



Handbook

A support guide for those working with schools to increase practical outdoor activities.

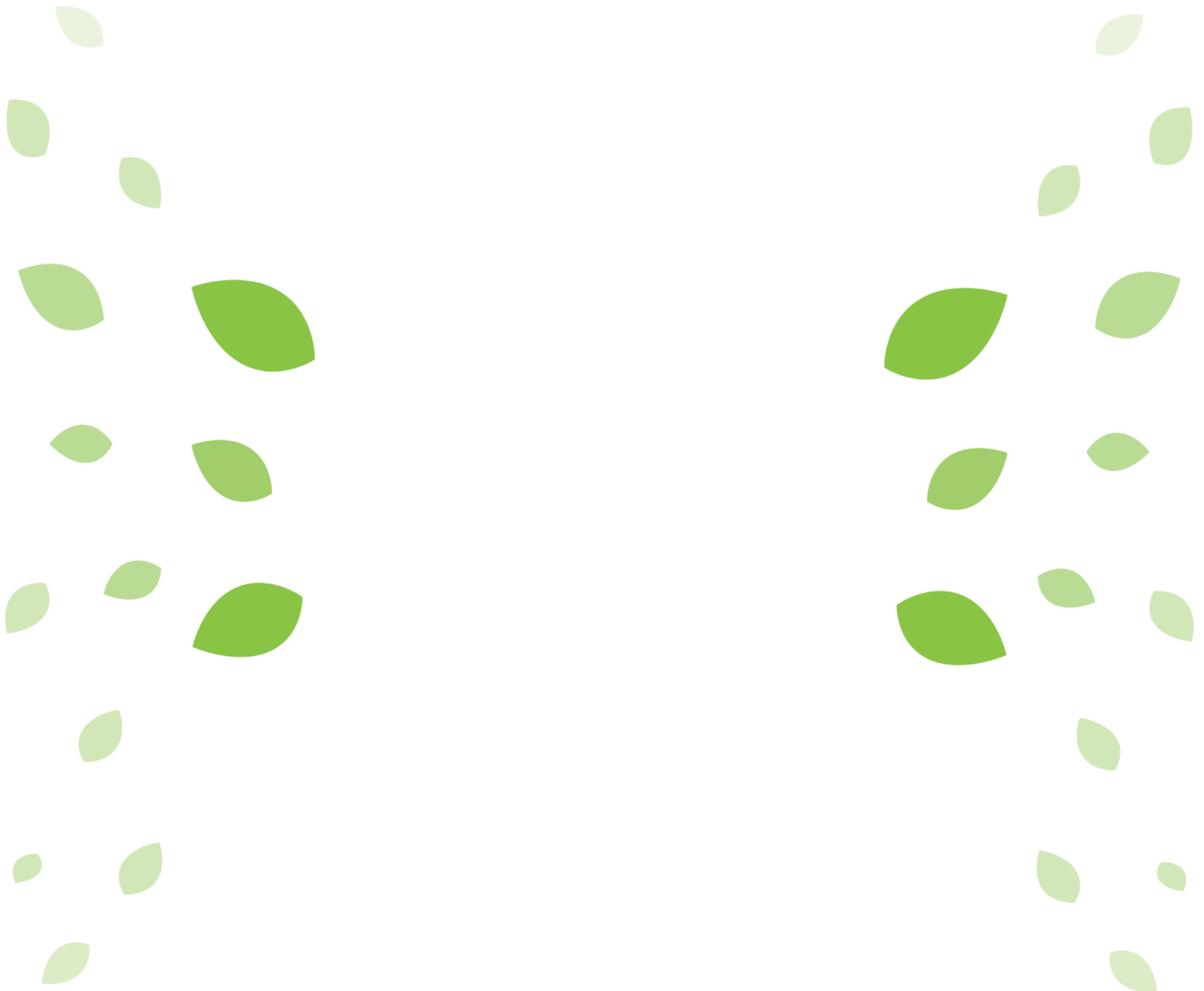


Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

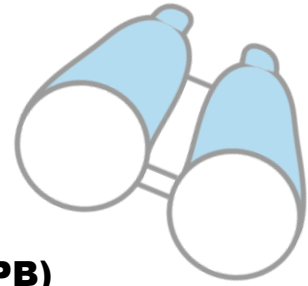
By Learning through Landscapes



Learning through Landscapes is a leading UK charity dedicated to enhancing outdoor learning and play for children. Our unrivalled knowledge and expertise is based upon more than 25 years experience of practical action and research. To find out more visit www.ltl.org.uk.



Foreword



By Suzanne Welch, Education Manager

Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)

I am a firm believer in the need for a greater understanding, a greater agreement and greater action around the essential part we as adults play during the most formative years of a young person's life in relation to their attitudes, behaviours and future impact in and on the natural environment.

To many people it would seem obvious and unquestionable that a crucial part of childhood is exploring the world around you. Be it through climbing trees, looking for insects, or feeding birds. Unfortunately, this is far from the case, and the amount of time and contact children are having with nature continues to decline steeply which is unsettling, as we know that experiencing nature and participating in physical activity both play an important role in positively influencing our health and well-being.

Through a mixture of practical activities and research, the One World Learning (OWL) Guide identifies some of the issues and challenges we face in developing our relationship with the natural world on school grounds; it explains the ideas that underpin them and their interconnection. It delivers a range of activities through which they might be addressed in order to trigger behavioural changes that will lead to inquisitive, empowered, socially inclusive and environmentally responsible individuals and communities. With an approach that is holistic, participatory and sustainable, Learning through Landscapes unrivalled expertise will help you maximise the learning and environmental potential of the grounds you work with.

Schools offer valuable and essential opportunities for all young people to experience nature and are the perfect starting place to help facilitate this connection by allowing them the experience of watching, describing, discussing and participating in what is going on in their school grounds. Working within school grounds ensures a relevance and ownership for pupils, allows for repeatable opportunities that are tangible, visible and provides a space where learning is deepened. It provides opportunities to strengthen professional development for teachers and educators and allows their pupils (and themselves) to develop positive relationships with nature. In turn, this supports the development of each and every individual child's life skills, including citizenship, language, team work and critical thinking. I believe that this opportunity to integrate first hand experience should be cherished for the multiple skills it helps develop and for the positive influence it has on a child's well being and future.

It is important to understand that environmental education can serve as a critical tool in countering environmental problems because it aims to impact not only an individual's internal representations and understandings of the world, but ultimately to intrinsically motivate people to perform appropriate real-life behaviours. Knowledge of and connectedness to nature together work as complementary drivers of ecological behaviour and fosters ecologically-motivated individuals, providing an invaluable foundation for broader community understanding and involvement in conservation projects beyond the school grounds.

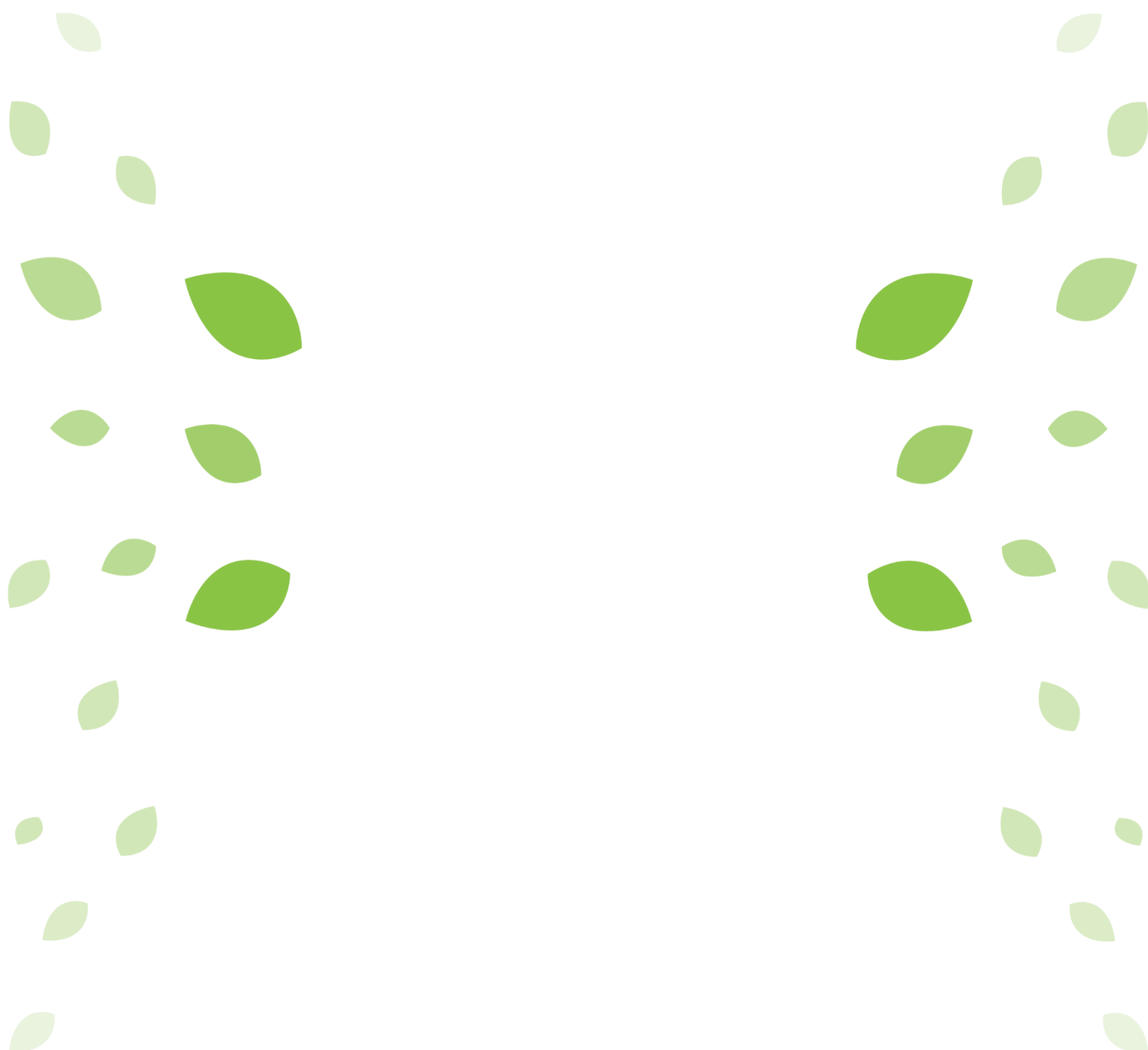
Through a series of thoughts and actions, both logical and intuitive, using tried and tested methodologies, imaginative and creative improvements to the school grounds open up more possibilities for learning and play. This guide is for educators who want to learn about the multiple opportunities and benefits that outdoor education on your doorstep brings and provides the tools to empower them to integrate their learning with their pupils' world. We hope it initiates changing attitudes and cultures of understanding and strengthens the position of school grounds as an educational and social tool.



Table of Contents

Preface:.....	1
Who and what is this guide for?	1
How to use the OWL guide	2
Part 1: Why children and young people need contact with nature;.....	3
The importance of planning	6
Part 2: Meeting the challenges of taking learning and play through nature;	10
Not everyone thinks this is a good idea	10
My pupils will behave badly outside?	13
Learning outside isn't real learning	15
Taking children outdoors is too risky.....	17
The weather isn't good enough	19
We're going to run out of steam.....	20
Part 3: Increasing learning and playing through nature.	22
Teaching and learning through nature	23
Quick wins to get you started.....	26
Wildlife, biodiversity and nature.....	27
Play and wildlife	31
Growing and eating.....	34
Access and inclusion	36
Seating and meeting.....	39
Community and clubs	43
Sustainability In a school context.....	45
Part 4: Resources and support.....	48
Audit tool.....	48
Planning tools	48
Case studies.....	48
Audit tool.....	49
Planning Tools 1 - Observation	56
Planning Tools 2 - Tour of the grounds.....	57

Planning Tools 3 - What do you think?	58
Planning Tools 4 - Special places.....	59
Planning Tools 5 - Baseline data survey.....	60
Planning Tools 6 - Expert teams.....	61
Planning Tools 7 -Visiting other spaces for inspiration and feedback.....	62
Advise Sheet - Funding	63
Advice Sheet - Example Risk Benefit Analysis	68
Advise Sheet - Teaching Tips for Teachers Outdoors	73



Preface:

Who and what is this guide for?

This guide is for anyone who works with schools to help them make the most of the outdoors with a particular focus on enabling them to have contact with nature everyday. It will direct educators, conservation professionals, teachers, parents and those working for NGOs or government representatives to plan the improved use of school grounds and local spaces, involving children at the heart, and linking the process to conservation and curriculum learning objectives.

This guide looks at how you can review what schools are already doing and will help you to help them do things even better. It will outline key benefits for children of spending time in nature and provide you with the answers to some of those tricky issues and barriers schools face when planning on going outside.

The OWL partnership members love the outdoors! And we love it at least in part because we spent time outside as children. We want to help you inspire the next generation so that they don't become the 'indoor generation' but instead love spending time outdoors and therefore want to make sure it is looked after and cared for. We hope this guide will be a key part in your journey in helping children of today become the adults of the future who look after our planet and make sure it has a beautiful and life-sustaining environment for many years to come.

So whoever you are we hope you will find something here to help and inspire you.

The OWL project partners

Since 1990, Learning through Landscapes has worked with thousands of schools to help them rethink the use and design of their outside spaces on school grounds and in the local environment. Now with One World Learning (OWL), and alongside our partners BirdLife Malta and BirdLife Europe and Central Asia, we are pleased to be able to share expertise even more widely through the creation of this support guide for those working with schools to develop the use of outside spaces for increased learning and play through nature.

How to use the OWL guide

The guide is divided into four sections. Each section will provide you with the information, knowledge and tools to successfully embark on learning in the natural environment project.



Part 1: Why children and young people need contact with nature; in this section we look at many reasons why children need to learn and play outside. You will also find the process of change, a tool for helping you make changes whether that is in your teaching practice or whether it is to the school grounds themselves.



Part 2: Meeting the challenges of learning and playing through nature; in this section we look at common reasons for not going outside and how schools have overcome these barriers.



Part 3: Increasing learning and play outdoors. This section introduces specific areas for development that we find are often schools' priorities when going outside.



Part 4: Resources and support. This section offers a range of resources to help you initiate and develop increased outdoor learning opportunities.

Part 1: Why children and young people need contact with nature;

If children don't grow up knowing about nature, and appreciating it, they will not understand it. And if they don't understand it, they won't protect it.

Sir David Attenborough, LTL Patron.

Research around the world is shedding light on this showing that regular contact with nature and learning in outdoor environments can improve attainment, behaviour, health and wellbeing, socialisation and teacher job satisfaction.



But unfortunately many children and young people today are not having the same contact with nature that previous generations had. School is one place that all children have access to and so its importance cannot be highlighted enough.

"We want to ensure that every child and young person benefits from outdoor learning as an integral part of their education and that the professionals working with them have the support and knowledge to make the most of their outdoor learning opportunities. I realise that children and educators need to be outdoors and need to be directly engaged with nature, including physically touching soil, looking for insects. I feel this contact with nature is lacking in a number of our students and that they deserve more exposure to nature, which requires being educated on being outdoors."

Isabel Zerafa 2018, Education Officer, Ministry of Education, Malta, 2018

Learning in the natural environment and involving children and young people in the process increases;

- pupil confidence
- renews pride in the community
- develops stronger motivation towards learning
- increases levels of health and wellbeing and
- promotes a greater sense of belonging and responsibility

A well-designed, stimulating outdoor area can offer irresistible learning opportunities and extend the learning that goes on inside, providing variety with changing environments, seasons and weather, and develop knowledge and understanding of the world, life cycles, etc.



Children behave differently outdoors and some of those who struggle inside will thrive outdoors. Outdoors provides places to explore different feelings and emotions through places to be quiet, relax and daydream. It stimulates the imagination and creativity. There are endless possibilities for scientific exploration and investigation, such as the properties of water, mud, plants or mini-beasts and many opportunities for numerical reasoning and problem solving skills for example by pacing out and marking the hard surfaces, building with blocks or working with big volumes of water or sand.

Everyone benefits

The many benefits of learning in outdoor environments to both pupils and professionals were documented in the findings of The Natural Connections

Demonstration Project (2016). Working with 125 schools in the South West of England, Natural England found that:

- 92% of teachers felt that students were more engaged with learning when outdoors.
- 85% saw a positive impact on student behavior.
- 79% reported positive impacts on their teaching practice.
- 70% felt that outdoor learning had a positive impact on job satisfaction.
- 72% reported improved health and wellbeing.
- 92% of children stated they enjoyed their lessons more when learning outdoors.
- 90% of children felt happier and healthier.

"From my experience of working with schools outdoors, it has been very rewarding. Both educators and children are really engaged in the activities. Typical outdoor activities include science fieldwork in outdoor settings, usually the Maltese countryside, seaside or Native Reserves."

Isabel Zerafa 2018 Education Officer, Ministry of Education, Malta

Reflection

Think of a memorable outdoor activity or event from your childhood. Did you see yourself as a part of nature or as separate from it? How has that experience influenced you in your adult life? In the choices you have made? In the career you have chosen? Would you be the same person had you not had that experience?

Write down the key benefits to children of learning through nature and being outdoors.

The importance of planning

Each school is unique – you have a unique setting, unique local wildlife, unique conservation objectives, unique pupils and unique teachers. There is, therefore, no one simple answer as to how school grounds should be used or developed to improve opportunities for use. There are, however, some key principles that will help every school make the most of their grounds. The key to success is taking an approach that is holistic, participative and sustainable:



Holistic. Think about your whole school, all aspects of the use of the outdoors, and the wide range of needs of your whole school community (property and people) alongside your learning and conservation objectives. You may focus on one area but putting this into the wider context will help in the long term.



Participative. The wider and deeper your engagement from start to finish, the more likely you are to come up with solutions that work for the school, the better the commitment will be across the school and wider community.



Sustainable. We often think that sustainability is about the materials we use, the plants we have, whether we use pesticides in the grounds and how we recycle. Whilst it is all those things it should also be how you make sure any changes you make will last. Does the school need to write new schemes of work and lesson plans? Is the outdoors in the school development plan? Make sure the school thinks about all the different short, medium and long-term implications of any changes they make.

Whether you are starting an outdoor learning project from scratch, have made a few improvements to support outdoor activities or transformed parts already, the Learning through Landscapes 'process of change' will help you take the next steps. It provides a simple structure to help you think through all of the different elements that you need to consider by helping you ask vital questions and ensuring that you do not jump in too quickly with solutions that might not be best in the long term.

The process has four stages, and forms a full circle, so when you have completed Stage 4, you return to Stage 1. It is designed this way for two reasons – first, to see if you have achieved what you set out to do, and second, to help you set off on the next stage of your project. Many schools that use outdoor spaces for increased learning activities start with small steps and develop their project over several years. It also means that the outdoor activities they engage in can be reviewed, developed

and improved over time.

Droxford Junior School in the UK was able to embed more outdoor activities into their curriculum by auditing their long and medium term plans and highlighting local opportunities. This allowed them to determine what the best environment for learning and meeting the curriculum could be; a visit to a community or conservation space or a school grounds based outdoor activity.

The LTL process should be used in conjunction with the system already in place rather than as an additional or onerous task. You will find that the stages of the process will merge into each other so do not worry too much if you move between the stages and back again every now and again. However, the path of the process is important so try to progress through it as much as you can.

A site walk was used as part of a senior management review at Gildredge House School in the UK. This tour of the grounds enabled staff and senior management to highlight improvements that could be made to their current maintenance plan. This in turn improved the management of their outdoor space and increased the quality and quantity of outdoor activities that could take place throughout the school year.





The Learning through Landscapes Process of change



Where are we now? By the end of this stage the school should have a good knowledge of how they are currently using their grounds as well as key features and the condition they are in. They should also be aware of any potential local conservation priorities and of any technical and legal constraints that you may need to consider.



Where do we want to be? The key to this stage is asking the questions; 'what do we want our pupils to do outside? What experiences do we want them to have?' By the end of this stage the school should have a vision statement for their outdoor learning highlighting what they would like to achieve and how they would like to be able to use their grounds in the future. This is where you articulate any species you want the children and young people to be aware of and then, in the next stage think about how you can develop habitats and food sources to enable this to happen.



How can we get there? In this stage you look at the different solutions that meet your needs and decide which is going to work best for you. At the end of this stage you may have new schemes of work, new lesson plans and new policies, but you may also have plans for physical changes to your grounds that will help you meet the needs you have identified in relation to using your grounds.



Making the changes This is where you get things done! You've planned how you will use the grounds more, for teaching and learning, for play, for more contact with nature, and now you want to get things done!



Where are we now? And at the end you return to the beginning to make sure you have done what you set out to do or, if not, what you have achieved. Then you can start planning the next changes!

The process of change is a tested project management cycle that complements existing planning and review cycles in the school. For more information, visit the Resource and Training section at Learning through Landscapes (ltl.org.uk) and download the Process of Change Tool.

When Sue Ward an accredited Learning through Landscapes professional approaches a school for the first time she will be assessing where she feels the school is in the process of change. Sometimes she will ask them to look more deeply at a previous stage by using an audit or consultation tool that you can find at the back of this book.

Reflection

Using a school you know as an example, think about who is currently involved in the senior management team, who is teaching and who else is involved in the whole community. What skills do they have for a project that will develop a wildlife garden?

How would you need to consult them or get them involved? Because time is often pressured you can help by designing an elevator speech for a couple of these audiences at the school. This should be no more than 30 seconds long and include what the need is, how the school can address it and how it will make a difference.

Part 2: Meeting the challenges of taking learning and play through nature;

Not everyone thinks this is a good idea

In many schools using the outdoors more for teaching and learning is usually due to one person's enthusiasm. They probably understand the benefits of taking lessons outside - but what if other people in your school community need convincing?

Making it work

At the start of a project, one of the most important things is encouraging staff, pupils and parents to think about the benefits of working, teaching, and learning outdoors. You could use some of the following ideas to help get everyone on board:

- poster displays created by children
- reflections on what things used to be like and what they could be like in the future
- a parent's picnic and PowerPoint presentation to share ideas



Other ideas might include:

Providing information at a parents' meeting; asking parents to join you in outdoor lessons; having an article in a school newsletter or on the school website

To help everybody think about how they feel about the outdoors, use the Special Places activity in Part 4 – and involve the children.

To introduce the idea of learning through nature you might try;

- professional development in teaching and learning outdoors
- involvement in planning any changes
- motivation from children's responses and involvement
- sharing examples of best practice within the school or from other schools
- visiting other settings

It is not always possible to get every member of staff to be enthusiastic about increasing outdoor learning opportunities, but there are things you can do to ensure that they are on-board at least in principle, and hopefully in practice.

Further techniques for embedding learning in the natural environment include:

- Appoint a 'lead' practitioner for learning outside the classroom.
- Encourage staff to observe children outdoors over a period of time.
- Gather waterproofs for wet weather, warm layers for the cold, sunhats and sun cream for the heat and have suitable footwear so that your time outdoors can be extended.
- Ensure that outdoor learning is regularly on the agenda for staff meetings and INSET or professional development sessions.
- Develop schemes of work and lesson plans that are easy to use and need minimal preparation and resources.
- Encourage staff to start small with parts of lessons outside to begin with and then building up as their confidence develops and pupils get used to learning outside.

In Learning through Landscapes training sessions the accredited trainer will give teachers a range of quick activities that they can embed into their lessons. One of the favorites of trainer Matt Robinson is to get teachers into pairs and ask them to direct each other from the indoor environment to the outdoor using mathematical language e.g. turn 90 degrees to your right, walk 3 steps forward, turn 90 degrees to your left. Talking about transitions from the inside to the outside supports behavioural management in a fun and positive way.

Reflection

Using a school you are familiar with, think about resistance you have faced. Look back at the text in this section; are there any techniques that could be applied to help reduce resistance to change? Can you think of other techniques that would help?



Imagine you are working with a school where the headteacher is the person that is stopping an enthusiastic teacher who wants to teach through nature – how might you support the teacher and what questions might you need to ask to do this effectively?

Awards and acknowledgement

Outdoor projects on school grounds or local spaces can also be linked to a range of national and international initiatives that offer awards and external acknowledgement such as:

- Eco-Schools (ecoschools.global)
- Outdoor Classroom Day (outdoorclassroomday.com)
- International School Grounds Month (internationalschoolgrounds.org/isgm/) and BirdLife Malta's Dinja Waħda (birdlifemalta.org/environmental-education/dinja-wahda)
- RSPB Give Nature a Home

Participation in these programmes can be very beneficial as a source for ideas, resources and inspiration, all of which assist with project momentum. They should not be used as the sole motivation as this will not enable nature to be embedded into the curriculum or be sustainable through staff changes.

Useful information and organisations

Additional guidance and support can be found at:

Learning through Landscapes (ltl.org.uk)

Green School Yards America (greenschoolyards.org)

The Council for Learning Outside the Classroom (clotc.org.uk) and

The International School Grounds Alliance (internationalschoolgrounds.org)

Reflection

What schemes exist in your country that acknowledge the achievements of students and whole school communities. Which of these might be used for your work in engaging children through practical outdoor activities?



My pupils will behave badly outside?

Some teachers worry about taking lessons outside – they are used to teaching in a structured and secure environment and feel that their pupils might ‘go wild’ when they go outside so that they won’t be able to control them and work will just not get done.

Making it work



Children who struggle to sit quietly behind a desk often benefit from being outside, but they are not the only ones. Engaging with the real world in hands-on, creative and investigative learning can have a very positive effect on behaviour and concentration of the entire class.

Start small, with quick activities outside as part of a larger lesson, and then build up to extended periods outside. Use a specific area first, maybe one that has a clear boundary, before using the whole site. Have a method of calling pupils back to you, such as a whistle or drum and test it out at the start of your first lesson outside so that you know you have control of your class.



Create a sense of ownership and responsibility by involving the children in devising a code of conduct for outside learning, coming up with new ideas for learning and raising funds to be spent on their outdoor space.

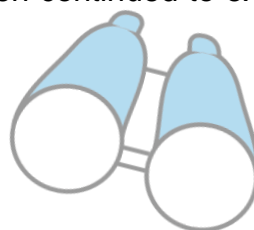
At one infant school in England they were under pressure to create a more investigative child led approach to learning. When the Learning through Landscapes accredited facilitator worked with them, they discovered that the teachers were not confident to let the children go outdoors into a small area outside the classroom without adult supervision. The facilitator worked with the teacher to identify where they could position themselves indoors so they could see more, they worked with the children to encourage them to let an adult know when they were going out. By having carefully positioned indoor and outdoor seating and teaching spaces the teacher could work with small groups whilst other children continued to explore their outside spaces.

Useful organisations

Anti-bullying Alliance – anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk

Learning through Landscapes – ltl.org.uk

UN Convention of the rights of the child



Reflection

Imagine that classic teacher's dream of a class going out of control. When you work with the class indoors how you control this behavior e.g. differentiated work, small groups and positioning yourself and using the tone and pace of your



voice. Now think of the area outside a familiar classroom how can you use your indoor skills outdoors? From the text above what might you add to these indoor techniques?

Learning outside isn't real learning

If you are in the process of increasing outdoor learning opportunities on the school grounds or at other local spaces, you may find that some parents or even other teachers are worried that being outside their children will get muddy, or that having lessons outside does not constitute 'real' learning.

Making it work

Parents, staff and the wider community need to feel confident that learning outside is as valuable as learning inside. There may be a variety of reasons why they feel this way so providing information about both research to support outdoor learning and examples from other schools will help meet those concerns.

Make sure that staff know about and can access national and international organisations such as Learning through Landscapes (ltl.org.uk), Green School Yards America (greenschoolyards.org) and the International School Grounds Alliance (internationalschoolgrounds.org). Many will have lots of free resources that can be downloaded from the internet. Work with the staff at a school to look at their current schemes of work and lessons plans. Challenge them to think about where they might take either part or all of a lesson outside.



During the One World Learning project I have heard teachers ask this very question. From a teachers perspective if you plan the lesson with differentiated activities, objectives, desired outcomes with assessment/evaluation of learning the outdoors becomes another important room within the whole school environment. Expanding your options and resources for teaching – Ruth Staples-Rolfe Learning through Landscapes facilitator (2018)

Useful information and organisations

Additional guidance and support can be found at:

Learning through Landscapes (ltl.org.uk)

Green School Yards America (greenschoolyards.org),

The Council for Learning Outside the Classroom (clotc.org.uk) and

The International School Grounds Alliance (internationalschoolgrounds.org).

Outdoor Classroom Day (outdoorclassroom.com and

outdoorclassroomday.org.uk)

Reflection

Think of a school you know that is currently teaching outdoor activities - how could you map all the activities being done outside? Where might you find out what else could be done to inspire others?

Taking children outdoors is too risky

The outdoors cannot be controlled in the same way as the indoors and sometimes this worries teachers. Here we discuss some of these concerns.



Making it work

The greatest risk most children take each day is the journey to school, however, the benefits of being at school far outweigh the risks and therefore we decide this is a risk worth taking.

Remember that with every reasonable risk, there is a benefit for the child. Try to communicate this risk/benefit approach whenever concerns are raised. Ensure that you are up-front about issues of challenge and risk. Children need opportunities to challenge themselves, discover their own boundaries and learn to assess and manage risk.

An urban school in London invested huge amounts of money in developing outdoor play and learning spaces which included a slope with boulders embedded for secondary aged children to climb and sit on. In the first few months one child broke a limb and there was a huge discussion over whether the slope should be taken out. However the Headteacher decided not to change the slope and very quickly observed the children adapting to their new environment and the number of injuries going down.

Since the world is full of risks, children need to learn to recognise and respond to them in order to protect themselves and to develop their own risk-assessment capabilities.

(Risk in Play and Learning: Ubud-Höör Declaration, International School Grounds Alliance 2017) Copies of the Declaration in various languages can be downloaded from internationalschoolgrounds.org/risk.

Useful information and organisations

Risk in Play and Learning: Ubud-Höör Declaration, International School Grounds Alliance 2017

The Play Safety Forum (playsafetyforum.wordpress.com).

Learning through Landscapes (ltl.org.uk/spaces/ltlriskbenefit.php).

Reflection

Think about what health and safety is in place within school in your own country. Then think about the activities which are routine and everyday. How can you support schools to identify the risks and benefits of teaching through nature and feel confident to work within the systems of your country?



The weather isn't good enough

Whether it is too hot, too cold, too wet or too sunny sometimes the weather becomes a reason for not going outside.

Making it work

There are schools around the globe that go outdoors for much of their learning. From Scandinavia to Australasia schools are finding ways to make sure their pupils get plenty of opportunities for learning and playing outdoors.

Remember the saying 'there is no such thing as bad weather – only bad clothing' Weather is a very important element in outdoor and environmental learning so use this in your teaching. Also make a note of where the sun reaches at different times of day and where the shadows lie so that you can find the best places to bring a class or group together.

In the darker, colder winters of Scandinavia, children go outside whatever the weather, often for several hours, with all-in-one outdoor clothing, boots, warm hats and gloves. In hotter countries water is just one of the ways to keep pupils cool. This might be playing with water, having fun with water sprayers or incorporating water into the design of the grounds so that air flows more effectively, thus cooling the site.



Useful organisations and information

Waterproof world

Muddy puddles



Beaufort scale to see when it might be too windy

Sun Safe nurseries for information on how to protect children outdoors in the sun

Reflection

You are working with a school where the parents are worried about children getting wet in lessons or slipping on trip hazards. How can you support the school to enable them to continue to take children outdoors?

We're going to run out of steam

It's easy to start a project, but keeping it going is much harder. How do you ensure that everything doesn't stop happening after the first push? What happens when the key member of staff with all the enthusiasm leaves?

Making it work

Start by making sure it isn't just one person making the changes – try to get several people on board even if one person has the responsibility to lead. A very small outdoor learning project will benefit from at least two minds working on it. A lead person, supported by a group sharing the vision and responsibilities is the most effective way forward and will help both embed the process into medium term planning and assist with the workload of teachers. Not only will this help generate fresh perspectives and ideas, and ensure that the ideas are realistic – it will also help to ensure sustainability.

Develop an action plan linked to the schools short and medium term plan that outlines when things are going to take place – this will also help you see when quiet times are likely to occur. You cannot always move at the same rate or at the same rate through every season. Some lessons will need time to plan, and implement.

Ensure that you incorporate an evaluation and monitoring activity when you begin. Do not leave this until the end. People are more likely to recall their impressions and be enthused the first time they experience outdoor learning.



The wider the range of possibilities we offer children, the more intense will be their motivations and the richer their experiences. We must widen the range of topics and goals, the types of situations we offer and their degree of structure, the kind and combinations of resources and materials, and the possible interactions with things, peers and adults. Loris Malaguzzi in Gandini (2012: 54)

Useful information and organisations

Measuring Success evaluation tools from Learning through Landscapes

Learning through Landscapes

Dinja Wañda research and evaluation of OWL project

Reflection

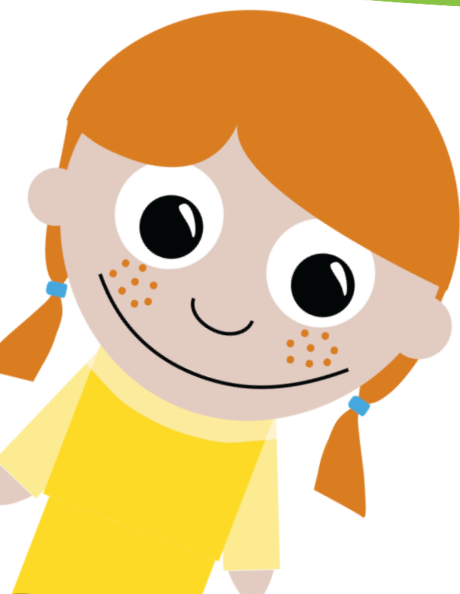
Think of a school you have visited or worked at. How could the use of an outdoor space be improved for the purposes of outdoor learning? For conservation? What would be the simplest single improvement you could make there? Can you think of a small change that would make the biggest impact for learning outside the classroom? For the environment? For the school community? Can you think of a challenge you may encounter. How could you address it before it becomes a barrier to the project?

Part 3: Increasing learning and playing through nature.

This part of the guide introduces specific areas for development that schools often identify when taking activities and lessons outside of the traditional classroom.



*The best classroom and the richest cupboard is roofed only by the sky.
(McMillian 1925: 5)*



Teaching and learning through nature

Learning experiences outside the classroom are often the most memorable lessons, helping children and young people to make sense of the world around them, and allowing them to gain knowledge and confidence that they can transfer back to the classroom.

There are opportunities here that do not exist indoors - noisy, messy activities are easier and the outdoors provides more sensory stimulation, making learning a whole-body experience. Pupils also report that their teachers seem friendlier and the lessons more interesting.

Making it work



Plan it

Think about easy ways to transport resources from your classroom to your outside space or is there storage available outdoors? Think about planning different activities for the needs of the class, for example don't expect a student with behavioral needs indoors to not need support outside.



Teach it

Classroom management outdoors is a skill but here are a few tips to help teachers:

- Prepare the class before you go out.
- Do not get bogged down in paperwork – school grounds and local short trips are 'Routine and Expected', and should only require annual permissions and risk assessments.
- Small steps are best – start with simple activities at first.
- Travel is a learning experience. For example – a short walk may have a 'spotting' challenge, can your noisy P7's sneak out without the head teacher hearing or seeing them?
- Gathering a group to speak to them is important. Think about sitting down, using small cosy corners or huddling in small circles, away from distraction.
- What are the boundary limits and how will you call them back? Younger children may need to be close at hand or in sight, whereas older pupils should be able to go out of sight and work independently.
- Be consistent – keep the same discipline expectations and systems as you do indoors.
- Be flexible –make use of learning opportunities as they arrive.

- Encouraging enjoyment and demonstrating your enjoyment of the outdoor environment sets a positive approach to activity and being outdoors for life.
- Ensure that you are familiar with the outside spaces and think about the learning potential they offer.
- Think too about using the maintenance of your outdoor space as a learning tool via stewardship.



It is also worth adapting what is being studied to fit in with the outdoors, for example, investigate measuring plant growth over the year, seed dispersal or charting the growth of biodiversity within the space over time. And do not forget that the changing seasons, and changing weather patterns, are fantastic topics for investigation too.

Review it



Once the activity is finished review it, as you would indoors reflecting on improvements you could make for next time. This may also include the building in of assessments that take place in the outdoors. Ensure the school does not approach going outside as an 'extra'

Assist them in examining their existing schemes of work to incorporate the outdoors Activities outside do not have to last an entire lesson. Support continued professional development opportunities.

At Richard Bonnington Primary school they have regular forest school sessions to complement their formal curriculum, this helps children to build resilience and grit with open ended resources available to support them in using natural objects creatively. This can include making toys, using tools, building dens or role play. The class teachers accompany their class and often build on what they see to create stimulating formal lessons that use natural materials indoors and outside.

Useful organisations

The Council for Learning Outside the Classroom – clotc.org.uk

Learning through Landscapes – lfl.org.uk

Green School Yards America – greenschoolyards.org

The International School Grounds Alliance – internationalschoolgrounds.org

Outdoor Classroom Day – outdoorclassroomday.com

Reflection

If you were leading a group of children in a school, what activity would you like them to do outside? What resources might you need? How would you manage the transition to the outside space? How could you assess if your outcomes were achieved by the children?



Quick wins to get you started

Some changes to facilitate increased outdoor learning opportunities can be made more quickly than others. These alterations might include:

- enhancing existing plantings
- adding moveable planters
- bringing in loose play materials to support natural play, such as circles of wood, sticks, large stones and branches for den building
- creating and installing nature/conservation related art works
- changing mowing regimes to create long grass areas
- developing existing unused or underused spaces
- developing schemes of work so the outside is used more for teaching and learning
- developing a nature-based play strategy
- creating wildlife habitats, such as insect hotels, bird boxes and bird baths
- growing native plants from seed in every classroom

Remember that any quick improvements you make must allow for the future improvements of the outdoor learning programme, so use this time at the start as an opportunity to focus on non-permanent physical changes.

Many schools in the UK now grow their own food using modular raised beds that are no wider than a child's two forearms and give easy access and contact with nature. The schools can purchase a planter for each class or they can slowly increase the size of their growing space as funds become available.



Wildlife, biodiversity and nature

If you want to engage pupils with nature you will need to think about whether your grounds have a good range of habitats and food sources or whether you need to make changes to your grounds. You may want to bring in an expert to help with this.

While children and young people have become increasingly connected with ecosystems and endangered animals around the globe, they have become increasingly disconnected from the world outside their own door (Sobel 1998) and that has an impact.

Another emerging body of scientific evidence indicates that direct exposure to nature is essential for physical and emotional health. For example, new studies suggest that exposure to nature may reduce symptoms of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), and that it can improve all children's cognitive abilities and resistance to negative stresses and depression. (Louv 2010: 35)

School grounds also represent an untapped resource for conservation organisations and can help ensure that environmental opportunities and learning objectives are met on a more frequent basis by becoming a regular facet of curriculum linked learning.

How to make it work

There are two main strands to success in this area – the development of how the grounds are used to promote biodiversity and the development of access to wildlife for children and young people.



Where are we now? – Survey your site

Start by making sure you know what you have already. It is not unknown for a school to destroy one good wildlife habitat in order to create another eg planting trees in a herb-rich meadow.

Even if your project has a very defined focus, for example, the creation of a native habitat, it is important to follow the holistic, participative and sustainable process of change. What might appear to be the most barren of grounds will have some areas where wildlife has made a home, and even in the best grounds there are still likely to be changes that can be made to encourage more wildlife to live in and visit the site.

Get to know the space - things to consider:

- Where does the sun rise and set and where does the shade fall?
- Which spots stay wet for long periods and which dry out quickly?
- Where does the prevailing wind come from and where does litter collect around the site?

- Make sure that both you and the staff know the main species of trees and shrubs in your grounds, as well as any other plants.
- Students can test the soil for both structure and pH.
- Consider how spaces are currently used.
- Don't forget to consider how the space is used for preparing for or post visit learning, do they have example plants they might see or artwork to introduce the bird species?
- All this could involve different groups of students, staff or the community.
- How is wildlife used in other areas of school life?



Where do we want to be?

At this stage you want to decide on what you want your pupils to do outdoors, whether that is learning, play or getting close to nature. Don't be tempted to think about the things that will make that happen – that is at the next stage.

For now you want to know what you are aiming towards in the broadest of senses. Create a vision statement to make sure you keep that focus throughout the changes. Remember your aim throughout this stage is; 'what experiences do you want your pupils to have outdoors?'

To help this process:

- Involve everyone in thinking about what you want to be able to do outside.
- Use problem solving, building, making and doing activity with pupils.
- Increase staff awareness of native plants and animals and local resources. This might include visits to other sites.

- Identify what the school wants to be able to do, for example whether you want to view animals. Make sure that whoever maintains the premises understands the aims of the project. Don't forget to consider how maintenance may be affected as a result of the project.
- At this stage one of the key things you might identify is that you would like your pupils to have more encounters with nature – whether that is learning about it, observing it, developing and managing habitats or playing in a natural environment.



How can we get there. Making the changes.

These two stages have been put together as they are very closely related; however, you cannot make the changes until you have decided what you are going to do!

As a result of the previous stages you should now know what you want to achieve. As part of the One World Learning programme we have come together to create a best practice activity guide for engaging school communities in developing green spaces for wildlife and this is also complemented by a wealth of materials.

These are just some of the ideas that will help you identify what you want to do in your school grounds or local space. This might be having contact with nature every day through including natural play spaces, growing an edible hedgerow, promoting organic approaches to gardening or studying wildlife throughout the seasons.

In Cornwall England, four schools came together to support action to create more habitat for the Long Horn Bee which is nationally rare. They worked with MP's, the local community and within the school grounds to create habitats. These habitats included the growing of beans which engaged a wider audience. The children spent time during English lessons interviewing key people and writing letters. They did baking during maths and organised a tea party. These activities made a whole range of links to the curriculum. The embedding of the programme supported the teachers to manage workload and acted as motivation for the children's learning.

Some ideas might include a bird table within view of a classroom, building a bird hide, creating a dipping platform by your pond, developing wildlife habitats far enough away to not be disturbed by noise and activity, but near enough to be accessed easily from the school buildings.

Useful organisations

British Ecological Society – britishecologicalsociety.org

Grün macht Schule (Green makes Schools) – gruen-macht-schule.de

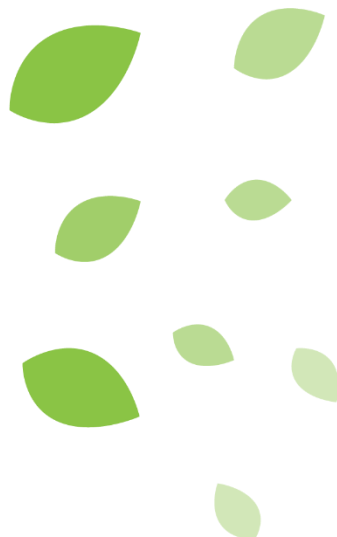
Landlife – wildflower.co.uk

Outdoor and Woodland Learning Scotland – owlsotland.org
Open Air Labs – opalexplorenature.org
Polli:Nation – pollination.co.uk (a biodiversity and education project)
RSPB – rspb.org.uk
The Wildlife Trusts – wildlifetrusts.org
The Woodland Trust – woodlandtrust.org.uk



Reflection

Think of your school, where did you get sun? Where did the puddles form? Were there plants? Did you do any growing outdoors? If you could go back where might you have put a small wildlife garden or pot? Where might you have planted a tree?



Play and wildlife

Play, in the broadest sense is when we are actively engaged doing something we enjoy. It can be physical, such as running or skipping or throwing, but it can also be imaginative, solitary or constructive to name but a few.

Making it work

By introducing natural materials to the play space might include slices of log or stones to climb over, it could be trees to sit under or herbs to rub between their fingers whilst they quietly read. Try to provide opportunities to be active, challenged, creative and social, to make their own choices and develop their independence.

Provide clearly defined spaces for loose part play with natural materials and spaces where natural materials are not to be disturbed. Have the children create signs to remind others of the important role those undisturbed loose materials are playing in the creation of habitats and food sources for vertebrates and invertebrates alike.



Parents and staff need to understand that taking risks, in a safe environment, is necessary for children's development, helping them assess risk and danger in different situations. Use a risk-benefit approach to look at how the positives of different features can be weighed up against their risk.



Get parents on board by inviting them to play sessions where the children are using natural loose materials or playing pollinators.

Agree on the role of the adult in promoting appropriate free play – keep adult supervision to a minimum and allow play to be child led.

Work with the children and young people to develop an agreed behaviour code for the space – for example, taking care not to break new growth, pick flowers or disturb nesting birds.

The Forest School Association promotes play in woodlands in the UK and is an approach used by many schools.

The principles of forest school (FS) are:

FS is a long-term process of regular sessions, rather than a one-off or infrequent visits; the cycle of planning, observation, adaptation and review links each session.

FS takes place in a woodland or natural environment to support the development of a relationship between the learner and the natural world.

FS uses a range of learner-centered processes to create a community for being, development and learning.

FS aims to promote the holistic development of all those involved, fostering resilient, confident, independent and creative learners.

FS offers learners the opportunity to take supported risks appropriate to the environment and to themselves.

FS is run by qualified Forest School practitioners who continuously maintain and

develop their professional practice.

Useful information and organisations

Learning through Landscapes – lfl.org.uk (search 'natural play')

Grün macht Schule (Green makes Schools) – gruen-macht-schule.de

Play Safety Forum – playsafetyforum.wordpress.com

Free Play Network – freeplaynetwork.org.uk

Playlink – playlink.org

Natural Curiosity – naturalcuriosity.ca



Reflection

In a school of your choice take time to either observe or think back to how children were playing. Did you see creative, physical, social play? Were loose parts made available to the children? Were there spaces to be quiet and noisy?

Growing and eating

School grounds are excellent places to help children learn about healthy food. Here they can grow their own crops and cook their own meals.

The Royal Horticultural Society (2010: 6) in the UK commissioned research to assess the impact of gardening in schools. It was found that gardening and growing food encourages children to:

- become stronger, more active learners capable of thinking independently and adapting their skills and knowledge to new challenges,
- gain a more resilient, confident and responsible approach to life,
- learn vital job skills such as presentation skills, communication and team work,
- embrace a healthier, more active lifestyle,
- develop the ability to work and communicate with people of all ages and backgrounds.

In many regions, communal eating and the sharing of food is an important cultural practice, and one that often occurs outside in community spaces. For some, this may be their primary interaction with nature. Integrating this socially recognised activity into your project will make it more familiar, which in turn will increase involvement and success.



How to make it work

As with any development on school grounds, you need to think first about what you want to achieve with a growing project, how to incorporate curriculum objectives, who is going to be involved, and most importantly, who is going to oversee the area and take care of the ongoing maintenance or requirements.

Growing projects can help pupils develop life-long skills and interests, and can be easily linked to learning about healthy eating, food literacy and active living, sustainability, nature and economics or to different areas of the curriculum – science, geography and maths being the most obvious areas for development. It can also provide the inspiration for creative writing, cooking and art.

There are many different organisations and individuals who can help you with a growing project. Investigate the local community – you may find a local community garden club or allotment society, parents or grandparents who are keen gardeners and willing to share their enthusiasm and expertise. Local companies, such as garden centres, may also be happy to share their knowledge, resources or time.

Plan your growing area carefully. If you are developing a significant project, the first issue to consider is its location. Many of the considerations will overlap with wildlife areas: you will need somewhere sunny and easy to access that will not be damaged by footpaths or desire-lines. An outside tap or water source is a necessity and a place to gather a class together and store tools are also useful elements. As the school becomes more confident, growing spaces can be expanded with a polytunnel or greenhouse, art works, fruit cages and housing for livestock.

Consider the seasons – school holidays can be a problem as edible crops and non-native plantings need harvesting and watering, so plan ahead – for example, create a system so that anyone watering and tending edible crops over the summer months also gets to harvest anything that is ready to eat.

Ensure that growing is encouraged as a way to meet the curriculum needs of the school and not simply as an out-of-lesson activity. There is much that can be learnt through lessons in a food or native planting garden such as geography and food miles, the history of cultivation, food security and the sustainability of using local food over imported food, cultural traditions and practices, scientific studies or the requirements of plants to flourish, biology, chemistry and maths or creative writing and art work.

Try to link food grown to local traditions and community celebrations. Cooking on a simple campfire, barbecue, earth pit oven or even a cobb or clay oven will add to the excitement of growing fruit and vegetables.

The Learning through Landscapes EGG programme encouraged schools to make links with local businesses so that the children created mini enterprise schemes in which they grew produce for local food retailers. This in turn raised teaching opportunities for maths, geography and science.

Useful organisations

Garden Organic – gardenorganic.org.uk

Countryside Classroom – countrysideclassroom.org.uk.

The Royal Horticultural Society – rhs.org.uk

Reflection

A school locally to you has previously not wanted to work with you because they did not want to teach through nature but did want to teach through food. What links could you make between their current good practice and whole school priority of food production and your need to raise awareness of wildlife conservation?

Access and inclusion

Access for all pupils into your site from inside and around your site needs to be considered to ensure everyone can participate in outdoor lessons. This does not mean that there should be no challenges along the pathways – and pupils with different needs will find some routes more difficult to access than others. If you are identifying or developing an outdoor learning space, consider the different surfaces, signage, slopes and steps, access and exit point as well as passing and resting places along the way

Park Community, Oakgrove and Bedales secondary schools, in the UK have embedded outdoor work in the children's timetable. They build buildings, create gardens and wildlife habitats and learn vocational skills whilst they are outdoors. The children can gain certification that can support them after their time at the school.

How to make it work

Children with additional needs often have a number of people working with them – teachers, teaching assistants, pastoral care, parents etc. People will often have different views, for example, on how much risk or walking is acceptable, so identifying your needs as a school and developing a shared vision for your outside learning is vital. From a planning point of view, some key areas to consider will include ensuring that you are providing opportunities for:

- Movement and challenge. All children and young people need to be challenged, some more than others. Aim for a variety of activity such as writing, measuring, drawing, digging, watering, investigating etc.
- A place to rest. Learning and playing can be overpowering – areas of less hectic activity can reduce sensory overload from noise (wind/other children), the glare of the sun and at the same time provide spaces to hide/watch nature.
- Real activities, such as filling plant pots, sweeping leaves and water plants can provide avenues for play for children who find it hard to improvise.



- Sharing. This ensures some areas are not seen as being ‘special’ or ‘different’ – for example, build a raised bed planter adjacent and connected to a lower-level bed as part of a dense planting arrangement.
- Sensory experiences. Children with altered perceptions may see the world in different ways or have a preference for/against textures/smells/colours. Consider how water, light (shadows and colours), plantings (texture, fragrance, shape etc.), sound and movement affect a space. Include features such as sand, mud and water that can be manipulated or felt by hands/feet/whole body after the space is developed without disturbing the primary plantings.
- Natural play. Loose parts – from logs and pallets to collections of natural materials – add valuable and cost effective dimension to play and learning, helping everyone to share, interact, play and learn more actively than with fixed elements.
- Journeys. Choices of routes around a site offer play and learning opportunities as well as decision making options for all children and young people, helping them to develop autonomy and confidence. Ensure routes, entrances and arrival points are clear; use landmarks and texture changes to help them orient themselves.
- Comfort and safety. This includes places to sit – in groups and individually – and places that offer shade and shelter. A range of seating can help meet a variety of needs; similarly shade and shelter – should meet a wide range of needs, including intimate spaces, group activities, on-to-one and retreat space.
- Some pupils, for examples those with Autism, will find their senses being over stimulated. To help with this provide sun glasses and ear defenders if they want them as these will help to lessen the impact of things going on around them.
- Provide spaces for pupils to stop, rest and observe what is going on. This should include a transition space leading from inside to outside.

Useful publications and organisations

Naturally Inclusive by L. Browning and F. Robinson (2011) Learning through Landscapes

Sense Scotland – sensescotland.org.uk

The Sensory Trust – sensorytrust.org.uk

Thrive – thrive.org.uk



Reflection

Imagine you are approached by a Headteacher in a special school who wants their students to learn through nature, what might you need to consider when building accessible wildlife habitats in a school grounds e.g. path surfaces]

Seating and meeting

Seating enables children, parents and staff to socialise, make friends, work, eat and to observe others and find solitude as well as to learn these to happen effectively. Whether children and young people are being instructed, are collaborating with each other, or working independently, different seating layouts will support each approach more effectively.

The ability to facilitate both socialising and solitary opportunities makes seating a very important element to consider. This may well be a permanent space but it could also be made of moveable seating, allowing for different teaching strategies to take place at one site.

How to make it work

Consider:

- who is using the seating?
- what they are likely to be using it for?

- when they are using it?
- where is it needed to be most effective?
- has everyone who might be interested been consulted or thought about?
- where is the best place for the teacher to be located?
- where does the sun shine?
- are there other resources that would be useful to combine with the seating eg storage or shelter?

When considering your seating options, make sure that the positioning of seating does not disturb those inside the building - if you want to use seating for lessons, do not place it directly outside another classroom. If you are developing a space for outdoor creative reflection and writing, do not position it next to an area used for physical activities during class time. Locate seating near to features that you want to use or study in lessons, so that teachers can gather the class easily when outside.

Think about the environmental conditions of the site. The prevailing wind may influence the location of your seating and lesson areas, or it may require shelter to be added, for example planting or mesh fencing. Likewise, consider whether shading from direct sun is needed. Shade can be achieved naturally with planting, or through the creation of permanent, semi permanent or temporary structures.

At Highcliffe Primary school in Dorset UK, when they designed and planted their new meadow they consulted on where a teacher would bring children from, what staff would be present, how would they communicate with the main building. This resulted in greater use by the nursery, a woodland circle for everyone to sit down and paths to access the area. The school are also looking at the use of two way radios or mobile phones to enable more classes to access the area.



Having a store of flexible seating options, such as picnic blankets or cushions, can extend the use of outdoor seating in the winter months. And always consider the materials you are using, and the layout of the seating. A useful design for seating based on a horseshoe, but not too large, so that pupils can relate well to each other and the whole group can be addressed at once.

Vary the areas to incorporate both large groups of children and young people and small groups of three or four, and think about the 'feel' of the space and whether the seating is conducive to formal or informal activities and which best suits your outdoor learning objectives.

- When planning social seating, take a walk around the grounds while the children or young people are out to see where they naturally congregate.
- For maximum flexibility, incorporate a mixture of loose, moveable seating as well as fixed permanent seating.
- Take portable or classroom chairs outside and try them in different places before making any final decisions about the addition of permanent seating.
- Remember to consider shade and shelter when looking at seating options.
- Consider your seating an adjunct to, rather than at odds with, conservation objectives.
- Ensure that they are from sustainable sources, are robust enough to take tough use by students and others and are easy to maintain

Useful information and organisations

Work with local suppliers, artists, arborists, craftspeople, landscape garden designers and stone masons. Contact local colleges to see if students may be able to create elements or seating design as part of their degree course.



Reflection

If you were asked by a school to integrate seating into an their wildlife planting what might you want to consider and what consultations might you need to carry out before you make a recommendation to the school?

Community and clubs

Learning outside the classroom is a fantastic way of getting the school community and wider neighbourhood involved in the life of the school.

There are many ways different community members can get involved and different people will be able to help you in different ways, so think carefully about what support may be needed and consider who lives and works in the area.



Making it work

Below are just some of the ways the school's local community might get involved in the school's outdoor learning objectives:

- Invite members of the community to join the school grounds management group – they may well have useful skills such as bookkeeping, gardening or grant application writing.
- Ask the neighbours what they think of the school grounds.
- Is there a local expert who can advise you on different aspects of your grounds?
- Ensure that there is someone who is skilled and knowledgeable in charge who can oversee work days where family and friends can help; for example, when digging a pond, planting large trees or constructing raised beds.
- Are there local companies or suppliers who can help?
- There may also be ways the community currently uses the space, and this may affect the way it can be used. Some may be planned activities, such as sports clubs, and others might be unplanned or unwanted visitors; both will

need to be considered when planning lessons and addressing risk/benefit assessments.

The Haven Primary school in Eastbourne attended their local learning outside the classroom teachers conference, networking with an organisation called SO Sussex who specialise in sharing traditional crafts. Together they developed outdoor teaching spaces working with teachers and students on practical work outdoors.

Useful organisations

Work with the local community. Advertise the project and your project needs in the school newsletter, local newspapers, local community halls and places of worship.

Reflection

You have been called into a project where the headteacher has not consulted the community or mapped local resources, what advice might you give them to help them to engage with the whole school and community? Can you think of any organisations you might approach in the community you live in?

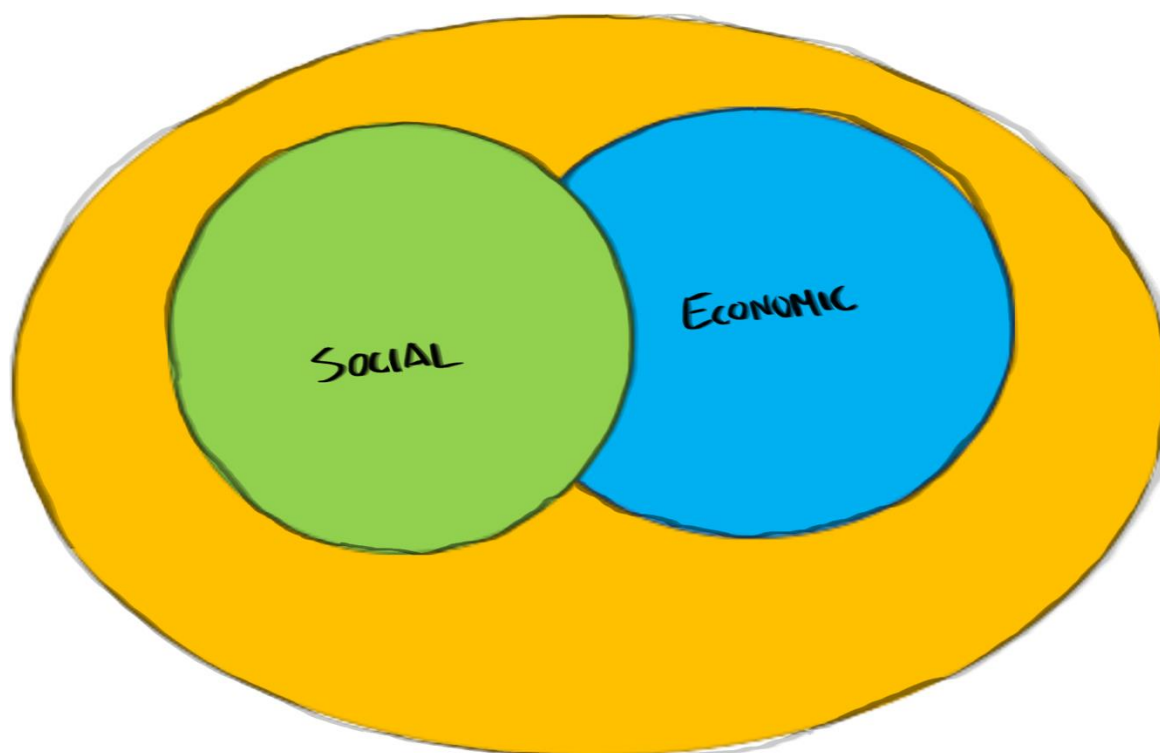
Sustainability In a school context

Sustainability and management go hand in hand; managing outdoor learning spaces in a sustainable way is good for the environment and will enable practical outdoor activities to endure over a number of years. Writing policies and putting outdoor learning into the school development plan will help ensure it remains a priority for the school in the future.

How to make it work

Schools are not necessarily nature reserves and need to acknowledge their priority is to educate children; however there are a few things they can do to help them teach through nature in a sustainable way. This includes social and economically sustainable changes.

[Info graphic Sustainability requires us to look at all types of sustainability in the school environment]



Checklist

- Review and embed in social policies within the school e.g. anti bullying
- Management plan, embedded in the curriculum and staff workload
- Acknowledge the hidden curriculum
- Work holistically looking at the whole child, community and site
- Be participative to support ownership
- Think about an impact assessment and how the changes will need eco system services such as water, energy and natural materials

Making biodiverse improvements to school grounds to facilitate increased practical outdoor learning will create new habitats, be mindful of the potential loss of habitats and food sources and the impact this will have on present wildlife on site.

If you are making physical changes and improvements, make sure that you consider the origin of the materials that have been chosen. Timber should be sourced from sustainably managed woods or forests, or simply repurposed. A good mantra is to 'reduce, reuse, repair, recycle, rejoice, repeat'. Purchase local products wherever you can – including locally grown native plants – and work with local people wherever possible.

If vandalism to outdoor learning spaces is a concern, remember that the more cared for somewhere looks, the more likely people are to look after it.

Are chemical pesticides and artificial fertilisers used? Moving to organic methods, such as making compost or using biological pest control solutions, increases learning opportunities (decomposition, chemistry, biology and food chains) and is both safer and sustainable. You might also look at ways of using water more efficiently; for example, collecting rain in water butts or troughs and using native and/or draught-tolerant species and mulches to reduce the amount of water required.



Schools in Worthing, UK pay a small subscription a year to enable them to take part

in a shared conference where their students share their best practice in making their schools more environmentally friendly and get inspiration from schools outside the area. The project is called the EYE project, their model is now being duplicated in nearby Chichester and Littlehampton.



Useful organisations

Eden Project – edenproject.com

Global Footprints – globalfootprints.org.uk

Sustainable Schools Alliance – sustainable-schools-alliance.org.uk

Sustainability and Environmental Education (SEEd) – se-ed.co.uk/edu

Reflection

Think of a school offering education for 6 to 11 year olds. It has a concrete area for children to play sport and let off some energy between lessons, a small sandy area and a strip of untended grass. There is little shade. A teacher and a parent governor from the school have approached you to support them to increase the use of this space for outdoor nature-based learning activities.

Using the LTL process of change what might you begin to do to help them explore sustainable options talked about in this section? They have no budget and staff are very stretched for time. How are you going to maintain communications and momentum with them after your first visit.

Part 4: Resources and support

In this section you will find



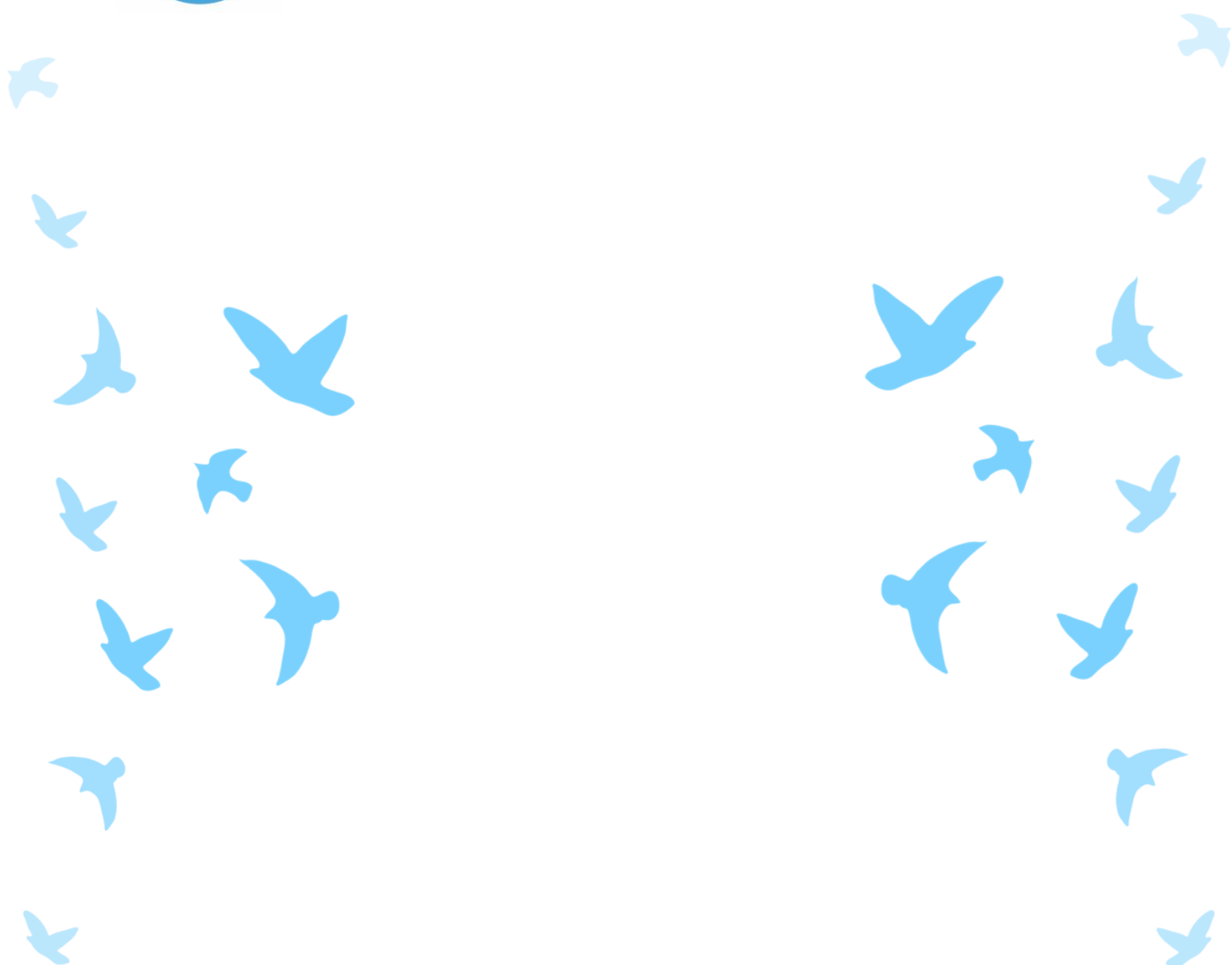
Audit tool



Planning tools – These are activities that can be undertaken within the setting. They can involve children and young people, staff members and the wider community. Some have been referenced previously in Part 2,



Case studies – These are real-life examples of how other settings have made improvements to the use, design and management of their outside spaces. Use these as inspiration or as a tool for discussion with colleagues and school partners.





Audit tool

The audit is split into three parts.

- The first part explores how the site is currently used and the children and young people's experiences of it.
- The second audit form explores the physical attributes of the site – what do you have there? What condition is it in? What is or isn't used?
- Finally, the third part will look at the staffing and management of the site.

The types of questions asked in the audit are not there to make judgments on what is or is not being done correctly; they are there to prompt you and the school to think more critically about why things are the way they are and what might be done to improve them. The audit is a straightforward way to collect this information and having it will help inform and direct how you can best focus your resources and work together with the school on the process of improvement.

Based on the information you gather below and on your observations of children and young people and consultations with staff and parents, summarise the priorities for improving the school's policies and procedures to support outdoor provision for pupils at the setting. These priorities can be transferred to an action plan.



Use Audit – How the space is used

How is outdoor play and learning included in curriculum plans?										
Is the school able to offer 'free flow' indoor-outdoor play?	Always	✓	No, it is not possible to offer free flow in the setting because:							
If no, what are the main barriers to free flow?	Sometimes	✓								
Do boys and girls enjoy equal use of the outdoors? If no, please give brief details.	✓	✗								
Does the space feel welcoming and friendly?	✓	✗								
Do pupils and staff have access to appropriate clothing for various weather conditions?	Wet	✓	✗	Snowy	✓	✗	Windy	✓	✗	
	Sunny	✓	✗	Cold	✓	✗	Hot	✓	✗	
Are children and young people encouraged to take risks and challenge themselves outdoors? If so, how.										
What types of learning and play are well catered for outdoors at the setting?										
Based on the above and your consultations with children, young people, staff and parents, summarise the priorities for broadening the students' and staffs' experiences outside. These priorities can be transferred to an action plan.										



Design Audit – How the space is organised

What are the approximate dimensions of the outdoor space?						
What shape is it?			Is the outdoors immediately adjacent to the indoors?	✓	✗	
Does it have shared access?	✓	✗	Is the outdoors easily accessible by everyone using the setting?	✓	✗	
Is the space used for anything other than learning through play? If yes, what?	✓					
	✗					
Approximately what % of each of these surfaces is the space made up of? Please mark 0 if there is none.	Tarmac		Concrete		Grass	
	Gravel		Wood		Rubber	
	Sand		Planting		Other	
Are there any hard surfaced pathways?	✓	✗	What are they made of?			
Does the space have secure gates and boundaries?	✓	✗	Are they attractive to look at?	✓	✗	
What are the gates and boundaries made of?			Are they in good condition?	✓	✗	
Are there attractive views into and out of the outdoor space?	Views from the buildings			✓	✗	
	Views from nearby roads /paths			✓	✗	
	Views out of the space			✓	✗	
<p>What fixed (i.e. permanent) play and learning features are available outdoors?</p> <p>What condition are they in (e.g. poor, ok, good, excellent)?</p> <p>Please add any other fixed features you have or use outdoors.</p>	Water					
	A tap					
	Growing					
	Climbing					
	Sand					

What other play and learning resources are available for outdoors? Are children able to self-select these resources?					
Is there any shade in the space? What provides the shade?		✓	✗	Is there any shelter? What provides the shelter?	✓ ✗
Is any seating provided?	✓	✗	Where do children sit, 'informally'?		
Does the space have any plants, shrubs or trees? If yes, please expand!		✓	✗		



'Transition' areas

A transition area is the important space that links indoors and outdoors; it is usually immediately adjacent to the main way out of the building to the grounds, and it is where children and adults can engage in quieter activities. Children and young people will use

Does the setting have a transition area?	✓	✗	If yes, please answer the remaining questions in this section, with additional details below if possible.
Is seating provided?	✓	✗	
Can children and young people independently access this area? How?	✓	✗	
Is the area covered or sheltered?	✓	✗	
Is independently accessible storage available?	✓	✗	
Based on the above, summarise some of the priorities for improving the physical features and outdoor opportunities at the setting. These priorities can be transferred to an action plan.			



Management Audit – How the space is managed

Are there any outdoor areas that do not get used? Why?	✓	✗			
Does the space suffer from vandalism? If yes, what happens? How often?	✓	✗			
Does the space suffer from animal incursion? What are the consequences?	✓	✗			
How long does it usually take to set up (and put away) outdoors?					
Has the setting undertaken fundraising specifically for outdoor play and learning? If yes, what has it paid for?	✓	✗			
Who maintains the outdoor space?					

The adult role at your setting

Has anyone at the setting had outdoor play and learning training? Please give details.						
Generally, when working outdoors, is the school team:	Confident in what they are doing?	✓	✗	Enthusiastic about being outdoors?	✓	✗

How does the school team support children's learning and play outdoors, e.g. planning, observations etc.?						
Do any parents help with outdoor sessions? If yes, please give details.	✓	✗				
Policies and procedures						
Who owns the setting's site?						
Are there any specific conditions or physical features that restrict the school's use of the site?						
Which of these policies does the school currently have? Please add any other policies that mention, or are relevant to, the outdoors.	Outdoor play	✓	✗	Health and Safety	✓	✗
	Risk and challenge	✓	✗	Accidents	✓	✗
	Others					
Is the outdoors specifically mentioned in any of the staff job descriptions? If yes, please give brief details.	✓	✗				
Is the outdoors or outdoor play and learning mentioned on the website, parent pack or brochure? If yes, please give brief details.	✓	✗				



Planning Tools 1 - Observation

One of the best ways to see how the school grounds are used is simply by observation. Below are just some of the techniques you can use to observe what is happening in the grounds.

Make a plan of the grounds and observe how individuals move around it. You can focus on one individual at a time and for a limited period or for the whole of a breaktime. Mark on the map where they go and note if they stay put in any particular place for a period of time. Note what they do and where they do it. Do this for several people from across the school community, ideally over a number of days and even at different times of year, and/or in different weather conditions. Watch to see how the space is being used.

Use photographs of moments in time – take them from the same places in the grounds at different times of day to see how the grounds are used throughout the day.

Video is a useful way to record what is going on in the grounds. If you make simple observations at specific times it is often surprising what you miss!

Finding out how specific features are currently used is also very useful. Is the play equipment really getting use that is proportionate to its cost, or would future development be better focused on different types of provision, including the creation of a project space.



Planning Tools 2 - Tour of the grounds

A site survey conducted by walking the school grounds with members of the school community is often a very successful way to prompt people's thoughts and to help them to think about the site. The best method will depend on who is undertaking this task and the information you want to gather.

Groups of pupils can take a tour of the grounds and record their thoughts:

- these can be prompted by written questions
- pupils can imagine they are taking a celebrity on a tour and show them the areas that might be of most interest to them
- younger pupils may find talking to a teddy or doll about their grounds makes it easier to explain what is in their grounds.
- The tour findings can be recorded in different formats:
 - written
 - audio recordings
 - video recordings
 - using ICT, e.g. GIS plotting.



Planning Tools 3 - What do you think?

Questionnaires can be completed by pupils, staff, parents, governors or the wider community. Children and young people may be able to design questionnaires themselves, or you may need adults to put them together.

When devising questions, think about:

- what you want to know?
- the questions you need to ask to get useful answers
- the age and ability of those filling in the questionnaire
- the language and literacy skills of those filling in the questionnaire
- what format the questionnaire might take:
 - online survey
 - written questionnaire
 - open-ended questions. These may be harder to analyse, but allow for people to express a wider range of ideas and issues
 - images as well as, or instead of, words.
- how are you going to analyse the information you are gathering?
- how are you going to present the results?
- who will you present the results to?
- how are you going to use the results?



Planning Tools 4 - Special places

We all have special places. Locate and celebrate a special space on the grounds before, during and after the improvements. This activity can be completed using photography or pupil art (or a combination of both). It is appropriate for all ages.

Go outside with a small group, or by yourself initially, and identify a place that you think is special. Once you have found a place, look at it carefully and think about the following:

Why you like it especially? Look at the smallest parts as well as the whole area.
How you can create pictures to show why this place is special. Will you use a digital camera or drawings?

Whether you want to show the whole, or just a part of it?
Are there some angles that are better than others?
How many pictures do you need to be able to say all you want?

Once you have done this, and taken or created the images, make a display to celebrate the special nature of the space, or spaces, chosen. You can add words or things that have been collected from the grounds to the display. Have the children or young people talk about the choices and ask them to reflect on why they think the people who made the images think they are special?



Planning Tools 5 - Baseline data survey

It is important to collect baseline data at the start of the project – this will help you to see how the project has progressed as the improvements are made. Rather than getting everyone to look at everything within the site, you can divide up into teams – whether expert teams or location specialists.



Planning Tools 6 - Expert teams

Expert teams give groups of pupils different technical aspects to undertake the research across the grounds. This team might include:

- wildlife experts to investigate wildlife habitats and what lives in the grounds
- tree specialists to identify the trees on site and note their height, age and condition
- engineers to check out the range of materials used across the site
- health and safety officers to check if the site is currently safe for use
- play researchers to check current equipment, spaces and other features.

Or they can divide into location specialists. Divide the site up into sections and use groups of pupils to find out everything they can about one section. They then bring all of this information together to create an overall plan.

List the things that are in the space but label them as fixed, loose and living. This could form part of your zone plan. Include images if you are able. Running through the times of day, record who uses the space and for what purpose. Use fixed-point photography to show how a space changes over time; take a photograph of a particular space and mark where you have taken the photograph from so that you can take comparative photographs during and after the improvements, as well as during different seasons.



Planning Tools 7 - Visiting other spaces for inspiration and feedback

Children, young people and others, may have limited experience of what is possible in school grounds and what occurs on conservation reserve sites. Visits to other locations can help everyone in the school community understand what is possible.

Visit other schools that have addressed similar issues to you and ask them:

- what works well
- what they would change
- what they might do differently in briefing and working with a designer or contractor

Visit public open spaces to see what works for different users.

Visit suppliers and manufacturers to see the variety of materials and products that are available in the local area. For example, visit:

- a nursery to determine what native trees and plants are available and their seasonality
- a quarry to select boulders or stones for features or borders
- a forest product manufacturer to learn about how trees can be used to create outdoor furniture

When visiting other spaces on a tour, ask yourself and the guide the following questions as you go:

- who is this space for?
- what would you expect to do in this space?
- what within the design makes you think this?
- do you think the space works as it is meant to?
- would you make any changes and if so, what would they be?
- do you think a space like this, or elements from this space, are replicable and would work in the project space and if not, why not?



Advice Sheet - Funding

Funding your school grounds development

The success of your fundraising efforts is closely linked to the involvement and commitment of the whole school community: include pupils, teachers, non-teaching staff, school governors, parents, grandparents and other individuals and businesses with links to the school and its community.

Creating a fundraising strategy

There are many sources of funding available for school grounds development projects with huge variation in the amount of funding available and the chance of success. It is therefore important to develop a fundraising strategy to increase the chances of being successful and bringing the project to life.

Making a strategy realistic, aligning it closely with the aims and objectives of the overall project will enable the project management team to think of creative ways to access a wide range of funding sources and avoid being 'funding-led'. Importantly, consider how and whether the local community can make use of the planned features or facilities – this is likely to appeal to many funders. Where possible, dividing the overall grounds development plan into a series of 'projects' that can be undertaken individually or batched together for larger funding applications will allow the most flexibility within the fundraising strategy.

From a funder's perspective, projects with a defined start, end, clearly identified needs and measurable outcomes are far more attractive. This also provides the opportunity to prove to future funders that the project managers have experience of delivering projects to time and budget – a good track record is a useful tool for securing larger awards for bigger projects later.

Generally, the larger the grant the more is expected from the applicant in terms of the complexity of the application process, monitoring, evaluation and, of course, outcomes and outputs. Many sources of larger amounts of funding will also require applicants to have charitable status, a constitution and some realistic aims and objectives. The Charity Commission for England and Wales and the OSCR in Scotland (www.charity-commission.gov.uk) (www.oscr.org.uk) both supply guidance on registering as a charity as well as a sample constitution and other relevant documents.

To avoid repeated failure and its effects on enthusiasm, the fundraising strategy should have a number of realistic, achievable fundraising targets built in. Once these targets are established, prioritise fundraising efforts to raise money for the things that are needed first.



Making a funding application

Take the time to prepare funding applications well. Too many bids fall at the first hurdle through not reading application information properly or by failing to provide the information requested. Many potential funders have a large number of applications to consider and it is worth spending some time to make the bid stand out. Feedback from major funders suggests that many bids are rejected because they:

- do not align elements of their proposal with the funder's aims
- fail to explain the need for their project and how this was identified
- do not answer all of the questions on the form
- fail to meet the funder's deadline
- submit illegible/poorly written applications
- do not include requested documents (such as proof of charitable status, annual report or accounts)
- provide an inadequate budget with unrealistic costings.

When making individual requests to local organisations and businesses, consider the project from their perspective and adjust the approach accordingly – what is it about the project and its aims that will appeal to them? How will supporting the cause actually benefit them as a funder?

The cost of fundraising

Evaluate the time required and potential cost of applying to particular funding sources against the benefit that will be received if successful. Applying for statutory funding and to grant-making trusts requires investment in terms of the application process, monitoring and evaluation whereas donations often require a lot less.

Think also about the other implications of applying to particular funding sources. Will a relationship with the funder affect the overall aims of the project? Is it desirable to be associated with this particular funder? Will establishing a relationship with a specific business, organisation or body limit the possibility to apply to others who may be seen as 'competition'?

Local businesses often encourage employees to contribute to projects in their local community through both volunteering and matched fundraising schemes. Large high street retailers and smaller locally-based businesses will often be willing to provide support if there is a corresponding benefit for them in terms of good publicity or increased sales so consider what advantages your project would offer a sponsor. Ensure that as many people as possible in the community know what you



are doing and you will have an increased chance of receiving offers of assistance.

Online Databases

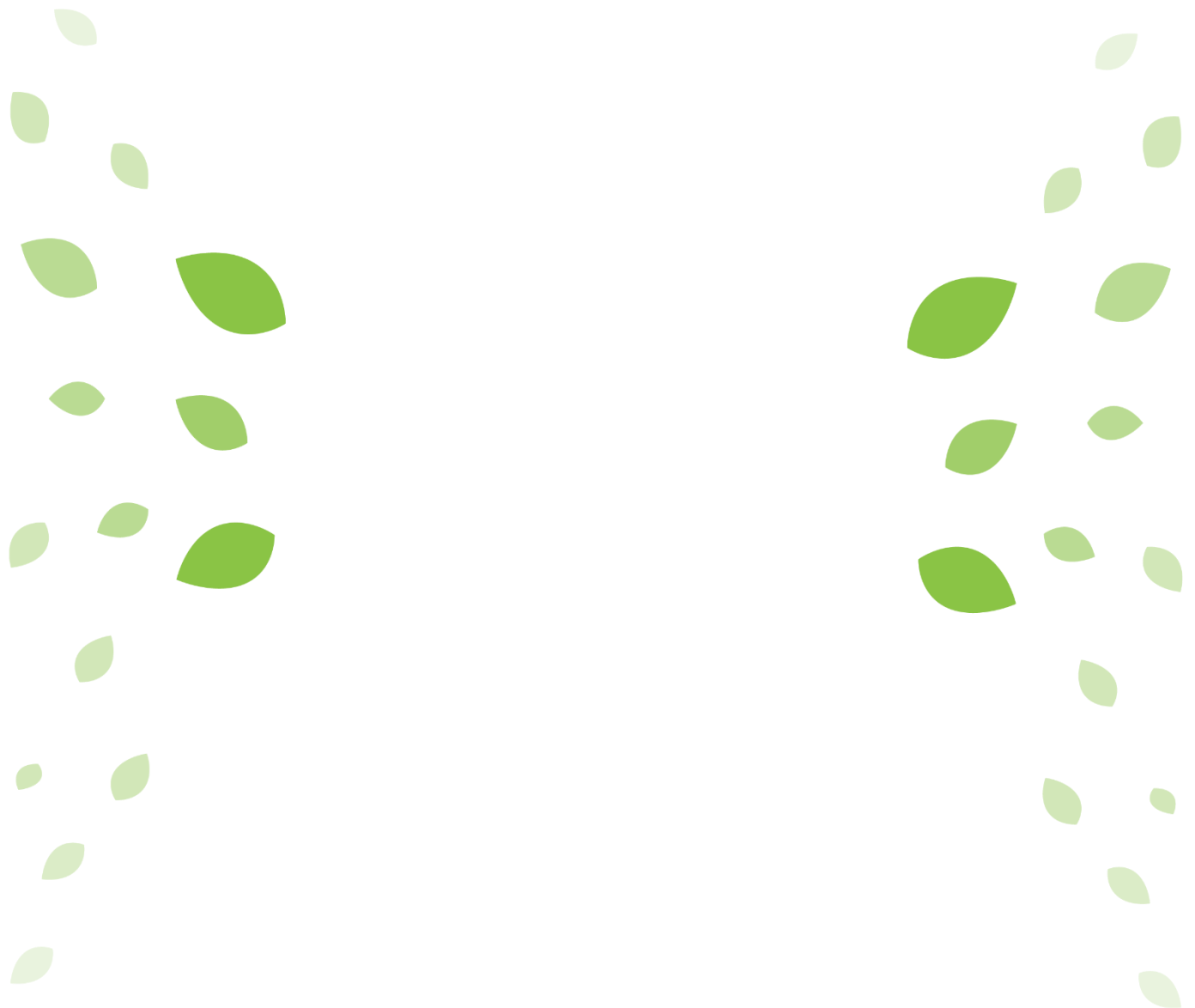
Many grants databases and funding guides are available online, providing a useful source of information on grant and award schemes. Many of these databases also contain comprehensive advice on putting together successful funding applications or choosing the most suitable funding sources for your project. Visit the following sites and read the user guides for advice and suggestions. The Charities Information Bureau supports voluntary organisations and community groups in funding their work.

Here are a couple of examples in the UK

www.fundraising.co.uk

www.lotteryfunding.org.uk

www.fundinginformation.org





Event ideas

There are lots of events that can be organised relatively easily throughout the school year that will raise a reasonable income. Why not race ducks or other objects? How about a disco, a fashion show, a quiz or a race night? Karaoke nights are a winner with dads, and mums will often pay to stop them singing too! As long as you have kept the community informed about your project and its progress, there should be no shortage of volunteers to help organise and take part. Good luck!

There are many relatively easy to organise, fun events that will yield a reasonable income. Here are just a few examples that have worked well:

- Alumni Reunions – eg 1950's, 1960's pupils
- Antiques Road Shows – see if your local antiques stores can help out
- Art & Craft Shows – local societies can usually help
- Beetle Drives or Bingo Nights – have food available and a raffle
- Boat or Duck Races – you'll need a suitable river for this one
- Buy a brick/sponsor a mural – most bits of school grounds developments can be sold
- Car Boot Sales – add to the fun by having a treasure hunt around the stalls
- Concerts – both school and local groups can take part
- Discos – always a favourite with the children – and parents too!
- Fashion Shows – companies may hold these for you if you provide the models
- Flower or Plant Sales/Shows – local societies and gardening centres can help
- Football or Netball Tournaments – teams can pay to enter for a star prize
- Gardener's Question Times – use local experts or knowledgeable parents and grandparents
- Jumble Sales – the oldest fundraising idea in the book, try using a theme
- Karaoke Evenings – people can pay to sing and others can pay to stop them!
- Mini Olympics or Highland Games - teams can compete to raise money as well.
- Quiz Night - charge for entry and get all prizes donated
- Race Night – can be great fun and good fundraisers too
- Scavenger or Treasure Hunt – a fun team event that local companies can support
- Talent Competition – hold your own X-Factor style event
- Toy Sales – popular with children
- Wine & Cheese evenings - can a local delicatessen or wine merchant help



Advice Sheet – Example Risk Benefit Analysis

	Example Risk Benefit Analysis		
Subject of risk assessment:	Fires and cooking on fires		
Brief description of activity, location, feature, activity and equipment used.	<p>Lighting, maintaining and putting out of small, contained fires. All our fires are contained – that is in some form of (purpose built or re-purposed) container or fireplace.</p> <p>Cooking of simple meals and heating of water (for drinks, cleaning and science experiments).</p> <p>This is undertaken with adult and child groups, in school grounds, beaches, local green spaces and woodland.</p> <p>Children, school staff and LTL staff are engaged with all aspects of the fire, from collection of tinder and fuel, to preparation, ignition, maintaining and putting out of fire. Children, school staff and LTL staff are engaged with all aspects of the food cooking, from preparation to heating/cooking, serving and eating.</p>		
Type of assessment (if play design process)	Designer <input type="checkbox"/>	Provider <input type="checkbox"/>	Post Installation Monitoring <input type="checkbox"/>
Job title and name of person making assessment	Matt Robinson	Signature of person making assessment	
Date of Assessment	24 July 2019	Review Date	1st January 2020
Name of senior manager:		Signature of senior manager:	
<p>Risk Management Statement</p> <p>LTL recognises that all risks cannot be reduced to nil, therefore this risk assessment prioritises the significant risks. Significant risks are those which pose risk of serious injury, chronic injury, disability or death, or risks that are overly common in interrupting our staff and clients normal work. For all activities, LTL staff will dynamically assesses risks and put in place control measures and record as required, but always within agreed and recorded RBAs.</p>			



Concerns, changes in risk management practice or minor injuries that are seen by LTL staff to be significant should be reported to the LTL manager who has signed off this RBA. The correct LTL Incident Report form should be used.

This RBA should be read in conjunction with LTL's Health and Safety Policy, other relevant LTL Risk Benefit Assessments and LTL Play Policy (as appropriate).

Activity or feature:	<p>Carrying of resources such as fire pit(s), Kelly kettles, fuel, large logs or branches.</p> <p>Collecting of fuel and tinder (gathering natural materials or from purchased source).</p> <p>Preparation of fuel and tinder by snapping, splitting, chopping and sawing down to smaller sizes.</p> <p>Carrying of flammable materials (natural and imported/purchased) and sources of ignition such as flint & steel or lighter.</p> <p>Igniting fire with tinder (natural and imported/purchased), building of fire to size and heat able to cook on, maintaining of flame, ashes or heat through adding fuel, slowing fire through damping with natural (earth or sand) materials.</p> <p>Putting fire out and clearing up of spent fuel and fire pits, Kelly kettles etc.</p> <p>Preparing of food including pouring, mixing, chopping, slicing and cleaning.</p> <p>Cooking of the food over hot fire or ashes including heating, frying, baking and boiling.</p> <p>Eating of the food (both cooked and uncooked) that has been prepared.</p> <p>Clearing up items used in food preparation such as cutlery, kitchen knives, bowls, cups, plates and waste food.</p>
How will participants benefit?	<p>Enjoyment, excitement and spiritual reflection.</p> <p>In managing a fire, participants will learn risk management, responsibility and organisation.</p> <p>In using fire as a (cooking) tool, children learn to respect it and use it wisely.</p> <p>Participants will learn simple science lessons (fire triangle) including the suitability of materials to ignite and keep a fire going, how to balance the right amount of oxygen and heat loss.</p> <p>Individuals will also learn about simple food preparation, meals and food types. They will also learn food hygiene basics, in a challenging practical environment.</p> <p>Putting a fire out, clearing up and taking items away will teach environmental responsibility and personal respect.</p> <p>In preparing, cooking and eating simple foods on an open fire groups will connect with food production, and enjoy social time.</p> <p>For many, the simple meals will also show variety of food types available, and signpost healthy food choices.</p>
Who will be at risk?	<p>LTL staff.</p> <p>Group members, adult and child.</p> <p>Members of the public.</p>
Any local factors that may affect risks or controls:	

Possible hazards and risks:	<p>Burns from the sparks or items placed on the fire or recently removed from the fire (e.g. saucepans or sticks).</p> <p>Group member falling into fire.</p> <p>Scalds from boiling water and fats used in cooking, following a spill or steam escape.</p> <p>Uncontrollable spread of fire..</p> <p>Toxins or poisons contained in scavenged food or rubbed off onto consumed food; illness from dirty water or unclean containers.</p> <p>Food poisoning or illness from poorly prepared food.</p> <p>Cuts from knife use when preparing food.</p>
-----------------------------	---

<p>Precautions and control measures to reduce the risk severity or likelihood:</p>	<p>Good group control and suitable activities (i.e. not running around) are the foundation of our fire safety.</p> <p>Hair, long clothing or hats should be kept away from flames, especially when tending a fire.</p> <p>Fires should be in containers, restricting sizes of fire, and allowing stable placing of pans and cooking implements.</p> <p>Areas around fires should be marked and restricted according to age and number in group. Seating should be the normal posture around a fire, unless working on or with it, in which case a 'safe position' for working can be adopted, again suitable to the groups. Implements, such as sticks will be used where appropriate to group to keep further back from fire when cooking or heating.</p> <p>Fires should always be put out before leaving the site, and sufficient water should be carried or available in the event of having to put a fire out suddenly. LTL staff should be confident that the fire has not spread to ground, and sand, rocks or logs may be used to space containers off the floor if needed on peaty or rooted soils.</p> <p>Hot cooking items should be kept within the marked fire area. Cooking fats should be used with care.</p> <p>Hot water should be poured carefully, with hands kept away from cups or other containers. Bungs or whistles should not be used with any Kelly/Ghillie/Storm kettles, or any other vessel used for heating water. It will not be appropriate to boil water with some groups, merely heat it.</p> <p>A set of gloves (or similar) will be carried with fire resources to facilitate lifting hot items.</p> <p>Great awareness of atmospheric and environmental conditions, such as dry summer, high winds or peat based soils, and choosing when not to have a fire. Use of sand base, rocks or similar to be considered.</p> <p>Staff to apply food hygiene controls in line with Food Standards Agency guidance and good practice outdoors. This will include:</p> <p>hand and personal hygiene of a good standard; clean implements and containers, working on mats or tarpaulins below containers or chopping boards to prevent contamination; clear working areas with no walking through, covering food before, during and after cooking when not being consumed; avoidance of foods that 'spoil' before cooking. This means that we will not cook meats unless dried and preserved, ensuring dairy products are fresh and consideration given to preserving them on hot days. All foods will be in-date and stored appropriately to prevent spoiling or contamination, both long term and when outside. Simple clean up measures to prevent re-use of implements or bowls where needed Good washing up technique, likely back in a kitchen or using dishwasher. Food preparation also involves use of knives, both sharp and cutlery. All implements will be managed well, with a limited number available and good storage so that knives are not left lying around. LTL staff will make judgements as to the competence of the group cooking, and employ suitable group</p>
--	---

		management or reduced tasks as appropriate.
		All LTL staff leading sessions or courses will hold a relevant emergency first aid qualification, appropriate to the training being led, and carry a first aid kit.
Precedents or comparisons:		<p>The Forest School Association has good protocols and proven history of using fire with a wide variety of groups, including pre-school. It also asserts qualifications are not needed.</p> <p>The Play Safety Forum highlights that fire is a play tool and learning tool, in their publication 'Managing Risk in Play Provision'.</p> <p>Education Scotland highlights fire as a suitable context for learning many things, and they have advice and videos on the subject.</p> <p>GfL and LTL have for many years used fire in schools, rural and urban settings with children as a learning tool.</p>
Judgement:		<p>Fire does have some challenges, due to small incidents having potentially unacceptable consequences. However, good group management and vigilance can reduce the likelihood of these risks to an acceptable level.</p> <p>Cooking on an open fire requires good skills and responsibility, and can be a life-long memory and skill.</p> <p>The positive benefits outweigh the serious risks, in light of reduced likelihood.</p>



Advice Sheet - Teaching Tips for Teachers Outdoors

Classroom management outdoors

Here are our top tips for classroom management outside:

1. Do not get bogged down in paperwork – school grounds and local short trips are 'Routine and Expected', and only require annual permissions and risk assessments.
2. Small steps are best – head out into school grounds, with simple activities at first.
3. Lead lessons that are within you and your class's confidence and competence.
4. Prepare the class before you go out. Planning and explanations are often best done in the indoor environment.
5. Plan the transition from indoors to out – and back in at the end of a session. For younger pupils this still may be learning to get dressed, for older pupils it is a chance to take responsibility and demonstrate skills.
6. Travel is a learning experience. For example – a short walk may have a 'spotting' challenge, can your noisy P7's sneak out without the head teacher hearing or seeing them? Has the class planned the bus journey and landmarks en-route?
7. Gathering a group to speak to them is important. You should not need to shout to a spread out group or over background noise.
8. What are the boundary limits and how will you call them back? Younger children may need to be close at hand or in sight, whereas older pupils should be able to work out of sight and work independently regularly.
9. Be consistent – keep the same discipline expectations and systems as you do indoors.
10. Be flexible – outdoors is a rich and changing learning venue, so make use of opportunities as they arrive.
11. Be fun - taking learning outdoors is a memorable, engaging experience.
12. Encouraging enjoyment and demonstrating your enjoyment of the outdoor environment sets a positive approach to activity and being outdoors for life.

References and further reading

Aristotle (350 BCE) *Nicomachean Ethics*. <http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/nicomachaen.mb.txt>. (trans W.D. Ross).

Berry, T. (2015) *The Dream of the Earth*. Berkeley: Counterpoint Press (orig. San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1988).

Bixler, R.D. and Floyd M.F. (1997) Nature is scary, disgusting, and uncomfortable. *Environment and Behavior* 29(4): 443-467.

Burroughs, J. (1919) *Nature Lore. Field and Study*. Boston: Houghton. Mifflin.

Carson, R. (1954) *The Real World Around Us*. In L. Lear (ed) *Lost Woods: the Discovered Writing of Rachel Carson* (1998) Beacon Press. 147-163.

Clements, R. (2004) An investigation of the status of outdoor play. *Contemporary Issues in early Childhood* 5(1): 68-80.

Corbin, C.B. (2002) Physical activity for everyone: What every physical educator should know about promoting lifelong physical activity. *Journal of Teaching in Physical Education*, 21(2), 128-44.

Danks, S. (2017) *Living Schoolyard Activity Guide, United States Edition* Green Schoolyards America, California.

Department for Children, Schools and Families (2007) *Principles into Practice, Early Years Foundation Stage: Enabling Environments – the learning environment* KEEP, Key Elements of Effective Practice, DfES Publications, Nottingham. Retrieved from <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130321061516/https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/DCSF-00012-2007.pdf>.

Dillon, J., Morris, M., O'Donnell, L., Reid, A., Rickinson, M. and Scott, W. (2005) *Engaging and Learning with the Outdoors – The final Report of the Outdoor Classroom in a Rural Context Action Research Project*. Slough: National Foundation for Educational Research.

Evans, G.W. (2006) Child development and the physical environment. *Annual Review of Psychology* 57: 1-28.

Fisher, K. (2005) *Research into Identifying Effective Learning Environments*. London: Rubida Research Pty Ltd.

Fjortoft, I. and Sageie, J. (2000) The natural environment as a play-ground for children. Landscape description and analyses of a natural playscape. *Landscape and Urban Planning* 48:83-97.

Gandini, L. (2012) History, Ideas and Basic Principles: An Interview with Loris Malaguzzi. In C. Edwards, L. Gandini, G. Forman (eds) *The Hundred Languages of Children: The Reggio Emilia Experience in Transformation* (27-72) Santa Barbara, California: Praeger.

Gill, T (2011) *Children and Nature: A Quasi Systematic Review of the Empirical Evidence*. London: Greater London Authority.

Groves, L. (2011) *Natural Play: Making a Difference to Children's Learning and Wellbeing*. A Longitudinal Study of the Forestry Commission Scotland. Glasgow: Forestry Commission Scotland.

Herrington, S. and Lesmeister, C. (2006) The design of landscapes at child-care centres: Seven Cs. *Landscapes Research* 31: 63-82.

Ipsos MORI (2010) *Teachers Omnibus 2009*. London: Ipsos Mori.



Ipsos MORI (2008) *Teachers Omnibus 2007*. London: Ipsos Mori.

Kurth-Schai, R. (1988) The Roles of Youth in Society; A Reconceptualization. *School K-12*. Paper 39. <http://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/slcek12/39>.

Learning through Landscapes (1994) *Special Places, Special People*. Godalming: WWF UK.

Louv, R. (2008) *The Last Child in the Woods: Saving our Children from Nature Deficit Disorder*. Chapel Hill: Algonquin Books (Original work published 2005).

Ludvigsen, A., Creegan, C. and Mills, H. (2005) *Grounds for Celebration: Measuring Impact of School Grounds Projects in London*. London: Learning through Landscapes.

McMillan, M. (1925) *Nursery Schools and the Pre-School Child*. London: Nursery Schools Publication (NSA).

Malaguzzi, L. (1998) History, ideas and basic philosophy. In C.P. Edwards, L. Gandini & G. Forman (eds) *The hundred languages of children (2nd edition): The Reggio Emilia approach, advanced reflections*. (49-198) Stamford CT: Ablex.

Montessori, M. (1946) *Education for a New World*. Reprint (1989) Cleo Press.

Muir, J. (1911) *My First Summer in the Sierra*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin (Sierra Club Books 1989 edition).

Natural England (2016) *Natural Connections Demonstration Project, 2012-2016: Final Report and Analysis of the Key Evaluation Questions (NECR215)*. Retrieved from <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6636651036540928>.

Natural England (2009) *Childhood and Nature: A Survey on Changing Relationships with Nature across the Generations*. Warboys: England Marketing.

The Nature Conservancy (2011) *Kids in nature poll*. July 28 - August 4, 2011 [survey report] Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates and Public Opinion Strategies. Retrieved from <https://www.nature.org/newsfeatures/kids-in-nature/kids-in-nature-poll.xml>.

Orr, D. (2004) *Earth in mind: On Education, Environment, and the Human Prospect*. Washington D.C.: Island Press.

Rivikin, M. (2000) *Outdoor experiences for Young Children*. Available from <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED448013.pdf>.

Sobel, D. (1996) *Beyond Ecophobia: Reclaiming the Heart of Nature Education*. Great Barrington, MA: The Orion Society. Adapted version available at <http://www.yesmagazine.org/issues/education-for-life/803>.

Stapp, W.B., Bennet, D., Bryan, W. Fulton, J., MacGregor, J. Nowak, P., Swan, J., Wall, R. and Havlick, S. (1969). The concept of environmental education. *Journal of Environmental Education* 1 (1): 30-31.

Staples-Rolfe, R. (2018) Learning through Landscapes facilitator – During our OWL Partnership training week

Tal, T. and Morag, O. (2013) A longitudinal study of environmental and outdoor education: a cultural change. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching* 9: 1019-1046

Titman, W. (1994) *Special Places, Special People: The hidden curriculum of school grounds*. Godalming, Surrey, WWF UK (World Wide Fund For Nature)/Learning through Landscapes.

Wells, N.M. and Evans, G.W. (2003) Nearby nature: a buffer of life stress among rural children. *Environment and Behavior* 36(3): 311-330.

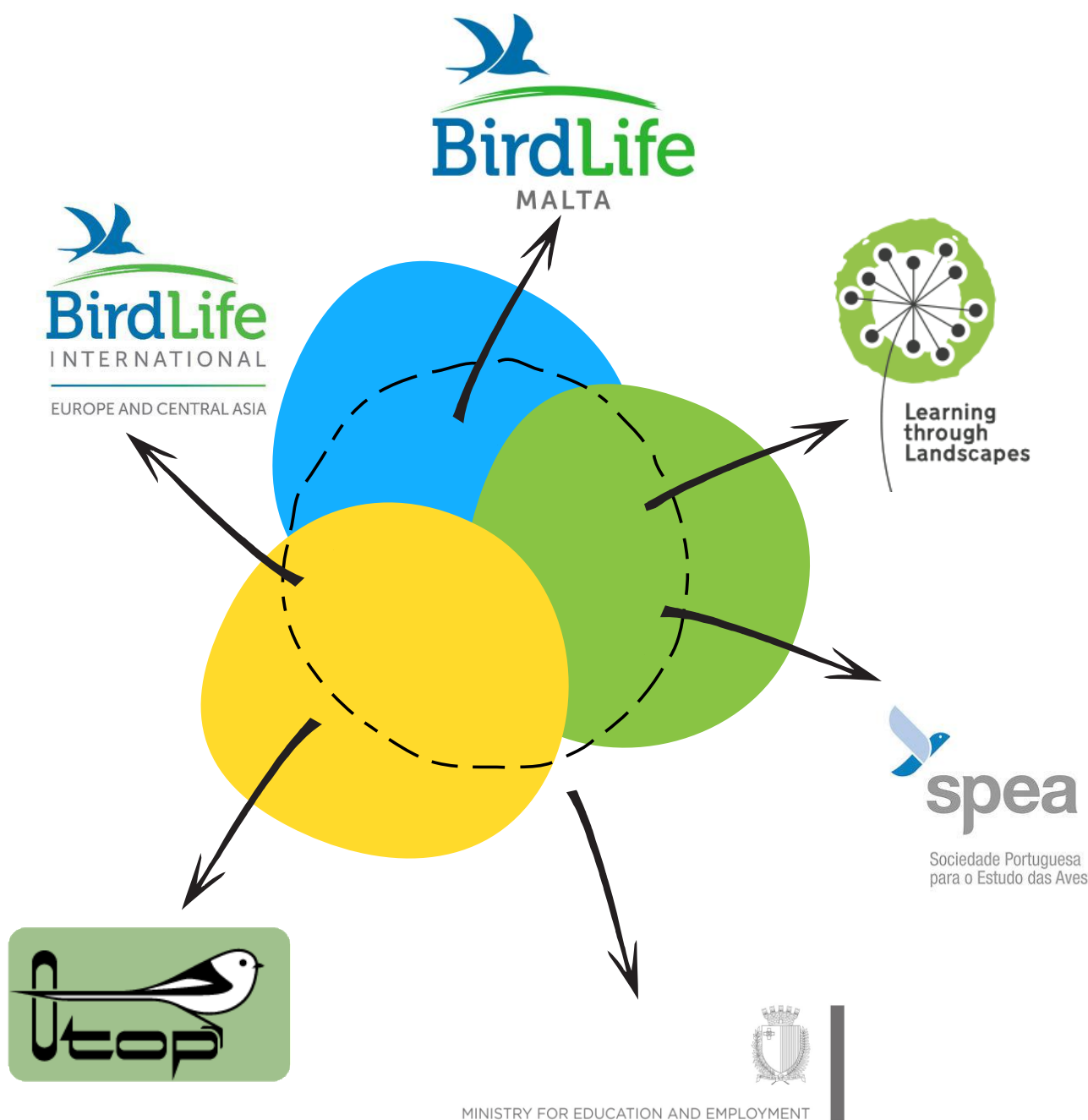


Wells, N.M. and Lekies, K.S. (2006) Nature and the life course: pathways from childhood nature experiences to adult environmentalism. *Children, Youth and Environments* 16(1).

White, R. (2004) Young children's relationship with nature: its importance to children's development and the earth's future. Available from www.usgs.gov/conferences/doi2007/young_childrens_relationship_with_nature.doc.

Zhang, W.Z., Goodale, E. and Chen, J. (2014) How contact with nature affects children's biophilia, biophobia and conservation attitude in China. *Biological Conservation*; 177, 109–116.

Zerafa, I, 2018, Education Officer, Ministry of Education, Malta, 2018 – during our OWL partnership training week



One World Learning is an international environmental education initiative bringing together best practices in this field from five European countries and the wider BirdLife Europe partnership.

Learning through Landscapes | Ground Floor, F Block | Clarendon House | Monarch Way | Winchester | England SO22 5PW
 Grounds for Learning | 5 Alpha Centre | Stirling University
 Innovation Park | Stirling | Scotland FK9 4NF



Co-funded by the
 Erasmus+ Programme
 of the European Union