

THE LION WORKS SCHOOL



External Providers for Outdoor Education and Mentoring Policy

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Introduction

At The Lion Works School our Outdoor Education and Mentoring policy aims to promote and enhance the children's love of learning by combining their academic studies with the unique and special nature of being outdoors. By using the outside environment as an additional context for learning we believe that our students will be given the opportunity to further develop their personal and social skills along with experiential opportunities allowing pupils to respond positively to opportunities, challenges, and responsibilities, to manage risk and to cope with change.

Scope

What do we mean by Outdoor Learning?

Outdoor Learning is a broad term that includes:

Outdoor play [learning through play], school grounds projects, environmental education, recreational and adventure activities, personal and social development, and more. Outdoor Learning does not have a clearly defined boundary, but it does have a common core... Outdoor learning can provide a dramatic contrast to the indoor classroom. **Although Outdoor learning can be defined in broad terms, the Outdoor Learning programme at The Lion Works School is based largely around our resilience and Outdoor Adventure Sport programme.** 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 which are frequently difficult to teach effectively using classroom methods alone. Direct experience outdoors is powerful, motivating and has impact and credibility. The results from outdoor learning can be instantaneous as well as active and therefore impact on behaviour as well as tapping into the learning styles of the more kinaesthetic learner. Through skilled teaching, outdoor experiences readily become a stimulating source of fascination, personal growth and can lead to breakthroughs in learning. Active learning readily develops the learning skills of enquiry, experiment, feedback, reflection, review, communication, problem solving, an enterprising attitude and cooperative learning – to name only some of the benefits.

Resilience is one of the 3 core value of The Lion Works School and our resilience objectives are based around *challenge by choice* with physical and psychological challenges designed to push students incrementally beyond their comfort zone.

Outdoor Learning can help to bring learning alive. For that reason, the outdoors can have an impact on areas of the curriculum as diverse as imaginative writing and personal and social development.

What do we mean by Mentoring?

Mentoring is an effective way to support development methods to assist individuals to reflect, identify and achieve their goals. Mentoring also supports the transfer of learning into further education settings or the work place. The learning relationships that develop through coaching and mentoring help support individuals to develop their skills and knowledge outside of the educational environment and it provides a powerful learning method to support the pupils in a way that is timely and specific. The mentoring system we put in place is used to inspire the children, endorse positivity, resilience to help people with additional needs become well

rounded young people in the future. Not all of our students will receive mentoring input. Those that do may receive it on a long term or short-term basis. Mentoring is an additional tool to support learning and progress.

The benefits of using external Outdoor Education providers at The Lion Works School.

The benefits of outdoor education include:

- Outdoor Education 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.
- Outdoor Education enables children to be confident individuals and impacts positively upon young children's attitudes beliefs and self-perceptions. Outdoor Education contributes towards creating independent learners with high self-esteem and self-sufficiency.
- Outdoor Education can have a positive impact upon children's behaviour.
- Outdoor Education contributes towards the promotion and children's understanding of the importance of developing a Healthy lifestyle.
- Outdoor Education has a positive impact upon children's personal and social development. It can also bring about community cohesion and allow children to develop as responsible citizens who make a positive contribution to their wider community. It 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.
- It raises learners' attainment, promotes, and strengthens communication skills, teamwork and sense of cohesion.
- Outdoor Education is the school's primary and most visible tool in terms of encouraging and supporting students to develop their resilience.

The benefits of using external professional mentoring at The Lion Works School.

The benefits of mentoring include:

- Providing a timely and structured learning and development opportunity based on the specific needs of the child and delivered at their own pace.
- Providing a range of specialist sports and activities which can not be provided directly by the school.
- Access to specialist equipment and areas not available to the school.
- A level of safety in Outdoor Education which comes from using specialist providers.
- Improving confidence and self-esteem.
- Increased motivation to become involved and enthused about vocational and sport activities.
- Developing the individual's own understanding of self-awareness and others around them.
- Developing new insights and ways of working independently.
- Providing an opportunity to receive safe and supportive feedback.
- Providing an opportunity for the students to reflect upon and plan their career development.

The role and responsibilities of external providers

- All external providers must be approved by the Headteacher.
- All external providers will meet all regulatory requirements. It is the Headteacher's responsibility to be the person designated with duty of care.
- Students who do not attend an activity provided by an external provider during school hours will be unable to attend the school site for alternative education. As a small school we do not have the facilities or resources to provide this. Our Outdoor Education programme is *challenge by choice* however which means non-participants can attend and will not be required to fully engage with each activity if they feel it exceeds their ability or confidence.
- Public liability insurance and any other necessary insurance to the excess of £5 million to cover the needs of programs offered by external providers is met by the provider if offered off site.
- An incursion or excursion with an external provider does not absolve supervision duties of the teacher or support staff, including first aid duties. A member of staff must be present at all times and remain the person designated with duty of care responsibilities. Responsibilities will be clearly identified in the external provider agreement.
- In the case of external providers who visit the school to provide a service, the school requires copies of current Safeguarding and Child protection training, DBS checks and Public Liability Insurance.
- The external provider will set the agenda and purpose of the activity and provide details to the school prior to the activity-taking place.
- The external provider will take the lead with completion of pupil written work.
- Maintain commitment to the relationship with the school.
- Ensure that students are supported during the process.
- Respect the confidential nature of the relationship with the school.

External agencies approved/accepted by the school must:

- Have formal qualifications or relevant experience and be recognised by other professional groups.
- Provide a range of support options.
- Understand what constitutes an effective program.
- Evaluate their programs identifying areas of strength and improvement.
- Enhance the role of the teacher, not replace it.
- It is a requirement for a member of staff to be always present with students.
- Align with current practice, principles and research.
- Consider the age and developmental level of the students, the content and appropriate resources.
- The external provider will give feedback to the school after the activity has taken place.
- Link learning with educational outcomes as outlined in the school program.
- Provide on-going support rather than the one-off session.
- Engage in planning with the Head teacher.

External Providers are to consider socioeconomic and cultural issues:

- Use information about student cultural experiences to create an atmosphere respectful of cultural diversity.

- Use strategies proven to be effective in dealing issues pertinent to students from a variety of socioeconomic backgrounds.
- Have well-established and acceptable positions on particular issues that are consistent with the values promoted by The Lion Works School.

Health and Safety

Both the school and the external provider will support children in taking risks within a safe and secure environment. Pupils will be taught to manage risks. It is important to ensure that the outdoor environment offers challenges and teaches the children how to be safe and aware of others. Outdoor Education opportunities will be grasped when available and teachers will assess risk.

In the first instance the school's policies relating to Health and Safety and Risk Assessment should be referred to and applied prior to any outdoor Education activity that may require additional support beyond the reasonable activities one would normally apply within the classroom. It is also important that the school applies robust safety measures to effectively manage and minimize risks. It is equally important, however, that all involved, including parents acknowledge that a degree of residual risk remains.

Our children are taught to manage risks regarding outdoor learning. All pupils are regularly reminded about the importance of staying safe.

The following expectations are understood by all pupils:

There is a shared understanding of how pupils safeguard themselves and others when undertaking outdoor learning. Outdoor Learning is an important part of our learning journey.

- We must follow the school standards at all times.
- We must stay with our group.
- We must be sensible and ensure that we achieve our learning objectives.
- Only our teachers are allowed to open padlocked gates.

If we follow the expectations above, we will enjoy learning and be safe.

Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's annual yearly review cycle but also occurs on a regular basis prompted by changing circumstances and raised concerns.