

Thriftwood School & College



Outdoor Learning Policy



Business &
Enterprise

January 2016



Thriftwood Outdoor Learning Policy



At Thriftwood we regard ourselves as an 'Outside School' where the value of the outdoor environment is an important and valued aspect of the students' experience. The outdoors can provide space and freedom for a type of learning that is difficult to replicate indoors. All children have the right to first-hand experience of the unique and special nature of being outdoors.

Aim

Through Outdoor Learning our pupils will have opportunities to

- Experience – a range of experiences, frequent and progressive
- Develop confidence, self-esteem and self-awareness
- Develop skills such as teamwork, leadership, communication, social interaction, problem solving and taking responsibility for themselves and others
- Learn new ideas, facts, concepts in a real world context
- Grow through challenge and become more independent and resilient
- Demonstrate achievement – through awards and creativity
- Develop morally as responsible citizens who care for the environment
- Develop spiritually through creativity, a sense of purpose, awe and wonder, enjoying being with nature
- Be physically active and know being outdoors is good for their well-being
- Develop knowledge and understanding of the environment
- Experience a range of weathers and learn to be prepared for these
- Be engaged in learning, feel motivated and willing to learn – contributing to raising their levels of attainment
- Broaden their horizons and raise aspirations – believing they can achieve

We will achieve this through:

- regular, planned and timetabled sessions outside
- school visits which may be curriculum based, environmental, cultural, social, adventurous or day /residential trips
- break times and learning outside in all weathers except in extreme circumstances such as thunder, lightning or gales
- experiences in the wildlife area
- Forest School
- work on the allotments or orchard, school grounds or projects
- including activities that offer Social Moral Spiritual and Cultural experiences
- Outdoor Learning awards
- Encompassing the values and outcomes of the Learning Outside the Classroom Manifesto and Every Child Matters

Role of the Adult

Good practice should be modelled by adults, showing pupils that the world in which we live in should be appreciated and cared for.

Good practice should include:

- encouraging and supporting pupils, providing positive experiences outside and with nature
- guiding pupils into self-discovery, modelling skills and language where appropriate
- allowing appropriate independence and risk-taking
- providing opportunities for reflection of pupils' actions
- assessing progress in the Outdoor Learning Awards and Personal Learning Skills

Health and Safety

Staff

All staff involved in Outdoor Learning should familiarise themselves with relevant policies, such as LOTC, Health and Safety, First Aid, and adhere to the guidance contained in them. Safe practice is regarded as extremely important and it is the responsibility of individual staff and volunteers to ensure general safety during working. Accidents are reported in accordance with usual school procedures and any "near misses" should be reported to the Outdoor Learning Subject Leader.

Students

Outdoor Learning will support students in taking responsibility for themselves and others. It will encourage early risk management strategies that will ensure they start to consider the impact of their actions on themselves, others and the environment.

Our 3 agreements are:

- Look after yourself
- Look after others
- Look after nature

Equipment

Gardening tools are stored in a designated shed/space and safe use/storage is modelled and monitored by the supervising adults who should be familiar with the Tools Risk Assessments. Students should be taught the correct techniques for transporting, using, maintaining and storing equipment as appropriate.

Environment

Outdoor learning may take place within the academy grounds, wildlife area, Forest School or within the local or wider community. Snakes and other wildlife are a part of these natural environments and care will be taken to ensure the safety of all involved through increased awareness.

For off-site activities staff will complete Visit Forms, considering group and individual needs/behaviours as well as transport, contact details, group numbers and ratios.

Policy Agreed: January 2016

Review in January 2018

Signed _____

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APPENDIX

Tools Risk Assessment for Outdoor Learning