Whitfield St James’ CE (VC) Primary School

Outdoor Learning

Intent, Implementation and Impact statement

Intent

At Whitfield St James’, our school vision is ‘working together to achieve our best to fulfil our God given potential’. As part of this vision we have decided to expand and enhance the breadth of our curriculum by incorporating outdoor learning and a ‘Muddy Puddle’ curriculum that will become part of our everyday routine. Our intent is that when children participate in learning activities outside of the classroom they will develop a lifelong love of the outdoors alongside a lifelong love of learning.

The engagement in outdoor learning activities will improve progress and support their mental, spiritual and physical well-being.

It is our aim that this outdoor learning will uphold the high standards and expectations that our school sets for its pupils and serve as a cornerstone to increasing their life skills and experiences throughout their nursery and primary school education. The primary aims of this curriculum will be:

• To build self-esteem and confidence in children.

• To build resilient, determined and independent learners

• To develop children’s personal, social and emotional development.

• To develop children’s and encourage creativity

• To encourage collaboration.

• To develop and build the ideas of risk management and risk benefit

• To improve children’s life skills and experiences

• To enable children to gain a respect for the natural environment and wildlife.

• To transfer negative behaviours into positive ones.

• To let children be children.

These aims will be covered with a variety of Muddy Puddle and outdoor learning teachings and strategies that not only seek to aid the children in their learning but also be provided in a positive, enjoyable, creative and inspiring manner that will allow them to transfer the skills and knowledge from outdoor learning into the classroom and life outside of school.

Implementation

At Whitfield St James’, we are developing our outdoor areas within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and Key Stage One to ensure that children have an environment available to them which offers them the freedom to explore, use their senses, take risks and be physically active and exuberant. We have wellington boots and waterproof trousers readily available in EYFS to ensure outdoor learning can occur in all weathers. We are hoping to extend this to Key Stage One also.

Outdoor learning is planned to enrich and enhance the children’s in-school learning experiences. Children also have opportunities to learn specific outdoor skills which link closely to successful learning. Outdoor learning takes place on our school grounds within dedicated outdoor areas as well as local walks and our school field.

Our approach to outdoor learning is to plan and deliver learning experiences outdoors. These opportunities are an integral part of our planning for each of the termly topics in all year groups within the Cornerstones Curriculum and alongside Muddy Puddle. Self-evaluation is also an integral part to planning positive outdoor learning experiences and ensuring that children are benefiting from what is being planned.

Muddy Puddle provides enriching and active ways to learn outside within the EYFS and National Curriculum for Key Stage 1 and 2. It provides Outdoor Learning Schemes of work for Science, Phonics and planning ideas for all areas of learning.

Outdoor Learning also encompasses learning that can not take place in the classroom, such as:

* Trips and visits, both local and further afield and including residentials.
* Playtimes
* Physical Education (PE)
* Orienteering
* Outdoor and adventurous activities – Rope Climbing.

Impact

Children at Whitfield St James’ will have enjoyed hands on experiences learning outdoors which will add to their understanding and learning of a wide variety of curriculum areas in all key stages. They will have developed imagination and creativity through exploration of the outdoors. Children will develop resilience through challenging activities and working in all weathers. They will have developed co-operation skills through team work and have an understanding of nature, the world around us, growing plants and vegetables. Children will have contributed to the development of our school grounds and looking after the world around us.

At Whitfield St James’, children and adults will benefit both physically and emotionally from having opportunities to learn both inside and outside.

The impact of our outdoor curriculum will be measured by how effectively it helps all our children, including those with SEN and vulnerable children, develop into well rounded individuals who embody our values and carry with them the knowledge, skills and attitudes which will make them lifelong learners and valuable future citizens.