



MUNTHAM HOUSE SCHOOL

**OUTDOOR EDUCATION
POLICY**

Outdoor Education Policy

Overview

Outdoor education is delivered from primary to Year 13 in Muntham House School, offering access to additional qualifications and weekly outdoor learning opportunities. In primary and key stage 3, pupils engage in weekly Forest School lessons, which adopts a child-led learning approach. In key stages 4 and 5, pupils move onto working through the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme, starting at Bronze in Year 9. Pupils also have opportunities to work towards additional qualifications such as NICAS and standup paddleboard (SUP) courses.

Intent, Implementation and Impact

Intent

Through regular access to outdoor education opportunities, pupils will develop skills that allow them to work safely in collaboration with others, as well as individually, in a variety of environments and conditions. Beginning with a child-led approach in Forest School seeks to improve engagement and motivation amongst pupils, as well as self-reflection and awareness of emotions and interaction. This leads to greater preparation and team working skills for later key stages and further qualifications. There are three key concepts behind the intent of the outdoor education curriculum.

They are for pupils to:

- Work within a group and understand their role within it.
- Enjoy outdoor experiences and build relationships with the environment, both locally and globally.
- Be exposed and given the opportunity to experience a variety of adventurous activities.

Implementation

Outdoor education sessions in school are planned with a child-led ethos at its core. All key stages work towards the aim of pupils being able to safely engage in activities alongside others as well as exploring their own agency. In Forest School sessions, the Forest School leader will provide activities deemed appropriate for the pupils and perhaps theme them around a school or national event, or to reflect a change in the environment, such as the seasons. The pupils are provided with a choice of activities in each session, and leaders will allow pupils to explore their choices, supporting the demonstration of safety and collaboration.

In key stage 4 and 5, as pupils move towards gaining qualifications involved in outdoor learning, sessions will be planned linked towards the skills required for that scheme of work or course. For example, extensive map reading and hiking is incorporated into Year 9 Duke of Edinburgh Award sessions to help prepare them for their expedition, which students must plan as a group.

Impact

In Forest School, there are no summative assessments. Rather, the development of schemas is monitored for each pupil, with information fed back to tutors and relevant subject teachers. However, pupils do complete self-scoring evaluations designed by the National Outdoor Learning Award (NOLA) every term that explores six themes: Safe, Learn, Respect, Self, Others and Environment. This is designed for pupils to

Outdoor Education Policy

seek demonstrations and engage in reflections on emotional intelligence, positive peer interactions, and safe behaviour.

In key stages 4 and 5, impact is measured through practice and qualifying expeditions, where the skills of exploring safely and confidently are assessed. Each half term, pupils are assessed on elements of expedition skills, such as navigating or campfire cooking, with the aim of pupils completing assessments safely and able to justify their decision making. Alongside half term assessments, pupils are measured on how well they work together as a team, how self-sufficient they are and how they approach problem solving. Assessment criteria are designed from things such as the National Curriculum in PE, the Duke of Edinburgh Award Expedition Aims and Requirements, and the NOLA self-assessment.

Aims

- Work within a group and understand their role within it.
- Enjoy outdoor experiences and build relationships with the environment, both locally and globally.
- Be exposed and given the opportunity to experience a variety of adventurous activities.
- To develop pupils' fitness and skills.
- To contribute to the enhancement of pupils' CVs and employability.
- To promote pupils' problem-solving skills.
- To promote pupils' independence.
- To develop pupils' teamwork.
- To educate pupils on environmental impact and issues.
- To encourage student mentoring between MHC and Key Stage 3 and 4.
- To encourage helping in the local community/environment.

Objectives

- Pupils have a sense of enjoyment in their learning.
- To encourage pupils to explore outside their area of interest.
- To develop fitness, fine and gross motor skills.
- To develop communication skills.
- To develop planning skills through preparation for multi-day Expeditions in which pupils will need to be self-sufficient (whilst also learning how to communicate for necessary support from staff).
- To learn the benefits of helping or becoming involved in the local community through the Duke of Edinburgh Award's Volunteering section.
- To become reflective learners through engaging in NOLA self-assessment and Duke of Edinburgh Award portfolios.

Teaching Guidelines

In-school sessions have a clear objective that predominantly revolve around preparing pupils for engaging in tasks safely. As a result of the content, lessons typically take place

outside and off-site, sometimes in very unfamiliar territory, where pupils learn the skills of assessing risk and planning necessary action.

Teachers and leaders use a range of learning and teaching styles, incorporating individual, paired, group and whole group work into sessions. Pupils are taught through discussion, practical activities, games, problem solving, and encouraged to self-reflect on their learning.

Teachers and leaders are aware that the abilities and attainment of pupils vary greatly, and therefore use a variety of methods to ensure suitable learning opportunities for all. This is achieved through use of:

- Displays, including Widgets symbols
- Self-assessed targets which are written on their NOLA scoring sheets
- Differentiation. Short-term and medium-term plans are clearly differentiated to enable teachers to include all learners within sessions. Child-led learning is the central teaching ethos in outdoor education which requires a deeper understanding of differentiation.
- Feedback and reflection: pupils reflect on their learning, of both personal development and subject related, through discussion with teachers and leaders, as well as self-assessments.

Curriculum Planning

This is organised into three stages – short-term, medium-term and long-term:

Long Term Planning

Long term plans are based on appropriate activities for the season. For example, during winter, pupils may access indoor climbing or creating festive decorations using woodland material, whilst canoeing or plant identification during the spring and summer. For expedition planning, the Duke of Edinburgh Award's calendar guidelines stipulate when expeditions can take place, which in turn effects when certain skills-based sessions are planned.

Medium Term Planning

For Duke of Edinburgh Award sessions, the medium term plans take the long-term plan and organise the teaching of Expedition skills into half-termly sections. These will take the form of the following:

- Navigation skills (compass and maps)
- Camp and cooking skills
- Bushcraft skills
- Route planning skills

Short Term Planning

Short term planning is based on the development, schemas, and skills of pupils, working on pupil interests too.

Monitoring and Assessment

The outdoor education curriculum is monitored on a regular basis by the Duke of Edinburgh Award Manager and Forest School Leaders, who examines pupils' eDofE profiles, section and completion and preparedness for the Expedition, as well as the self-assessment reports completed by pupils in Forest School.

The Duke of Edinburgh Manager identifies the training needs of the staff and plans the training programs necessary for successful support of Expeditions.

Monitoring the Effectiveness of the Policy

Annually (or when the need arises) the effectiveness of this policy will be reviewed by the Head of Education and the nominated governor. Necessary recommendations for improvement will be made to the Governors.