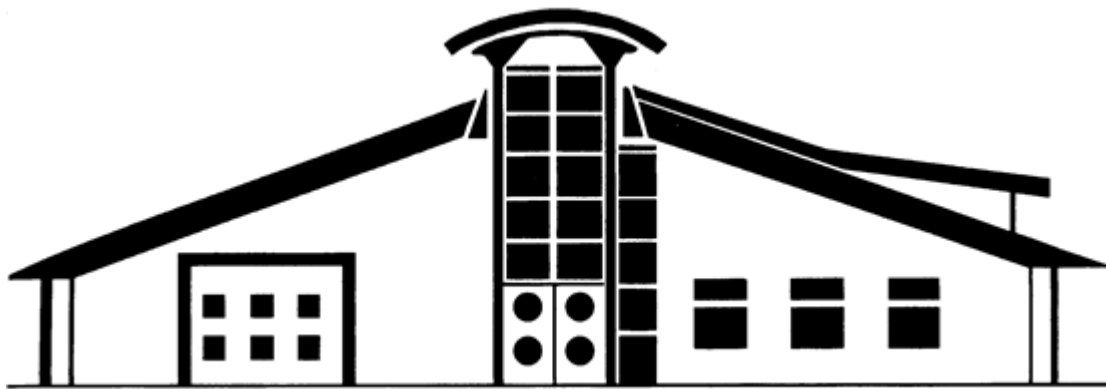




HOLMESDALE COMMUNITY INFANT SCHOOL



LEARNING OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM POLICY

Agreed by Staff.....January 2025

Review due..... January 2027

Learning Outside the Classroom Policy

Outdoor learning is powerful, motivating and holistic. It can provide a dramatic contrast to the indoor classroom. It can have a positive impact on behaviour as well as tapping into the learning styles of the more kinaesthetic learner. Through skilled teaching, outdoor experiences readily stimulate a child's curiosity, personal growth and can lead to breakthroughs in learning.

It promotes the development of their natural sense of enquiry, the drive to explore, experiment, solve problems through trial and error and reflect on what they discover.

Primarily we believe outdoor learning has a positive impact on the children's physical and emotional well-being, their ability to communicate and negotiate with others and to cooperate together in activities and projects they become involved in.

Aims

- to raise the profile of Outdoor Learning
- all children will participate in a range of outdoor experiences to support their learning and development across the curriculum
- to promote and strengthen social and communication skills while working with peers and adults
- that children will gain the confidence to accept challenges, manage risks and be aware of their own safety and the safety of other people
- to develop self-esteem and feel valued for their own contributions
- to increase the children's awareness and appreciation of living things and the natural world and to recognise their role in learning to respect and care for the outdoor environment
- that teachers embed outdoor learning in the curriculum so that learning in the outdoor environment becomes a reality for all children

Benefits of Outdoor Learning:

- Enables children to develop confidence in their own abilities, and challenge themselves which impacts positively upon their attitudes and self-perceptions.
- Contributes towards creating independent learners who develop a sense of pride in their achievements.
- Motivates children to engage more readily in their learning.
- Contributes towards their understanding of the importance of developing a healthy lifestyle.
- Can have a positive impact on the children's social, emotional and behavioural development.
- Links can be made to all areas of the curriculum and therefore Outdoor Learning should be incorporated into planning across all year groups.
- The children witness the impact their actions can have on the outdoor environment and begin to develop a sense of understanding and responsibility to look after the school grounds and the wider community.

Health and safety

Risk assessments of outdoor areas are carried out annually. Staff carry out dynamic risk assessments before and during the school day.

EYFS

Outdoor learning is an integral part of the day in EYFS. Children have free access during most of the sessions, with a range of free flow and planned activities that are cross curricular. Planning incorporates the children's current needs and interests and resources are modified or added to enhance their learning. Children can choose from a wide range of resources and activities, such as, climbing and balancing apparatus, bats and balls, ride on and push along toys, a stage and musical instruments, a range of construction equipment including den building, natural materials including the mud kitchen. They have free access to large scale painting, chalking, model making and writing equipment. They also have the opportunity to plant and grow flowers and vegetables. Children wear wellies and appropriate protective clothing where appropriate.

Woodland Explorers

The children in Reception go to Woodland Explorers once a fortnight. The sessions are planned following the philosophy of Forest Schools which aim to promote a range of skills and knowledge that will encourage them to:

- be independent in self-care.
- use tools and appropriately and safely.
- negotiate with their peers by listening to each-others' ideas and working cooperatively together.
- develop their own ideas and creativity using natural resources.
- have the confidence and perseverance to learn through trial and error without a sense of failure.
- develop independence and sense of self-esteem in what they can do.
- demonstrate the skills and learning they have been taught during their independent tasks.
- respect the woodland and come to understand how they can play a role in preservation and maintenance of their school woodland and the wider environment.
- learn the woodland rules of how to keep themselves and others safe during their outdoor.

Key Stage One

All classes across KS1 have allocated time in the Woodland. These sessions build on the experiences stated during the Woodland Explorer sessions the children attended throughout their time in the Early Years.

Our Year 1 children build on the skills developed during their time in the Early Years through continuous outdoor provision. This approach provides frequent opportunities for outdoor learning, allowing them to deepen their understanding across the curriculum. High-quality outdoor learning supports the exploration of concepts that can be challenging to teach effectively within the confines of the indoor classroom.

- Outdoor planning provides children with hands-on, real-world experiences that enrich their learning by making it more meaningful. These engaging and stimulating activities inspire

children to take ownership of their learning, fostering a deeper understanding of the concepts.

- Opportunities are intentionally integrated across the curriculum to encourage outdoor learning, utilizing the facilities listed under "Resourcing."

School Lunchtime / Outdoor play

Reception, and Key Stage One children have access to the main playground, the meadow, trim trail and the pathways in the woodland at lunchtimes. KS1 children have an outdoor break mid- morning.

Children have access to a wide variety of resources in the playground to support both their play and learning. These include dressing-up costumes, a mud kitchen, loose parts, tyres, construction materials, reading areas, drawing supplies, and opportunities for sports activities.

The Adult's Role

Observation of where the children are at developmentally and what their current interests are is key to facilitating the learning environment. Teachers take this into account when planning for both indoor and outdoor learning and one can complement the other.

Staff support and extend learning using a range of strategies:

- Interact with the children by making comments and asking open questions about their learning to help them think about strategies they use.
- Allow children to test their ideas and encourage them to persevere with a task to see it through. Sometimes offer suggestions if children are struggling but taking care not to interfere.
- Observe the children's movements and interactions and sensitively support children who may find interacting with others a challenge.
- Model different skills required to carry out a wide range of activities such as ball games or using equipment, tools and resources to build models.
- Develop their sense of enquiry and provide and model the use of resources that will motivate them further such as bug viewers, magnifiers, information books.
- Model how to act in role as a eg. a firefighter or a character from a story.
- Praise children for their achievements

The facilities at Holmesdale Infant School include:

The woodland which includes a base camp to set off the learning, the log pile, a digging area, resources for den building.

The pond (Fenced and gated. Accessible for learning time)

The meadow

Eco garden

Memorial garden

Garden tools

Trim trail

Static Wooden train

EYFS Outdoor Classroom

- Sand with trolley of tools and resources from which children self-select
- Water trays with self-select trolley
- Mud kitchen, selection of tools and resources to 'cook' with. Wellingtons and aprons provided
- Additional resources such as guttering, pipes, small world toys, seashore articles, ice blocks etc. to enhance / extend thinking and imagination
- Ride on and push along toys and safety helmets
- Role play – resources to follow interest eg in space, stories, people who help us.
- Additional resources for children to create their own resources (deconstructed role play) including large pieces of fabric, camouflage netting, sticks and logs
- The Stage, dressing up clothes and different fabrics to create their own costume
- Outdoor CD player musical instruments and resources to improvise and explore sounds, scarves and ribbon sticks
- Painting easel, large scale painting
- Writing area- self-select drawers include drawing and writing tools, letter and word cards, number lines, clip board, selection of paper, folded paper, envelopes etc. Writing boxes to transport and use in other outdoor areas.
- Large chalk board
- Number lines, clock, timers, measuring tools
- Range of construction kits both large and small
- Cushions and selection of books under sheltered area
- Investigation tray to explore and use materials such as, sticks, pebbles, shells,
- Spot tray investigation table to develop fine motor skills and engage curiosity. Eg Tapping peg into pumpkin using a hammer or finding out what happens to two coloured ice blocks
- Climbing and balancing apparatus including A frame, crates, planks, large blocks, tyres
- Bats, balls, quoits,
- Parachute
- Gardening equipment

The children will continue to have access to outdoor learning opportunities as they move through the school. Activities that have been planned to develop independence and progression in their learning.