



Wateringbury Church of
England Primary School

Outdoor Learning Policy

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| Date | Summary of Changes |
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Learning, growing, achieving.....our journey together with God.

Our Vision and Values

Guided by our Christian values and nurturing culture, we aspire to enable everyone to grow green leaves to meet the challenges of our ever-changing world and to send out our roots to the wider community.

Every child is seen as a unique learner, loved by God and is equally valued and championed to grow and achieve their very best in all they do.

LOVE FORGIVENESS JOY RESILIENCE RESPECT COURAGE

Rationale

Defra's 25-year plan (2018) identified the importance of enabling children in England, particularly those from disadvantaged areas, to be close to nature in and out of school in order to support their health and wellbeing.

Natural Connections Demonstration Project (2016) was delivered by the University of Plymouth and provides overwhelming evidence that children were more motivated when learning outside the classroom. A staggering 92% of pupils said they enjoyed their outdoor lessons more and 90% expressed feeling happier and healthier. The project also found a positive impact on teachers' motivation, wellbeing and job satisfaction, showing that using the outdoors is good teaching and learning practice.

The outdoors can provide space and freedom for a type of learning that is difficult to replicate indoors. All children have the right to experience the unique and special nature of being outdoors. At Wateringbury C of E Primary School, we feel it is important to enable children to use the outside environment as a context for learning throughout the year, whatever the weather.

"Learning outside the classroom was most successful when it was an integral element of long-term curriculum planning and closely linked to classroom activities" Ofsted 2008

Aims

- ◆ To raise the profile and importance of both formal and informal outdoor learning
- ◆ To encourage close links with parents and the school in celebrating our outdoor space and the rich learning that can take place within it
- ◆ To empower children to take ownership of their learning, allowing their minds and bodies to thrive
- ◆ To provide a safe and secure environment where they can take risks
- ◆ To encourage children to care for their environment
- ◆ To expand the range of teaching styles and ways of learning we offer.

Policy into Practice

Possibilities for outdoor learning will be considered throughout our planning. We will:

- ◆ ensure that their curriculum planning includes sufficient well-structured opportunities for all learners to engage in learning outside the classroom as a key, integrated element of their experience
- ◆ 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.
- ◆ evaluate the quality of learning outside the classroom to ensure that it has maximum impact on learners' achievement, personal development and wellbeing
- ◆ ensure children receive regular outdoor learning in addition to PE, forest school inspired learning, break and lunchtimes
- ◆ ensure that our outdoor area and resources are used in a flexible way regardless of weather constraints
- ◆ support inclusion and meet the needs of individuals, offering a diverse range of learning experiences

- ◆ observe, assess and record outdoor learning, ensuring that there is adequate provision for children to extend their learning
- ◆ plan for outdoor learning with the children to offer experiences which have meaning to them and ones which can be led by the child
- ◆ enable children to work both individually and co-operatively outside
- ◆ enable children to make connections with nature
- ◆ encourage children to use a variety of natural resources
- ◆ encourage children to enjoy and have fun outdoors in many contexts
- ◆ work together (children, staff, parents, community) to create a better environment for all
- ◆ organise necessary resources
- ◆ enable children to use resources safely and to manage and use the space and freedom responsibly
- ◆ encourage children to respect their environment and to care for living things

Health and Safety

We will support children in taking risks within a safe and secure environment. 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 incorporated within planning and risk assessments will be carried out where appropriate. The school Health and Safety Policy will be followed and the outdoor risk assessment adhered to.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Assessment of the children's learning will be valued equally indoors and outdoors and is part of the same process. Subject leaders will be responsible for monitoring their subject area outdoors.

Policy Review

This policy should be considered alongside other relevant policies and will be reviewed every two years or sooner if significant changes are needed.