

Our Vision

To provide a rich and varied learning community where all children reach their potential through self-esteem and self-belief and a commitment to life-long learning.

Our Aims

- To raise the profile of outdoor learning
- To use our outdoor learning spaces to provide our children with experiences that will help them to learn and flourish
- To encourage close links with parents and the federation in celebrating our outdoor spaces and the rich learning that can take place within it
- To empower children to take ownership of the learning, allowing their minds and bodies to thrive
- To provide a safe and secure environment that they can take risks in
- To encourage children to take care of their environment

See Federation Development Plan, SEF and Ofsted Report (Grewelthorpe School) 2010 Ofsted Report.(Fountains School) 2016 Ofsted Report.

Rationale

We believe that our children's learning and personal development is improved when they:

- are exposed to new experiences
- learn in different ways related to their learning styles
- are motivated to learn more and feel positive about learning
- become self-confident, developing self-esteem and self-awareness
- work collaboratively, fostering decision-making and teamwork
- improve communication skills with peers and adults
- are healthier, and their sense of well-being increases
- appreciate the links between formal and informal learning

Research has found that there is evidence that when learning outside the classroom, children:

- attain higher levels of knowledge and skills
- improve their physical health and increase their motor abilities
- socialise and interact in new and different ways with their peers and adults
- show improved attention and enhanced self-concept, self-esteem and mental health
- change their environmental behaviours and their values and attitudes.

Policy into Practice

Possibilities for outdoor learning will be considered throughout our planning, using it as a context and a natural resource for learning.

We will:

- ensure that the outdoor learning areas harness the special nature of the outdoors, to offer children what the indoors cannot. (This should be the focus for outdoor provision, complementing and extending provision indoors.)
- ensure that our outdoor areas and resources are flexible and versatile, where children can choose, create, change and be in charge of their environment.
- support inclusion and meet the needs of individuals, offering a diverse range of experiences.
- enable children to access the garden on a regular basis. In the early years, children should access the outside area as much as possible, throughout the seasons.
- ensure that children enjoy energetic activity outdoors and the feeling of well-being that it brings, including opportunities to develop their large motor skills.
- observe, assess and record learning, ensuring that there is adequate provision for children to extend their learning.
- plan for outdoor learning with the children to offer experiences which have meaning to them and which are led by the child.
- enable children to work both individually and co-operatively outside.
- enable children to appreciate the beauty of nature; encouraging children to use a variety of natural resources.
- give children the opportunity to find a quiet space to relax/reflect.
- encourage children to enjoy and have fun outdoors in many contexts.
- work together (children, staff, parents, governors and community) to create a better environment for all.
- organise and/or provide necessary resources including Wellington boots and protective clothing.
- develop a set of rules through discussion with the children. Enable children to use resources safely and to manage and use the space and freedom responsibly.
- help children to take responsibility and care for the outside environment and resources within it.
- encourage children to respect their environment and to care for living things.
- plan for outdoor learning in the wider context, for example, class trips within the local area or to other localities which will be relevant to the curriculum.
- develop partnerships with providers (e.g. outdoor centres, farms, museums, sacred spaces, historic houses, theatres)
- celebrate achievement – through the use of digital cameras, displays, invitations to parents to come into school, articles and photographs on the school website and frontier.

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. Teachers will assess risks of outdoor learning opportunities. Risk assessments will be carried out where appropriate and the school's Health and Safety Policy will be followed.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Assessment of the children's learning will be valued equally indoors and outdoors and should be part of the same process. Subject leaders will be responsible for monitoring their subject area outdoors.

Policy Review

This policy should be considered alongside other relevant policies, particularly the Learning Out of Doors in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage One Policy and the PSHE Policy. It will be reviewed by the governing body as part of its schedule of policy review.

Grewelthorpe & Fountains CE Primary Schools Federation

Policy:	Learning Outside the Classroom Policy
Signed Chair of Governors:	
Date Signed:	
Governors Meeting Ratified:	7th April 2017
Review Date:	Summer 2019
Review schedule	2 yearly