**Outdoor Activities**

The children’s experiences of the natural world can sometimes be limited, we want our students to leave Exhall Junior School having the knowledge, understanding and passion to ensure that the natural world is valued and protected.
We know that for children to achieve their best our curriculum needs to be designed in order to enable the maximum amount of learning, through the recall and understanding of knowledge and concepts. Therefore our curriculum is organised as a progression that facilitates the re-visiting of learning through recurrent themes, such that it becomes embedded in children’s long-term memory. We also understand the importance of children making connections between prior and new learning. The cyclical nature of our curriculum design, in which topics are returned to over the course of a child’s time with us, helps to enable this.

**Our rationale for the teaching of Outdoor Learning and its inclusion within our core curriculum is as follows:**

* There is strong evidence that good quality learning outside the classroom adds much value to classroom learning.
* It leads to a deeper understanding of concepts that span traditional subject boundaries, and can help bring learning alive.
* It can be powerful and motivating for children, having real impact and credibility. Through skilled teaching, learning outside of the classroom readily becomes a stimulating source of fascination, personal growth and can lead to breakthroughs in learning.
* It can be a powerful way for us to develop the characteristics of being Safe, Ready, Respectful in our students.

**Benefits of learning outside the classroom:**

* helps to ensure that children are successful learners enabling children to develop knowledge and skills in ways that add value to their everyday learning experiences.
* enables children to be confident individuals and impacts positively upon children’s attitudes beliefs and self-perceptions
* contributes towards creating independent learners with high self-esteem and self-sufficiency.
* can have a positive impact upon children’s behaviour.
* has a positive impact upon children’s personal and social development.
* can bring about community cohesion and allow children to develop as responsible citizens who make a positive contribution to their wider community.
* can create pride in the school and wider community and promote community involvement, renewing children’s pride and creating a sense of belonging and responsibility.
* raises learners’ attainment, promotes and strengthens communication skills, team work and sense of cohesion.

**Intent**

During Outdoor Activities we strive to give all our children the opportunity to build their own self-esteem and self-confidence within an environment outside the classroom.

We aim to:

* ensure an understanding of our beautiful environment and how we can protect and sustain it.
* develop independence.
* encourage a healthier life style and body.
* have a positive impact on children's behaviour.
* create pride in the school, it's setting and the local community.
* develop children as responsible citizens who make a positive contribution to society.

Our curriculum is organised as a progression which facilitate the re-visiting of learning through recurrent themes, such that knowledge and understanding becomes embedded in children's long term memory.  *For details of this see the document 'Exhall Junior School Knowledge and Skills Progression'.*

We ensure our Outdoor Activities Curriculum is rooted in the vision and ethos of the school, through ensuring that as well as delivering scientific knowledge and skills lessons also develop key learning characteristics of:

* Children learn knowledge about the natural world, and understanding of the impact people can have on this.
* They develop their communication and team-work skills through exploring, collaborating, working and playing with others.
* Children show resilience through learning new skills and undertaking activities that they may find challenging.
* They develop their problem-solving skills through tasks they are set and outcomes they are asked to deliver.
* Finally the children have the opportunity to further their diligence by working to the best of their ability.

**Implementation**

All children take part in a sequence of 12 week sessions each year, delivered by members of staff who are suitably trained and accredited, this is based on a two year lower and upper Keystage 2 programme.

Outdoors Activities is based in the school grounds with an Outdoor Activities room also being available. We are very lucky that our grounds are large and varied, and offer a suitable background to support this curriculum. We feel that with the lessons being on the school site it reinforces that the nature is all around us, is it local and that students can directly impact on the protection of it.

All sessions are tailored to meet the needs, abilities and age of the child. Each session contains a range of activities through which the children learn knowledge and skills, and includes a time for free play.

**Impact**

Through the delivery of our curriculum children are equipped with knowledge and understanding about the natural world and how they can enjoy and protect this. They learn skills to use a variety of tools safely. They grow in confidence and self-esteem by meeting challenges and facing new experiences. They are enthused to play an active role in protecting and sustaining the environment in their own homes, community, nationally and globally.