



Outdoor Learning Policy

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## Intent

At Norwich Road Academy, we believe the outdoor environment can be an effective and stimulating place to learn. Regular outdoor learning encourages children to connect with nature and brings a host of benefits in terms of health, self-esteem, self-confidence and motivation. It is both a form of pedagogy and an aspect of learning in its own right.

The outdoor environment encourages a wide range of skills and abilities that we cannot not always develop in the classroom. These can be presented as building on existing outdoor play, the foundations of which are laid in EYFS. It should include activities normally carried out indoors, school garden projects – (growing) environmental exploration, or off-site visits. By providing positive opportunities for active learning, the outside environment can promote skills of enquiry, problem solving, communication, co-operation, creativity and evaluation.

Norwich Road Academy offers outdoor learning opportunities for children across the school. The child's natural curiosity is captured from their time in our Early Years setting, providing them with opportunities to explore and experiment. As children grow and progress through the school, armed with their love of learning, they can stretch their understanding and problem-solving skills outside with the opportunity to shine in open-ended challenges.

We are lucky enough to have a range of outdoor areas allowing provision including: three EYFS areas, two of which have been significantly updated this year, and a KS 1 playground – again updated to become a showpiece for outdoor imaginative play. A KS 2 playground a nature area (currently the centre of a development project) a gardening area and a multi-use games field – the subject of an environmental planting scheme. Outdoor learning encompasses many different experiences in the outdoors: from visits, residentials and PE outdoors and Forest Schools. In fact, any experience outdoors that allows children to engage and learn in a different way. We want our children to be proud of the outdoor area around them and aspire to be responsible, respectful and active citizens who maintain and look after it. We have an active Eco Committee who lead this across the school, taking responsibility for promoting and monitoring recycling and waste reduction.

Outdoor Learning can help to transform many school subjects and bring them alive as they focus on real results and consequences. For that reason, the outdoors can have an impact on areas of the curriculum as diverse as imaginative writing and moral education. Outdoor learning also provides experiential opportunities allowing pupils to respond positively to opportunities, challenges and responsibilities, to manage risk and to cope with change.

## Objectives

At Norwich Road Academy, we want all children to:

- Take ownership of their learning, allowing their minds and bodies to thrive.
- Develop the skills to solve problems to become resilient and reflective learners.
- Develop skills of communication, cooperation and collaborative learning.
- Have access to a challenging, safe and secure environment where they can take and manage risks.
- Make links with the local area.
- Care for their environment and become responsible, respectful and active citizens.

## Health and Safety

At Norwich Road Academy, the safety of our children is paramount. The utilisation of outdoor learning experiences can promote key life skills, regulation and enquiry for our young people. We have a responsibility to facilitate the development of these skills and a duty to keep children safe. We will ensure that:

- Our equipment is checked regularly and used as per manufacturer's instructions.
- Our children are supervised at all times with the correct adult/child ratio.
- The apparatus we use is age appropriate.
- Rotas and timetables to be easily available and clear.
- Any accidents, breakages or repairs will be reported immediately.
- Any equipment that may hold additional risks is stored in a safe place out of the reach of children.
- Risk Assessments are always carried out when visiting places off site or for activities within the school environment which have potential risks.
- The weather is considered before outdoor activities take place.
- Staff wear high visibility jackets to make themselves stand out and available.
- Staff will receive appropriate first aid training.

## Implementation

Outdoor learning at Norwich Road Academy should:

- Be for children from Nursery to Year 6, providing opportunities for both formal and informal outdoor learning and play.
- Be a part of Early Years free flow, regardless of the weather, to enable children to choose to use the outdoor areas throughout the day.
- Be built into the curriculum and enhance provision.
- Be well-resourced and these resources are easily accessible to children.
- Be planned into a variety of subjects. The outdoor area is used as a context and a natural resource for learning.
- Be used to support extra-curricular clubs to provide a range of experiences for all children.

- Provide children with a range of experiences that help develop key life skills, including personal learning, enquiry and thinking skills.
- Provide the opportunity to explore, grow and nurture plants through class-based work.
- Give children the opportunity to engage with imaginative, investigative and creative play using the outdoors.
- Make use of the locality around the school.
- Ensure trips out are planned in every year group.
- Include the opportunity for a residential trip. This is a powerful way of developing key life skills, building confidence, self-esteem, communication and team working.

### Resources

We have developed resources in the following areas:

- EYFS areas - 3
- Physical development area (School field)
- Gardening area
- Playgrounds (KS1 and 2)
- Wildlife / 'Forest Schools' area
- Guides to support accessing the locality.

### Impact

Monitoring and evaluation of children's learning outdoors, and the impact of this policy, will be valued equally with class-based learning and in line with academy expectations.

Subject leaders will monitor how the outdoors is used to support the teaching of their subject. Outdoor learning throughout the curriculum will be monitored by the lead teacher. This process will inform provision and further promote the implementation of an effective approach at our academy.

Related policies:

Curriculum, Teaching and Learning  
 Early Years and Foundation Stage  
 Physical Education  
 Science  
 PHSE  
 Health and Safety