

The UK Youth Outdoor Learning Matrix



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Our outdoor learning matrix is objective-focused and highlights **nine key social and emotional skills** that outdoor learning fosters. It is designed to help you pair the objectives you want to focus on during your stay with the activities you think your group would enjoy and benefit from the most, helping them to **experience, learn, and develop** along the way.

Outcomes are central to outdoor learning where the primary goal is to foster personal growth, skills development, and overall well-being.

Here's why focusing on these outcomes is vital for young people

- ✓ Building Life Skills
- ✓ Promoting Mental and Physical Well-Being
- ✓ Enhancing Learning and Academic Success
- ✓ Encouraging Environmental Stewardship
- ✓ Supporting Social & Emotional Development
- ✓ Supports Individual Growth

Please note: This matrix serves as a guide, and we encourage you to discuss your specific requirements with our customer experience team. Together, we'll create a personalised programme to enable your young people to experience, learn, and develop and ensure your visit leaves lasting memories.





Environmental awareness

Environmental awareness connects us to the outdoor learning environment we operate in.

It sensitivity links how our actions and decisions affect the environment and how we can make conscious choices to minimise negative impacts.

It can include practical examples such as adopting sustainable practices like reducing waste, conserving resources, and respecting nature in team activities. This promotes ethical decision-making and contributes to broader environmental stewardship.

Socio-emotional Skills

This can be seen in a person's ability to understand how human activities are connected to the environment, and how both individual and group actions affect ecological systems.

Environmental awareness fosters a sense of responsibility and stewardship towards the planet.

Mental Skill Indicators

Curiosity: about what drives us and others to explore, learn, and seek new knowledge about the environment.

Adaptability: Our ability to adjust to changing circumstances and thrive in new environments.

Behavioural Skill Indicators

Mindfulness and awareness

Being conscious of the environmental impact of our actions.

Our ability to undertake an action or activity whilst appreciating or protecting the natural landscape

Staying informed about environmental issues and developments.

Our location and the importance we place on our environment as an integral aspect of our outdoor learning delivery means that this learning outcome will be naturally inherent in any outdoor learning experience at Avon Tyrrell. For those really looking to amplify environmental awareness during their stay we would highlight the following as ways to maximise engagement on environmental awareness during your visit.

Outdoor Learning Sessions

- ✓ Pond Dipping
- ✓ Bushcraft
- ✓ Shelter building
- ✓ Animal tracks/ Mini Beasts
- ✓ Art in the environment
- ✓ Discovery Walk
- ✓ Night Walk
- ✓ Nature Trail

General Residential Aspects

- ✓ Reuse – by using a reusable water bottle.
- ✓ Reduce – by not overloading plates with food.
- ✓ Recycle – by using the various bins provided.
- ✓ Not leaving any litter.
- ✓ Using established paths and walkways.
- ✓ Taking an interest in session content and getting involved in discussions about the environment.
- ✓ Turning lights off in rooms when you leave.



Physical literacy

Physical literacy is the degree to which we have a positive and meaningful relationship with movement and physical activity across our lifetime. It is defined both positively and negatively by our experiences.

By creating safe spaces that enable everyone to participate and through an ethos of challenge by choice personalised participation is rewarded, and we help individuals build positive relationships with movement.

Activities often involve developing physical skills, coordination, and body awareness that enable individuals to engage in group activities or challenges effectively.

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Socio-emotional Skills

This can be seen in an individual's ability to understand how motivation, confidence and physical competence to participate can impact short and long term engagement with movement.

Providing positive opportunities for individuals to engage in less traditional activities can reduce negatively held beliefs about ability and sense of belonging.

Mental Skill Indicators

Wellbeing: The ability to understand the immediate and long term impacts on health and happiness.

Choice: the ability to understand the breadth of provision available and choose the right personal choices.

Behavioural Skill Indicators

Physicality: an ability to recognise or develop the body management, or locomotor skills required to participate.

Skill development: increased knowledge or proficiency at a specific task or action.

Diversity of provision and the ethos of challenge by choice often mean individuals are able to find the activity level that suits them and are rewarded for their individual achievements. These principles are embedded in all our programmes, but for those really looking to amplify physical literacy during their stay we would highlight the following as ways to build stronger relationships with positive movement and physical activity during your visit.

Outdoor Learning Sessions

A diverse programme is essential and where possible it should include

- ✓ An activity at height i.e. Tree Top Trail
- ✓ A combined cognitive and physical activity i.e. Pioneering
- ✓ A team based activity i.e. Raft building
- ✓ A water based activity i.e. Canoeing
- ✓ A land based activity i.e. Archery

General Residential Aspects

- ✓ Navigating around the site and recognising how being outdoors can support our mental and physical wellbeing.
- ✓ Setting personalised goals and recognising and rewarding achievement.
- ✓ Supporting our challenge by choice ethos and recognising the achievements and choices of others.

Groups also have free access to our sports courts and grounds to conduct their own self led activities or for young people to use in their free time.



Challenge and risk

Outdoor learning activities can often involve individuals pushing beyond comfort zones and embracing uncertainty to achieve growth and innovation. There can be a perceived sense of risk that can be explored in a safe and well supported environment.

Challenges stimulate creativity, encouraging teams to find new solutions and improve their skills. Facing challenges as a team fosters resilience and collaboration, as members work together to overcome obstacles and recognise the value of having personalised challenges.

Socio-emotional Skills

This can be seen by an individual's ability to make informed choices and manage their emotional state.

Providing positive opportunities for individuals to engage in supported activities can allow them to begin differentiating between challenge and risk to make more informed future choices.

Mental Skill Indicators

Choice: the ability to understand the breadth of opportunity available and establish their own comfort and stretch boundaries.

Behavioural Skill Indicators

Self-confidence: the trust and acceptance you have in yourself.

Decision making: the ability to make informed decisions based on environment conditions and personal targets.

Diversity of provision and the ethos of challenge by choice often mean individuals are provided with different levels of personal challenge and can observe others to make different personal choices.

For those really looking to amplify this aspect during their stay we would highlight the following as ways to challenge perceptions of risk and the role of choice together with appropriate follow up messaging, to drive effective sustainable growth.

Outdoor Learning Sessions

- ✓ High Ropes
- ✓ Climbing
- ✓ Zip wire
- ✓ Low Ropes
- ✓ Mountain Biking
- ✓ Kayaking

General Residential Aspects

- ✓ The way we adapt to being in an unfamiliar place or staying away from home.
- ✓ Trying new foods at meal times.
- ✓ Forming new or different friendships with peers and leaders.



Teamwork

Individuals have their own set of skills and strengths. When the whole team works as a unit, everyone has an opportunity to learn from each other. Engagement in outdoor learning enables teams to become better equipped to deal with new challenges.

By choosing activities that focus on teamwork you will be helping individuals to collaborate and coordinate with others, to encourage everyone to do their fair share, get help from others and give support to others and build awareness and respect around what makes us unique.

Groups will be able to recognise and manage social interaction, see the influence of personality, power and behaviours and where possible be given the opportunity to take a leadership role.

Socio-emotional Skills

This can be seen by observing an individual's ability to collaborate and coordinate action with others, including through communication and leadership.

Providing positive opportunities for individuals to engage in team challenges where they take on different roles can allow them to understand more about their own working styles and that of others and appreciate the differences and strength of different approaches.

Mental Skill Indicators

Receptive: ability to consider new ideas and suggestions

Fairness and equity: the ability to do a fair share of group work, help others, seek help from others and respect others' viewpoints, and hold others accountable.

Active listening: the ability to fully concentrate on what others are saying, show understanding through body language or feedback, and respond in a thoughtful and respectful way.

Behavioural Skill Indicators

Leadership: abilities to influence group dynamics, cooperate with others and seek help/input

Group dynamics: abilities to recognise and manage social interaction and influence of personality, power or behaviour.

Help or cooperate with others who are struggling, seek help from others, remind others to do their part, and abilities to keep track of their own and others' group progress.

Teamwork is often inherent within outdoor learning provision, not just through the delivery of outdoor learning activities but through the shared experiences of being away with others. For those really looking to amplify this aspect during their stay we would highlight the following as ways to spotlight the role individuals play within teams.

Outdoor Learning Sessions

- ✓ Climbing
- ✓ High Ropes
- ✓ Problem Solving
- ✓ Low Ropes
- ✓ Canoeing
- ✓ Raft building

General Residential Aspects

- ✓ Working together to keep dining and accommodation areas tidy.
- ✓ Encouraging and supporting others to try new things.
- ✓ Supporting others who may feel anxious about being away from home.
- ✓ Sharing rooms with others, especially lesser known peers.



Responsibility

Responsibility highlights the accountability each member has for their actions, roles, and contributions toward team goals. It involves reliably completing tasks, meeting deadlines, and being transparent about progress or challenges.

A strong sense of responsibility fosters trust, as team members know they can rely on one another. It encourages ownership, where individuals take pride in their work and hold themselves accountable for outcomes. Ultimately, responsibility drives team success by ensuring commitment and consistency in achieving objectives.

Socio-emotional Skills

This can be seen by observing an individual's ability to reliably meet commitments and fulfil obligations of challenging roles.

Providing positive opportunities for individuals to engage in activities with additional responsibility can build trust and understanding.

Mental Skill Indicators

Responsibility: An individual's ability to take responsibility for their actions; be counted on to get their part done; do the things that they say they are going to do; and do their best when an adult asks them to do something.

Behavioural Skill Indicators

Completing the task that they started, delivering on promises on the things that they said they are going to do, acknowledge mistakes and take action to address them, and do the things an adult asked them to do.

Responsibility is often a skill that is developed as a result of an outdoor learning experience where the activity is seen as the outcome rather than the components of the journey. For those really looking to amplify responsibility during their stay we would highlight the following.

Outdoor Learning Sessions

- ✓ Climbing
- ✓ Abseil
- ✓ Archery
- ✓ Pond dipping
- ✓ Low Ropes
- ✓ Problem Solving
- ✓ High ropes
- ✓ Navigation (i.e. Orienteering, Adventure trail, Geocache)

General Residential Aspects

- ✓ Making beds and maintaining personal items.
- ✓ Laying tables or clearing tables after meals.
- ✓ Personal hygiene.
- ✓ Being in the right place at the right time.
- ✓ Having all the clothes and equipment you need.



Problem solving

Problem-solving involves identifying, analysing, and addressing challenges collaboratively to achieve common goals. It requires critical thinking, creativity, and effective communication among team members to develop solutions that benefit the group.

Successful problem-solving enhances decision-making, reduces conflicts, and increases efficiency by allowing teams to overcome obstacles together. Teams that prioritize problem-solving foster an environment of open dialogue, where diverse perspectives and ideas are valued. Leaders play a key role in guiding the process, encouraging collaboration, and ensuring the team remains focused on solutions. Ultimately, strong problem-solving skills lead to greater innovation, adaptability, and team cohesion.

Socio-emotional Skills

This can be witnessed through observing an individual's ability to plan, strategise, and implement complex tasks, including critical thinking, goal setting, and responsible decision making.

Providing positive opportunities for individuals to adapt to changing circumstances or overcome problems can build empowerment and confidence.

Mental Skill Indicators

Ideation: an individual's ability to brainstorm and organise ideas; make alternative plans; make step-by-step plans; manage time; and keep track of goal progress.

Behavioural Skill Indicators

Communication: the ability to impart or exchange information and achieve the desired outcomes

Ideate before developing a plan; evaluate alternative plans for reaching a specific goal; create plans with multiple steps; manage time; keep track of goal progress; and adjust to feedback.

Problem solving is often a skill that is developed as a result of an outdoor learning experience where the activity is seen as the outcome rather than the components of the journey. For those really looking to amplify problem solving during their stay we would highlight the following.

Outdoor Learning Sessions

- ✓ Problem Solving
- ✓ Low Ropes
- ✓ Challenge Course
- ✓ Navigation (i.e. Orienteering, Adventure trail, Geocache)
- ✓ Shelter building

General Residential Aspects

- ✓ Managing new and existing peer relationships and possible conflict.
- ✓ Managing different bedtimes and sleep choices.
- ✓ Speaking up with ideas.
- ✓ Finding solutions to unexpected challenges.
- ✓ Making group decisions.



Initiative

Initiative refers to the proactive behaviour of taking responsibility and acting without being prompted, driving the team toward its goals. It involves identifying opportunities, addressing challenges, and contributing solutions before issues escalate.

Team members who show initiative often inspire others, fostering a culture of accountability and innovation. In a collaborative environment, initiative helps teams move forward, maintain momentum, and overcome obstacles efficiently. Leaders who encourage initiative empower individuals to take ownership, make decisions, and improve overall team performance. By cultivating initiative, teams become more dynamic, adaptable, and resilient in achieving their objectives.

Socio-emotional Skills

This can be seen by observing an individual's ability to act, sustain motivation; and persevere through challenges toward an identified role.

Providing positive opportunities for individuals to adapt to changing circumstances or overcome problems can build better long term initiative.

Mental Skill Indicators

Abilities to take initiative; generate new solutions.

Persist during challenges; and risk failure.

Behavioural Skill Indicators

Take initiative: set ambitious but realistic goals, stay on task despite distractions, and push through during a challenging task.

Initiative is often a skill that is developed as a result of an outdoor learning experience where the activity is seen as the outcome rather than the components of the journey. For those really looking to amplify initiative building during their stay we would highlight the following.

Outdoor Learning Sessions

- ✓ Pioneering
- ✓ Raft building
- ✓ Shelter building
- ✓ Discovery Walk
- ✓ Navigation (i.e. Orienteering, Adventure trail, Geocache)
- ✓ Mountain Biking

General Residential Aspects

- ✓ Proactiveness in the dining room without being prompted by an adult.
- ✓ Forward planning for the day ahead with bags – hats, drinks, sun cream etc.
- ✓ Proactiveness on lessons with equipment usage and helping others.



Empathy

Empathy is the ability to understand and share the feelings of others, playing a crucial role in fostering strong relationships within teams. In teambuilding, empathy helps individuals connect on an emotional level, improving communication and collaboration.

It allows team members to see situations from different perspectives, reducing misunderstandings and resolving conflicts more effectively. Empathetic teams are more supportive, creating an environment of psychological safety where everyone feels heard and valued. Empathy is a hugely transferable skills that strengthens team cohesion and enhances overall performance and well-being.

Socio-emotional Skills

This can be witnessed through observing the way an individual relates to others, this could be with empathy, compassion; acceptance and understanding; and sensitivity to their diverse perspectives and experiences.

Providing positive opportunities for individuals to give and receive empathetic support can build teams and relationships.

Mental Skill Indicators

Abilities to understand how others feel; feel what others are feeling; and feel bad for others who are worse off or whose feelings are hurt.

Behavioural Skill Indicators

Noticing when others are emotionally upset; showing empathy by reflecting others' feelings; and responding to others' feelings without taking them personally.

Residential and outdoor learning experiences can often result in heightened emotions as individuals deal with uncertainty and exposure to new and challenging environment. Being able to feel supported and give support to others is often critical to creating a positive environment when individuals thrive. For those really looking to focus on empathetic behaviours during their stay we would highlight the following.

Outdoor Learning Sessions

- ✓ Abseiling
- ✓ Tree top trail
- ✓ High Ropes
- ✓ Lake activities
- ✓ Low Ropes
- ✓ Mountain biking
- ✓ Night Walk
- ✓ Trust walk

General Residential Aspects

- ✓ Comforting others if they feel upset/home sick.
- ✓ Good manners in the dining room and when getting meals.
- ✓ Noise awareness in shared spaces.
- ✓ Understanding varying needs of others in the group and supporting them.
- ✓ Supporting our challenge by choice ethos and recognising the achievements and choices of others.



Emotion management

Outdoor learning activities can often help individuals recognise their own and others' emotions in a safe supported environment test and learn strategies that work for themselves, as they watch others do the same.

Effective emotional management can also enhance or spotlight emotional intelligence (EI), allowing team members who may not excel in other spaces to shine as they respond empathetically to support each other under pressure. Teams with strong emotional management are more cohesive, resilient to stress, and better equipped to handle challenges while maintaining a positive and productive environment.

Socio-emotional Skills

This can be witnessed through observing the way an individual can name, understand, and constructively handle both positive and negative emotions.

Self-awareness: abilities to understand own needs and values and constructively handle both positive and negative emotions.

Mental Skill Indicators

Focusing and shifting awareness; reappraisal; response inhibition.

Cognition: the mental process of thinking. Learning and understanding includes aspects such as concentration and analytical ability.

Behavioural Skill Indicators

Easily frustrated; remains calm in stressful situations.

Resilience: ability to recover and adapt quickly from adversity or challenges.

Residential and outdoor learning experiences can often result in heightened emotions as individuals deal with uncertainty and exposure to new and challenging environment. Individuals often face a range of emotions throughout their experience from the highs of achieving their goals to the anxiety of dealing with new situations or building new relationships and being able to understand your own emotional state can really support creating a positive experience. For those really looking to focus on empathetic behaviours during their stay we would highlight the following.

Outdoor Learning Sessions

- ✓ Tree top Trail
- ✓ Low Ropes
- ✓ Problem Solving
- ✓ Bushcraft
- ✓ Pioneering
- ✓ Archery

General Residential Aspects

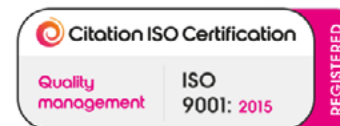
- ✓ Queuing at mealtimes, for activities, or in the shop.
- ✓ Managing emotions of being away from home.
- ✓ Managing conflicts that arise e.g. you want to sleep, and others are talking, or you want the top bunk and so does someone else.
- ✓ Managing anxiety – what's going to happen in an unfamiliar environment.
- ✓ Patience where there are gaps in the schedule.
- ✓ Sharing rooms with others outside of normal friendship groups



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