



Curriculum Statement Outdoor Education

Version 1.1

October 2024



*"Love, Honesty, Respect"
Caring for all.*

Our Mission Statement

We are a warm, welcoming village school where all the children receive high quality pastoral care and are able to access a broad, challenging and exciting curriculum. All children are encouraged to 'be the best they can be' and to care for others in the community.

Our Vision – "Caring For All"

As the good shepherd cared for and loved all his sheep, our vision is to nurture and respect all within our safe, Christian community. We seek to create successful learners, resilient individuals and responsible citizens who are equipped as thoughtful advocates and able to adapt and grow in an ever changing world

Our Values

Love – We show love by caring for others as well as ourselves, making a difference to our community and the world through our words and actions.

Honesty – We are honest with ourselves and others. We can rely on each other to truthfully do our best and to make the right choices. We trust each other to tell the truth, even when it is difficult to do so.

Respect – We have respect for ourselves and others. We understand that we are all different and celebrate our uniqueness. We embrace our differences, and we strive to care for each other and ourselves.

Curriculum Intent

At Longcot and Fernham CE Primary School, we want our pupils to love learning, be excited, passionate and challenged by our deep, rich curriculum and prepared for the next stage of learning.



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Our Outdoor Education Curriculum intent

At Longcot and Fernham Primary School we are delighted provide our Forest School curriculum provision that enriches all pupils. This builds on, reinforces and enhances our pupil's education as well as helping their wellbeing and mental health to teach the children to use the outdoor environment and develop each child's culture capital.

We intend for pupils to grow in confidence, self-esteem and independence through being successful in our setting and achieving their own goals, often working collaboratively. We want children to be provided with outdoor experiences that develop their physical fitness, mental/emotional health, social skills, resilience and motivation and link these to the school values of Love, Honesty and Respect.

We also want our pupils to learn to enjoy, understand and care for the natural environment and to use an inviting outdoor space to connect in a 'hands on' way with all other learning such as science, art, history, geography, English and maths. At Longcot and Fernham School we have adopted the principles and practices of the Forest School Association (FSA) guidance as the fundamental basis for all Forest School learning. This guidance is based on many years of professional research into the impact on different types of learners experiencing Forest School activities and philosophies. At our school, Forest School sessions are planned and run by a Forest School Leader who has successfully completed the FSA Level 3 Leader training. We also have a specially designed and continually developed Forest School area for the benefit of all pupils from Nursery Foundation Stage to Y6.

Forest school follows the following principles:

These six principles are:

- Forest School is a long-term process of regular sessions, rather than one-off or infrequent visits, the cycle of planning, observation, adaptation and review links each session.
- Forest School takes place in a woodland or natural environment to support the development of a lifelong relationship between the learner and the natural world.
- Forest School uses a range of learner-centred processes to create a community for being, development and learning.
- Forest School aims to promote the holistic development of all involved, fostering resilient, confident, independent and creative learners.
- Forest School offers learners the opportunity to take supported risks appropriate to the environment and to themselves.
- Forest School is run by qualified Forest School practitioners, who continuously maintain and develop their professional practice.



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How we will implement our Outdoor Education Curriculum

Our Vision Statement is:

At Forest School

We explore, learn and play,

Making our own choices,

In a natural way.



Motto

Whatever the weather, we go outside together!

At Longcot and Fernham Primary School, the implementation of Forest School develops knowledge and skills and enriches the children's educational opportunities.

Early Years: Forest School sessions are first introduced in the Nursery and Foundation stage when children have the ability to understand ground rules, the health and safety rules of "No lick, no pick and be careful of that stick."

Activities are based upon the weather and season. The most important part of Forest School is that it is child initiated. The Forest School Leader offers ideas for the children to do, feeding back from previous sessions, and suggesting ideas. It is up to the children what they choose to do, developing independence, decision making and desire.

Sessions can be shortened and to take into account of more challenging weather conditions for this age group.

Years 1 – 6: Progression of taught skills related to increasing risk and age-related maturity, ensuring appropriate risk benefits are carried out for activities such as:

- Fire lighting, cooking, tool use
- Safe use of tools such knives and saws.
- Assembling structures using a range of techniques and materials safely.
- Fire safety rules. Collecting/sorting fuel, building fires, selecting a site, lighting/extinguishing techniques.
- Cooking. Safe food preparation. Cooking with different implements.
- Tying knots for different purposes.
- Climbing trees, where deemed appropriate.



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In addition, all pupils learn and revise safety rules such as:

- Emergency procedures. Understanding how to prevent danger/minimise the risks inherent in Forest School activities.
- Safety with plants, for people and for nature. Identifying/classifying common plants on the site. Understanding the dangers and uses of plants.
- Safety with wildlife, protecting/encouraging wildlife. Identifying a range of smaller and larger creatures, their needs, habitats and lifecycles. How to protect/encourage different species.
- Safe movements around the site. Hazard awareness, minimising risks including appropriate clothing.
- How to look after nature/wildlife sustainably.
- Lifting/carrying/moving/climbing safely in different environments.
- How to protect against hazards caused by different seasons/weather.

NB Sessions cannot take place outdoors if weather conditions are too unsafe to protect the pupils against, such as in thunderstorms or high winds.

Cross-curricular learning of other subjects in Forest School sessions can include developing skills of reading/writing, storytelling, imagination/creativity, maths, measurement, science observation/enquiry, drawing/art, singing/music, map making/orienteering, historical investigations/re-enactments, designing and making objects, use of iPad and other digital tools, spiritual development and much more.

Underpinning skills will include:

- Planning
- Reasoning
- Negotiating
- Explaining
- active listening
- challenging
- presenting
- Confidence
- resilience
- determination
- 'Have a go' attitude.
- Collaboration
- Fairness
- emotional self-regulation
- respect towards others
- self-esteem
- peacefulness
- having fun
- relaxation
- time with friend
- Stamina
- Strength



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- Balance
- Agility
- manual dexterity
- lifting
- running
- jumping
- climbing
- crawling
- negotiating obstacles etc.

The desired and expected impact of our Outdoor Education Curriculum

Forest School has had a huge impact on pupils learning, particularly for their mental health, wellbeing, development and communication.

The Forest School leader follows the self-reflective approach advocated by the Forest School Association, for pupils during and at the end of sessions to inform the next stages of learning. Children are developing decision making and confidence during sessions as well as learning to take control of what they wish to do, rather than having directed teaching and learning time.

Forest School is inspirational and provides opportunities for every learning style and ability. Some key areas it covers are:

mindfulness	spiritual development
well-being	opportunities
teamwork	independent / group learning and thinking.
exploration	creativity
physical exercise	confidence
discovery	resilience
individuality	social skills
motivation	language
reflection	emotions
play	outdoor learning
stimulus	curriculum coverage
experiences	



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The children enjoy having a drink, and additional treats such as biscuits, 's'mores', toasted marshmallows etc. creating opportunities that some children may never have experienced and the social aspect of eating and sharing a meal together. Food and drink can help to warm them up in colder / wetter weather but also helps to make links between the outdoors being part of daily life where you can eat and drink safely, developing a broader range of experiences. Outdoors in winter, the emphasis has to be on eating and drinking that keeps us warm, nourished and gives us more energy than is needed when playing inside, and that we can make informed healthy choices and lifestyles, that help to enhance our wellbeing, conversation and life experiences. As far as possible we try to make the children independent, making their own drink and cooking on the fire themselves to develop responsibility and understanding risk. They understand the need for suitable clothing for the weather and how get ready for Forest school themselves.

The Forest School leader, with the general Site Manager and other professionals such as maintenance contractors and arborists, routinely monitor the wear and tear of the current Forest School site to protect and maintain the sustainability of the area and make plans for its long-term use as a teaching site.

We believe that engaging with nature is so important "at this critical time when we are facing climate breakdown and biodiversity loss its more than ever to get young people need to be in touch with nature because frankly if they don't love it, they won't ever, ever sand up to look after it, that's implicitly important. The other things is of course their physical and mental health, this is so much better than sitting indoorsout here running, jumping, climbing, getting muddy and wet... finding things in branches, brambles and hedges...looking for fruits... that's real life for kids isn't it, that's what we like to see" Chris Packham