

Learning Outside the Classroom Policy (LOtC)

Brook Community Primary School



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Date agreed and ratified by Governing Body:

Date of next review: January 2022

The Overall policy explains what we value about Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) and its potential benefit for young people. At the same time, it allows us to simplify and state basic requirements and clarify expectations.

Our Vision

We want to ensure that every child has the opportunity to experience the world beyond the classroom walls as an essential part of learning and development. We want to make sure that parents, governors and staff continue to hear about Learning Outside the Classroom because it underpins our whole school curriculum. We believe that Learning Outside the Classroom broadens horizons and raises aspiration. We want to foster a love of learning for the children at Brook Primary School by encouraging and supporting teachers to teach anywhere and therefore children to understand that they can learn inside and outside of the classroom. We want children to understand that their learning will not be limited to tables and chairs in a classroom.

Rationale

We believe that every child should experience the world beyond the classroom as an essential part of their learning and growing. At Brook Primary School learning happens everywhere from our forest school to our Year R mud kitchen and where possible through educational visits. LOtC should take place frequently, be identified on planning and be embedded through the curriculum. Our curriculum is linked through key concepts so that all subjects come alive for our children. We nurture our children's social and emotional development through our forest school and a variety of educational visits. Children have many experiences beyond the school, such as going on residential trips, visits to the theatre and visiting local attractions. LOtC is important in our vision to help all our children to reach their full potential.

How Learning Outside the Classroom should be delivered

Staff will incorporate LOtC into their daily curriculum. All teaching staff should be able to deliver the curriculum in whatever way best suits the needs of the children, encouraging Learning Outside the Classroom. Linked to our school value of Creativity, the school expects teaching staff to look for ways to deliver the curriculum creatively using LOtC. This can be delivered in many ways, such as: activities, performances, whole lessons, parts of lessons, entire mornings or afternoons. There should be effective follow up learning to ensure that any learning taken outside of the classroom is consolidated and built on.

LOtC must be frequent, progressive and embedded within the curriculum. It must happen often, building on previous learning, rather than happening in isolation, and increasing the level of challenge over time – as would lessons within the classroom. Activities outside of the classroom should not be one-off experiences but should build upon a child's learning and enhance it. LOtC will be reflected on in the classroom and be part of the wider learning journey.

All teachers need to ensure that a wide range of different high-quality activities and experiences are included in the curriculum to maintain interest and engagement.

LOtC must be part of all subjects. LOtC opportunities will be identified on planning and each class will have a LOtC display and floor book in their classroom.

LOtC is:

- › Trips, residential trips and visitors (even if they are in the classroom)
- › Any activity, or series of lessons, that build up to or from an awe and wonder experience outside of the classroom
- › Any amount of time spent away from the class room for an activity or lesson as a group or whole class
- › Any lessons, events, routines, assemblies, visits and activities that take place out of the classroom or beyond the school
- › Fun

LOtC is not:

- › PE
- › An activity outside of school hours
- › A one off experience
- › Dull, ordinary or passive

Planning

When planning, staff should be looking for opportunities to include LOtC at all levels, including but not limited to visits to external providers. LOtC opportunities for each term will be listed on the Medium Term Plan for each class.

Assessment and Achievement

Teachers will keep a record of less tangible outcomes such as behaviour, levels of engagement, confidence and love of learning during LOtC activities. This can also be linked and measured by using Leuven Scales. Children will reflect on their learning during or after LOtC activities. Achievement can be demonstrated through awards, displays and presentations.

Resources

Clipboards are available for each class to share. Teachers should decide whether to use clipboards, take photographs as evidence or use books. The same high quality of presentation is expected as if the lesson was in class.

Risk

There is a blanket parental consent in place for low-risk off site activities as part of the normal school day. Teachers will also complete risk assessments for all off-site activities and refer to the risk assessments in place for activities on school grounds. (e.g the pond) Where a LOtC experience is planned at a specific site, a preliminary visit is vital in creating an effective risk assessment.

Where external providers are used, teachers ensure that the educational quality and risk management level is appropriate; for example by checking for accreditation such as the LOtC Quality Badge. This applies equally to lower risk activities provided by external organisations. Where possible, staff should choose providers which hold the LOtC Quality Badge.

A searchable database of LOtC Quality Badge accredited providers is available on the LOtC Quality Badge website (www.lotcqualitybadge.org.uk).

LOtC around school

Across all classes staff are supported and encouraged to take learning beyond the walls of the classroom. The learning environment has been developed including:

- An undercover area in the Year R and 1 outside area
- A roundhouse in the forest school area
- A pond
- Wildflower area
- Garden and growing space
- Den making area
- Trim trail and musical instruments

The LOtC leader will conduct a regular audit and review of the school grounds and features. All teachers and support staff should be very familiar with all of the grounds and the surrounding area – a tour will form part of the induction of new teachers and support staff.

The grounds should be used creatively for preparation and follow up work around external LOtC experiences.

Guidance on planning the curriculum with LOtC in mind can be found on the Council for Learning Outside the Classroom website at www.lotc.org.uk