



Earl Sterndale CofE Primary School

Outdoor Learning Curriculum



At Earl Sterndale School, we believe that learning should extend beyond the classroom walls and into the rich, diverse environments that surround us. Outdoor learning is not an optional extra—it is a vital part of our curriculum and our commitment to developing confident, curious and resilient learners.

We recognise the outdoors as a powerful context for learning, where children can explore, take risks and collaborate in ways that nurture both academic achievement and personal growth.

Our aim is to ensure that every child experiences high-quality outdoor learning opportunities that are purposeful, inclusive, and connected to the wider curriculum. By embedding these principles into our practice, we prepare our pupils not only for success in school but for life beyond it.

The five key skills areas are detailed below:

Physical Skills

- **Gross motor skills:** Running, climbing, balancing, jumping.
- **Fine motor skills:** Handling natural materials, tying knots, using tools safely.
- **Coordination and spatial awareness:** Navigating uneven terrain, judging distances.

Cognitive Skills

- **Problem-solving:** Working out how to build shelters, navigate routes or complete challenges.
- **Critical thinking:** Making decisions about safety, resources, and strategies.
- **Creativity:** Using natural materials for art, design, and imaginative play.

Social and Emotional Skills

- **Collaboration and teamwork:** Group tasks like den building or outdoor games.
- **Communication:** Explaining ideas, listening to others, negotiating roles.

- **Resilience and confidence:** Coping with challenges, managing risk, and celebrating success.

Environmental Awareness

- **Respect for nature:** Understanding ecosystems, sustainability, and conservation.
- **Responsibility:** Caring for outdoor spaces and wildlife.

Practical Life Skills

- **Risk assessment:** Judging what is safe and what isn't.
- **Independence:** Managing personal belongings, preparing for outdoor conditions.
- **Leadership:** Taking initiative in group activities.

Age	Activity	Duration	Date
EYFS	Forest School	6 weeks x 1 afternoon	Autumn 1/2
KS1	Indoor Climbing	6 weeks x 1 session	Spring 1
KS1	Multi-activity Days (introduction)	2 days	Summer 1
KS2	Weaseling	1 day	Autumn
OR	Multi-activity Day 1. Outdoor wall, Leap of Faith, high ropes 2. Indoor wall, little Zip line, assault course	1 day	
KS2	Caving 1. Carlswalk 2. Giants	1 day	Spring 1/2
KS2	Forest School	1 day	Summer 1
KS2	Paddleboarding	3 sessions	Summer 2
KS2	Kayak/canoe 1. Advanced 2. Beginners	3 sessions	Summer 2

Additional event days may include:

- Team-building
- Climbing Festival
- Cyclecross
- Orienteering Festival
- Bikeability
- Circus Skills
- Bollywood

Residential:

Year	Duration	Location
A	2 nights	Gulliver's Kingdom
B	4 nights	Whitehall