

Outdoor Learning

Outdoor learning experiences are often remembered for a lifetime. Integrating learning and outdoor experiences, provides relevance and depth to the curriculum in ways that are difficult to achieve indoors.

Learning outdoors can be enjoyable, creative, challenging and adventurous and helps children and young people learn by experience and grow as confident and responsible citizens who value and appreciate the spectacular landscapes, natural heritage and culture of our country.

Learning outdoors can be the educational context which encourages children and young people to make connections experientially, leading to deeper understanding within and between curriculum areas and meeting learner needs.

Outdoor learning, used in a range of ways, will enrich the curriculum and make learning fun, meaningful and relevant for children and young people. Outdoor learning can deliver sustainable development education through initiatives such as working to improve biodiversity in the school grounds, visiting the local woods, exploring and engaging with the local community and developing a school travel plan.

Outdoor learning is not a separate subject like forest school activities but involves taking the curriculum outside to create more impactful and lasting learning experiences.

There are associated health benefits to learning outdoors. Research indicates that the use of greenspace or 'green exercise' improves health. In particular, learning outdoors generally results in increased levels of physical activity. In addition, interacting with greenspace (walking, gardening, etc) improves emotional wellbeing and mental health.

The use of new technology as part of the planned approach to outdoor learning will add value to the outcomes for children and young people. Experiences recorded digitally, for example, can be taken back to the classroom and used to reinforce and further expand on the experience itself.