

## Outdoor Learning at Kenwood.

At Kenwood we have developed a programme of Outdoor Education that is now embedded within the Curriculum. Children participate in regular planned outdoor experiences. Groups are identified and are offered specific slots in the timetable to participate in Outdoor Learning. Children are also offered Outdoor learning experiences in their Enrichment choices. Each year students can participate in an outdoor pursuit residential and Duke of Edinburgh Expedition.

*The benefits of Outdoor Learning include:*

### **1. Building confidence and independence**

Building dens, navigating with a compass and using a knife in woodwork are just some of the activities that instil children with confidence and a sense of independence.

### **2. Feeling empathy for others and nature**

Working as a team in a natural setting bonds children as a group. It also makes them aware of the need to care for each other and for the environment.

### **3. Physical fitness**

Running around and climbing trees develops muscle strength, aerobic fitness, and coordination.

### **4. Health benefits**

Studies have highlighted a multitude of health benefits to being outside -sunlight and soil microorganisms boost the body's levels of serotonin, the chemical linked to feelings of wellbeing, while vitamin D, which is essential for bone and muscle health, is also provided by the sun's rays.

### **5. Improved mental health**

Today's children are experiencing increased stress caused by a range of pressures, from school exams to social media. Mental-health professionals acknowledge that maintaining a relationship with nature can be very helpful in supporting children's emotional and mental wellbeing.

### **6. Learning by experience**

Research suggests young children learn best from experience, by using their senses actively rather than passively, and it's via these experiences that learning remains with us into adulthood.

### **7. Exposure to manageable risk**

Children can run and make a noise, get their hands dirty and experience manageable risk, which is essential for healthy child development, through activities such as supervised fire building and cooking.

### **8. Better sleep and mood**

Children – and adults – sleep more deeply after either playing outside or going for a long walk, and mood lifts just from breathing in a few lungfuls of fresh air.

## 9. Learning about spiritual meaning

Outside the confines of four walls, without the distractions of electronic devices and excessive supervision, children can move, explore and discover at their own pace, connecting to the natural world – a place not created by man, that had deep spiritual meaning for our ancestors.

Our outdoor education aims to promote the holistic development of those involved, fostering resilient, confident, independent and creative learners.

Where appropriate the Staff lead will aim to link experiences from outdoor education to home, work and / or school education.

Our Outdoor education aims to develop, where appropriate the physical, social, cognitive, linguistic, emotional, social and spiritual aspects of the learner.

Planning, adaptation, observation and reviewing are integral elements.

We use a range of learner centred processes to create a community for development and learning. We try and respond to the needs and interests of the individual. Reflective practice is a feature of sessions to ensure learners and practitioners can understand their achievements, develop emotional intelligence and plan for the future.

*Typically, a session would involve.*

Travel to the chosen site.

- Intro: Circle time group check in and discussion of children's ideas around the planned activity.
- Planned activity 1
- Shared meal/ drink.
- Planned activity 2
- Review and reflection.

These sessions are either planned around a walk or centred around a particular site for the children to explore and engage in.