



## Leamington Federation

# Sydenham Primary School and Lighthorne Heath Primary School Learning Outside the Classroom Policy



UN convention on the Rights of the Child. This policy reflects the principles of equality, dignity, respect, non-discrimination and participation. At Sydenham and Lighthorne Heath Primary Schools, we recognise achievement in putting the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child at the heart of our practice to improve well-being and help all children realize their potential. Children's rights are learned, taught, practiced, respected, protected and promoted in our schools.

### **Our Rights Respecting Schools (RRS) ethos:**

Article 15: Every child has the right to meet with other children and to join groups and organisations, as long as this does not stop other people from enjoying their rights

Article 28: Every child has a right to an education

Article 29: Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full

Article 31: Every child has the right to relax, play and take part in a wide range of cultural and artistic activities

### **Rationale**

Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) is the use of places other than the classroom for teaching and learning. It is about getting children and young people out and about, providing them with challenging, exciting and different experiences to help them learn.

The places where learning happens can have a significant effect on how a young person engages with a subject or an idea. Learning outside the classroom can happen at almost any time and almost anywhere – outdoors or indoors: in the school grounds, at a supermarket, in the local park, in museums and art galleries, on mountain tops and rivers, in Britain's remote places, or elsewhere.

Government guidance (*Learning outside the classroom: How far should you go?* October 2008, Ofsted; Learning Outside the Classroom manifesto, 2006) and research (Every experience matters, Dr Karen Malone; Learning Outside the classroom; theory and guidance, Simon Beames et al, 2012) informs us that learning outside the classroom "contributes significantly to raising standards and improving pupils' personal, social and emotional development." Across The Leamington Federation, we work towards exciting, direct and relevant learning activities outside the classroom to build our learners confidence, resilience and broaden their horizons.

Our Learning Outside the Classroom Policy (LOtC) aims to foster children's love of learning further by moving educational opportunities beyond the classroom. Within the Leamington Federation, we believe that all children have the right to experience the unique and special nature of being outdoors and learning in a range of different ways.

All visits and LOtC opportunities are planned by a member of staff nominated as party leader, with the health, safety and welfare of the children of paramount importance.

## **Aims**

We aim to:

- Ensure high-quality provision through LOtC experiences
- Learn new facts, ideas and concepts (in context) from our Maestro curriculum
- Offer pupils exciting and stimulating experiences that enthuse them in their learning and broaden aspirations
- Use LOtC opportunities to put the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child at the heart of our practice
- Improve emotional well-being and help all children realise their potential
- Provide a challenging, safe and secure environment within which children can take and manage risks.
- Encourage close links with parents and the community in celebrating our LOtC provision
- Support pupils to develop their social skills, independence and resilience
- Apply LOtC activities and experiences daily to help raise attainment
- Improve the effectiveness of LOtC through additional monitoring of effectiveness
- Carefully plan provision to ensure all pupils are included in LOtC activities

## **Governors**

The Governing Body has given its approval to the following types of activities in support of the educational aims of the school:

- Out of hours clubs (for example music, drama, art, science, sport, homework, ICT etc.)
- Breakfast Club and After School Club
- School sports teams
- Lessons taught in the school playground, on the school field, the Forest School area, cooking area, or in another part of school other than the classroom
- Visits within the local area to include museums, library, places of worship, farms, venues etc
- Day visits outside the local area
- Residential visits to be offered to all pupils Key Stage 2 pupils, giving progression in length of time away, distance and independence
- Encourages the federation to work with other organisations to provide pupils with additional LOtC opportunities
- Ensures LOtC is embedded across the curriculum through monitoring and evaluation

- Uses sports funding to support CPD to implement LOtC provision

## Why LOtC?

At the Leamington Federation, we believe it is vital to provide a dynamic, engaging and inspiring curriculum that ensures all pupils have the opportunity to have first-hand experiences using the outside environment as a context for learning. This approach increases motivation and a willingness to learn – contributing to raised levels of attainment. Our school grounds provide rich opportunities that can engage all pupils effectively in learning through nature, supporting pupils in understanding about sustainability and the environment.

Visits outside of school, including residential opportunities, are carefully planned and built into our curriculum Maestro topics. Children need to be well prepared, supported, resourced and informed for any learning experience to reap maximum benefit. Our school community enhances children's learning through planned visits, 'out and about in the community' opportunities and a diverse range of visitors and opportunities within school. Our children are encouraged to be involved in opportunities to promote learning outside the classroom and are offered leadership roles to support this. A wide range of experiences are offered through our curriculum, which help to develop children's self-confidence, self-awareness, skills and knowledge.

Educational visits and learning outside of the classroom is a school wide activity and should be encouraged at every opportunity. We are part of a vibrant and lively community and we encourage all classes to take part in that community as well as inviting them into our school.

## Our provision

In the Leamington Federation, we realise the importance of careful planning to ensure that learning outside the classroom is purposeful, direct and in context, asking ourselves '*Where will this learning be best learnt?*'

We offer the following entitlement to all our pupils:

- Access to a stimulating outdoor learning environment all day, every day
- Fully integrated, frequent, continuous and progressive LOtC provision
- At least one immersion topic activity each half term
- At least one visit/trip each term within the local Community
- At least one visit/trip each term beyond the local area
- A visit to a quality theatre production (RSC or Warwick Arts Centre)
- To work with an artist in residence every 2 years
- Half a term of Forest school tuition (led by a trained practitioner)
- Key Stage 2 pupils will be offered a residential trip once a year
- A range of assemblies, performances, extra- curricular activities, nurture opportunities, sporting activities, music events and visitors into school
- All pupils are given the opportunity to be actively involved in the planning LOtC opportunities (UNICEF ambassadors, Learning Detectives, SPLAT! Arts Ambassadors, RSC Ambassadors, Eco- Committee, Anti-bullying ambassadors, School Council)

Trips and visits should:

- Be part of the curriculum and enhance teaching and learning
  - Provide hands-on, stimulating opportunities for pupil
- Be with quality badge providers wherever possible
  - Help develop social skills and self-esteem

## **Types of Visit & Approval**

There are three 'types' of visit:

- Visits/activities within the 'School Learning Area' that are part of the normal curriculum and take place during the normal school day. These follow the 'School Learning Area' Operating Procedure - all staff to use the Event Specific Notes.
  - Other non-residential visits within the UK that do not involve an adventurous activity, e.g. visits to museums, farms, theme parks, theatres, etc. These are entered on EVOLVE by the visit leader and submitted to the EVC for checking. The EVC then submits to the Head for approval.
- Visits that are overseas, residential, or involve an adventurous activity. These follow point 2 above, but the Head then submits the visit to the LA for approval.

## **Risk assessment**

Our risk assessment process is designed to manage real risks when planning trips whilst ensuring that learning opportunities are experienced to the full. The group leader initially draws up a visit plan and timetable (who, what, where, why, when and how?). Trip leaders need to complete a Trips and Visits form and have this approved by SLT and Head of School. Staff are encouraged to make an effective preliminary visit to support in making a good risk management plan.

A risk assessment visit should be made by the group leader prior to the visit of the group and uploaded on Evolve to be approved by the EVC. This will be shared with staff and volunteers prior to the visit. The process is as follows:

- Identify the hazards
- Decide who might be harmed and how
- Evaluate the risks and decide on precaution
- Record your findings and implement them
- Review your assessment and update if necessary

## **Forest school**

In the Leamington Federation, we encourage children to explore their own innate learning in the richest classroom we have – the outdoors. The Forest School ethos focuses on an approach to learning that

maximizes the emotional, social and developmental benefits of education.

Forest School is run by trained Forest School Leaders, together with other staff who are well versed in the process. The Forest School Team work with children in the outdoors over a period of time throughout the year, working with a higher than normal staffing ratio, introducing risk-taking and setting participants up to achieve. Forest School sets learning in a different context for children where they can undertake a range of practical activities and carry out small achievable tasks.

At Forest School, children can develop their team working skills and also learn to become more independent. Those who are unfamiliar with woodlands and green spaces can become confident in using them and this can form the basis of a life-long relationship with natural spaces. Forest School can be particularly effective for children who do not do well in the classroom environment. Children learn to solve problems and be creative and imaginative at Forest School thus showing enterprising behaviour.

### **Working together**

We work in partnership with a wide range of organisations that provide invaluable support for the work we do in the Leamington Federation and the community. Regular class visits to Leamington library, The RSC, Jepherson Gardens, The Royal Pump Rooms, The National Gallery, Warwick Arts Centre, form part of our vocabulary trips, community events and shared meetings.

We are extremely grateful for the support of all of our partners. We have undertaken a commitment, fostering lifelong learning and cultural literacy in the community – ownership and belonging in our cultural institutions, embedding quality arts and culture.

Before- school, lunchtime and after-school activities are provided on a weekly basis. A mixture of school staff and external clubs leads these. The programme changes termly to reflect the availability of staff and needs of the children. A timetable is circulated at the end of each term listing the clubs, their time and location. The range and timing of clubs takes into consideration:

- The interests of the pupils at the school
- The facilities available
- Links with the local community
- Expertise of adults associated with the school
- The needs of all groups of pupils including those attending mosque after school
- The balance and range of activities available

Attendance at clubs is monitored to ensure that clubs are accessible to all our pupils.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

In order to monitor and evaluate SLT will:

- Monitor and evaluate plans termly for trips, visits and visitors
- Monitor and evaluate plans termly for opportunities for classes to take part in LOtC activities
- Monitor and evaluate the uptake of cross-curricular opportunities

- Monitor and evaluate the participation of pupils in productions and special events
- Collect evaluation forms from pupils participating in activities and use these to review activities
- Complete their own LOfC activity evaluations and submit to the Head of school

It is particularly important that Senior Leaders ensure that:

- All groups in the school are given equal opportunity to participate in cross-curricular opportunities
- All pupils are fully able to participate in trips, visits and residential trips
- Learning outside the classroom experiences support and develop curriculum plans
- Learning outside the classroom experiences are evaluated for their effectiveness

In addition, Experiential Audits confirm the experiences that all pupils take part in throughout each half term. These are analysed, based on vulnerable groups (e.g. SEN, FSM, boys/girls, EAL), discussed and evaluated to SLT and class teachers to identify and measure the involvement and experiences each child participates in throughout school life.

### **Links with Royal Shakespeare Company**

The Leamington Federation are one of 26 Lead Associate Schools with the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC). This partnership presents the opportunity for pupils to develop their teamwork, confidence and communication skills through dramatic engagement outside the classroom.

The children's experiences through the RSC partnership provide a strong base for a life-long understanding and love of the arts.

RSC opportunities include:

- Staff Professional Development opportunities with RSC Education practitioners exploring how rehearsal room approaches to Shakespeare can transform attitudes beyond the classroom
- Access to a local and national network of schools, teachers and theatre professionals committed to making Shakespeare's work vivid, accessible and enjoyable for children and young people
- The chance to take part in a national festival of work by young people
- Opportunities to contribute to a national programme of research and publications
- A whole-school Shakespeare project, including access to live broadcasts
- Experiencing high quality performances of Shakespeare's work in theatres and in school
- Pupils taking ownership and the lead on whole-school projects through the ambassador programme
- Collaboration with local schools to support and embed Shakespeare across the curriculum locally.

### **Inclusion**

Under the Equality Act 2010, it is unlawful to discriminate against disabled participants because of their disability, without material or substantial justification. You are required to make reasonable adjustments to avoid participants being placed at a substantial disadvantage. However, the Equality Act does not require responsible bodies to place employees or participants at inappropriate risk if a health and safety issue

arises. It is also the case that the adjustments made to include a disabled young person should not impinge unduly on the planned purpose of the activity.

At Sydenham and Lighthorne Heath Primary Schools, we will not exclude pupils with special educational or medical needs from school visits. Every effort will be made to support them whilst maintaining the safety of everyone on the visit. Special attention will be given to appropriate supervision ratios and additional safety measures may need to be addressed at the planning stage. We will work with families to find ways so that all children can attend educational visits.

### **Equal Opportunities**

At Sydenham and Lighthorne Heath Primary Schools, we undertake to provide equality of access to all aspects of the curriculum to all members of the school community. Staff will endeavour to help all children to reach their full potential irrespective of race, gender, age or ability in accordance with the school's Equal Opportunities and Inclusion policies

### **Race Equality Statement**

At Sydenham and Lighthorne Heath Primary Schools we offer a curriculum that reflects our cultural diversity. We teach children to be aware of the diversity of cultures within our schools, and to see them as a positive factor that enriches the experiences of the whole school community. We recognise that different languages are spoken and understood by staff and children in our school, and we value those languages and the impact that fluent first languages have on the development of children's English learning.

### **Review**

This statement is part of a working document and therefore is open to change and restructuring as and when the need arises.

This policy will be implemented in conjunction with the school's Behaviour and Discipline, PSHE, Equal Opportunities and Exclusion, Educational Visits, Health and Safety policies.

**This policy was ratified:** September 2022

**This policy will be reviewed:** September 2023

**Signed by the Head Teacher:**

*Juliette Westwood*

**Chair of Governors:** Richard Butler