

ST. JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL



Outdoor Learning Policy

Rationale for this policy: Outdoor learning can provide a dramatic contrast to the indoor classroom. The results from outdoor learning can be instantaneous as well as longer-term and therefore impact on behaviour as well as accommodating different learning styles particularly for learners who respond well to practical activity. Through skilled teaching and facilitation, outdoor experiences readily become a stimulating source of fascination, personal growth and can lead to rapid breakthroughs in learning.

Active learning readily develops the learning skills of enquiry, experiment, feedback, reflection, review, communication, problem solving, an enterprising attitude and cooperative learning.

Outdoor learning can help to bring many school subjects alive as it focuses on real results and consequences impacting on many areas of the curriculum. It also provides experiential opportunities and allows pupils to respond positively to different opportunities, challenges and responsibilities.

Our aims:

- To encourage our school community to care for the environment.
- To raise the profile of outdoor learning as a framework for growth and development.
- To celebrate our outdoor space and the rich learning that can take place within it.
- For all children to use the outdoor area as a context for learning throughout the year.
- For all children to develop skills and independence in the wider environment.
- For all children to develop their curiosity and understanding of the outdoor environment.
- For all children to socialise and interact in new and different ways with their peers and adults.
- To provide a safe, stimulating outdoor environment where space is used effectively to enable children to explore a broad and balanced curriculum using a range of interesting resources suitable to their individual needs.

Methods:

We will endeavour to address outdoor learning across all areas of school life. Focused work will also be in place.

Inclusion and Participation:

As part of our commitment to the 'Every Child Matters' Agenda, all children are encouraged so far as is possible to participate in decision making through a curriculum delivery emphasising skills development and through such bodies as the School Council, Eco and Fairtrade Committee. We encourage them to feel confident about finding solutions and to enjoy making positive contributions to society. Issues such as discrimination, equality of opportunity, citizenship, cultural and spiritual awareness and care for the environment are consistent themes for all our pupils.

Monitoring and Reviewing:

When planning the introduction of new initiatives we will consider the viability, cost, maintenance, health and safety and the educative value.

The policy for outdoor learning forms part of the School Improvement Plan and will be revisited annually by the SMT. Monitoring progress towards our objectives is the responsibility of all curriculum teams and should be an integral part of the school.