



I am delighted to support the Learning Outside the Classroom Manifesto, and I would like to thank the many people who have worked so hard to make it a success.

It is vital for all young people – from the very young to older teenagers – to experience learning outside the classroom as part of their normal lessons, and beyond, and to have a range of experiences that help them to grow and develop.

These experiences all help motivate young people, reducing poor behaviour and truancy, while helping schools to raise attainment and meet Every Child Matters outcomes.



If we are to reach our goal of making this the best place in the world for our children and young people to grow up, we must ensure that they have access to experiences that deepen learning and provide challenge and inspiration.

The Children's Plan reinforces the five aims of Every Child Matters and learning outside the classroom has clear links to every one of these outcomes. Participation not only encourages healthy lifestyles, it develops the personal attributes and social skills that are vital for achievement, social inclusion, responsible citizenship and enterprise and employability. It also helps young people to learn to manage risk.

If we are to provide learning outside the classroom for all, we need to look at opportunities literally on the doorstep – poetry and performance in the school or setting grounds; walking up to a local war memorial or churchyard to discover more about the history of local people; using local streetscapes to explore buildings old and new. Going further afield to a museum or gallery to see paintings and handle collections; or to a field studies centre, using the natural environment for science and geography fieldwork; spending time in place of worship to reflect and explore spirituality; going to a farm to understand better where food comes from – all of these open young people's eyes to the world around them. And then there are the powerful experiences in wild and remote places – adventure activity and expeditions - as well as going abroad on language and cultural visits, that stretch and inspire.

This website, created by the Manifesto partnership, has been designed to support schools, early years settings and other groups to take advantage of these opportunities and to build them in to teaching plans for their learners. The 'Out and About' guidance provides practical help in planning the curriculum, organising and running learning outside the classroom and judging success and progress.

There are resources, case studies and ideas for getting out of the classroom, and these will grow as the site develops. You will find a range of CPD modules that can be downloaded for different audiences. You can keep up to date with news and events in your area. You can use the powerful arguments and research to talk to colleagues about the importance of these experiences. This includes the Ofsted report - *Learning outside the Classroom – How far should you go?* which makes a strong case:

*'When planned and implemented well, learning outside the classroom contributed significantly to raising standards and improving pupils' personal, social and emotional development'*. Ofsted October 2008

You will soon be able to take advantage of the new Quality Badge which will identify organisations offering high quality experiences and managing risk effectively. From January 2009 providers of learning outside the classroom will be able to apply for the badge and progressively you will find organisations in your area listed at [www.lotcqualitybadge.org.uk](http://www.lotcqualitybadge.org.uk)

And finally, I am pleased to welcome into being the new Council for Learning Outside the Classroom, which will take over responsibility for the Manifesto and drive forward its aims from April 2009. I see the Council as a key partner for the Department and look forward to working with them as they move ahead with their strategic plan.



**SARAH MCCARTHY-FRY MP**  
**Parliamentary Undersecretary of State for Schools and Learners**