Primary School

Outdoor Learning Policy



Document Control

Date current version published	May 2020
Date of next review	May 2021
Purpose of the document	To outline what Outdoor Learning is and the aims that we want to achieve as a school. It ensures that all children have access to outdoor learning opportunities that will enhance their learning across all subjects and help them to develop wider skills, communication and teamwork and provide them with a greater range of opportunities.
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Document approved by	Head teacher and Governing Body
Document approved on	
Changes made to this version	None
Reference material	None
Linked documents	None

Seaham Trinity Primary School is a Rights Respecting School. The following articles focus on a child's right to new experiences, a range of activities and opportunities to develop as individuals to their full potential and as a school we adhere to this.

ARTICLE 29 – Goals of Education: Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full. It must encourage the child's respect for human rights, as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures, and the environment.

ARTICLE 31 – The right to leisure, play and culture: Every child has the right to relax, play and take part in a wide range of cultural and artistic activities.

What do we mean by outdoor learning?

At Seaham Trinity we strive to use outdoor learning to enhance children's learning opportunities. There is strong evidence 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.

Outdoor learning is the use of places other than the classroom for teaching and learning such as outdoor play, school ground projects, environmental education, team building and personal and social development. Outdoor learning provides children with opportunities to discover, experiment, explore and learn about and connect with the natural world. Through outdoor learning, children can experience active learning which readily develops the learning skills of enquiry, experiment, feedback, reflection, review, communication, problem solving, an enterprising attitude and co-operative learning – to name only some of the benefits.

1. Aims & Objectives

The aim of this policy is to:

- Raise the profile of outdoor learning at Seaham Trinity Primary in order for it to become embedded within the curriculum.
- Provide clear guidelines for the implementation of the policy
- Work towards providing high quality provision through better planning and evaluation of outcomes for all children
- Provide all children with a safe and secure environment where children can learn and manage and take risks

Outdoor learning opportunities should:

- Be an integral element of long-term curriculum planning and closely linked to classroom activities

- Be evaluated regularly to assess the quality of learning that is taking place outside of the classroom to ensure that it has maximum impact on learners' achievement, personal development and wellbeing.
- Ensure equal and full access for all learners to learning outside the classroom by monitoring participation in activities by different groups of learners and removing any barriers.

2. Entitlement

All of our children have the right to an education and the goals that education sets out to achieve. They have the right to opportunities that will develop their personalities and abilities. Therefore they are entitled to outdoor learning opportunities which meet their individual needs.

Teachers should use outdoor learning experiences to enhance learning that is taking place within the classroom and ensure any barriers are removed.

3. Inclusion

All children have the same entitlement outdoor learning opportunities. Therefore it is vital that every effort is made to ensure that learning outside the classroom, such as activities and visits, are available and accessible to all, irrespective of special educational or medical needs, ethnic origin, gender or religion.

- Facilities and learning opportunities should be adapted whenever possible, to enable equal access and participation
- Risk assessments should be undertaken if appropriate to ensure children with SEN can access outdoor learning opportunities.

4. Equal Opportunities

Staff must be aware of, and guard against any bias based on gender, racial or any other stereotypes. All pupils should have equal access to outdoor learning.

5. Monitoring and Evaluation

As outdoor learning opportunities are provided in school to enhance learning, skills and personal, social and emotional development, outdoor learning cannot be assessed in the same way that other subjects would be in school. Due to this, staff will monitor and evaluate the impact that outdoor learning has had on children's learning and development through observing children working outdoors exploring different learning objectives in various subject areas. The way in which lessons are evidenced will also enable the subject coordinator to monitor and evaluate outdoor learning taking place within the school. These approaches will enable to see if delivering a lesson through outdoor learning opportunities

has made a difference and if it has not, it will enable to use review our lessons, approach and own learning to set future targets and ensure children are benefiting from these learning experiences.

Monitoring and evaluating will be carried out by the subject coordinator with support from SLT where appropriate. The subject coordinator and the school will utilise the following strategies and measures in order to monitor and the evaluate standards in Outdoor Learning:

- Observing the teaching and learning of outdoor learning to assist in identification of strengths and development needs
- Monitoring the evidence recorded by staff to assess impact and achievements. Learning should be recorded through photographs and notes on what the children have said. Teachers should then annotate these to show what they did, why they did it and what impact it had on the children's learning.
- Pupil voice. This will be gathered by interviews/questionnaires.

6. Resources

There are currently some outdoor learning resources available and they are reviewed annually. Teachers and other staff report resource shortfalls, issues or possible extension requirements to the outdoor provision co-ordinator or SLT.

7. Responsibilities

The outdoor learning coordinator is responsible for:

- Assisting senior management with coordinating, developing and implementing the school's policy on outdoor learning.
- Developing good outdoor learning practice, providing guidance, stimulus, support and inspiration
- Attending courses to further own professional development and to provide information, support and strategies to colleagues for in service training and guidance
- Monitoring the planning and delivery of outdoor learning to set future targets and ensure quality of teaching and delivery.
- Promoting and overseeing staff CPD and INSET activities relating to the implementation and development of outdoor learning.

The classroom teacher is responsible for:

- Incorporating outdoor learning opportunities, where appropriate, when planning.

- Understanding how to use outdoor learning and its use in enhancing children's learning
- Completing risk assessments before carrying out any outdoor learning opportunities to minimise any risks and monitor any risks that may occur. Ensuring children are responsible, respectful and safe when learning outdoors.
- Ensuring outdoor learning activities are accessible to all children
- Evidencing outdoor learning experiences in order to the subject coordinator to monitor and evaluate the impact of outdoor learning

8. Staff Development

In order to implement this vision effectively, all staff need to be confident in planning and delivering outdoor learning opportunities. Opportunities for the development of all staff should be provided in order to enhance the quality of planning and teaching of Outdoor Learning within the school. The needs of the staff will be identified through the monitoring and evaluation of outdoor learning which is undertaken by the designated subject coordinator and should be done in conjunction with the whole school development plan. Where relevant training cannot be located to staff members, the subject coordinator will be able to support staff members in delivering and planning for outdoor learning opportunities.

The subject coordinator will ensure that any development opportunities undertaken by staff are disseminated throughout the school where necessary to further enhance the quality of teaching and planning of outdoor learning.

9. Health and Safety

When learning outdoors, risk assessments should be completed prior to the activity taking place to ensure that any risks can be managed accordingly and where possible removed. It is however important to consider that some risks will be beneficial to the children and they should be taught how to manage these safely.

Updated: May 2020

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