



THOMSON HOUSE SCHOOL

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# Thomson House School

## Outdoor / Off-site Learning Policy

Agreed by: Governor's Education Committee

Date: September 2017

Review Cycle: Three Years

Review Date: September 2020

All the Thomson House School policies should be read in conjunction with the Equality Policy.

If you require a copy of this document in large print, Braille or audio format, please contact the School Business Manager



## **Thomson House School Outdoor / Off-site Learning Policy**

### **Aims**

At Thomson House School we aim:

- To foster the values of *curiosity, kindness and courage* through outdoor learning;
- To provide opportunities for all children to access learning through a well-planned outdoor environment (EYFS) and a well-planned range of trips and off-site visits - to meet their needs, engage and motivate learning, stimulate curiosity and expand interests through a range of resources and experiences outside of the classroom;
- To ensure that off-site environments are still environments in which children feel safe, secure and confident;
- To ensure that transport arrangements to venues are age appropriate and where possible, use of public transport is encouraged, subject to risk assessments;
- To provide opportunities outside of the classroom for children to work independently and collaboratively with enthusiasm and perseverance, developing socially and emotionally;
- To provide appropriate adult support to help the children's learning when outside of the classroom, to develop their experiences and interests.

### **EYFS Outdoor learning**

At Thomson House School we have:

- A separate outdoor area for the Foundation Stage children to access;
- A defined boundary in which the Foundation Stage children can feel safe, secure and confident;
- Watchful adults to provide appropriate intervention to engage children in the learning process;
- A range of large and small equipment and cross-curricular activities which help to promote interactive and independent play and sharing and physical skills;
- Learning activities outdoors which mirror the same learning objectives indoors;
- Opportunities for self-initiated activities under adult supervision;

- Access to the wider environment of the local parks and playground under adult supervision.

We will ensure that children have access to outdoor learning on a regular basis in line with Ofsted guidance.

### **Assessment and Recording**

Assessment is by systematic observations of each child's achievements and interests and by interaction with the children during their play. All assessments inform current and future planning. Observations are recorded by all staff, and are added to the children's Foundation Stage profiles. See EYFS policy for further information on assessment and recording.

### **Inclusion**

The outdoors curriculum of shared and physical activities is an important part of a child's overall development. At Thomson House School we are committed to providing for each child, whatever their individual and/or special need, the opportunity to access all areas of the Foundation Stage curriculum. We adapt the facilities and activities whenever possible, to enable all children to use them. We aim for our outdoor spaces to be accessible for wheelchair users.

### **Resources**

Our varied resources aim to cover all areas of learning in the Foundation Stage curriculum. To maintain a high standard, these resources will be continually reviewed, thus enabling the maximum input in the important area of learning out of doors.

### **Off-site activities**

At Thomson House School we:

- Believe that the learning opportunities which London and the surrounding areas provide should be accessed by all our children as part of their education
- Plan trips and off-site activities which support curriculum subjects
- Will always conduct a pre-visit so ensure all aspects of safety and learning have been considered by the adults accompanying the children
- Follow guidance from the authorities as to the level of risk associated with travel and particular venues.

## **Risk Assessments**

- A risk assessment will be written by the lead adult for every off-site visit
- The risk assessment will be signed off by the Head Teacher, or Deputy.
- Risk assessments are shared with all adults accompanying the trip and held on file
- Will ensure that each risk assessment has contingency plans in case of terrorist action – this will include alternative travel arrangements and ways of contacting school and parents in case of emergency

## **Health and Safety**

- The safety of our children is paramount
- All Health and Safety policies of venues will be checked prior to planning a visit off-site. We adhere to the school's *Health and Safety* policy.
- A first-aid kit and necessary medical support will be carried by adults whenever children are off-site

## **Travel/Transport**

- Children will be registered before leaving the site
- Where possible the school will use public transport
- If the risks associated with public transport are too great then alternative transportation will be sought.
- All coaches used will have seat belts for all passengers
- Children and adults will always wear hi-vis jackets when travelling to and from off-site activities
- Ratios of adult:child supervision will be risk assessed for each trip
- Children will walk in an orderly manner.
- Children will be counted on and off any mode of transport

## **Procedures for Mortlake Green**

- A risk assessed route will be followed by all members of THS when walking to Mortlake Green – either from Sheen Lane or Vernon Road sites
- Children will be clearly instructed on the risks along the route to Mortlake Green
- Children will have annual road safety lessons and these procedures will be put into practice when crossing roads and will be reinforced prior to every trip
- Children will have annual safety lessons from Network Rail on behaviour around the station and level crossing
- Staff will carry first aid kits and any other medical equipment required by children
- Staff will carry the school mobile phone
- At least one member of staff will be first aid trained

- Children will be split into groups for easier supervision
- Children will be made aware of the necessity to share the Green with other members of the local community.