ABC Primary School

Nursery Class

**Outdoor Learning Program**

If we want to educate children for the world outside, then we have to allow them to get out and experience that reality at first hand. Educational researchers agree that children need to go out more and learn about the world outside.

In the years ahead, we will see much more learning taking place outwith the walls of nursery and primary schools. The core values of ***Curriculum For Excellence*** resonate with the concepts of Outdoor Learning. Adam Ingram, Minister for Children and Early Years, states “Children have such wonderful and creative imaginations and we need to do all we can to encourage them to learn through exploration and adventurous activities that incorporate an element of risk and especially in the outdoors.”

Outdoor education has many proven benefits for children. Some of these include:

* Increased Self-esteem & Confidence
* Personal and Social Development
* Independence
* Concentration
* Physical Activity
* Small risk management
* Working with others as a group
* Problem Solving
* Thinking skills etc., etc.

We all know that some things are best learned by direct experience, like riding a bike or climbing a tree. Children require a means of testing themselves (and their abilities) in a physical manner, which is impossible to do so indoors.

**What does that mean?**

We will offer children the opportunity to enjoy the outdoors. They will be able to explore, climb, get wet, get muddy, get dirty, acquire new outdoor skills, learn about animals, bugs, birds, vegetation and (more importantly) learn about themselves. Children will be allowed to get close to nature, to play freely in wild places and gain an appreciation (and understanding) of their natural environment. Different outdoor learning experiences will offer opportunities for personal and learning skills development in areas such as communication, problem solving, information technology, working with others and thinking skills.

**Will the activities be structured?**

The children will be actively encouraged to play naturally and explore the environment. We will, on occasion, be supported by the other professionals, such as Forest Rangers who will help to support the learning in this environment.

**Where will it Take place?**

The program will be based in xxxxxxxx

**When will it take place?**

The children will visit the woodland area on a rota system. You will be given notice of when your child will attend in order for them to be appropriately dressed for the day.

**But what if it rains?**

If it rains, children will dress up warmly and wear heavy waterproof clothing (which will be provided). They will also have the opportunity to create their own shelter while in the woodland area.

**Will my child be missing anything at Nursery?**

No. As part of the planning process, whatever is planned within the nursery will be adapted and taken outdoors. The environment will act as an extension to what is planned in nursery rather than an alternative.

**Can I get involved too?**

Absolutely. We encourage all parents, grandparents, uncles, aunts or other relatives to become part of this exciting programme. We will be asking for parent helpers to accompany us to the woodland site and hopefully we will be able to start a Parental Help Rota so you are not required on a weekly basis.

 **What Happens Next?**

You will be asked to sign a permission slip to allow your child to take part in this exciting programme.