



Experiential learning

The links below highlight references to experiential learning across the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Profile and the National Curriculum, including the National Curriculum's general introduction and subject-specific programmes of study. They also include references from the new Ofsted inspection framework that explicitly recognise the importance of experiences within the curriculum, alongside relevant publications from the DfE's final report on its curriculum and assessment review and the government's response.

Only links that directly mention experiential learning have been included, although other relevant references may be found within links relating to other learning outcomes.

Area of curriculum	Documentary support	What the document says
EYFS	Early years foundation stage (EYFS) statutory framework - GOV.UK	All children deserve the care and support they need to have the best start in life. Children learn and develop at a faster rate from birth to five years old than at any other time in their lives, so their experiences in early years have a major impact on their future life chances. (p. 6)
		The educational programmes are high level curriculum summaries which set out what should be taught in settings for each area. They must involve activities and experiences that enable children to learn and develop, as set out under each of the areas of learning. (p. 9)
		Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community. The frequency and range of children's personal experiences increases their knowledge and sense of the world around them. (p. 11)
		The frequency, repetition and depth of their experiences are fundamental to their progress in interpreting and appreciating what they hear, respond to and observe. (p. 11)
		The ELGs should not be used as a curriculum or in any way to limit the wide variety of rich experiences that are crucial to child development. (p. 11)
		Past and Present - Children at the expected level of development will: • Know some similarities and differences between things in the past and now, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class. (p. 15)



		People, Culture and Communities - Children at the expected level of development will: • Know some similarities and differences between different religious and cultural communities in this country, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class. (p. 15)
		The Natural World -Children at the expected level of development will: • Know some similarities and differences between the natural world around them and contrasting environments, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class. (p. 15)
		Practitioners should be ambitious for all children. To do this they must consider the individual needs, interests, and development of each child in their care. They must use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience for each child in all areas of learning and development. (p. 16)
Ofsted EYFS	Early years inspection toolkit	In gathering evidence about the design of the curriculum, inspectors consider the extent to which the curriculum: • is designed to build children's knowledge and skills systematically and focuses on developing children's knowledge and skills rather than on activities and experiences that leave children's learning to chance (p. 19)
		In gathering evidence about the design of the curriculum relating to each area of learning and development, inspectors consider the extent to which the curriculum for understanding the world: • emphasises the importance of children's personal experiences and the books, songs and rhymes they encounter • includes experiences that help children make sense of and learn about the diverse world in which they live (p. 20)
		In gathering evidence about the design of the curriculum relating to each area of learning and development, inspectors consider the extent to which the curriculum for expressive arts and design : • ensures that all children have the early sensory experiences they need (p. 20)
		In gathering evidence about high-quality teaching, inspectors consider the extent to which: • Practitioners select activities and experiences after they have determined the curriculum and think carefully about what children already know and can do when deciding what to teach first (p. 21)
Science	The national curriculum in England - Framework	The principal focus of science teaching in key stage 1 is to enable pupils to experience and observe phenomena, looking more closely at the natural and humanly-constructed world around them. (p. 146)



	document (publishing.service.gov.uk)	Most of the learning about science should be done through the use of first-hand practical experiences, but there should also be some use of appropriate secondary sources, such as books, photographs and videos. (p. 146)
		Pupils in years 1 and 2 should explore the world around them and raise their own questions. They should experience different types of scientific enquiries, including practical activities, and begin to recognise ways in which they might answer scientific questions. (p. 147)
		Pupils in years 3 and 4 should be given a range of scientific experiences to enable them to raise their own questions about the world around them. (p. 155)
Art	The national curriculum in England - Framework document (publishing.service.gov.uk)	The national curriculum for art and design aims to ensure that all pupils: produce creative work, exploring their ideas and recording their experiences. (p. 176)
Geography	The national curriculum in England - Framework document (publishing.service.gov.uk)	The national curriculum for geography aims to ensure that all learners are competent in the geographical skills needed to: collect, analyse and communicate with a range of data gathered through experiences of fieldwork that deepen their understanding of geographical processes. (p. 184)
Ofsted	https://assets.publishing.ser vice.gov.uk/media/690b26c 69456634d9795fde0/Scho ols_inspection_toolkit.pdf	**Within the inspection framework, the importance of experiences is mentioned several times around inclusion. We have not included these here, but it highlights that experiences and experiential learning are considered important.
		Personal development and well-being - This evaluation area is focused on the personal development and well-being of pupils. This evaluation area considers: Whether leaders establish a suitable and coherent programme of personal development, through both the curriculum and the wider opportunities and experiences they provide for pupils (p. 44)
		In gathering evidence about the strategic leadership of personal development and well being, inspectors consider the extent to which: Leaders ensure that the personal development programme (which includes taught content and wider opportunities and experiences) is broad, coherently planned and suitable for the school's context, and that the programme and the school's wider work reinforce one another (p. 47)



		Personal development and well-being meet the 'expected standard' when all the following apply: • Pupils have a range of suitable opportunities that broaden their experiences and enable them to develop their talents and interests in areas such as the arts, music and sport. (p. 50)
The Curriculum and Assessment Review	Curriculum and Assessment Review final report: Building a world-class curriculum for all	**The CAR does not explicitly mention experiential learning but it does highlight the need for inclusive access to experiences throughout the curriculum and with the introduction of enrichment benchmarks and entitlement, emphasises the importance of experiential learning.