



Southglade Primary School
Outdoor Learning Policy
September 2025 – 2026

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Vision Statement

At Southglade Primary and Nursery school we believe that outdoor learning should be woven into the curriculum where possible. Our Outdoor Learning Policy aims to encourage children's love of learning. We believe that all children have the right to experience the unique and special nature of being outdoors, having a positive impact on children of all ages and abilities. We further believe that it is important to enable children to use the outside environment as a context for learning.

What do we mean by Outdoor Learning?

Outdoor Learning is a broad term that includes: outdoor play, school grounds projects, environmental education, recreational and adventure activities, and personal and social development. There is strong evidence that good quality learning outside the classroom adds much value to classroom learning. It leads to a deeper understanding of concepts that span traditional subject boundaries and which are frequently difficult to teach effectively using classroom methods alone. Direct experience outdoors is powerful, motivating and has impact and credibility.

The results from outdoor learning can be instantaneous as well as active and therefore impact on behaviour as well as tapping into the learning styles of the more kinaesthetic learner. Through skilled teaching, outdoor experiences readily become a stimulating source of fascination, personal growth and can lead to 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 – to name only some of the benefits.

Outdoor Learning can help to bring learning alive. For that reason, the outdoors can have an impact on areas of the curriculum as diverse as imaginative writing and personal and social development. Outdoor learning also provides experiential opportunities allowing pupils to respond positively to opportunities, challenges and responsibilities, to manage risk and to cope with change.

Aims and objectives

Our aims for all children at Southglade:

- Raise the profile of Outdoor Learning
- To encourage children to care for their environment
- To have access to experiences of outdoor learning across the curriculum
- Develop positive attitudes towards learning outside
- Empower children to take ownership of their learning, allowing their minds and bodies to thrive
- Develop a love for the outdoors and being in nature
- Encourage children to develop the skills to solve problems, developing resilient and reflective learners

Benefits of Outdoor Learning:

- Helps to ensure that children are successful learners enabling children to develop knowledge and skills in ways that add value to their everyday learning experiences
- Enables children to be confident individuals and impacts positively upon young children's attitudes beliefs and self-perceptions
- Contributes towards creating independent learners with high self-esteem
- Can have a positive impact upon children's behaviour
- Contributes towards the promotion and children's understanding of the importance of developing a Healthy lifestyle
- Impacts positively upon children's personal and social development. It can also bring about community cohesion and allow children to develop as responsible citizens who make a positive contribution to their wider community. It can create pride in the school and wider community and promote community involvement, renewing children's pride and creating a sense of belonging and responsibility
- Raises learner's attainment; promotes and strengthens communication skills, team work and sense of cohesion

Health and Safety

We will support children in taking risks within a safe and secure environment. Pupils will be taught to manage risks. Staff ensure that the outdoor environment offers challenges and teaches the children how to be safe and aware of others.

Outdoor learning opportunities are embraced when available and teachers will assess risk. In the first instance, teachers will refer to and apply the schools policies relating to Health and Safety, and Risk Assessment prior to any outdoor learning activity that may require additional support beyond the reasonable activities one would normally apply within the classroom. It is also important that the school apply safety measures to effectively manage and minimise risks.

EYFS Provision

There are no boundaries to outdoor learning within the EYFS. Outdoor learning is integral part of the day – the range of activities can be endless. Children have free access throughout the sessions, with range of free flow and planned activities. Children wear appropriate clothing depending on the weather.

KS1 Provision

In KS1, we try to utilise the outdoor space as much as possible. Opportunities to take learning outside are taken full advantage of. KS1 have access to the playground and Loretta's garden where learning is enriched with outdoors. For example, looking at habitats in science, setting the butterflies free, looking at different materials and using map skills.

KS2 Provision

Teachers endeavour to take lessons outside whenever possible. For example, science lessons involve studying the weather, and geography lessons may involve work in the locality, orienteering, and following maps.

Where Outdoor Learning Takes Place

The School Grounds

We are lucky to have grounds, which offer opportunities for both formal and informal learning and play, Loretta's garden provides a space where children can see plants growing and insects and animals in their natural habitat.

School buildings can also provide a useful resource for learning about energy use and waste – linking to our school eco ambassadors who do sweeps of the school to check lights and whiteboards are switched off when not being used.

Gardening opportunities

We have plans for a poly-tunnel on our school field so we can begin to grow fresh produce. Having access to this area will educate children where food comes from and the process it undertakes. The produce grown will be used in cookery lessons to promote healthy eating and sustainability.

The Local Environment

The locality around school highlights a range of opportunities within relatively accessible distance. Learners can develop their skills to explore their local environment, for example, geography or history fieldwork, surveys and collection of data etc.

Residential Visits

Staying away from home is a powerful way of developing key life skills, building confidence, self-esteem, communication and team working, for example. Children have the opportunity to widen their range of experiences and find new skills and interests in which they may excel. Year 6 children spend time away at Kingswood, an outdoor centre where they take part in a wide range of outdoor and adventurous activities.