

Experiential Learning

Intent

At Harvills Hawthorn Primary School we believe that children should experience an extensive and innovative curriculum that engages them and contributes towards high achievement to ensure they can be the very best they can be. Our School Values (Respect; Love; Inclusiveness; Responsibility; Quality) are a fundamental aspect in developing strong foundations on which learning is built upon; to assist our children for the next stage in their lives and to make positive contributions to their community. These elements are woven into our Experiential Learning which provides real life experiences that are often missing for our children and also gives them a platform to base their learning on. It also promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of Harvills Hawthorn pupils.

The staff at Harvills Hawthorn understand (and foster) children's natural curiosities and that by interacting with each other and the world around them, new discoveries are made. Experiential Learning involves 'learning from experience' and our children are immersed in practical opportunities that create a hook to immediately engage children and develop new skills, new attitudes and new ways of thinking, fostering lifelong connections.

When planning for Experiential Learning, staff recognise that learning is a deeply personal experience and ensure that 'hands on' experiences are fully inclusive for every child. Our aim is to inspire, self-motivate and encourage our children to actively contribute and shape their own learning through first hand experiences.

Implementation

- All teachers will be involved in the planning of experiential learning opportunities for individual classes and/or year groups, in advance of subjects and topics taught, linking to a range of learning opportunities throughout the curriculum.
- Consideration for all experiential learning activities will be given to the interests, lives, school values, and experiences of all children.
- Provide a range starting from the hook in the classroom to the visit to the local shops to the larger, further afield experiences.
- Learning targets (constructed from knowledge and skills from the National Curriculum) will be identified for specific trips and hooks, prior to the experience.
- Space around school site will be used effectively for experiences.
- Children will be encouraged to take risks in the pursuit of self-directed discovery.
- A focus on subject specific vocabulary will be experienced first-hand throughout the activity.
- Children will complete Harvills 101 booklets where they will be set specific tasks to complete throughout their time at primary school and will be rewarded for their achievements. Awards will be based on the number of tasks completed: 25 (bookmark); 50 (torch); 75 (pencil case); 101 (bag). Awards will be presented in celebration assemblies.
- Where possible, parents will participate in experiential learning or be invited to showcase assemblies.

Impact

Providing Experiential Learning, through engaging, inspiring experiences, we aim to improve the construction of our children's knowledge and skills, enabling them to contribute to the local community and wider society now and in the future. Real life learning opportunities, which include challenges, will develop deeper critical thinking, problem solving and decision making skills in order to accelerate learning and help retain concepts and ideas. Through a fun, safe, controlled environment, our children will build collaboration and learn from others and also enhance social, emotional, management and leadership skills, whilst understanding that mistakes and risk taking are natural parts of the learning process. This will equip our children with independency skills required for the next stage in their lives.