**Primary (3-7) Initial Teacher Education: Curriculum Plan**

**Learning Outside the Classroom: Early Years Undergraduate with QTS Programmes**

***NB – this curriculum plan identifies when trainees will ‘meet’ content for the first time – the intention is that at each phase, university and school-based colleagues will support trainees in recalling, refining, applying and discussing content from the previous phases.***

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| **Curriculum Intent:**  Learning Outside the Classroom (LOTC) Curriculum at Edge Hill University aims to ensure our trainees recognise the power and value that this approach has for children’s learning. Being outdoors and being active is a vital part of living a healthy and fulfilled life. Learning Outside the Classroom benefits children’s overall development and enhances their learning experience. Spending time in nature is necessary for healthy development (Chen 2014) The Learning Outside the Classroom strand aims to provide trainees with the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to provide pupils with a purposeful and effective learning experience in the outdoor environment, that can be recalled and remembered by children. We define Learning Outside the Classroom as “the use of places other than classrooms for teaching and learning” as identified in the DFE (2005:4) and it includes the use of visitors from the community and different organisations. The ‘outdoors’ is interpreted as, school/community environments, and natural/Forest School spaces. Forest School Education allows children to interact with the natural world, engaging in first-hand experience (Coates and Pimlott-Wilson 2019). Leather (2018) highlights that there has been a sharp increase in Forest School Education within the United Kingdom. As the practice within the UK changes it is important to recognise that the skills, understanding and experience of Initial Teacher Trainees must be adapted to enable them to work effectively with emerging changes within schools.   Trainees are encouraged to recognise the significant part they play in developing an ethos of sustainability in line with the United Nations 17 Sustainability Goals and the DFE Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy (2021). This will provide teachers at the beginning of their career with the knowledge, understanding and skills to plan and teach in the outdoors with confidence as well as a deep understanding of issues related to the sustainable future of the planet. Trainees will recognise how LOTC can promote children’s positive pro environmental attitudes and values that support ecological justice, stewardship and prepare trainees to be able to support teaching for climate change within their Professional Practice Placements and their future classroom practice. This can be achieved by promoting biophilia and avoiding biphobia by strengthening children’s/trainees’ connections with the natural world.  Louv (2005) raises the notion of the ongoing decline in children’s exposure to the natural world. This progressive lack of experience could impact on generations of children and their ability to protect the natural environment.  **Literature**  **Phase 1**  Chawla, L 2025. ‘Benefits of Nature for Children’ Journal of Planning Literature accessed at <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0885412215595441> on 14/02/22  Constable, K.2015. ‘The Outdoor Classroom in Practice, Ages 3-7.’ Routledge London.  Constable, K. 2014. ‘Bringing the Forest School Approach to your Early Years Practice’. Sage. London  Knight,S. 2016. ‘ Forest School in Practice For All Ages’. Sage. London  **Phase 2**  Griffin J & Symington.D. 1997. Moving From Task Orientated to Learning Orientated Strategies on Excursions to Museums in Science Education 81:6  Riding, D Talbot-Landers, C.A. et al. 2019. Developing Place based Pedagogies to Challenge Institutional Authority International Journal for Art and Design 38:4 pp927-942 accessed at [https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/jade.12282 on 14/02/22](https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/jade.12282%20on%2014/02/22)  **Phase 3**  Beams, S. Higgins, P,J. Robbie, N. 2012. ‘Learning Outside the Classroom Theory and Guidelines for Practice’. Routledge. London.  Hawxwell, L. O’Shaughnessy, M. Russell, C. Short, D. 2012. ‘Do you need a kayak to learn outside? A literature Review into Learning Outside the Classroom. Education 3-13, 47 (3) 322-332. Accessed at <https://doi.org>.  Wait, S. 2017. ‘Children Learning Outside the Classroom’. Sage. London  Watt, A 2020. “Learning Through the Seasons an Essential Guide for the Early Years” Taylor Francis. London.  Porter, H. 2018. “Educating Outside” Bloomsbury Education. London. | | |
| **Phase** | **Learn that…** | **Learn how to…** |
| **Phase 1**  **(University-led)** | **Trainees will know:** | **Trainees will be able to:** |
| * LOTC involves learning in a wide array of places and settings other than a classroom and includes the use of visitors to the school **CCF3.2** | * Begin to identify some opportunities to use LOTC to support learning in individual National Curriculum subjects. **CCF 3.1, 3.2.,3.5,3.7** |
| * LOTC is an approach to learning that consists of multiple pedagogies related to individual subject disciplines, (e.g., fieldwork, enquiry etc) connected to specific places (Forest School, Visits etc). **CCF3.1, 3.2** | * Articulate some of the values of using LOTC to support children’s learning e.g., developing schema, impact on long term memory, behaviour regulation, wellbeing etc |
| * What is Learning in the Natural Environment and how all schools, no matter their location can access these environments. **CCF 3.** | * Collectively shape a learning Experience to support children’s Connection to Nature using a Connection to Nature Framework **CCF3.2** |
| * Recognise the importance of connecting to nature for children’s learning. **CCF1,1, m 1,4, 1,6, 2.1,2.2, 2.5, 2.6** | * Consider potential benefits and hazards of using the outdoors and how to mediate hazards. **CCF1.1,3.1,3.2 7.2** |
| * Know the term ‘Nature Deficit Disorder’ and recognise some of the causes for this including those of unequal access, misconceptions and lack of teacher confidence. **CCF1.2,1.4, 1.6 2.** | * Begin to use Risky Play Pedagogy to collectively shape the design of an activity to support providing children with opportunities to experience healthy risk **CCF11, 1.6,3.1.3.2, 3.3,3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 7.1, 7.2.7.3, 7.4** |
| * Begin to be aware of the research findings around the benefits of LOTC for children’s learning and how it can support long term memory, cognition, wellbeing and behaviour regulation. **CCF2,1, 2.2 2.3,2.4 2.5, 2.6,3.71, 7.2, 7.3, 7.4, 7.5,** | * Identify and begin to promote an individual respect for the environment and ecological justice. **CCF1.1,1.6 2.1, 2.2, 3.2** |
| * How connection to nature and experiences in the natural environments can support children’s wellbeing. (Visit to Ruff Wood), using the local community as a learning resource. Recognise the Country Code. Promoting play through natural materials. **CCF1.1,1.6, 2,4, 3.2,3.5, 3.6, 7.4, 7.5** | **Composite knowledge/understanding/skills**  *By the end of this phase trainees will* ***know:***   * What is Learning Outside the Classroom? * LOTC can support learning in different subjects. * The key values associated with Learning in Natural Environments and the outdoors. * It is a teachers’ professional duty to carry out a Risk Benefit Assessment. * *The importance of the Country Code.*   *By the end of this phase trainees will* ***understand:***   * Key principles and pedagogies associated with Learning in a Natural Environment (Connecting to Nature, Risky Play Pedagogy etc). * Risk Benefit Assessments support children in learning how to regulate behaviour, evaluate risk and stay safe. * How the outdoors can be used to support some disciplinary pedagogies such as Knowledge and * Understanding of the World, historical/geography enquiry, scientific enquiry. * How to promote play using natural materials.   *By the end of this phase trainees will* ***be able to:***  Begin to collectively create learning experience to support children’s learning using outdoor spaces.  **Assessment**  Formative Assessment within seminar and Seminar Padlet to record trainees’ planned experiences. |
| * Begin to identify how the United Nations 17 Sustainability Goals and DFE Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy (2021), can impact on Early Years Provision **CCF1,1,1.6,3.2,3.5, 7.2,7.3,7.4,7.5, 7.6** |
| * Trainees to understand the importance of Learning in natural environments and how the outdoors supports children’s cultural capital through enabling them to access a full range of natural landscapes, increase awareness of employment opportunities and supports their personal, social, emotional, cultural and cognitive development. **CCF1.6, 2.1 2.5, 2.6,3.2,3.5,3.6,7.2, 7.3** |
| * Risk Benefit Assessments are a statutory requirement and support children in learning how to assess risk and stay safe. |
| * potential risks, likelihood of injury, mediators to reduce risk/likelihood and evaluation of activity (practical session). |
| **Phase 2**  **(University-led)**  *\*Trainees will review the knowledge, understanding and skills developed at Phases 1 and phase 2, and will add the following…* | **Trainees will know:** | **Trainees will be able to:** |
| * Factors that contribute to a well-planned visit. **CCF 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7, 3.8,3.10, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4** | * Design a learning experience using LOTC to support effective learning across the curriculum, demonstrating awareness of appropriate pedagogy.   **CCF3.1, 3.2,3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7, 3.8. 3.10, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3** |
| * LOTC includes visits to cultural, environmental, historic and other informal educational settings and places. **CCF1.1, 1.6 3.2, 3.7** | * Plan an orientation activity to ensure children become comfortable, confident and understand the setting and purpose of visit and recognise how this supports a child’s cultural capital .**CCF1.1, 1.6, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5 3.6 3.7, 3.8, 4.1, 4.2,4.3,4.6, 4.7, 4.8, 4.9, 5.2, 5.7** |
| * The research around effective LOTC planning and the role of the teacher. **CCF 1.1, 1.2, 1.6, 3.2, 4.1, 7.1,7.2, 7.3,7.4** | * Consider the barriers identified in research to effective use of LOTC and be able to begin to address them.   **CCF 1.2,1.3, 1.4, 1.6, 3.2, 3.4, 3.5, 4.1,5.1 5.2, 5.7** |
| * How children’s cultural capital can be developed through opportunities to visit and engage confidently with a range of settings and professionals. **CCF1.1,1.2,1.3, 1.4 1.6, 3.2, 3.5, 3.6,3.7, 3.10 5.1, 5.2, 5.7** | * Discuss and/or plan LOTC experiences within a Medium term Plan. **CCF 3.2, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3,4.6,4.7, 4.8, 4.9 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.7, 6.1,6,2,6,3,6,4** |
| * That the participation gap in access to cultural experiences can be reduced through school-based experiences. **1.6, 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5 3.2 5.1, 5.2** | * Reflect upon LOTC lessons designed and or observed, recognising the role of assessment and measuring impact on children’s learning **CCF. 3.1, 3.2, 4.1, 5.1, 5.2, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4, 6.5, 6.6,** |
| * Key theories that support effective learning using informal learning settings. **3.2, 1.6, 2.4, 7.3** | * Shape a Benefit Risk Assessment that supports orientation, understanding and respect for the setting and that keeps themselves and others safe. **CCF 3.2, 4.1,4.2, 4.3,46, 4.7 5.2, 5.7** |
| * Principle values of using cultural institutions and built landscapes within teaching for the holistic development of the child. **CCF1.1, 1.6 3.2, 37, 3.10, 5.1, 5.2.7.1, 7.2, 7.3,7.4** | * Recognise how to adapt learning outside the classroom experiences to support all children’s learning. **CCF3.1, 3.2 5.2,5.3, 5.4, 5.6, 5.77.1, 7.2** |
| **Trainees will understand:** | **Composite knowledge/understanding/skills**  *By the end of this phase trainees will* ***know:***   * ***That school visits to an informal learning setting should use the three-part structure to inform the sequence of lessons.*** * ***Some ways that school visits can support children’s cultural capital.***   *By the end of this phase trainees will* ***understand:***   * ***Key features of effective LOTC planning, drawn from research informed practice, when using LOTC setting*** * ***The importance of pre-visit and post visit tasks when planning a high-quality school visit*** * ***How effective planning can support children’s cultural capital when using LOTC.***   *By the end of this phase trainees will be* ***able to***   * ***Identify the key values that visits to informal learning settings can develop in children.*** * ***Plan orientation activities to support children’s effective learning when using an LOTC setting.***   **Assessment for Phase 2**  Assessed within University Centre training through formative assessment, quizzes and summative assessment within modules. |
| * School visits should follow a three-part structure when planning an effective visit (pre-visit, the visit and post visit tasks upon return to school. **CCF 3.2, 4.2,4.3, 4.6, 5,1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4 6.1, 6.2, 6.3 6.4,6.7.1, 8.3, 8.4** |
| * Key elements that should be contained in an effective LOTC lessons (clear objectives, assessment, pedagogy matched to objective. **CCF3.2, 4.1, 4.2,4.3,4.4,4.5, 4.6, 5.1, 5.2,5.3, 5.7 8.4** |
| * The professional role of the teacher in undertaking pre visits, consider needs of the class, purpose of visit and developing relationships and partnerships with other educational professionals to make the visit effective. **CCF 1.2, 3.2, 7.1, 7.2** |
| * The importance of self-reflection developing their own professional skills through research, seeking CPD, enhancement opportunities and working with other professional partners i.e teachers, learning officers in LOTC settings. **CCF1.2, 3.2** |
| * Key principles, practices and resources to support effective planning using LOTC. |
| * Strategies to adapt teaching to support the individual needs of children. |
| * Approaches to the assessment of the impact of LOTC on children’s learning and holistic development. |
| * How to construct a Risk Benefit Assessment. |
| **Phase 3**  **(University- led)**  *\*Trainees will review the knowledge, understanding and skills developed at Phases 1 and 2, and will add the following…* | **Trainees will know:** | **Trainees will be able to:** |
| * How schools Integrate LOTC into their curriculum across EYFS, KS1. (Visit to Eatock School). | * Discuss and observe/or support LOTC in individual lessons across subjects and age phrases. |
| * Some ways that schools use their grounds and local vicinity to support learning. | * Discuss and observe/support were possible e.g., Forest School, Beach School Gardening and Nature Clubs etc. |
| * How LOTC opportunities can provide experiences to children that they may not have access to at home. |
| * Some ways that LOTC opportunities are used to support NC subjects. |
| * Some ways that visitors are used by schools to support learners. | **Composite knowledge/understanding/skills**  *By the end of this phase trainees will* ***know:***  ***How Schools integrate LOTC into their curriculum using their school grounds and locality***  *By the end of this phase trainees will* ***understand:***   * ***The range of LOTC resources and practices used to support learning across individual subjects.*** * ***The implementation of Risk Benefit Assessments in enabling children to regulate their behaviour and to evaluate risk.***   *By the end of this phase trainees will be* ***able to***   * ***To discuss, plan and/or support LOTC experiences using the schools’ outdoor space, locality and LINE to support a learning experience.***   Discuss how schools use and create Risk Benefit Assessments  Discuss and were possible support the evaluation and impact of LOTC on children’s learning.  **Assessment Phase 3**  Reflection and feedback from school visit  Module EYE 3001:  Explore how outdoor learning can contribute to children’s learning and development, considering its holistic nature.  Critically analyse and gain knowledge of the benefits and challenges of outdoor learning.  Explore the role of the adult and how attitudes may inform/affect outdoor provision.  How outdoor provision can be adapted to meet individual needs.  Critically analyse a range of views from literature around key themes related to the benefits and challenges of outdoor learning. |
| * Factors that contribute to a well-planned visit. **CCF 3.1, 3.2,3.3, 3.4,3.5,3.6,3.7,3.8,3.10, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4.** |
| * How schools evaluate risks and conduct Risk Benefit Assessments. * Some ways a school curriculum integrates LOTC within its wider curriculum. **CCF3.1, 3.4** * The utilisation of LOTC to support individual subject principles e.g., fieldwork, enquiry etc. * Ways that schools utilise their LOTC resources e.g., school grounds, locality and visitors to support learning. * How schools use Risk Benefit Assessments to keep children safe. (One day visit to Eatock Partner School). |