

Outdoor Education Matters

Advice and Guidance on Good Practice

This document aims to enhance the awareness of the learning opportunities Outdoor Education has to offer [for children and young people on the Wirral](#). It should be used to signpost teachers and youth workers towards best practice in order to provide challenging, safe and enjoyable experiences.

The current political climate has acknowledged the value of Outdoor Education for young people. Recent documents have defined the value Outdoor Education. [These include The Every Child Matters Agenda, High Quality Outdoor Education and the Learning Outside the Classroom Manifesto.](#)

Every Child Matters

Outdoor Education links with the five outcomes of the Every Child Matters agenda. Children and young people learn and do well when they are healthy, protected from harm and engaged. Educational achievement through Outdoor Education is an effective way to improve the outcomes for all children.

The Outcomes Framework from Every Child Matters, shows how Outdoor Education fits in with the specific aims for children and young people.

- | | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Stay Safe | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - safe from injury through the guidance on the correct use of equipment - use of safe practices in Outdoor Education |
| Be Healthy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - be physically healthy through the use of the outdoor environment - be mentally and emotionally healthy - develop a healthy lifestyle |
| Enjoy and achieve | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - attend and enjoy using the outdoor environment - achieve personal and social development and enjoy recreation - achieve national educational standards at primary and secondary school |
| Achieve Economic well being | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - access to Outdoor Education and residential experiences for all Wirral children, young people and adults no matter what the economic circumstances may be - have the opportunity to engage in further education and training in the outdoors |
| Make a Positive Contribution | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - engage in decision making and support the community and environment - engage in law abiding and positive behaviour |

- develop positive relationships
- develop self-confidence and successfully deal with changes and challenges

High Quality Outdoor Education

Good practice in Outdoor Education is defined in the document High Quality Outdoor Education. The themes include participation; competition and achievement; residential experiences; differentiation and progression; safety and risk management.

When schools and Outdoor Education Centres are providing high quality Outdoor Education they will see children and young people who are displaying:

- | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------|
| Enjoyment | Confidence |
| Social awareness | Environmental awareness |
| Activity skills | Personal qualities |
| Key skills | Health and fitness |
| Increased motivation | An appetite for learning |
| Broadened horizons | |

Wirral Children’s and Young People’s department wish to make sure that all young people have access to High Quality Outdoor and Adventurous Activities.

Learning Outside the Classroom Manifesto

Wirral welcomes the government’s Learning Outside the Classroom Manifesto.

Wirral is a signatory Authority to the Manifesto.

Every child and young person should experience the world beyond the classroom as an essential part of learning and personal development, whatever their age, ability or circumstances.

These memorable learning experiences help to make sense of the world around us through feelings and learning. Experiences frequently stay into adulthood and may affect behaviour, lifestyle and work. They may influence values and decisions that children and young people make. They allow the transfer of the learning experienced outside to the classroom.

Learning outside the classroom can take place in the school grounds; local nature reserves and wild places; city farms and parks; streetscapes; field study and Outdoor Education centres; farms and the countryside; remote wild and adventurous places; heritage and cultural sites; zoos and botanic gardens; places of worship; museums, theatres, galleries and music venues; and on cultural, language and fieldwork visits abroad.

The Wirral and Outdoor Education

Wirral encourages schools to consider the place of Outdoor Education in their curriculum and to develop a plan that supports both out of classroom learning and Out-

door Adventurous Activities. Ideally this will be progressive in nature encompassing key stages 1 – 4 and **would be** cross curricular.

Wirral Local Authority acknowledges that every school has its own outlooks and aspirations of where Outdoor Education fits in to its Curriculum. This may be through activities on the school site, using the local environment, and the provision of residential experiences.

Oaklands Outdoor Education Centre

Oaklands is Wirral’s own Outdoor Education Centre, located in the Snowdonia National Park it is the perfect location for a residential Outdoor experience. Its proximity to Wirral also allows day visits from Wirral groups and the expertise of the Oaklands staff team to be used for continued professional Development. The Oakland’s experience is holistic, combining experience and learning through adventure and challenge. Participants on an Oaklands course will learn about themselves, others and the environment. All courses are tailor made to provide High Quality Outdoor Education. The Centre has been operating for 25 years with an excellent safety record. Staff are employed by Wirral and are highly qualified and experienced both in outdoor activities and in managing groups. The Centre has been managed to take in to account the views of its users and other stakeholders. Standards and achievements are recognised e.g. GCSE PE and Records of Achievement. Quality of provision and of the learning experience is monitored and developed. It is in the process of gaining eco centre status. For further details see www.oaklands-centre.co.uk

Below are some examples of the progressive nature of OAA for schools and youth groups.

Primary – Townfield Primary School

TOP Outdoors OAA implemented in school
 Extended schools use OAA e.g. outdoor clubs, sailing [at West Kirby or New Brighton Marine Lakes](#)

Residential experiences

- Year 2 Beeston
- Year 4 Castlehead
- Year 6 Oaklands

PSHE and other curriculum links e.g. history, geography and PE

Follow up work in school linking back to OAA programme and other curriculum areas
 Continuing Professional development for Teachers in conjunction with Residential experience at Oaklands

Secondary – South Wirral High School



Continuing Professional Development OAA implemented in school through TOP Outdoors Wirral Years 7 and 8 units of work.

School Clubs e.g. the Duke of Edinburgh Award

Year 7 Civic Award- Dibbin Level
Year 8 7 Day residential at Oaklands 6th formers used for peer mentoring
Year 9 Bronze Dof E
Year 10 Oaklands expedition experience and or skiing
Year 11 Skiing
Year 12 opportunity to support year 8 on residential

GCSE PE, BTEC and A/S Level PE (school, club and residential based)
NGB proficiency awards e.g. BCU, RYA, NNAS, BOF, MLTUK

Youth Service

Recreational Activities

Duke of Edinburgh Award

Issue based youth work, encompassing outdoor adventure (Residential and non residential) Response

NGB Awards, BCU, RYA, NNAS, BOF, MLTE

Youth Opportunities Fund, Residential projects and expeditions

Wirral Borough Council and Children and Young People's Department Contacts for Outdoor Education

The following people are available to support the provision of High Quality Outdoor Education in Wirral.

Name	Position	Location	Role
Bob Saunders	General Inspector for Physical Education and Outdoor Education	PEC	<p>Advice and support on OAA Curriculum</p> <p>Overseeing Health and Safety for all residential and hazardous activities</p> <p>Health and Safety for Physical Education and Outdoor Education on the Wirral</p> <p>Educational Visits Co-ordinator Trainer / Advisor</p> <p>Oaklands Outdoor Education Centre</p>
Nuala Dunn / Carolyn Bird	Heads of Centre	Oaklands Centre	<p>Technical Experts for Outdoor Education and OAA</p> <p>Residential provider for Wirral school and youth groups</p> <p>CPD and INSET providers for NGB awards</p> <p>Teacher and youth worker validations</p> <p>Advice, training and guidance on Outdoor Education and OAA</p>
Ray Hamlett	SSCo	Pensby High School for Boys	<p>Seconded to Bob Saunders one day a week</p> <p>To Develop OAA resources for use within Wirral schools</p> <p>Wirral Local Authority representative on the Outdoor Education Advisors Panel</p>
Dave De-court	Wirral Youth Services		<p>Duke of Edinburgh Award Co-ordinator</p> <p>Urban adventure</p>
Ian Sparks Simon Smith	Centre Principal Chief Instructor	West Kirby Marine Lake	

Supporting Documentation

The Children's and Young Peoples Plan 2006-2008

High Quality Outdoor Education (Ordnance Survey, 2005)

Out-of Classroom Learning (RSPB, 2006)

Learning Outside the Classroom Manifesto (DfES, 2006)

Safety in Outdoor Education Policy and Guidance Document (H005/02)

Generic Risk Assessments for Educational Visits Policy and Guidance Document (HS/ECS/051)

Educational Visits, Overnight Stays and Hazardous Activities policy and Guidance Document (H004/02)

Exchange Visits doc.

Supporting Agencies

Institute for Outdoor Learning
Outdoor Education Advisors Panel
Association of Heads of Outdoor Education Centres
Adventure Activities Licensing Authority

Governing bodies

British Canoe Union
Mountain Leader Training – UK
British Caving Association
British Orienteering Federation
Duke of Edinburgh Award
Royal Yachting Association