

**Purpose**

*Making connections with our environment. Living and learning together.*

Living and learning together at Arbury Park Outdoor School inspires everyone to learn more.

Together we make connections with nature and with each other. We create extraordinary opportunities to explore and be challenged in a magical bush setting.

The experience of living away from home builds confidence, independence and wellbeing. It also builds community and a shared responsibility to care for things that matter.

**Values**

**Curiosity** is an eagerness to discover new things, to wonder and to learn. When we are curious we explore the mysteries of our world.

**Care** means giving love and attention to people and things that matter. When we care about something or someone we try to give our best.

**Community** is about the connections in our lives; connections between each other, with places, and with things. Our community is the web of our relationships. It gives us a sense of belonging.

**Learner Dispositions**

**Being reflective** is when we make an effort to explore our feelings and thinking so we understand ourselves better. We try to recognise our own strengths and improvement areas so we can learn and grow.

**Using imagination** opens new possibilities that help us visualise a world beyond here and now. Using imagination creates ideas and actions.

**Being resilient** means being able to bounce back from difficult or challenging experiences. It means we don't give up when things are stressful, we find a way to keep going.

**Seeking challenge** means being willing to risk going beyond our current boundaries so that we can grow our skill or understanding.

**Making connections** means we are linking new learning, places, people and feelings to our personal life. Connections help us make sense of how our experiences build on what we already know.

**Learning collaboratively** happens when people help and challenge each other. Comparing our ideas and perspectives with others helps us to clarify and deepen our learning.

**Pedagogy**

Sharing our understanding of what research tells us is good practice.

Being intentional about what the students are learning, rather than what they are doing.

Developing strategies that promote formative assessment of learning. (Dylan William *Assessment for Learning*)

Seeing the learning through the eyes of the student. (John Hattie *Visible Learning*)

**Structures**

Enabling a collaborative approach to de-privatising our practice

**Questioning** *Good questioning causes deeper thinking. Good question delivery extends participation of all learners in the class.*

- "Pose, pause, pounce, bounce" (Basketball not table tennis).
- Open and closed questions both have a purpose. Effective teachers know the difference and choose a question that suits the teaching moment.
- A 'hands down' classroom. Hands up only to ask a question, not to answer a question. All students have to do the thinking. The teacher distributes answers around the group.

**Feedback** *Closing the instructional gap. "Where do I need to be?" "How am I going?" "Where to next?"*

- Task level feedback: does your answer meet the success criteria?
- Process level feedback: what strategies did you use?
- Self-regulation feedback: what is your self-assessment of your learning?
- Praise: unhelpful feedback that directs attention from the task to the self.

**Learning intentions** *A statement that describes clearly what the teacher wants the students to know, understand, and be able to do as a result of the learning and teaching activities. A learning intention emphasises what the students will learn, rather than what they will do.*

- A carefully framed learning intention will direct students' attention to the learning, rather than the activity.
- Can be shared with students at the beginning of a lesson or unit of work, or not mentioned until after the engagement activity.
- Focusing on the learning rather than on the context means it is more likely students will be able to transfer their learning from one context to another.
- Success criteria describe the range of ways students can demonstrate the learning intention.

**Task design** *Designing challenging tasks where students do the thinking. Providing intellectual stretch. Low floor, high ceiling. Re-designing learning tasks from:*

- **Closed to open.** Many entry points, many pathways, many solutions, different perspectives.
- **Telling to asking.** Explore before explain, using dialogue, Socratic questioning, student voice.
- **Information to understanding.** Compare and contrast, generalise, make connections, find relationships.
- **Procedure to problem solving.** Provide only some of the steps, provide insufficient information at first.

**Small group collaborative dialogue** *"Those who do the talking do the learning." Practicing the skills of speaking and listening without judging.*

- Think/pair/share, to explore ideas on a particular challenge or provocation.
- Actively seek divergent views.
- Utilise peers to provide feedback, telling each other what they have achieved and where improvement is necessary.
- Use paraphrasing and clarifying questions to check for understanding.
- Do your thinking out loud, so others can understand and share in it.
- After personal reflection, test your thinking with another person. Its helps make your thinking stronger.

**Learning through play** *How do teachers intentionally encourage play and observe the learning that develops through play?*

- Play is deep uninterrupted engagement in the activity of one's own choice.
- Play is characterised by observable experiences of risk, joy, and deep engagement.
- Play flourishes in places where the materials, environments and decision-making attend to the differences in the individuals and the group.
- Teachers actively observe and extend the learning revealed through play.

**Developmental characteristics of learners** *How do learner characteristics change from early years to adolescence?*

**Early Years** learners are social learners who construct and review their understandings through play, scaffolding and modelling. They are motivated to learn through curiosity, imagination and creativity. **Primary Years** learners are experiencing different kinds of friendships and exploring power dynamics. They are experimenting with identity and referencing themselves against peers. **Middle Years** learners are developing greater interdependence with their peers and independence in their lives. They are developing their own voice, often challenging the voices of parents, teachers and society.

**Professional Learning Teams** *Small teams of teachers use an emergent planning process to provide feedback to each other about pedagogical practice. They:*

- Analyse video segments of lessons using an agreed tool or protocol.
- Meet once each term.
- Use norms for respectful peer reflection: Open mindedness, Whole heartedness, Collegiality.

**Program staff meetings** *All teachers plus curriculum SSO meet for 90 minutes weekly (usually Monday morning)*

- Agenda includes professional learning priorities and daily operations
- Reflection of previous week's program and planning for current week.

**Performance and development** *Everyone has a right to feedback about their performance. Everyone is expected to contribute to improvement at APOS.*

- All staff develop an annual performance and development plan.
- A mid-year and an end of year reflective report meeting for all staff.

**Feedback mechanisms** *Tools and procedures that help us reflect on our intentionality, effectiveness and consistency.*

- Feedback from students**
  - Individual lesson feedback questionnaire, providing feedback for individual APOS teachers, and also summarised to show patterns across teachers.
  - End of camp student focus group with a small group of students.
- Feedback from visiting teachers**
  - Annual client survey using a 2 page questionnaire.
  - End of camp teacher focus group with 2-4 teachers.

**What our students say about their learning and their teachers**

**Helpful teaching**

- They're not full on telling you what to do, they're trusting you to come up with your decisions and they only tell you what to do if you're full on doing something wrong or if they have to.
- They are caring and they make sure everyone's ideas are used in the activities.
- Something that you guys did well was you enthused learning by doing, which is how I learn and I'm sure others do.
- They were telling us and teaching us to keep being curious about things, explore and learn new things.
- I think you have to fail first to succeed cause our group ran out of matches (*Bush survival*) we wasted 4 of them and had to get some extra so we got it in the end. So that was the best teaching because we got to learn from our mistakes and she let us fix our own mistakes.

- In one of the lessons it was hard to hear the teacher. A lot of the times they would go off topic and it was a bit annoying because you would try and listen but they would keep going off topic. People would call out and say something and they would answer that question even though it wasn't relevant to what we were doing.
- On the forest walk the teacher was kind of speaking in the opposite direction of us and it was a bit hard for me to work out what was happening.
- Not doing too many circles (*Bush Survival*) because when our instructor said "Make a circle" everyone kind of went "uhhhhh".

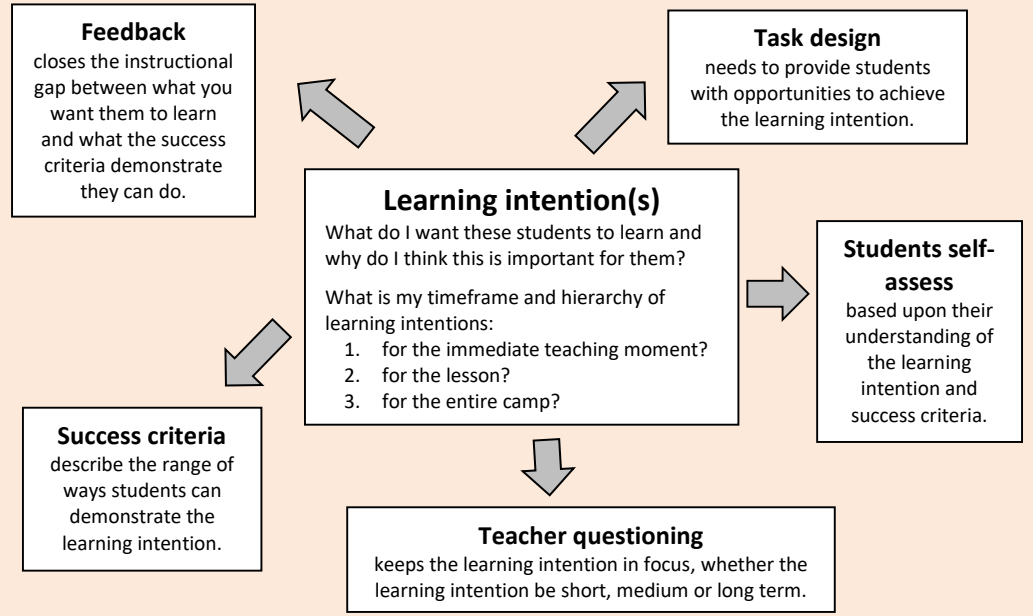
**What I learnt that I think is important**

- Normally we work with the same people over and over but here we were put in different groups. I've learnt that you can do teamwork with pretty much anybody.
- I've learnt how to be a good leader. You should include other people and ask questions to see what they think.
- It's not just about skills. It's about what habits you've learned as well.

**Unhelpful teaching**

- Talk like stronger, not like nicey-nice. Like not really nice but not angry, just enough to let people get it, to get the point through, but not acting like we're babies.

**The fundamental importance of clear learning intentions**



**Rubrics for observing learner engagement (students and their teachers)**




**Student engagement**

<b>-1 Negative engagement</b> Interrupts learning of others (eg. physically / verbally distracts attention from learning).	<b>0 Not participating</b> Walks away from the activity. Does not participate with the group or task.	<b>1 No visible engagement</b> No concentration, fiddles, easily distracted. Aimless actions, only limited results from actions. No physical signals indicating engagement (posture, expression, lack of action). Gives up easily. Off-task.	<b>2 Surface engagement</b> Not really absorbed in the task, activities are short lived. Actions are performed mechanically (routine), without dedication or real involvement. Some physical signs indicating engagement (posture towards the activity, some action) Limited motivation, no real direction, is not challenged.	<b>3 Deep engagement</b> Full attention and energy is focussed on the activity. Actions show attention to detail and precision. 'Jumps' into action as possibilities are introduced. Explicitly indicates their involvement by spontaneous comments and sounds.
Unhelpful engagement		Not engaged → Deep engagement		

**Visiting teacher involvement**

<b>-1 Negative involvement</b> Teacher interrupts, interferes with, or overrides the intended learning designed by APOS teacher.	<b>0 Present but not involved</b> Teacher not concentrating on the learning, doing other tasks (eg photography, phone calls, talking with other visiting staff)	<b>1 Passive involvement</b> Present as an observer of the learning. Assists in the lesson when directed. Doesn't actively intervene.	<b>2 Active involvement</b> Present as a co-learner. Participates actively alongside the learners, prompting and supporting their learning. Encourages on-task behaviour.	<b>3 Expansive involvement</b> Actively builds on and connects student learning. Draws upon knowledge of individual student capabilities and/or prior learning from their school setting. Intervenes purposefully using targeted feedback.
Surface involvement		Deep involvement		

**A taxonomy for constructing learning intentions and success criteria**

	Low floor	Sweet spot	High ceiling
<b>Activating curiosity.</b> An eagerness to discover, wonder & explore.  Being reflective ↔ Using imagination	Willingly listens to instructions and involves him/herself in the task. <i>observes, realises, engages, discovers</i>	Adjusts thinking, plans and actions, as aspects of the task and learning become clear. <i>examines, experiences, wonders, responds, enables, brainstorm</i>	Invents alternatives that could extend learning or practices. <i>experiments, imagines, regulates, changes, transforms, expands</i>
<b>Nurturing care.</b> Giving attention to things that matter.  Being resilient ↔ Seeking challenge	Persists and cooperates to achieve their goal. <i>notices, accepts, listens, participates, joins in, follows procedure, tries, uses, makes</i>	Shows attention to detail with their knowing and doing. <i>responds, adapts, applies, embraces, shares, cooperates, demonstrates, enjoys, encourages</i>	Reflects with others on where new learning may take their thinking and action. <i>expresses, indicates, reflects, creates, includes, involves others, collaborates, , monitors</i>
<b>Expanding community.</b> Knowing about aspects of community.  Making connections ↔ Learning collaboratively	Uses some or all of the new content/skills during the lesson. <i>recognises, reports, describes, recalls, identifies, lists, names, remembers,</i>	Links content/skills to the concept embedded in the learning intention. <i>discusses, classifies, compares, summarises, contrasts, interprets, sequences</i>	Develops appreciation of the concept by 'testing' their shared concept understanding/new skills. <i>explains, judges, evaluates, analyses, plans, designs, organises, generalises, critiques, connects, orients</i>