Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC)

September 2026

Introduction:

At William Patten school the importance of a varied and relevant curriculum is recognised. We believe that learning should be enjoyable and that children should be active in their learning. As part of a broad and balanced curriculum, learning outside the classroom (LOtC) plays an important part in ensuring that learning experiences are varied and relevant. LOtC at William Patten involves the use of the school and its grounds, as well as providing access to a range of locations, venues and experiences through the range of educational visits and trips on offer. We believe that these experiences should be frequent and progressive, across all areas of the curriculum and that all children should have access to LOtC

Aims

Through the range of LOtC offered, we aim to ensure that children -

- **Experience** – a range of experiences, frequent and progressive
- **Develop** confidence, self-awareness and skills (e.g. responsibility for self and others, working in a team, leadership, communication, problem solving)
- **Learn** new ideas, facts and concepts in a real-world context
- **Grow** through challenge and become more independent
- **Demonstrate achievement** – through awards, school/setting displays and school events
- **Increase motivation and willingness to learn** – contributing to raised levels of attainment
- **Broaden horizons and raise aspiration** – believing they can achieve

Achievement of these aims will be supported through -

1. Planning high-quality provision of Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) experiences
2. Ensuring that all age groups receive a wide range of experiences and activities 3. Recognising different learning styles and taking into consideration the fact that some learners learn best through a hands-on approach, actively exploring the physical world around them.
4. Providing frequent activities which allow for progression in both experiences and learning
5. Involving children in shaping their learning, for example through input into and review and evaluation of LOtC

Ethos for Successful Learning Outside the Classroom

In the early years, outside play will form a strong part of all children's learning experiences. From the provision of quality planned play experiences through to child initiated, children will be learning through language, problem solving, taking risks and overcoming challenges. Observations by key adults will form an integral part of the process.

Children are given opportunities to take their learning beyond the play areas and make use of the school and its grounds. Provision will be supported by workshops provided by visitors to the school and an involvement with the recently developed rooftop terrace, as well as educational visits in line with the Educational visits policy.

In Key Stage 1 and 2, children are given frequent opportunities to use the school and grounds for curricular work, to develop their self-confidence and promote team-work. Provision will be supported by external visitors offering workshops and focused learning experiences beyond the classroom, as well as regular access to the recently developed rooftop terrace and a range of educational trips and visits in line with the educational trips policy.

Older children will have the opportunity to take part in a residential trip.

Implementing the Policy

Planning:

LOtC will be planned with specific learning intentions and outcomes identified. LOtC will involve use of the school and its grounds, including the rooftop terrace, and the recently landscaped 'Nature Playground'. Activities in the nature playground will continue to be informed and supported by the school's ongoing link with Hackney Outdoors.

Opportunities will be sought by the school to provide the children with educational visits and trips, and learning outside the classroom that support units of work. Subject leaders have identified and mapped school trips that support each of the geography topics, using the School Trips Mapping document. This lists recommends trips that are appropriate to the topics of each subject that are being taught in each team. At the beginning of the year, teachers will use the list to inform their choice of one trip per half term from the list. In the first instance, LOtC for children in their EYFS beyond the school grounds, will generally involve the immediate local area, with the children having access to locations in the wider locality as the year progresses.

Teachers, in collaboration with SLT, subject and phase leaders, will ensure that there is diversity in the subjects that children are accessing school trips in. The category that each trip falls under, is also mapped and considered at planning stage to ensure a broad and balanced enrichment offer.

School Trip Categories							
Natural World – parks, woodland	Places of Worship	Architecture and Heritage - Historic sites and contemporary buildings	Artistic - Theatres, galleries and creative settings	Science and Discovery	Adventure Activity and Leisure Centres	Zoos and Aquaria	Regional/ national Museums

Opportunities for LOtC will be considered as part of the 'school context' aspect of planning. These are indicated on the Knowledge and Skills Progression Maps for each subject. These provide further evidence as to how LOtC is embedded across the curriculum and supports the acquisition of key knowledge, as well as the development of key skills, identified for each subject. The inclusion of LOtC on whole school curriculum mapping also evidences the extent to which this the provision for this is continuous and progressive.

Children from reception to Y6 have the option of accessing school trip locations via the London underground as well as local bus routes.

Most LOtC opportunities are open to whole year groups, and planned for together by the year group team, with support from subject leaders and the curriculum lead, where appropriate. In the rare instance that an opportunity is only available to one class, but its educational and experiential merit would mean that not accessing it all would be detrimental, the school will consider which class (or a mixed group from both classes) would benefit the most. This might take into account a number of factors, including for example –

- Individual and group interests.
- Prioritisation of children who qualify for PPG funding.

- Previous experiences that have been available to one class, so that the other is prioritised to ensure access to equal opportunities.
- The role of the class teacher, for example, if the experience relates to an aspect of subject leadership that has the potential to inform/positively impact an aspect of whole school practice.

Should this occur, to ensure that equal opportunities are maintained, the class or group that took part in the activity will lead an activity (such as an assembly) to disseminate the learning outcomes of the activity.

Child protection will be an integral part of the planning, including safeguarding considerations at an appropriate level. In line with the schools Inclusion Policy, SEN Policy, Educational Visits Policy and individual subject policies, planning will include provision for those with special educational needs, including physical and learning, and medical requirements.

Where possible, external providers will have the LOtC quality mark and all should provide the highest possible experiences, with safety effectively managed. The risk assessment of the external provider will be requested in the early planning stages and in line with the educational trips policy, the school's own risk assessment will be informed by a site visit and identify the overall benefits of the trip, as well as the control measures needed to address identified risk.

Further opportunities for LOtC: where external conditions allow, such as overnight snowfall, experiences should be used for teaching and evaluated for outcomes for children as part of our LOtC ethos.

Evidence: can be from planning, photos, reports from children and should be collected centrally for evaluation. This evidence can be used in future planning, allowing for progression in challenge across the school. It will help with both formative and summative assessments for children, and the effectiveness of LOtC within the school. Activities involving LOtC should be communicated to parents and carers through the school's biweekly newsletter and website.

Risk Assessment: will be completed, using the agreed proforma and taking in to account the age and number of children, and the staff ratios required in line with the educational visits policy. The aim is to identify and manage the risks to those taking part, rather than be risk averse and not take part.

Roles and Responsibilities The
LOtC team includes:

Headteacher: Karen Law
Deputy Headteacher (Curriculum and Teaching & Learning Lead): Craig Porteous
Deputy Headteacher (Inclusion Lead): Sian Davies
Assistant Headteacher: Maya Domb
EYFS Coordinator: Helen Williams
School Business manager: Elmara Cadette

The LOtC team will:-

be the key point of contact for policy and planning of all learning outside the classroom, offering expertise in their aspect of leadership and fulfilling their role as identified in the Educational Visits Policy. This will include –

- Monitoring standards of quality and safe practice
- Developing and leading policy

- Ensuring that practices are up to date and informed by current guidance on procedure
- Disseminating new approaches to good practice and guidance on procedures
- Ensuring effective LOtC induction for new staff
- Leading or arranging training and ensuring activities are competently led
- Supporting, as necessary, the planning of activities and evaluation of LOtC
- Maintaining accurate records of visits, risk assessments, and pre-trip checklists etc

The Deputy Headteacher with Curriculum and Teaching & Learning responsibility, Craig Porteous, will oversee the development of LOtC and will be responsible for updating the policy annually and reviewing its success throughout the year. The development of LOtC will be done in accordance with the LOtC Quality Mark – Gold Level Framework provided by the Council for LOtC.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Governing body.

Policy Agreed: **November 2026**
Policy Review Date: **September 2027**

Council for
Learning Outside the Classroom

William Patten Primary School

has been awarded the

Gold LOtC Mark

In recognition of their commitment to offering well-planned, engaging and impactful learning beyond the classroom (LOtC).

Dr Anne Hunt

Chief Executive, Council for Learning Outside the Classroom

Date Issued: 14/12/2023

Expiry Date: 14/12/2025