



Leamington Federation

Sydenham Primary School and Lighthorne Heath Primary School

Learning Outside the Classroom Policy



UN convention on the Rights of the Child. This policy reflects the principles of equality, dignity, respect, non-discrimination and participation. At Sydenham and Lighthorne Heath Primary Schools, we recognise achievement in putting the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child at the heart of our practice to improve well-being and help all children realize their potential. Children's rights are learned, taught, practiced, respected, protected and promoted in our schools.

Our Rights Respecting Schools (RRS) ethos:

Article 15: Every child has the right to meet with other children and to join groups and organisations, as long as this does not stop other people from enjoying their rights

Article 28: Every child has a right to an education

Article 29: Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full

Article 31: Every child has the right to relax, play and take part in a wide range of cultural and artistic activities

Rationale

Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) is teaching and learning that takes place beyond the traditional classroom environment. It can happen indoors or outdoors, on the school site or away from it, and includes everyday use of the school grounds, local community learning, cultural visits, visitors, clubs, Forest School, residential experiences and other purposeful opportunities that enrich the curriculum and pupils' wider development.

This policy is informed by current national expectations for high-quality learning beyond the classroom, including the Council for Learning Outside the Classroom (CLOtC), current Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel (OEAP) National Guidance, local authority educational visits procedures and the school inspection framework in force from September 2026. CLOtC's current Learning Beyond and LOtC Mark frameworks emphasise an embedded, inclusive whole-school approach in which experiences are purposeful, safe, linked to learning and evaluated for impact.

Across the Leamington Federation, LOtC is an important part of our broad and ambitious curriculum and our wider personal development offer. We use carefully chosen first-hand experiences to deepen

pupils' knowledge and understanding, extend vocabulary and cultural experience, strengthen confidence, resilience and independence, and help pupils to achieve, belong and thrive. LOtC is not an "extra" for a small number of pupils: it is an entitlement that should be planned so that every pupil can participate and benefit.

All educational visits and LOtC opportunities are planned and led by a suitably competent Visit Leader, with oversight from the Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) and approval through the school/local authority arrangements, including EVOLVE where required. Health, safety, safeguarding, inclusion and the educational value of the activity are considered together so that risks are managed proportionately without removing worthwhile challenge from pupils' experiences.

Aims

We aim to:

- Ensure that LOtC is an integral part of a broad, ambitious and coherently planned curriculum, with clear links to what pupils are intended to know, understand and be able to do.
- Provide purposeful first-hand experiences that deepen and connect curriculum knowledge, extend language and vocabulary, and help pupils remember and apply important learning.
- Broaden pupils' horizons, aspirations and understanding of the wider world through high-quality cultural, environmental, community, sporting and artistic experiences.
- Promote pupils' personal development by building confidence, resilience, independence, cooperation, responsible risk-taking and the ability to reflect on experience.
- Promote physical and emotional wellbeing and provide opportunities for pupils to experience nature, movement, challenge, creativity and enjoyment.
- Ensure that disadvantaged pupils, pupils with SEND, pupils known or previously known to children's social care, young carers, pupils with EAL and others who may face barriers to learning and/or wellbeing can participate appropriately and benefit fully.
- Make timely and effective reasonable adjustments so that disability, medical need, communication need, sensory need or financial disadvantage do not unnecessarily limit participation.
- Use pupil voice and participation to shape, evaluate and improve the Federation's LOtC offer.
- Work in partnership with parents, carers, community organisations and high-quality external providers to enrich pupils' experiences.
- Monitor both participation and impact so that leaders can identify gaps in entitlement, respond swiftly to barriers and continually improve provision.
- Promote a positive culture of safety in which pupils learn to identify, understand and manage age-appropriate risk rather than being protected from all challenge.

Leadership and governance

The Governing Body provides strategic oversight of LOtC as part of the Federation's curriculum, inclusion, safeguarding and personal development responsibilities. Governors seek assurance that provision is ambitious, inclusive, safe, appropriately resourced and evaluated for its impact on pupils' learning, participation and wider development.

The Governing Body supports the following types of activity, subject to the Federation's Educational Visits procedures and appropriate approval:

- Out-of-hours clubs, including music, drama, art, science, sport, homework and computing activities.
- Breakfast Club, after-school provision and school sports teams.
- Lessons and curriculum activities in the playground, field, Forest School area, cooking area and other appropriate spaces beyond the classroom.
- Visits within the local area, including libraries, museums, galleries, places of worship, farms, parks, businesses and community venues.
- Day visits outside the local area.
- Progressive residential opportunities for Key Stage 2 pupils.
- Partnership work with external organisations that provides pupils with additional high-quality LOtC experiences.
- Professional learning and appropriate use of funding streams, including PE and sport premium where permitted, to strengthen staff expertise and pupils' access to high-quality experiences.

Why LOtC?

Carefully planned learning beyond the classroom strengthens both curriculum learning and personal development. First-hand experience can make abstract ideas concrete, provide memorable contexts for vocabulary and knowledge, stimulate curiosity and enable pupils to apply learning in authentic situations. Our school grounds, local community, cultural institutions and wider environment provide rich contexts through which pupils can develop knowledge, interests and talents, including in the arts, music, sport, science, history, geography and environmental education.

Visits, visitors and residential opportunities are planned as part of coherent curriculum and personal development sequences rather than as isolated events. Staff identify the intended learning and wider developmental purpose, prepare pupils so that they can access the experience successfully, and revisit or build upon learning afterwards. Leaders expect the curriculum to remain ambitious for all pupils and for adaptations to remove barriers without unnecessarily narrowing the experience or separating pupils from their peers.

Learning outside the classroom is a whole-school responsibility. Staff are encouraged to use the most effective location for learning where this adds genuine educational value. Pupils should encounter a rich range of people, places, cultures, environments and experiences that help them understand their community and wider society, develop a sense of belonging and prepare well for later life.

Our provision

Planning begins with the question, "Where and how will this learning be best learned?" LOtC should have clear intent, appropriate preparation, high-quality implementation and purposeful follow-up. Provision is progressively planned so that pupils build knowledge, independence, confidence and experience over time.

Our intended entitlement includes, as appropriate to each school, year group and curriculum plan:

- Access to stimulating outdoor learning environments and regular opportunities to learn beyond the classroom.
- Curriculum-linked immersive or enrichment experiences that deepen learning and create memorable contexts for knowledge and vocabulary.
- Regular opportunities to learn within the local community and to understand local people, places, services, heritage and environment.
- Visits beyond the immediate locality where these add significant curriculum or personal development value.
- High-quality cultural experiences, including live theatre, performance, museums, galleries and arts opportunities.
- Opportunities to work with artists, practitioners, specialists and community partners.
- Forest School and other structured outdoor learning led by appropriately trained and competent staff.
- Progressive residential opportunities for Key Stage 2 pupils, subject to annual curriculum planning and appropriate approval.
- A broad range of assemblies, performances, clubs, nurture and wellbeing opportunities, sporting activities, music events and visitors into school.
- Meaningful pupil leadership and voice in shaping and evaluating experiences, including through relevant pupil groups and ambassador roles.

Quality principles for trips, visits and external provision

- Be clearly linked to curriculum or personal development intentions and enhance what pupils learn, experience or understand.
- Provide purposeful, appropriately challenging first-hand experiences with suitable preparation and follow-up.
- Use providers holding the Council for Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge where available and appropriate. The Quality Badge provides assurance that the provider has been assessed for both the quality of its learning offer and its risk management arrangements.
- Be inclusive, well supervised and evaluated for both educational impact and pupils' participation, wellbeing and enjoyment.

Types of visit and approval

There are three broad types of visit:

- Visits/activities within the School Learning Area that are part of the normal curriculum and take place during the normal school day. These follow the Federation's School Learning Area operating procedure and any event-specific notes required by local arrangements.

- Other non-residential visits within the UK that do not involve an adventurous activity. These are entered on EVOLVE by the Visit Leader and submitted to the EVC for checking before approval by the Executive Headteacher or delegated approver.
- Visits that are overseas, residential or involve adventurous activities. These follow the school and local authority approval process and are submitted through EVOLVE for any additional local authority scrutiny or approval required. Staff must follow current local authority educational visits guidance and OEAP National Guidance.

Risk management and safeguarding

Risk management for LOtC is proportionate and benefits-led. Staff identify the educational benefits and foreseeable hazards, consider who may be harmed and how, and put sensible controls in place. The aim is not to eliminate all risk, but to manage significant risks while retaining worthwhile challenge and learning. Visit Leaders must consider the group's needs, staffing and supervision, transport, environment, emergency arrangements, safeguarding, medical/allergy needs and any individual adaptations.

A preliminary visit or other suitable venue familiarisation should be undertaken where it is reasonably practicable and adds value to planning. Where a preliminary visit is not possible, equivalent information should be obtained from reliable sources. Risk management information and relevant individual pupil plans must be shared with staff and volunteers before the activity. Dynamic risk assessment continues throughout the visit, and arrangements should be adjusted if circumstances change.

- Identify the educational benefits and significant foreseeable hazards.
- Consider who may be harmed, including any individual vulnerabilities, and how.
- Decide proportionate control measures and any reasonable adjustments.
- Record and communicate significant arrangements clearly, including emergency procedures.
- Review and adapt arrangements in light of changing circumstances, incidents, near misses and evaluation.

Staff competence and professional learning

The EVC, Visit Leaders and other staff involved in LOtC must be suitably competent for their roles and access relevant training and advice. The Federation uses current local authority guidance, EVOLVE and OEAP National Guidance and seeks specialist advice where an activity is unusual, higher risk or outside staff expertise. Professional learning should strengthen staff confidence in curriculum planning, inclusion, risk management, outdoor pedagogy, safeguarding and the effective use of external providers.

Forest School

Forest School forms part of our wider approach to learning, wellbeing and personal development. It provides repeated opportunities for pupils to learn in a natural environment, develop curiosity, practical knowledge, communication, independence and resilience, and experience appropriately managed challenge.

Forest School is led by appropriately trained practitioners and supported by staff who understand the approach and the needs of the pupils participating. Sessions are planned progressively over time, with suitable supervision and risk-benefit assessment. Adults support pupils to develop skills and confidence while avoiding unnecessary over-support or dependence.

Forest School can be particularly valuable for pupils who benefit from practical, sensory, relational or movement-based learning. It should complement rather than replace pupils' entitlement to the full curriculum. Staff monitor participation and impact, and make reasonable adjustments so that pupils with SEND, medical needs or other barriers can participate safely and meaningfully.

Partnerships and enrichment

We work in partnership with a wide range of organisations that enrich the Federation's curriculum and pupils' cultural experiences. Opportunities may include local libraries, the Royal Shakespeare Company, Jephson Gardens, the Royal Pump Rooms, museums, galleries, theatres, arts organisations, sporting organisations, environmental providers and community groups. Partnerships are selected because they add clear educational value and broaden pupils' access to people, places and experiences beyond those they might otherwise encounter.

The Federation values sustained partnerships that build cultural literacy, confidence and a sense of ownership and belonging in cultural and community institutions. We also use visitors and practitioners in school where this is the most effective way to enrich learning.

Before-school, lunchtime and after-school activities contribute to the wider personal development offer. Provision is reviewed regularly to reflect pupils' needs and interests, available expertise and facilities. Leaders consider participation carefully so that enrichment is not disproportionately accessed only by pupils who already have wider opportunities outside school. In planning and reviewing clubs, leaders consider:

- The interests and aspirations of pupils.
- The facilities available and links with the local community.
- The expertise of staff, volunteers and external providers.
- The needs and circumstances of disadvantaged pupils, pupils with SEND, pupils known or previously known to children's social care, young carers, pupils with EAL and pupils with religious or family commitments.
- The balance, breadth and accessibility of the overall offer.

Participation in clubs and enrichment is monitored so that leaders can identify and address barriers to

access and ensure that the wider personal development offer is a genuine entitlement for every pupil.

Safeguarding, behaviour and wellbeing

The same safeguarding expectations apply during LOfC as they do in school. Visit Leaders must ensure that staff and volunteers understand safeguarding procedures, supervision arrangements, professional boundaries, behaviour expectations, how to report concerns and how to respond to a disclosure. Pupils should know which adults can help them and how to raise a worry. Behaviour expectations should be clear, relational and appropriately adapted for pupils with SEND or other needs.

Where a pupil's attendance, anxiety or emotionally based school avoidance may affect participation, staff should work sensitively with the pupil and family to plan manageable participation rather than assuming non-attendance. Any individual arrangements must prioritise safety, inclusion and the pupil's long-term success.

Monitoring, evaluation and continuous improvement

Senior leaders and relevant curriculum/personal development leaders will use a range of quantitative and qualitative evidence to evaluate whether LOfC is consistently high quality, inclusive and having the intended impact. This includes:

- Reviewing the range, sequencing and curriculum purpose of trips, visits, visitors, outdoor learning and enrichment opportunities across year groups.
- Tracking participation in wider opportunities and identifying patterns for disadvantaged pupils, pupils with SEND, pupils known or previously known to children's social care, young carers, pupils with EAL and others who may face barriers.
- Using pupil voice, staff evaluation, parent/carer feedback and, where appropriate, work or assessment evidence to understand the quality and impact of experiences.
- Identifying whether LOfC is deepening curriculum knowledge, vocabulary and understanding and strengthening confidence, independence, resilience, relationships and wellbeing.
- Reviewing incidents, near misses, risk-management practice and provider quality to inform future planning.
- Taking prompt action where participation, quality or impact is uneven, and adjusting provision in response to evidence and pupils' evolving needs.

Experiential Audits are used to build a clear picture of the opportunities pupils receive across the year. Leaders analyse participation and experience by relevant groups and individual circumstances, including SEND, disadvantage, EAL, sex, young carers and pupils known or previously known to children's social care. This information is discussed with staff and used to identify gaps, target support, plan reasonable adjustments and ensure that pupils who face barriers participate and benefit fully.

In reviewing provision, leaders consider whether experiences are coherently connected to the curriculum and personal development programme, whether participation is equitable, whether reasonable adjustments are effective and whether evaluation leads to demonstrable improvement. The Federation may also draw on CLoTc's current Learning Beyond/LOfC Mark development framework as a benchmark for reviewing whole-school practice.

Cultural partnerships: Royal Shakespeare Company and other arts organisations

The Federation values its partnership work with the Royal Shakespeare Company and other high-quality cultural organisations. These partnerships provide opportunities for pupils to develop communication, confidence, creativity, teamwork and subject knowledge through rehearsal-room approaches, live performance and engagement with professional artists and practitioners.

Such experiences support pupils' cultural development and can help establish a lifelong interest in the arts. Leaders seek to ensure that pupils who may have fewer cultural opportunities outside school are able to participate and benefit.

Opportunities may include staff professional development, live or streamed performances, workshops, ambassador programmes, collaborative projects with other schools and chances for pupils to contribute to whole-school arts projects.

Inclusion and reasonable adjustments

The Equality Act 2010 places duties on schools not to discriminate against disabled pupils and to make reasonable adjustments so that disabled pupils are not placed at a substantial disadvantage. The Public Sector Equality Duty also requires the Federation, in exercising its functions, to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations. These duties apply to educational visits, enrichment and wider LOfC as well as classroom provision.

Pupils will not be excluded from LOfC simply because they have SEND, a disability, medical condition, allergy, communication need, sensory need or other vulnerability. Planning should begin from the presumption of participation and identify what reasonable adjustments will enable the pupil to take part safely and meaningfully. This may include additional or differently deployed adult support; an individual risk assessment or healthcare plan; accessible transport or venue arrangements; pre-visits or social stories; visual timetables and Now and Next boards; Makaton, symbols or reduced language; sensory or regulation resources; adapted equipment or activity; medication and emergency arrangements; planned rest or quiet spaces; or a phased/graded approach to participation. Pupils and parents/carers should be involved in planning where individual needs are significant.

Equality, diversity and belonging

The Federation provides equality of access to LOfC and uses its wider curriculum to broaden pupils' knowledge of diverse communities, cultures, faiths, identities and experiences. Financial circumstances should not unnecessarily prevent participation: leaders will consider appropriate support for disadvantaged families in line with school charging and remissions arrangements. LOfC should strengthen pupils' sense of belonging and help them learn and socialise with others from different backgrounds.

Language and cultural inclusion

We value the languages and cultural experiences represented within our school communities. Pupils with EAL and international new arrivals may benefit from visual preparation, pre-teaching of key vocabulary, bilingual or pictorial information, careful peer support and additional explanation before

unfamiliar visits or experiences. Staff should maintain high cognitive expectations while reducing unnecessary language barriers so that pupils can participate confidently and gain the intended learning.

Review and related policies

This policy will be reviewed annually, or earlier where there are significant changes to statutory guidance, local authority educational visits procedures, OEAP National Guidance or Council for Learning Outside the Classroom frameworks.

This policy should be read alongside the Federation's Educational Visits procedures and relevant policies including Child Protection and Safeguarding, Positive Behaviour, Inclusion and SEND, Equality Policy and Objectives, Health and Safety, Medicines in School, Allergy Safety, First Aid, Charging and Remissions, and Emotional Well-being and Mental Health.

This policy was ratified: September 2026

This policy will be reviewed: September 2027

Executive Headteacher:



Chair of Governors: Richard Butler