



# The Linden Centre

## Outdoor Education Policy

Signed by:		
	Headteacher	Date:
	Chair of Management Committee	Date

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## **Statement of intent**

At **The Linden Centre**, we understand that good quality outdoor learning can be just as valuable as learning that takes place in the classroom. As part of the curriculum, outdoor learning can enrich pupils' understanding of concepts that span a number of subject areas, and that can be difficult to teach effectively using solely indoor classroom methods; for example, humans' impact on the environment.

Being in the outdoors can be a motivating and fascinating experience for pupils which, in turn, can have an impact on behaviour, while encouraging active learning, appealing to kinaesthetic learning types and developing skills such as the following:

- **Communication**
- **Reflection**
- **Problem solving**
- **Enquiring**
- **Experimenting**

## 1. Legal framework

1.1. This policy has due regard to statutory legislation, including, but not limited to, the following:

- **Equality Act 2010**

1.2. This policy has due regard to school policies, including, but not limited to, the following:

- **Equal Opportunities Policy**
- **Educational Visits and School Trips Policy**
- **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy**
- **Health and Safety Policy**
- **Looked After Children Policy**
- **Adverse Weather Policy**

## 2. Definitions

2.1. For the purpose of this policy, the term 'outdoor learning' is used to describe learning that takes place outdoors on the school premises; this can include the following:

- **Outdoor play**
- **School grounds projects**
- **Environmental education**
- **Recreational and adventure activities**
- **Personal and social development**

2.2. For the purpose of this policy, the term 'organisers' refers to members of staff in charge of arranging outdoor education.

### **3. Cross-curricular aims and objectives**

3.1. The core aim of this policy is to enable pupils to use the outdoor environment to support learning across the curriculum by providing a challenging, safe and secure environment in which pupils can take ownership of their learning and manage risks.

3.2. The objectives of this policy are to:

- Create opportunities for learning in a range of environments that allow pupils to investigate, explore, problem solve and apply their imagination and creativity.
- Ensure outdoor learning allows pupils to develop their gross motor skills.
- Encourage pupils to care for the environment and increase their sense of responsibility.
- Enable pupils to work independently and as part of a team.
- Foster close links between parents and the school.
- Enhance pupils' personal and social development.
- Include the outdoor environment when planning for learning.
- Ensure pupils are able to enjoy the outdoor environment safely, through effective planning and risk assessments.
- Enhance all subject areas, with particularly strong links to geography, science and reading.

## 4. Organisation and planning

4.1. Outdoor education will provide opportunities to teach pupils about the following topics:

- The effect that humans and their behaviour have on the environment
- Sustainability issues in the environment, e.g. recycling
- How people's lives and livelihoods depend upon the environment
- Conservation and the importance of protecting the environment
- Environmental issues and the conflicts they can cause
- The range of habitats in the local area
- The dangers in the local area
- Life within and outside of the local area

4.2. Outdoor education will give pupils a broader understanding of the subject area being taught.

4.3. Outdoor education will take place:

- On the school grounds.
- In the local environment.
- In more distant and challenging environments.
- On residential trips.

4.4. Outdoor learning that takes places off the school premises will be planned in accordance with the provisions in the **Educational Visits and School Trips Policy**.

4.5. Outdoor learning that takes place on the school premises will be planned in accordance with the **Health and Safety Policy**, with the appropriate risk assessments undertaken.

4.6. Staff members organising outdoor learning will consult with the pupils, parents, centre users, venue owners, voluntary organisations and the local community to ensure outdoor learning meets the needs of the pupils.

4.7. Staff members will recognise and note the particular learning needs and styles of each pupil through their own visual assessment, and by taking into account previous assessments and pupil records.

- 4.8. Organisers will identify the resources needed during the planning of outdoor learning, and ensure there will be sufficient space and resources for the activities planned.
- 4.9. The use of resources will be monitored and reviewed during planning meetings.
- 4.10. Organisers will actively encourage volunteers, particularly those with specialist knowledge to participate in outdoor learning.
- 4.11. Organisers will actively encourage parents to support outdoor learning and get involved with school-led activities.
- 4.12. Organisers will communicate the benefits of outdoor learning, so that parents have a good understanding of the value and importance of outdoor education, as well as the school's safety measures.
- 4.13. The **headteacher** will support organisers to capably and confidently plan outdoor learning, and regularly investigate any concerns that arise.
- 4.14. The school will provide training opportunities for teachers to develop their skills to organise outdoor learning that impacts on pupil attainment and achievement.

## 5. Health and safety

- 5.1. When planning outdoor education activities, teachers will act in accordance with the school's **Health and Safety Policy**.
- 5.2. All Adventurous Activities will be led by an experienced and qualified instructor and member of staff.
- 5.3. Equipment will be checked monthly and recorded on a database. Any defected equipment will be clearly labelled as 'Retired' and stored separately to fit for use equipment.
- 5.4. First Aid will be available with a qualified first aider for all Outdoor Education lessons.
- 5.5. As part of the planning for outdoor education, relevant risk assessments will be conducted by **lead members of staff** and any necessary safety measures must put in place to reduce risk prior to the activities taking place.
- 5.6. Pupils are taught how to manage appropriate risks they encounter during outdoor education.

- 5.7. If outdoor education will take place away from the school premises, staff will have regard to the **Educational Visits and School Trips Policy**.
- 5.8. Parents will acknowledge that despite safety measures and processes, a degree of residual risk remains in outdoor education.
- 5.9. There will always be adequate adult cover to ensure pupils can learn safely in the outdoor environment.
- 5.10. When taking part in outdoor learning, pupils will be dressed appropriately for the weather to avoid getting too cold or too hot, in accordance with the school's **Adverse Weather Policy**.
- 5.11. Staff will model good practice and support pupils with the use of tools, equipment and living things, and will assess whether their interventions are appropriate.

## **6. Equal opportunities**

- 6.1. Outdoor education will be made accessible to all pupils equally, irrespective of their gender, race, ethnicity, religion or special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).
- 6.2. Resources will be shared fairly between pupils.
- 6.3. Pupils will be involved equally in all aspects of outdoor education.
- 6.4. Pupils will be encouraged to value each other's contributions and their own role and ability in practical outdoor education.
- 6.5. Plans for outdoor education will accommodate for pupils with SEND, medical conditions, mobility problems, difficulty with fine motor skills and English as an additional language.
- 6.6. When planning outdoor education, teachers will act in line with appropriate school policies, including:
  - **Equal Opportunities Policy**
  - **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy**
  - **Looked After Children Policy**

## **7. Monitoring and review**

- 7.1. Supervising staff will make observations and assessments, and gather feedback from pupils and parents to inform future planning for outdoor learning.



- 7.2. Outdoor learning will be closely monitored through forward planning meetings, classroom observations, teacher self-evaluations, and summative assessment records.
- 7.3. Pupil assessment will be valued equally indoors and outdoors.
- 7.4. This policy will be reviewed annually by the Subject Lead & Headteacher.