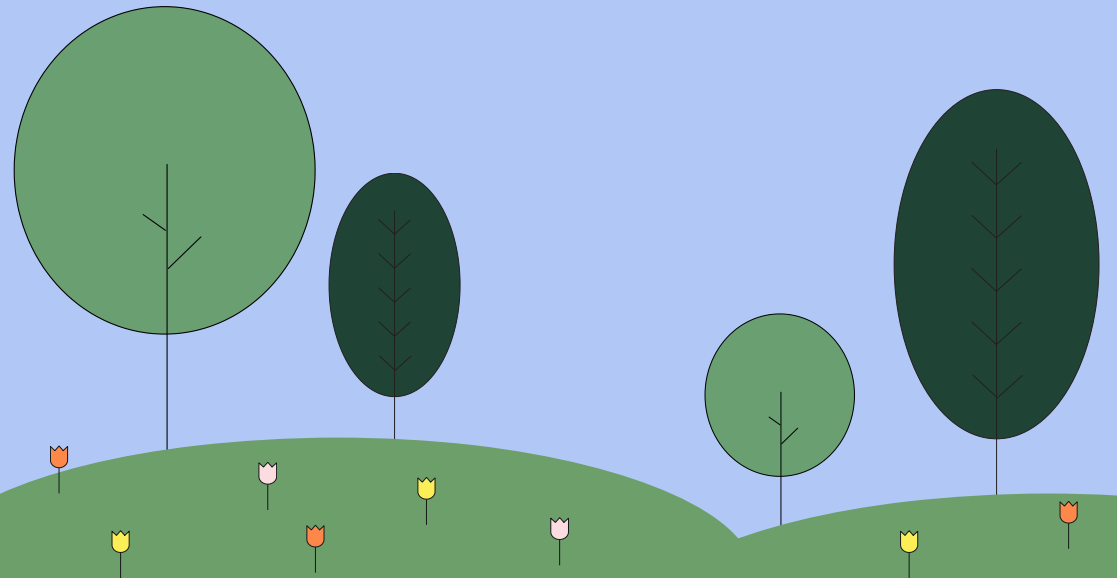




A Complete Guide To Hopscotch Explorers

A deep dive into the benefits of Forest
and Beach School initiatives



Hopscotch



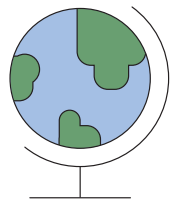
Our Vision

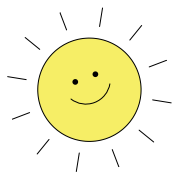
Hopscotch Explorers is an initiative that was started by Jordan, the Early years Curriculum lead at our Seven Dials Nursery.

At Hopscotch, we are passionate about doing our bit to help the planet and we want to encourage the children that attend our nurseries to do the same.

The Hopscotch Explorers curriculum gives children the opportunity to immerse themselves in natural parts of their local communities, such as beaches or woodland areas, but does so with purpose and intent.

This booklet will look at research that has been done into Forest and Beach schools to provide evidence into why Hopscotch Explorers will change our nurseries for the better.





Holistic Development

Holistic development is an approach that encompasses the whole of a child. It is focused on the child's development in all areas:

Physical

The first way in which Hopscotch Explorers allows for the development of the physical is through the initial movement to a new location. This is something that is unable to be done in the nurseries due to limited space, so it offers children the freedom to walk to a new place and find out more about the world. Some of the activities provided, such as leaf threading, encourage children to develop their fine motor skills which is very important in connecting a child's mind to their body.

Emotional

The emotional wellbeing of a child is extremely important to their development. Hopscotch Explorers wants to encourage children to lock into their feelings and understand why they feel the way they do. We encourage children to take part in activities that require perseverance and resilience, such as den building, which may take more time than the usual classroom activities, however they will feel a real sense of a achievement when they are able to complete the task set out.

Social

Whilst children at our nurseries are constantly social, Hopscotch Explorers wants to encourage children to be much more social with their peers. The practitioners will take a step back and allow for children to work together in teams to complete the tasks that have been set out for them. We encourage children to talk to one another and to problem solve on their own whilst helping others.

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Intellectual

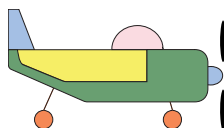
Hopscotch Explorers encourages children to think for themselves and to reflect on their experiences which aids their intellectual development. This is why each child is provided a nature guide that they are able to fill out throughout their time in Hopscotch Explorers which enables them to reflect back on what they learnt that day. We also want to encourage children to engage in a range of creative activities that utilise the natural resources of the outside world. Children will have to decide how best to utilise these resources with practitioners offering guidance on what they can and cannot use, thus aiding in their intellectual development.

Moral and Spiritual

At Hopscotch Explorers, we want to encourage a love and respect for the environment which in turn aids the moral development of children. Hopscotch Explorers encourages learning through play and the activities that we have set out teach children how to care for the environment that surrounds them, whilst still having fun. We also want to encourage children to play different games and even create their own games through utilisation of the natural world surrounding them.

Our Hopscotch Explorers initiative looks at the Holistic development of our children by providing a range of activities that help develop each part of the child. We choose to provide open-ended activities that allow the children to decide what area they want to develop on what day, allowing them that freedom.

Each of our activities provided focuses on at least one of these key developmental areas.



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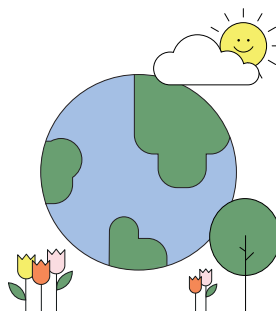
Self Esteem and Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence involves encouraging children to recognise, understand and manage their emotions. It also encourages children to make a judgement on their own skills and abilities.

Hopscotch Explorers believes that by encouraging children to learn outside, it will only aid in their emotional intelligence. Children who struggle in the classroom may excel outside. It will allow them to grow in confidence and have better faith in their abilities and skills through different activities.

Another way we can develop this is through failing. As the activities that children are doing are ones they are not engaged in frequently, this leaves room for more failures. In order to develop these skills, we will encourage children to be strong and resilient even when things do not go to plan, which aids in their development.

Making your own choices is key for self esteem. In Hopscotch Explorers, we encourage children to make their own decisions which will hopefully lead to a positive outcome. However, if it does not then ,as we have already stated, we allow room for mistakes and encourage children to make these and think about what they will do differently next time.



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Resilience, Confidence, Independence and Creativity

At Hopscotch Explorers, we believe that being outside expands on skills that children have already learnt in the classroom, sometimes even teaching them new skills that they are unable to experience inside.

Resilience:

A lot of the activities that we provide are skill based activities that encourage children to work with others and think differently to how they normally would. To do this, children need to recover and learn from their mistakes and be able to handle disappointment.

Confidence:

We want to encourage children to have much more faith in their abilities. This means that we hope to see children learn new skills which will allow them to grow in confidence. By granting them freedom in nature we allow children to explore and investigate which leads to further positive results.

Independence:

We feel that a very important part of developing for children is them learning how to work on their own. Whilst we will always have a practitioner close by, we want to allow children to explore their surroundings by themselves and even begin to start their own projects.

Creativity:

Many of the activities we provide focus closely on creating by using natural resources. We feel this is so important as it creates a close link between children and the natural world, whilst also allowing them to form their own meaningful ideas.



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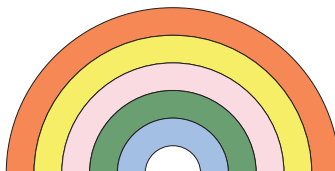


Learning Through Play

One of our most important core beliefs in Hopscotch is the idea that children learn best through play. It is said that it is an innate need in children to play, and we want to cultivate that and expand upon it. This innate need is even in adults and that is what makes Hopscotch Explorers so special as it allows for adults to cultivate their need for fun.

We want to support the play process, and the role of our practitioners is to create a calming environment outside in which children can learn and play in. Our practitioners are well aware of their impact on the play space and they want to encourage children to follow their own instincts, ideas and interests, which can only be done through children freely choosing their own play style.

Our activities that we chose to provide to children are perfect examples of ways that children can learn through play. By looking at a creative activity, such as building dens for animals, we can see how this will lead to the development of a child's imagination, and even there emotional strength, as throughout this activity we will emphasise the importance of looking after animals homes. This will allow children to learn about the wildlife that surrounds them whilst they are still having fun.



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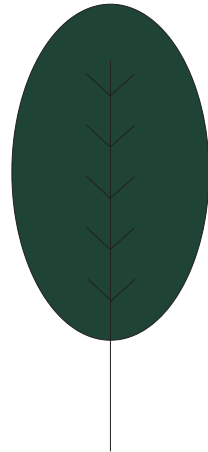
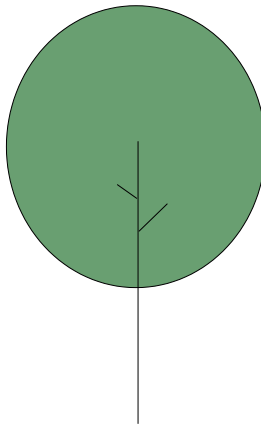
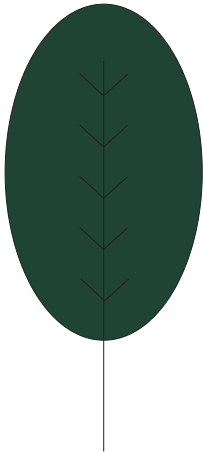
Policies and Procedures We Follow

Policies

- Hopscotch Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Hopscotch Health and Safety Policy
- Hopscotch Equal Opportunities Policy

Procedures

- Always have our Hopscotch kit bag.
- Always have emergency contacts and medical information documents for all children.
- Always have food, water, and an emergency travel potty.
- Teach children to pick up all litter.
- Have a good understanding of the emergency procedures.



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Encouraging Positive Behaviour



At Hopscotch, our ethos is to nurture every child attentively and according to their needs. We want to create calm, structured and sociable learning environments to aid them for when they attend school and for later on in life. Hopscotch Explorers continues to keep to this ethos and even to further expand on it. Being outside allows us to focus on the different needs of children as some learn much better through practical experiences. We also have a set plan for the way Hopscotch Explorers is run, however, it is up to the practitioners what activities they chose to do on what days and this decision is made based on the needs of their own children.

Each practitioner will model behaviours that they want to see in the children. This will be behaviours such as being caring and considerate towards the natural world. At Hopscotch, we always use positive enforcement of behaviour. We want to encourage everyone to use positive praise and to be fair and consistent towards each and every child.

However, it is important for our practitioners to set out clear rules and boundaries that children must follow. Although we want to encourage children to be independent and to discover on their own, we still have a duty of care towards our children and their safety comes before anything else. This is why we set out clear boundaries that children cannot go past, so they are still able to explore on their own, but in the sight of the practitioners.

At Hopscotch Explorers, we encourage self-learning in children. We want our children to learn how their behaviour will impact them, and from this they can learn and grow.

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The Six Principles

At Hopscotch Explorers, we want to utilise the traditional six principles of a Forest School, but adapt these principles to suit us. These principles encourage us to retain the traditional Forest School Ethos, but allow us to have flexibility in how we apply these to suit the needs of our children.

- **It is a long term process of regular sessions**

At Hopscotch Explorers, we want to take our children out at least once a week, with this progressing throughout the whole of the children's time in preschool. Children can reflect on their sessions through the Hopscotch Explorers Nature Guide.

- **It takes place in a natural environment**

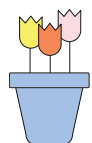
We know that each of our nurseries have different natural areas that they can take their children out to explore. This is why we expanded upon the Forest School idea and included Beach School as this enables us to utilise the beautiful beaches that surround our nurseries.

- **It aims to promote the holistic development of children**

It has already been touched upon on how Hopscotch Explorers aims to nurture the holistic development of each and every child. We believe that Hopscotch Explorers will allow for the child to develop in every possible way, as they are free to do it in a completely new environment and are given the allowance to chose what they want to develop each session.

- **It should be risk-aware, not risk-averse**

Hopscotch Explorers is focused on acknowledging the risks, understanding they exist, the impacts, and how to deal with them. We want to look out for new risks to protect our children, and allow them to have fun whilst still being risk aware.



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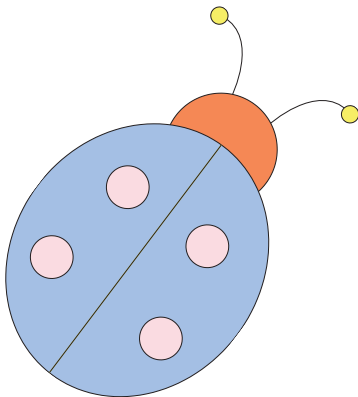


- **It is run by qualified practitioners**

At Hopscotch, we are very proud of all of our staff that we have working for us. We have chosen our top qualified practitioners to lead Hopscotch Explorers, with other practitioners being able to take on training that will allow them to join in with this initiative. Lauren and Jordan, two of our practitioners, have been working hard to create a curriculum that all other practitioners will be able to use.

- **It is learner centred with learner based outcomes**

The most important thing in Hopscotch Explorers is that our children are able to learn something from each session. We want children to go home to their parents and be able to tell them something new they have learnt. But even more importantly, we want our children to learn about themselves, what interests them, learn more about their emotions, and be able to gain a better understanding about the world that surrounds them. We are child-centric and put the needs of our children first. This is why we believe the most important thing a child can develop is their own understanding of themselves.



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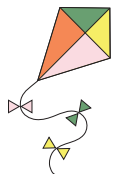
Environmental Benefits of Hopscotch Explorers

At Hopscotch, we deeply value the environment that surrounds us, and we want to teach our children to have this same love and respect for the environment as we do.

Hopscotch Explorers helps children to gain a better understanding of the natural world. We want children to understand their impact on nature and what they can do to help it. We will do this by teaching children the structure of the woodlands and the benefits of all the wildlife that surrounds them. We would help children be able to identify different types of flora and fauna and teach them how to look after them. We would also like to express the importance of sustainably managing the environment and discourage children from picking plants, instead encouraging them to only take plants that have already broken away.

A fascinating theory has been produced known as the 'green mind' theory. This theory conceptualises the link between the body and the mind to natural and social environments. The environment helps to shape our minds, and then our minds allow our bodies to help shape the external environment. This expresses the importance for humans to be in nature and to learn about it.

It has further been proven that the more time a child spends in nature, the more likely they are to be good stewards of the planet. We want our children to grow up to consider the needs of wildlife and to gain an appreciation for the world around them.



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Quotes From Our Very Own Hopscotch Explorers



'I like doing bus trips with my friends, it is like going on holiday.'

'I like going out with my teachers.'

'I like going to the beach with my friends.'

'I like throwing stones in the sea.'

