

LEARNING OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM AND FOREST SCHOOL AT GOSDEN HOUSE SCHOOL

WHAT DO WE BELIEVE IS ESSENTIAL IN THE TEACHING AND LEARNING OF LEARNING OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM AND FOREST SCHOOL FOR OUR GOSDEN LEARNERS?

At Gosden House School, we believe learning should be an exciting adventure, full of hands-on experiences. That is why we embrace a holistic approach to education, where the classroom extends beyond four walls and into Gosden's vibrant outdoor environment- including our outdoor classroom, walled garden, allotment, and meadow. We believe nature offers an ideal environment for children to develop intellectually, physically, emotionally, and socially. Additionally, learners benefit from a diverse range of off-site learning experiences, prompting teachers to consider the most effective learning environments for each topic. Teachers ask themselves, 'Where is the best place to teach this?'

Our outdoor learning pedagogy is thoughtfully interwoven with classroom learning, enriching lessons in all subjects. For example, our learners might study fractions by dividing natural materials, or write poetry inspired by the sights and sounds of the forest. Immersing our learners in nature fosters imagination and curiosity, sparking a love of learning that extends beyond the confines of textbooks and worksheets. Through hands-on experiences in the natural world, such as building shelters, creating nature-inspired art, and conducting mini-beast investigations, children develop a deeper understanding of their environment and their place within it. They engage all their senses, explore freely, and connect with nature on a personal level. This fosters creativity, problem-solving skills, and a sense of responsibility for the planet.

Furthermore, outdoor learning provides unique opportunities for social and emotional growth. Children collaborate, communicate, and learn to navigate the natural world together, building resilience, confidence, and respect for others. Outdoor learning also promotes physical health and well-being. Children have the space to run, play, and explore, improving their fitness and reducing stress. The natural world provides a calming and inspiring environment, fostering creativity and a sense of wonder.

At Gosden House, we celebrate that each child is unique, and our outdoor learning program reflects this. We provide a safe and supportive environment where every child can thrive, discover their passions, and develop a lifelong love of learning. We are passionate about providing our learners with a truly enriching educational experience where the demands of the classroom are stripped away, resulting in children having an increased capacity for learning. Many learners lack opportunities for outdoor play at home, so our school provides a haven for exploration, curiosity, and connection with nature. Outdoor learning is essential for our children and young people, allowing them to make meaningful connections between their experiences and the world around them.

Children are encouraged to come dressed for the weather, ready to embrace the elements!

HOW DO WE DEVELOP, STRETCH AND NURTURE THE ESSENTIAL SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE THROUGH LEARNING OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM AND FOREST SCHOOL?

Learning outside the classroom aims to fully support and promote our Learning Habits (creative, challenge, explaining, asking questions, exploring, listening, keep trying, problem solving, noticing and learning together) and Learning Muscles (being brave, getting ready, learning together and keep improving) by creating environments in which children's learning flourishes. We believe that learning extends beyond the classroom walls, and the outdoors provides a rich and stimulating context for exploration, discovery, and growth. Learning outside the classroom provide teachers with the space and time for valuable observations, allowing them to gain deeper insights into children's current learning levels, which is crucial for effective initial assessments. Outdoor learning is incorporated into all four key areas of the Gosden House curriculum: Happy and Healthy, Numeracy, Literacy, and Creative and Curious.

Our Outdoor Curriculum is founded upon creating dynamic learning environments that foster skills that include:

- **ENCOUNTER:** Direct experiences with the natural world, sparking curiosity and wonder through sensory explorations, nature walks, and observation of wildlife.
- **ENQUIRY:** Asking questions, investigating, and seeking answers through hands-on exploration and experimentation in the outdoor environment.
- **EXCHANGE:** Sharing ideas, collaborating, and learning from peers and the natural world through discussions, presentations, and outdoor projects.
- **EXPRESSION:** Communicating learning and experiences through creative mediums like art, writing, drama, music, and movement inspired by the outdoors.
- Expectations and key principles in delivering rich learning outside of the classroom at Gosden.
- Outdoor Learning at Gosden House will enhance the existing curriculum and will be taught/experienced in conjunction with other subject areas.

Learning Power Vision: To nurture in all our learners a lifelong love of learning. Our whole school curriculum will build resilience and grit in our learners, so when they leave Gosden House they are better equipped to face life's challenges in a world that is forever changing.

- Outdoor learning will be planned for by all teachers and included in Medium Term and Short-Term Planning.
- Team Planning will be encouraged to maximise the benefits of outdoor learning experiences and sharing of good practice.
- Outdoor Learning will provide learners the freedom to engage in more extensive open-ended learning opportunities.
- Learning and progress will be evidenced using Evisense, observations, targets and through pupil voice.
- Termly meetings to reflect/review planned experiences and outcomes to ensure improvement/success.
- Outdoor learning environments and activities will be designed to be accessible and inclusive for all learners, considering diverse needs and abilities.
- We are committed to incorporating principles of sustainability and environmental responsibility into our Outdoor Learning Program.

By embracing these principles and actively engaging with the outdoor environment, we aim to create a dynamic and enriching learning experience that fosters a lifelong love of learning and empowers our students to thrive in an ever-changing world.

THE LEARNING JOURNEY OF THE GOSDEN COMMUNITY IN LEARNING OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM AND FOREST SCHOOL

ASPECT	STAFF	GOSDEN LEARNERS	PARENTS/CARERS	SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT
Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting staff in effectively implementing outdoor learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing rich and engaging outdoor learning experiences for all learners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaging parents/carers in the outdoor learning journey. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating a supportive and inspiring environment for outdoor learning.
Key Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CPD (Continued Professional Development): Regular workshops, training sessions, and peer-to-peer learning opportunities on outdoor pedagogy, risk assessment, and environmental education. • Collaboration: Staff meetings, planning sessions, and collaborative lesson planning to integrate outdoor learning across the curriculum. • Joint Planning: Cross-curricular planning to ensure a cohesive and integrated approach to outdoor learning across all subjects. • Drop-in Sessions: Availability of informal drop-in sessions for staff to seek advice, share ideas, and discuss challenges related to outdoor learning. • Mentorship: Experienced staff mentoring colleagues new to outdoor learning. • Resource Sharing: Creating a central repository of resources, lesson plans, and best practices for staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curriculum Access: Providing access to the full curriculum through alternative approaches and environments, ensuring all learners have the opportunity to learn and succeed outdoors. • Differentiated Learning: Offering a range of learning experiences tailored to individual needs and learning styles, including 1:1 support, small group activities, and whole-class lessons. • Sensory Experiences: Providing opportunities for learners to engage with nature through all their senses, fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation of the natural world. • Risk-Taking and Exploration: Creating a safe and supportive environment that encourages learners to explore, experiment, and take risks in their learning. • Learner Voice: Involving learners in planning and decision-making related to outdoor learning activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information Sharing: Regular communication with parents/carers about the benefits of outdoor learning and the school's approach. • Sharing Best Practices: Sharing best practices and resources with parents/carers to support outdoor learning at home. • Home-School Connections: Encouraging parents/carers to engage in outdoor learning activities with their children at home. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Grounds Management: Ensuring the school grounds are well-maintained and provide a safe and stimulating environment for outdoor learning. • Sustainability: Promoting environmental sustainability through initiatives such as composting, recycling, and energy conservation. • Community Partnerships: Developing partnerships with local organisations, such as nature centres, environmental charities, and community groups, to enhance outdoor learning opportunities.

Learning Power Vision: To nurture in all our learners a lifelong love of learning. Our whole school curriculum will build resilience and grit in our learners, so when they leave Gosden House they are better equipped to face life's challenges in a world that is forever changing.

HOW DO WE KNOW OUR LEARNERS ARE ACTUALLY LEARNING? HOW DO OUR LEARNERS KNOW HOW THEY ARE DOING?

What does success look like? Teachers will observe;

- Increased student engagement and motivation in learning.
- Improved development of key Learning Habits/muscles.
- Growth in students' resilience, confidence, and problem-solving skills.
- Enhanced appreciation for the natural world and sustainable practices.
- Active student participation and voice in shaping their outdoor learning experiences.

Assessment and Evaluation

We assess and evaluate student learning through a variety of methods, including:

- **Observation:** Monitoring children's engagement, participation, and skill development during outdoor activities through Evisense.
- **Pupil Voice:** Gathering feedback from children about their experiences and learning in the outdoor environment.
- **Assessment:** Evaluating the impact of outdoor learning on children's progress and attainment across the curriculum.
- **Portfolio Assessment:** Collecting student work samples and reflections.

Our Commitment:

Gosden House School is committed to providing a high-quality outdoor learning and Forest School program that enriches the lives of all our learners. We continually review and develop our curriculum to ensure it meets the needs of our children and reflects best practices in outdoor education.

HOW WILL THE SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE GAINED THROUGH LEARNING OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM PREPARE OUR GOSDEN GRADUATES FOR SUCCESS IN THE FUTURE?

At Gosden House, we believe that learning outside of the classroom is an integral part of a holistic education. Our thoughtfully crafted lesson plans and objectives create dynamic learning experiences that connect different subjects, focus on specific disciplines, and foster personal, social, learning, and thinking skills. This approach empowers students to become resilient, adaptable, and successful Gosden Graduates.

Gosden House graduates will carry the benefits of their outdoor learning experiences far into the future, impacting various aspects of their lives:

1. Thriving in a Changing World:

- **Adaptability and Resilience:** The ability to adapt to changing circumstances and bounce back from setbacks, honed through outdoor challenges, will be crucial in navigating the complexities of adult life, whether in further education, the workplace, or personal relationships.
- **Problem-solving and Critical Thinking:** Facing unpredictable situations in nature fosters creative problem-solving and critical thinking skills, valuable for decision-making in all areas of life.
- **Confidence and Independence:** The self-reliance and confidence gained through outdoor learning will empower graduates to embrace new challenges and pursue their goals with determination.

2. Fostering Lifelong Well-being:

- **Stress Management and Emotional Regulation:** The calming influence of nature and the ability to self-regulate, developed through outdoor experiences, will equip graduates with tools for managing stress and maintaining emotional well-being throughout life.
- **Physical Health and Appreciation for Nature:** A love for the outdoors and an active lifestyle, nurtured at Gosden House, will contribute to lifelong physical health and a deep appreciation for the natural world.

Learning Power Vision: To nurture in all our learners a lifelong love of learning. Our whole school curriculum will build resilience and grit in our learners, so when they leave Gosden House they are better equipped to face life's challenges in a world that is forever changing.

3. Becoming Engaged Citizens:

- Environmental Responsibility: Outdoor learning instils a sense of responsibility towards the environment, inspiring graduates to make sustainable choices and contribute to a healthier planet.
- Community Engagement: Experiences with teamwork and collaboration in outdoor settings encourage graduates to actively participate in their communities and work towards collective goals.

4. Unlocking Future Opportunities:

- Career Paths: Outdoor learning can spark passions that lead to careers in environmental science, conservation, education, outdoor recreation, and many other fields.
- Further Education: The skills and knowledge gained through outdoor learning provides a solid foundation for success in further education, particularly in fields related to science, geography, social studies, horticulture and animal care.

We are confident that the skills and knowledge nurtured through outdoor learning at Gosden House will provide our graduates with a solid foundation for navigating the complexities of our world. They will be well-equipped with the resilience, critical thinking skills, and passion to make a meaningful difference in their lives and the lives of others.