

Sherburn Primary School

# Outdoor Environment Policy



## Sherburn Primary School Outdoor Environment Policy

The school environment, both indoor and outdoor, must contribute positively to the attitudes, behaviour and motivation of pupils. The quality of the learning environment is very important to children, and has a considerable influence on their academic standards. We therefore, aim to make use of the opportunities provided by the school grounds, local area and class visits to enrich our curriculum enabling teachers to make learning practical and 'hands on'.

The school acknowledges that students can derive immense educational benefits by taking part in off-site visits. Taking part in problem solving, decision-making and residential experiences can enhance the development of personal and social skills. The knowledge and experienced gained beyond the classroom can consolidate and extend the taught curriculum within it.

### **Aim**

To create an outdoor area which is stimulating, exciting and that is used throughout the year as a learning environment

### **Objectives**

We believe that the outdoor environment provides the following benefits:

- Using and applying knowledge, skills and understanding in realistic and exciting contexts.
- Developing the ability to work co-operatively.
- Developing the ability to communicate successfully.
- Showing initiative and a positive attitude.
- Showing greater independence, moving towards self-reliance.
- Raising self-esteem through successful participation and enjoyment.
- Developing a positive attitude to learning.
- Encouraging responsibility.
- Improving behaviour.
- An appreciation of the natural world as a source of interest and challenge.
- A concern for living things.
- An understanding of the need for interdependence between people and the environment.
- Developing a positive attitude to physical activities and a health lifestyle.
- Developing and experiencing physical fitness and well-being.

### **Our School Grounds Environment**

Developing our school grounds is an ongoing process. Each development enhances the outdoor experience, whilst meeting the needs of members of our school community, as well as being sensitive to the existing environment. Pupils are given the opportunity to contribute their ideas through drawing plans, showing their visions of what developments they would like to see in their school grounds environment.

All of our children share the playground and we believe that this is beneficial for both older and younger children, as this fosters a sense of responsibility to care. The playground has equipment to stimulate play including a climbing frame, a tyre bridge, stepping posts, imaginative play and picnic tables. The playground is also marked out for a number of games, including netball and football.

In the Reception Class children have access to a dedicated Early Years Outdoor Environment designed to be a continuation of the indoor environment, with a balance of child-initiated and adult-led experiences. Giant Steps Nursery shares our school site. As well as having their own outdoor area they may make use of other outdoor areas on our site to enhance their own provision.

The sports field is used for a variety of games activities and is used by all children during their PE lessons. We encourage the children to use the field during the summer term, at lunchtime, for games and trained play leaders lead games activities.

The school has developed a Forest School at the edge of our site with trees, a pond and a camp fire area. (see Forest School Policy)

We have a vegetable garden where, with the assistance of parents and members of the community, we grow a variety of fruit and vegetables that are used in the school kitchen and sold to raise funds, keeping the garden self-sustaining.

## **Off-site visits**

An off-site visit is defined as pupils going 'beyond the school gates' to pursue an activity organised through the school.

Our Village is situated in an area with both residential and farm land. Here, within walking distance, we have access to a Sports Centre, a Co-op and village shops, allotments and other village amenities such as the Community Centre and Church, which classes may visit to enhance their learning.

Classes are encouraged to make use of local museums, art galleries, nature reserves, sporting facilities etc. to support and enhance their topic work.

Upper KS2 children have the opportunity to participate in a residential visit each year.

All Off-site visits are carried out in accordance with the [LEA's Educational Visits Policy](#).

## **Health and safety**

The health and safety of all who use the school is of paramount importance. [The school follows the LEA guidance on health and safety matters, and has adopted the LEA policy.](#)

Children will be supervised at all times using, with the relevant adult-child ratio for the activity.

It is strongly advised that children will need to have appropriate outdoor clothing to enable them to fully access the activities outside. This may include:

- Waterproof coat
- Footwear appropriate for playing out
- Sun protection cream and a hat
- Suitable sports kit and shoes

Risk Assessments will be carried out on all equipment and the general school environment. Staff will check, repair or replace equipment as necessary.

Risk Assessments will be carried out for all off-site visits and reported to LEA in accordance with their Educational Visits Policy.

Sherburn Primary School has qualified First Aiders and ensures that there is adequate and appropriate first aid equipment on site, to enable employees, pupils and visitors to be given first aid.

The governing body will ask for regular reports from the head teacher about health and safety matters, including a record of what accidents have occurred in each term, and what safety inspections have been carried out.

### **Equal Opportunities**

All children will have the opportunity to access to the outdoor play curriculum regardless of gender, special educational needs, race, home or cultural background.

### **Special needs**

All children will be encouraged and supported to enable them to access the outdoor environment.

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

This will include:

- staff observations, discussions and feedback from children and parents
- stakeholders discussing and reviewing the policy at least every two years, to ensure it is meeting the needs of the children.

### **Role of the co-ordinator**

The role of the Co-ordinator is outlined in the job description.

The main tasks of the job include:

- Monitoring the use of outdoor environment.
- Overseeing the improvement of school grounds.
- Co-ordinating a calendar of proposed off-site visits, supporting any teacher's planning of a site visit, ensuring LEA guidelines are being adhered to.
- Attending courses and passing on information to the rest of the Staff.
- Promoting the use of the outdoor environment within the School.

Policy written by Miss G Jones

Reviewed Sept 2018

Next review September 2020