



The  
Westminster  
School

# Learning Outside the Classroom Policy 2016/2017



*Safe Happy and Learning Together*  
*Building foundations and providing*  
*opportunities to create confident,*  
*aspirational and independent members of*  
*our community.*

Approved by Governing Body on: 08/06/17

Signed by Chair of Governors:

*Ken Oho*

Head Teacher:

C A Hill B.Ed NPQH

Lead Personnel:

B Taylor

Date of Review:

08/06/19

# 1. Rationale

*“All children have a natural enthusiasm for learning about the world around them. But we also know they can become disengaged if their school day is rigid and boring. If we listen to what children and young people say inspires them most, we can be left in little doubt that good quality teaching learning outside the classroom should be part of our educational mainstream.”*

Sir Al Aynsley-Green  
Children’s Commissioner for England

## Mission Statement

At The Westminster School we are committed to ensuring that every pupil must experience high quality teaching and learning in the classroom and outside the classroom. We recognise the fact that high quality learning outside the classroom adds considerable value, and vice versa.

As an SEN school it is extremely important that our pupils experience access and learning in the wider environment in order to develop the skills and knowledge necessary for a successful future. For many pupils we are the only provider of such and therefore are committed to ensuring that access to a range of quality learning outside the classroom is part of every pupil’s entitlement during their time at Westminster.

# 2. Our Aims

We recognise that there are numerous benefits for our pupils when we embed a wide range of tailored learning outside the classroom experiences. Amongst these we include:

- Improved academic achievement
- Making learning relevant to classroom learning
- Motivating and Inspiring
- Developing pupil’s curiosity
- Deepening understanding and skills
- Allowing pupils to make more sense of the world around them and to be prepared for their next phase in education or training
- Developing problem solving and thinking skills
- Developing social and team building skills
- Meeting preferred learning styles, especially kinaesthetic and visual
- Opportunities for learning through play
- Pupils having fun, enjoying hands-on experience, gaining confidence and learning

### **3. Learning outside the classroom**

We offer the following entitlement to all our learners:

1. The opportunity to participate in at least one residential experience per year.
2. Participation in a range of learning outside of the classroom including:
  - In the school grounds
  - In the local community
  - Wider afield
3. All pupils will have the opportunity to participate in at least two productions per year, which many include assemblies, concerts or a special event.
4. All pupils will have access to a range of extra-curricular activities including during lunchtimes and identified after school clubs.

### **4. How we will deliver this**

#### **Residential activities**

Parents are notified at the end of the previous year about the proposed details for the trip and a parents' meeting is held two weeks before. The residential trips are considered to be an entitlement and all pupils take part. School may use pupil premium money to allocate places for pupils on residential If this is deemed as beneficial academically or socially. Residential activities are clearly planned and should have curriculum focuses throughout. Appropriate residential visits are identified for students with a variety of needs. The school works closely with Local Authority outdoor centres which have included Frank Chapman and Plas Gwynant

#### **Trips and visits**

It is expected that all year groups have at least two trips during the school year. These will be included in the year groups' curriculum plans and will support and expand opportunities for teaching and learning. Educational visits and trips should:

- Be part of the curriculum and enhance teaching and learning
- Provide hands-on, stimulating opportunities for learners
- be with quality badge providers wherever possible
- help develop social skills and self-esteem

A risk-assessment needs completing before every trip and needs to be copied to the Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC). Risk assessments will usually be for the site but may also include individual risk assessments for identified students

Trip leaders need to complete the Evolve system prior to the visit and all visits must be approved by governors that are further than a 1.5 mile radius of the school. All venues for trips must be visited prior to the trip taking place by the course leader. All adults accompanying a trip must have had the appropriate police

check. Opportunities are provided in assemblies and through newsletters for learners to share their experiences.

Staff can access the Offsite Activities Support pack to help them plan, organise and implement their visit. The School adhere to the Sandwell Offsite Activities Policy that was updated in February 2017. All visits must have a Visit Leader accreditation and a member of staff must accompany the group who has a good knowledge of first aid.

### **Use of School grounds/gardens**

The school grounds are seen as a resource for use by all the school. We aim to use it as frequently as possible through:

- The continued development of a Forest School and use of the eco classroom
- Including it as a planned resource within the curriculum e.g. 'habitats'
- Using it as a resource to support other curriculum areas e.g. for sketching in art, as a stimulus for writing activities
- Using it to support our healthy schools initiatives e.g. gardening club, cookery, sustainability initiatives
- Opening it up for events and welcoming its use by members of the community
- Developing the school social enterprise (for example Seeds of Hope)

In line with Forest Schools procedures staff must liaise with Forest Schools Leaders when they would like to use this facility. This is due to Forest Schools Leaders being aware of any recent activity or hazards that may be present.

### **The local community**

At the beginning of the year a standard letter is sent out to parents requesting their permission for learners to go on short walks into the community. All classes are encouraged to make visits into the local community including:

- Visiting local religious and community buildings
- Taking part in local festivals and events
- Making links with local clubs
- Using local resources such as museums, the canal and art gallery
- Using local facilities such as parks, swimming pools, library

### **Participating in productions**

All learners have the opportunity be involved in at least two productions annually. This might include from:

- Class assemblies
- Presentation evening
- Christmas concert
- Summer Oscars Ceremony
- Community events

In addition to this it is expected that learners will contribute to assemblies through:

- Providing feedback about trips and visits
- Welcoming visiting speakers
- Volunteering in assemblies
- Providing feedback about matches and events

Learners who play a musical instrument will have further opportunities to play during assemblies and/ or to accompany other events.

### **Extra-curricular activities**

A full range of lunchtime and after-school activities are provided on a weekly basis for all key stages. These are led by a mixture of school staff and external clubs. The programme changes termly to reflect the seasons and the availability of staff.

A timetable is circulated at the end of each term listing the clubs, their time and location. These are visible around the school for students to identify which clubs are available. The range and timing of clubs takes into consideration:

- The interests of the learners at the school
- The facilities available
- Links with the local community
- Expertise of parents and other adults associated with the school
- The balance and range of activities available

Separate guidance is available for club leaders including health and safety, contact numbers and term dates. Attendance at clubs is monitored to ensure that clubs are accessible to all our learners.

## **5. Monitoring and evaluation**

In order to monitor this entitlement year, leaders including governors will:

- Monitor plans termly for trips, visits and visitors
- Monitor plans termly for opportunities for classes to take part in gardening and food preparation activities
- Monitor the uptake of cross-curricular opportunities
- Monitor the participation of pupils in productions and special events
- Collect evaluation forms from pupils participating in activities and use these to review activities
- SLT will refer monitoring reports to Governors

It is particularly important that year leaders ensure that:

- All groups in the school are given equal opportunity to participate in cross-curricular opportunities
- All learners are fully able to participate in trips, visits and residential trips
- Learning outside the classroom experiences support and develop curriculum plans
- Learning outside the classroom experiences are evaluated for their effectiveness