

Sir Alexander Fleming Primary School and Nursery
Outdoor Learning Policy
Updated: September 2026

What is the intent of the Outdoor Learning curriculum at Sir Alexander Fleming Primary School?

At Sir Alexander Fleming Primary School and Nursery, we believe that outdoor learning is a valuable and essential part of every child's educational experience. We aim to provide meaningful opportunities for children to develop their knowledge, skills, understanding and wellbeing through first-hand experiences in the natural environment.

Our overarching principle about learning is: 'Knowing more and remembering more.' Through carefully planned outdoor experiences, children are encouraged to make connections across the curriculum, deepen their understanding of key concepts and develop a lifelong appreciation for the natural world.

Outdoor learning promotes curiosity, creativity, resilience, independence and teamwork. We want all children to become confident learners who can apply their knowledge in real-life contexts while developing respect for themselves, others and the environment.

We are committed to ensuring that outdoor learning is inclusive, accessible and ambitious for all pupils. Through regular opportunities to learn outdoors, children develop practical skills, problem-solving abilities and positive attitudes towards learning.

How is the Outdoor Learning curriculum implemented at Sir Alexander Fleming Primary School?

Outdoor learning is embedded throughout our curriculum and supports learning across a wide range of subjects including science, geography, English, mathematics, art and PSHE.

Our main outdoor learning environment, **The Hazels**, provides a rich and varied space where children can explore, investigate and learn through hands-on experiences. The Hazels includes:

- Potting and planting areas
- An outdoor classroom
- Den-making areas
- Outdoor reading spaces
- Free-play and exploration areas
- Wildflower meadows
- Outdoor learning tables

In addition, pupils have access to:

- A greenhouse for growing and investigating plants

- Composting areas to develop understanding of sustainability and environmental responsibility

Teachers plan purposeful outdoor experiences that are linked to curriculum objectives and age-appropriate learning outcomes. Activities are designed to build upon prior knowledge and provide opportunities for children to apply learning in meaningful contexts.

Outdoor learning opportunities may include:

- Scientific investigations and observations
- Environmental studies
- Growing and caring for plants
- Reading and storytelling outdoors
- Practical mathematics activities
- Team-building and problem-solving challenges
- Creative and expressive arts activities
- Nature exploration and wellbeing sessions

Children are encouraged to take increasing responsibility for their learning and the outdoor environment as they move through the school.

What is the process of our Outdoor Learning curriculum?

We organise intended learning into carefully planned outdoor experiences that develop knowledge, skills and understanding. This is evident in our long-term overview which carefully maps out the skills our children learn over time.

Prior Assessment

Teachers consider prior knowledge, misconceptions and learning needs when planning outdoor activities.

Context and Purpose

Learning experiences are linked to curriculum objectives and provide meaningful real-world contexts.

Exploration

Children are encouraged to investigate, observe, question and discover through practical activities.

Skill Development

Opportunities are provided for children to develop practical, physical, social and communication skills.

Reflection

Children are encouraged to discuss, evaluate and reflect upon their experiences and learning.

Application

Pupils apply their knowledge and skills independently through investigations, projects and challenges.

Assessment and Feedback

Teachers assess learning through observation, discussion, practical outcomes and recorded work where appropriate. Feedback is used to celebrate achievements and identify next steps.

Learning Environments

At Sir Alexander Fleming Primary School, outdoor environments are viewed as an extension of the classroom. Learning spaces are carefully maintained to provide safe, stimulating and engaging opportunities for all pupils.

The Hazels offers a variety of environments that support different types of learning, including collaborative work, independent investigation, imaginative play, reading, reflection and environmental stewardship.

The greenhouse, composters, planting areas and wildflower meadows allow children to develop an understanding of sustainability, life cycles, biodiversity and responsibility for the environment.

Teachers use these environments purposefully to enhance teaching and learning and provide memorable experiences that support long-term retention of knowledge.

Equal Opportunities

At Sir Alexander Fleming Primary School, we plan to provide outdoor learning opportunities for all pupils regardless of gender, ethnicity, socio-economic status, cultural background, academic ability, Special Educational Need/Disability or vulnerability.

We will:

- Plan activities that challenge and support all learners.
- Ensure outdoor learning environments are inclusive and accessible wherever possible.
- Adapt activities and resources to meet individual needs.
- Promote teamwork, respect and positive relationships.
- Encourage participation and achievement for every child.

Children identified as needing additional support will receive appropriate adaptations to ensure they can fully access and benefit from outdoor learning experiences.

Health and Safety

The safety and wellbeing of all children is paramount.

Risk assessments are undertaken where appropriate and staff follow school health and safety procedures when using outdoor spaces. Pupils are taught how to use outdoor environments safely and responsibly, including the use of tools, equipment and natural materials.

Children are encouraged to assess risk appropriately, develop resilience and make informed decisions within a safe and supportive environment.

Monitoring

The Outdoor Learning Lead is responsible for raising standards in outdoor learning across the school.

Monitoring may include:

- Observations of sessions
 - Discussions with pupils
 - Evaluation of planning
 - Reviewing curriculum coverage
 - Monitoring resources and facilities
 - Staff training and professional development
 - Communication with Governors
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Policy Links

- Health and Safety Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- SEND Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Assessment Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Educational Visits Policy