

New Cumnock Primary School



Outdoor Education Policy

February 2021

Outdoor Learning

'Learning need not take place solely within educational buildings. The outdoor environment has massive potential for learning. We are extremely fortunate to have such rich urban and rural environments on our doorsteps and our children and young people's learning experiences can be enhanced by maximising the potential of the outdoors. The Scottish Government is keen to see all our children and young people having positive learning experiences in a variety of settings.' Curriculum for Excellence Through Outdoor Learning

Rationale and Aims

In New Cumnock Primary we aim to offer opportunities for all children and young people to enjoy first-hand experiences outdoors, whether within the school grounds, or our local green spaces. Outdoor learning opportunities allow children to make connections between their experiences and the world around them in meaningful contexts. This type of learning can be enjoyable, creative, challenging and adventurous, and helps children and young people learn by experience, therefore growing as confident and responsible citizens who value and respect the world around them. Emersion in rich outdoor learning experiences will positively impact on the wellbeing of our children and young people, and enable them to become resilient, responsible citizens and successful lifelong learners, who value our landscape and culture and contribute effectively to our local and global society.

At New Cumnock Primary we aim to provide -

- a range of planned and spontaneous outdoor learning experiences which are both enjoyable and challenging
- opportunities for holistic assessment through planning outdoor learning experiences which allow children to be challenged in a meaningful way
- contexts for children to apply a range of skills in a variety of settings and contexts
- opportunities to develop the skills of enquiry, critical thinking and reflection necessary for our children and young people to meet the social, economic and environmental challenges of life in the 21st century

- an appreciation for the world in which we live (linked to the UN sustainable development goals)
- an opportunity to build relationships with members of the community including NCDT and LOST team

The Curriculum

Outdoor Learning, when used in a range of ways and contexts, enriches the curriculum, making learning fun, meaningful and relevant for our children and young people. Opportunities for outdoor learning experiences should be built into termly planning and take account of holistic assessment approaches.

Learning outdoors should also be flexible and spontaneous, building upon experiences that arise within day-to-day teaching or interactions with children. Learning in the outdoors can make significant contributions to literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing and the wider curriculum. Outdoor Learning also provides opportunities for development in areas such as communication, problem solving, information technology, working with others and critical skills.

Children and young people should be encouraged to create risk assessments in preparation for going out into greenspaces.

Resources

There are a huge range of resources and support available to support outdoor learning within East Ayrshire. The LOST Team have created a variety of materials which can be used to support or enhance the delivery of outdoor learning.

Resources available from the LOST team are -

- Website (containing videos, lesson plans, useful links etc)
- Youtube site (containing video)
- Twitter Account
- Instagram Account
- Weekly newsletters (sign up for these, or access them through the website or glow tile)
- LOST - Out of the Box Resource Kits (available to be booked, and collected, from the LOST team in Kilmarnock)
- In school support can also be provided by the LOST team.

Resources available within the school which can be used to promote equity are -

- Kelly Kettle
- Magnifiers
- Den Building kits
- Orienteering Flag kit
- Bug Finding kits
- Digimaps
- iPads
- Cameras

Recognition and Assessment

At New Cumnock Primary we provide opportunities for children and young people to have their skills and contributions recognised through participating in rich experiences such as -

- John Muir Award - P7
- Heritage Heroes Award - P4
- RSPB Wild Challenge Award
- Eco Committee Events and Campaigns
- Great British Bird Watch
- Cycle Proficiency - P6
- My Place Photography competition - P7

These activities also allow for

-opportunities to develop leadership skills which will have a positive impact on their career choices

- opportunities to learn about sustainability

We are committed to the use of Outdoor Learning as a means of facilitating holistic assessment. Outdoor Learning can be used as a means to apply skills in a meaningful way allowing for assessment in a real world context.