



FCVS LOTC Policy

September 2021

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Assigned Governor:	M Cluer
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Farnham Common Village Schools

Learning Outside the Classroom Policy

Every young person should experience the world beyond the classroom as an essential part of learning and personal development, whatever their age, ability or circumstances. High quality education outside the classroom can stimulate and inspire; foster independence; aid personal and social development; and can often motivate reluctant learners"

- Nov 2006 Learning Outside the Classroom Manifesto

Rationale

The outdoor environment can provide space and freedom for a type of learning that is difficult to replicate indoors. We believe this is key to raising achievement and a fantastic opportunity for children to develop self-esteem and confidence through the unique combination of play, environmental education and outdoor learning.

Outdoor learning is synonymous with active learning and readily develops the learning skills of enquiry, experimenting, feedback, reflection, review, communication, problem solving, and cooperative learning.

Intent

At Farnham Common Village Schools, we believe that the outdoor environment can be used in many cross-curricular areas, to strengthen and deepen pupils' understanding and knowledge and create real life experiences for pupils. Through outdoor learning pupils will become confident, resilient and determined learners. The children are exposed to natural environments enabling them to gain understanding and respect for the natural world and all that lives within it.

Through regular, well-planned activities for outdoor learning we aim to raise attainment of all children. We make good use of the outdoor space so that children are enabled to learn by working on a larger, more active scale than is possible indoors.

Through outdoor learning opportunities we aim to provide a safe and secure environment that the children can take risks in. We encourage them to work independently and collaboratively with enthusiasm and perseverance.

Implementation

At Farnham Common Village schools, we aim to provide frequent, continuous and progressive learning outside the classroom opportunities for all children. Outdoor learning is planned to enrich and enhance the children's in-school learning experiences. This gives every pupil in the school the opportunity to enjoy and learn from our wonderful natural world on a regular basis.

Children have the opportunities to learn specific outdoor skills and have respect for the environment, themselves and others; working within safe boundaries which they learn to recognise and manage themselves.

Outdoor learning takes place on our school grounds and in Burnham Beeches.

Impact

By the end of KS2 all children will have enjoyed hands on experiences learning outdoors which will add to their understanding and learning of a wide variety of curriculum areas. They will have developed imagination and creativity through exploration of the outdoors and will have developed resilience through challenging activities and working in all weathers. They also will have developed co-operation skills through team work.

Pupils will have a good understanding of nature, the world around us, growing plants and vegetables and will have contributed to the development of our school grounds and looking after the world around us.

Monitoring and Assessment

Teaching and learning will be monitored through:

- termly audits of planning books and evaluations
- learning walks
- pupil feedback
- outdoor learning display board in the library (each year group displaying photographic evidence of learning outside)
- Feedback to parents will be given through school newsletters and Parentmail. Any significant achievements will be shared with parents through the class teacher.

Inclusion

We aim to offer access to high quality Learning Outside the Classroom experiences for pupils of all abilities and needs. We aim to provide a secure environment in which all children and adults can flourish and all contributions are valued.

It is the class teacher's responsibility to ensure differentiation of activities to meet the individual needs of their class. The different areas of the school site are accessible to all.

Provision for Learning Outside the Classroom

Entitlement FCIS

Entitlement 1	All pupils have the opportunity to experience Forest School throughout the year. Early Years have sessions once a fortnight and Key Stage One is once per term.
Entitlement 2	All teachers are required to plan one lesson a week using the outdoor environment.
Entitlement 3	All children experience at least 3 trips or visitors each year, one per term.
Entitlement 4	All pupils take part in 'gardening' activities over the year.

Entitlement FCJS

Entitlement 1	All pupils take part in 'gardening' activities over the year.
Entitlement 2	All children experience at least 3 trips or visitors each year, one per term.
Entitlement 3	All teachers must regularly plan activities that incorporate the outdoor environment, with particular opportunities being planned in the creative curriculum.

FCIS: The Environment

The school environment and the locality provide many opportunities for learning.

On site children have access to;

A fully enclosed woodland

- In use on Wednesday and Thursday mornings and all day Friday for Forest School.
- There are different areas within in the woodland including clearings, seated areas and a fire pit.
- Children participating in activities using the woodland area must be accompanied by 2 members of staff.

Gardening beds

- Each year group has their own gardening beds.
- All equipment is kept in the gardening shed and plastic bottle green house.

Rot zone

- Situated at top of the playground by the woods.
- All sections are clearly labelled.

Mini beast hotel

- Situated on the grassy area outside KS1 classrooms.
- In addition to this there are other areas within the school, including log piles in the woodland to hunt for mini beasts.

Pond

- The gate is kept locked for safety reasons. The key is available from the Headteacher.

Playground

- Available throughout the year during lesson time.
- Area includes a basketball court, muddy area and grassy area.

Forest School

Forest School forms an integral part of the curriculum at Farnham Common Infant School. All pupils have the opportunity to experience Forest School throughout the year. Early Years have sessions once per fortnight and Key Stage One once per term.

Please refer to the Forest School Policy for more details.

FCJS: The Environment

Gardening beds

- Each year group has their own gardening beds.
- All equipment is kept in the gardening shed and green house.

Playground

- Available throughout the year during lesson time.
- Area includes a basketball court, table tennis tables and activity trail.

Jubilee Garden

- Available throughout the year during lesson time.
- Wildlife area with plenty of areas for habitat building and studying.

Firepit

- Available throughout the year during lesson time backs onto kitchen facility for combined use.

Bug Hotels

- Created as part of science (Year 4) next to Rowan class.

Field

- Available throughout the year during lesson time.
- Large field with wild areas in the corners.

Quiet Garden

- Available throughout the year during lesson time.
- Logs.
- Stage area
- Quiet games/activity tables.

Outdoor Classroom

- Available throughout the year during lesson time.
- 5 tables of six in a covered area.

Off-site facilities:

- Burnham Beeches - City of London owned woodland.
- Ponds and streams.
- Woodland.
- Maintained by rangers so permit must be obtained.
- Each year group incorporates visits to Burnham Beeches in their creative curriculum ranging from walks to stream investigation to orienteering and geocaching.

External Trips and Visits

All year groups should provide a minimum of three trips per year, although one of these may be a visitor coming into school.

The school is within walking distance of Burnham Beeches which provides an ideal setting for environmental work. The school has good links with Burnham Beeches, and staff and rangers are happy to visit the school.

The school is also within walking distance of Farnham Common village, providing opportunities to visit community facilities such as shops, library and Church.

During their time at Farnham Common Village Schools children will have experience of Learning Outside the Classroom crossing a range of different educational sectors, for example; local woodlands, places of worship, streets and townscapes, zoos, farms and museums.

Please refer to the Educational Visits Policy for expectations and requirements for external trips and visits.

All Weather Learning

'Sunshine is delicious, rain is refreshing, wind braces us up and snow is exhilarating. There is no such thing as bad weather, only different kinds of good weather.'

John Ruskin 1819-1900

The school takes an 'all weather' approach to learning.

In order to allow for access to the whole grounds throughout the year; both pupils and staff are expected to have suitable warm and waterproof clothing in school at all times, including boots (FCIS) and brought in on request for FCJS.

In extreme weather however, such as torrential rain, icy conditions, very high winds or intense sun, the decision will be made by the member of staff on duty as to whether to limit or curtail activities if it is felt that by not doing so the children will be at **significant** risk.

Funding

All visits and journey will be funded according to our charging policy.

Health and Safety

We will support children in taking risks within a safe and secure environment. It is important to ensure that the outdoor environment offers challenges and teaches the children how to be safe and aware of others. Outdoor learning opportunities will be grasped when available and teachers will assess the Risk benefit where appropriate. Existing risk benefit assessments are available within the Health and Safety folder on the school server. Teachers taking children outside for a lesson should notify their year colleague or the office staff.

FCIS Staff ratios

Children participating in activities using the woodland area must be accompanied by 2 members of staff.

Forest school activities must have a ratio of 1: 8 (see separate Forest School Policy).

Ratios for external trips and visits can be found in the Evolve documents available in the staff room.

FCJS staff ratios:

All groups taken off site must have a minimum ratio of 1:8. Outdoor learning on site must have at least 2 members of staff accompanying them.

FCIS First Aid provision

Each year group has a designated first aider who can attend to incidents on the school site.

FCJS First Aid provision

The school has two qualified first aiders, one of which is located at the office should the need arise. Other members of staff have 'first aid at work' training.

All groups engaged in off-site outdoor activities will be accompanied by a minimum of one first aider. Any appropriate medication will be taken and the emergency first aid box.

Emergency Procedures

On hearing the fire alarm staff and pupils will remain outside and move to the designated fire assembly point.

On hearing the lockdown signal staff and pupils must move quickly into the school building and to the nearest designated safe area.

Roles and Responsibilities

The school has an appointed Learning Outside the Classroom coordinator, the role of whom is to monitor LOtC across the school and to provide resources and advice to other staff where appropriate.

It is the class teacher's responsibility to ensure children have at least one experience of Learning Outside the Classroom per week (FCIS).

Parental involvement

As a school we believe that parents, carers and other volunteers can be involved in a number of ways — for example as assistant leaders, activity instructors, or, with some activities, as an appreciative audience. Some may have skills, qualifications and experience that they would be very keen to share with the children.

Parents'/carers' involvement will be most effective if they are involved in planning the activity, they clearly understand their responsibilities and they are well supported during the activity.

It is important to ensure that the roles and responsibilities of all staff involved are clear to parents, carers and other volunteers. This encourages a collective sense of responsibility for issues such as safety and discipline—even though the steer on these matters should come from the group leader. Parents/carers or other volunteers should be taken on as supervisors only when the group leader is satisfied that they have the necessary competence.

Examples of Learning Outside the Classroom will be fed back to parents through newsletters, weekly updates and day-to-day conversations.

Date: September 2021

To be Reviewed: July 2023