Northwood School Grounds Guide

OUTDOOR LEARNING
The Extended Classroom

A guide to maximizing learning **OUTSIDE** of the classroom

Discover areas in school that could be used to take learning outside of the classroom.

Written and collated by: Miss G Sanderson

Introduction

Ethos

At Northwood Primary School we recognise the value of **learning outside the classroom** as an integral part of our pupils' education.

Providing a wealth of learning opportunities in environments other than the classroom can readily develop the learning skills of enquiry, experiment, feedback, reflection, review, communication, problem solving, an enterprising attitude and cooperative learning – to name only some of the benefits.

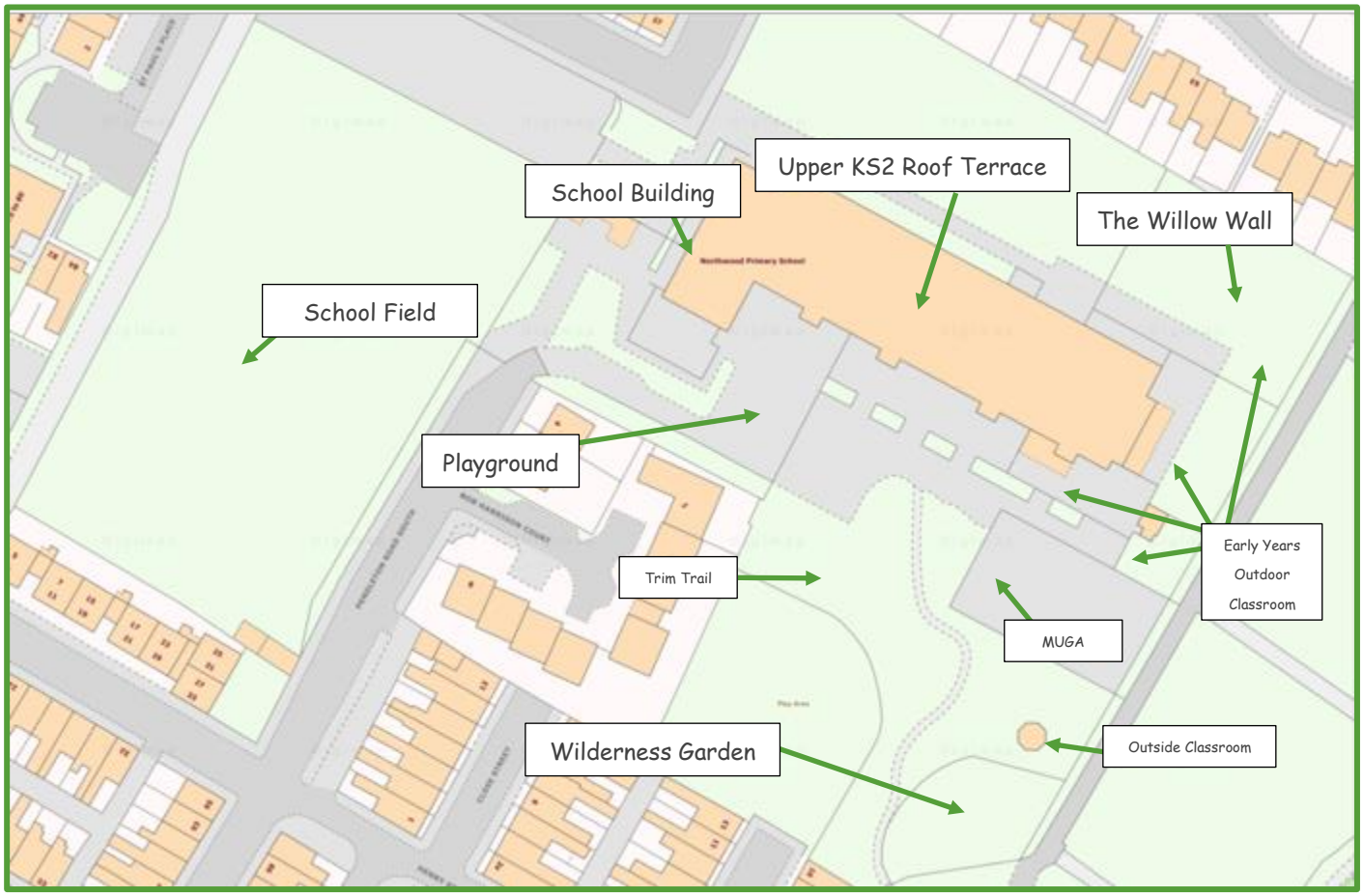
Learning outside the classroom can help to bring many school subjects alive as they focus on real results and consequences.

Purpose of this guide

The aim of this guide is to signpost the plethora of opportunities to take **learning outside the classroom** and highlight the potential of the **school grounds.** This guide is for teaching staff, support staff, students, volunteers and visitors to the school in order to highlight the areas on the school grounds in which learning can occur. It includes important considerations and educational content including the location of potential learning opportunities, the resources that are there and readily available and what kind of activities can be carried out. Learning outdoors offers hands-on practical approaches. It provides 'real world learning' that demonstrates the relevance of subjects to the world beyond the classroom and often generates integrated cross-curriculum learning.

Contents

Map of the School Grounds



The Willow Wall

The Willow Wall was designed to be a multi-functional outdoor area. This area is under development with help from volunteers at Darlington Forest Project.

This area is located to the left of the school building; accessible from the gates at the side entrance or from the playground via the Early Years Outdoor Classroom.

The Willow Wall Resources:

- The Fire Pit
- Growing Tyre Herb Garden
- Bug Walk
- Hedgehog Habitat
- Seating Area

The Fire Pit

At the Willow Wall, you could:

- Use the Fire Pit to deliver learning linked to your topic e.g. (History-The Great Fire of London, etc.)
- Use the Fire Pit to conduct storytelling linked to Core Areas or the Wider Curriculum
- Use the Fire Pit to teach basic skills e.g. fire safety, cooking etc.

WW KIT BOX

Fire Resources

Garden Resources

Insect Resources

Additional Resources/Links:

- Information linked to fires can be found here:
  - Muddy Faces - https://muddyfaces.co.uk/activity/fire-area-preparation/
  - The Forest School Training Company- https://www.forestschooltraining.co.uk/_webedit/uploaded-files/All%20Files/Student%20Resources/12%20day%20Level%203/SP14FIR.pdf
  - Muddy Faces Recipes and Inspiration for cooking outside https://muddyfaces.co.uk/activity_category/food-outdoors

IMPORTANT:

- Remember to **ALWAYS** have a Risk Assessment prior to starting a fire (this will include a dynamic risk assessment, safety distance, first aid etc.)
- A template for this can be found here: (RMStaff-Staff Resources-Documents-Learning Outside the Classroom – School Grounds Guide – FIRE GUIDANCE)
- Adequate preparation needs to occur BEFORE starting the fire e.g., clear the area-the whole fire pit area needs to be free from hazards to avoid trips, impacts and spillages. particularly if hot food or liquid is being transported
- If in doubt, please consult G. Sanderson

Growing Tyre Herb Garden

At the Willow Wall, you could:

- Access the Herb Garden as part of Science/PSHE/Geography (see below)
- Undertake gardening projects that teach children where their food comes from
- Develop their scientific and environmental awareness
- Encourage them to eat more fruit and vegetables as they discover how to grow herbs to enhance flavours- make smoothies/soups/recipes/herbs for pizza and chocolate

Additional Resources/Links:

- Garden Organic – https://www.gardenorganic.org.uk/schools/
- RHS School Gardening – activities, projects, lesson plans, information sheets and class growing topics - https://schoolgardening.rhs.org.uk/Resources/Find-a-resource
- Edible Playground Curriculum Guide- RMStaff-Staff Resources-Documents-Learning Outside the Classroom – School Grounds Guide – WILLOW WALL-Edible Curriculum Guide YR1-6
- Activities and Recipes for each month – also in file path above.

Bug Walk/Hedgehog Habitat

At the Willow Wall, you could:

- Science/PSHE-Readily find and handle insects and report findings
- Science/Maths - Conduct insect hunts/studies using a range of spotter guides etc.
- D&T-Create additional shelters and small habitats for the insets and wildlife e.g. hedgehog tunnels, 'bug hotels' etc. Consider different materials e.g. log pile or stone pile is probably the easiest and most effective, but you can also make more specialist 'houses' for insects like bees, ladybirds or lacewings.
- Science/Geography-Focus on habitats and homes-create a 'log book' of sightings

Additional Resources/Links:

- Information linked to fires can be found here- RMStaff-Staff Resources-Documents-Learning Outside the Classroom – School Grounds Guide – FIRE GUIDANCE

Outdoor Classroom

The Outdoor Classroom is a purpose-built, gazebo style shelter (octagonal prism), with wooden benches to sit and open viewing windows to observe.

This area is located behind the MUGA; accessible from the main playground and Early Years Outdoor Classroom.

The Outdoor Classroom Resources:

- Large, covered seating area
- Viewing Window Area/Nature 'Hide'
- Close proximity to Wilderness Garden

Outdoor Classroom

In the Outdoor Classroom, you could:

- Deliver a story/'Wow' topic introduction activity linked to Core Areas or the Wider Curriculum topic
- Establish it as a central meeting point/base to issue instructions or lead a discussion (see LOTC Training – gathering call/signal)-PSHE link
- Record findings under the shelter using clipboards and clear work folders etc (included in KIT BOX) - linked to Core/Wider Curriculum
- Observe wildlife discreetly from viewing windows, making use of binoculars and cameras
- Undertake observational drawing/sketches – Art & Design link
- Undertake activities which require resources from indoors (i.e. glue/scissors etc.)
- Store resources needed for activities
- Eat/drink and have a picnic
- Seek shade and shelter from the elements
- Undertake seated communication and collaboration activities
- Use it for a 'quiet' area for reflection and personal 'think time'-PSHE link
- Use it to deliver presentations, drama/role-play, music and other speaking and listening activities- Core Areas/Wider Curriculum link

OC KIT BOX

Core Subject Resources

Tarpaulin and waterproof seating

Birds

- You can instantly bring more birds into your [illegible] by putting up feeders – and there are lots of simple designs that can be made by pupils.
- You can also make a simple bird bath by digging a small hole, lining it with concrete and then digging it out to relocate wherever you wish.
- Bird boxes allow children to watch the wonderful process of nesting and hatching and many schools have invested in web cam boxes to allow them watch this up close.
- Use the nesting process as a stimulus for creative writing with children naming the chicks and writing a weekly 'soap opera' about the goings on in the nest.
- Teach your children some safety tips- ensure they know the importance of keeping quiet when they go out bird watching and they know not to disturb nests and baby birds.

Nature Watch Resources:

- Bird tables and feeders
- Stone/rock habitats on the Wilderness Garden floor
- Binoculars
- Bird Book for reference
- Cameras
- Spotter's guides
- Weather chart
- Magnifying glasses/pooters
- PLEASE CLEAN/RETURN ALL ITEMS AFTER USE ☺

Nature Watching Ideas:

- RSPB Big Schools' Birdwatch - https://www.rspb.org.uk/fun-and-learning/for-teachers/schools-birdwatch/
- Bird Spot - https://www.birdspot.co.uk/bird-watching-binoculars/using-your-binoculars
- Provide pupils with a robust **digital camera** (or a **single-use camera** while they are learning to handle a digital camera) to take photographs of things that have meaning for them. Discussions that follow about what the children have chosen to record will provide meaningful contexts for talk, and provide you with new perspectives on your outdoor provision.
- The Outdoor Classroom will be a useful shelter in the winter months: this guide to winter wildlife has activities that can be adapted to suit your class: My Wild Winter

IMPORTANT:

- This area can become wet due to the wooden decking and furniture-please ensure that all surfaces are dry before learning commences to avoid hazards.

Additional Resources/Links:

- Information linked to fires can be found here- RMStaff-Staff Resources-Documents-Learning Outside the Classroom – School Grounds Guide – Outdoor Classroom

Wilderness Garden

The Wilderness Garden was established in Summer 2018 and is comprised of bark pathways and grass areas, marked with rope barriers. This area has access to water via a hose pipe which needs to be switched on in the Nursey Outdoor Classroom (see map).

This area is located behind the Outdoor Classroom; accessible via a pathway leading from the main playground and Early Years Outdoor Classroom.

The Wilderness Garden Resources:

- Bird Feeders and feeding platforms
- Natural Habitats for wildlife
- A log circle for small group gatherings
- Close proximity to the Outdoor Classroom
- Long, natural, grass areas
- Wet, boggy areas

WG KIT BOX

Core Subject Resources

Wildlife Resources

Tarpaulin

Wilderness Garden

In the Wilderness Classroom, you could:

- Provide food, water and shelter for nature and wildlife
- Observe wildlife discreetly from viewing windows/log circle
- Explore fallen logs, boulders and stumps to investigate fossils and insect life
- Explore the trees, shrubs and long grass – discover the differences in colour, smell, textures and seasonal differences
- Forage for twigs, leaves and seeds to create a bank of natural materials
- Explore the areas of long grass and wet areas for insect life and other living things
- Sow wild flower plugs and seedlings

Exploring the Wet Areas:

- Build a **hibernaculum** to provide amphibians and reptiles a safe place to shelter in the winter- https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/actions/how-build-hibernaculum-amphibians-and-reptiles
- Visit and research the 'bog garden'. This can range from a plot of marshy or waterlogged land to an old sink filled with soil and water.
- Further information and ideas on how to make a bog garden can be found here:
- RHS Bog Gardens
- The Wildlife Trusts

IMPORTANT:

- This area requires a key to be accessed - please consult G. Sanderson if you need assistance with this.
- Remember to **ALWAYS** lock the area after use.
- Consider health and safety when accessing wet areas!
- If using the hose pipe, please remember to **TURN IT OFF** after use.

LOG PILES:

- Log piles are valuable habitat for invertebrates such as spiders, millipedes, centipedes and many insects.
- Logs should be placed in a pile in partial shade to prevent them drying out, as most invertebrates prefer damp habitats.
- Log piles are easy to create and require little, if any, maintenance and provide an excellent opportunity for minibeast hunting and animal identification
- You should have at least two or three log piles to prevent over use
- In autumn, create a pile of leaf litter nearby to attract a wider variety of wildlife. Toads and hedgehogs like to hibernate in leaf pile
- https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/actions/how-make-log-shelter

BIRDS TABLES, WATER BATHS & BIRD BOXES

- Birds are possibly the most interesting and attractive wildlife that you can attract to your school grounds. A few feeding stations such as bird tables and seed feeders in your school grounds should encourage a range of species, including tits, finches and robins.
- You should feed birds from November until March using a variety of foods including unsalted peanuts, oats, sunflower seeds, fresh coconut, meat scraps, fat, currants, cheese, mixed bird seed and moistened bread. Remember to place some food on the ground for ground feeding birds such as blackbirds and thrushes.
- You should also provide a water bath such as an upturned dustbin lid so that birds have water to drink, and place the feeders and baths in close proximity to each other. Place both feeder and bath in or near a leafy tree that can be observed easily from one or several school windows. Check that the water baths don't freeze over in cold weather.
- Nest boxes can be placed on trees at a height of 4 - 6 metres, away from too much noise and intrusion. They should be put up in October-November and facing north-east. These should not be disturbed from February until October, as the birds will be nesting and raising chicks. Clean out the boxes during the winter to prepare them for the new family the following spring.
- https://www.rspb.org.uk/fun-and-learning/for-families/family-wild-challenge/activities/build-a-bird-bath/?channel=paidsearch&gclid=Cj0KCQjw-af6BRC5ARIsAALPIlXyPzclgz7FobiU0bLoGXnCo_nNrHft5ipeu61dhBKQ01hiKHe_Gx8aAmDPEALw_wcB

Additional Resources/Links:

- Information linked to suggested activities in the Wilderness Garden can be found here- RMStaff-Staff Resources-Documents-Learning Outside the Classroom – School Grounds Guide – Wilderness Garden
- Explore STEM resource about BIODIVERSITY
- Discuss the importance of The Country side Code in relation to respecting and maintaining the school grounds and adhering to rules and boundaries.

MUGA/Playground/Trim Trail

The Playground is a flat, concrete area with markings that can be adapted for outdoor games. The MUGA (multi use games area) is enclosed by a fence and has markings in order to deliver a variety of sports e.g. football, basketball etc. The Trim Trail is an outdoor physical course with wooden obstacles and a climbing wall.

This area is located behind the Outdoor Classroom; accessible via a pathway leading from the main playground and Early Years Outdoor Classroom.

The MUGA/Playground/Trim Trail Resources:

- Large, open spaces
- Hard flooring
- Markings for use with games/sports
- Wooden fixtures for developing physical skills
- Close proximity to the Outdoor Classroom

PG KIT BOX

Core Subject Resources

Games resources

Mark-making Resources

Tarpaulin

MUGA/Playground/Trim Trail

In the MUGA/Playground/Trim Trail you could:

- Undertake sports games and physical education activities
- Mark-making activities using the concrete flooring using creative resources such as chalk, water,
- Games that involve problem solving, development of cooperation, collaboration and communication
- Play traditional 'playground games' or parachute games linking to PSHE
- Deliver a story linked to Core Areas or the Wider Curriculum
- Access Loose parts (see p.12)
- Take part in Orienteering using the OAA resources (see p.12)

TRIM TRAIL

Tricky obstacles

Really good fun

Irresistible to play

Much laughter

Talented climbers

Race through challenges

Amazing balance

Intelligent thinking

Love my trail

10 ways to incorporate the TRIM TRAIL:

- **Maths:**
  1. Timing how long it takes to finish the course, including links to number recognition (using a stop watch), comparisons, addition to collate total time taken by a team, subtraction to work out time differences between individuals or teams
  2. Measuring the length of the trail
- **Literacy:**
  3. Writing out the sequence of the course, write a story about their trim trail, writing instructions on how each challenge is used
  4. Reading out the instruction cards as described
  5. Poetry for creative writing: write out an acrostic poem using the words, TRIM TRAIL
- **Science:**
  6. Introduce forces by establishing the relationship between effort and speed/time and understanding push and pull
  7. Establishing the properties of materials

Art:

8. Drawing the trail
9. Introduce the concept of perspective

History:

10. Re-enact a famous scene from history e.g., use elements of the trail to act a moment in history to establish a better visualisation

Seating and meeting

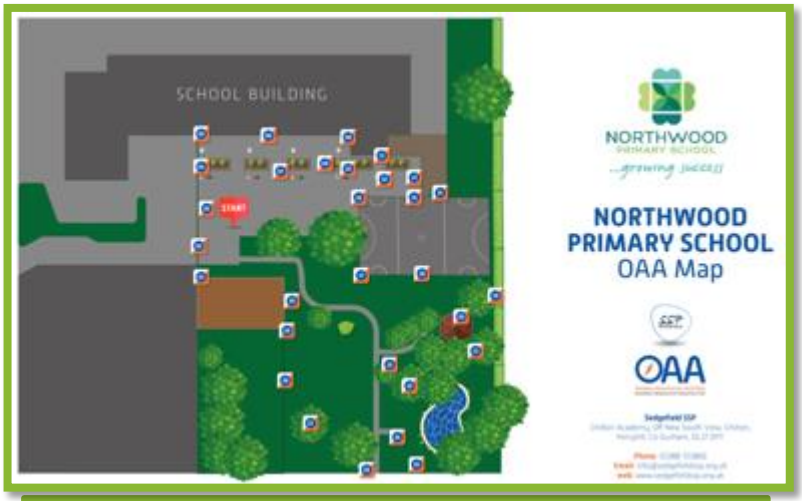
- Seating and meeting spaces are important for all age groups, but perhaps particularly for older pupils, where comfortable and attractive outdoor spaces to 'hang out' are highly valued.
- It's important to provide enough seating to avoid creating competition for a scarce resource.
- Think about providing seating that can accommodate larger groups and provide a useful space for working outdoors with a class.
- These areas might also benefit from a focal point such as a stage, sculpture or fire pit as well as some tables; useful for writing during outdoor lessons and for outdoor dining.
- It's also helpful to provide seating that enables smaller groups to form.
- Informal seating is often popular with pupils and grass banks, boulders, logs, steps, decking and walls all create opportunities for children and young people to create their own seating arrangements.

PE Games needing No Equipment:

- #1 – Red Rover.
- #2 – Captain's Orders.
- #3 – Relay running races.
- #4 – Cops and Robbers (Team tag game)
- #5 – Wheelbarrow races.
- #6 – Duck Duck Goose.
- #7 – Headstand/handstand practice.
- #8 – High Jump Competition

LOOSE PARTS PLAY

- Natural environments provide boundless loose parts with more play possibilities then many artificial play spaces such as a tarmac school playground. However, these spaces can be enriched by the addition of loose parts-it is not just for the Early Years!



Orienteering using the school grounds:

- Log on to the OAA resources using the personal link below (there is also a folder saved to the school system):

  https://tdrv.eu/qFBNwu

- The password is: **NorthwoodOAA**

- In the folder you should find the following files:
  - A teachers master map
  - Approx. 30 individual numbered photographs for use with KS1
  - Approx 30 individual numbered maps for use with KS2
  - A blank marker file - this is to edit as you need (it is to be positioned around your site at the marked points on the teachers master map, with a symbol of your choice on it for the children to find)
  - An instructions file for KS1 and KS2 lesson set up.
- Click on the links below for activities linked to orienteering:
  - TRI-O
  - ORIENTEERING IN SCHOOLS

LOOSE PARTS PLAY

- Information linked to LOOSE PARTS can be found here: RMStaff-Staff Resources-Documents-Learning Outside the Classroom – School Grounds Guide – LOOSE PARTS PLAY
- LOOSE PARTS PLAY TOOLKIT

School Field and Grass Areas

The playing field is used annually for year group sports day events and hosts football matches in drier weather and summer months. During the summer term, pupils access the field during break times, and can access all of the space, excluding the slight decline around the perimeter and closest to the public footpath.

The field can be accessed via the playground or main entrance and requires a key for the padlock.

School Field and Grass Area Resources:

- Large, open space
- Soft ground
- A variety of gradients

F KIT BOX

Core Subject Resources

Tarpaulin/ground cover

School Field and Grass Areas

On the field/grass areas you could:

- Deliver sporting events requiring a large area and markings e.g. races, football etc.
- Deliver team games with equipment
- Deliver communication and team building games
- Deliver long distance running/travelling
- Use a parachute and undertake parachute games
- Activities involving 'What's under your feet?', e.g. soil, grass, leaves, insects, flowers, etc.
- Read stories as a class or in smaller groups
- Have picnics
- Conduct activities involving gradient and distance (linked to Core Areas; Maths/Science) for example Forces, Distance
- Conduct activities exploring and celebrating gradient (linked to Wider Curriculum; Geography/History/Drama)

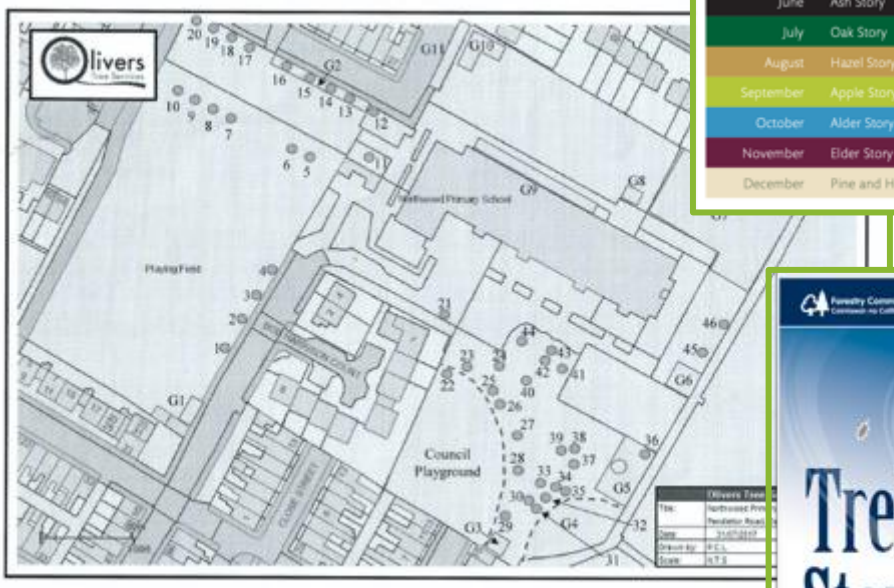
Topography

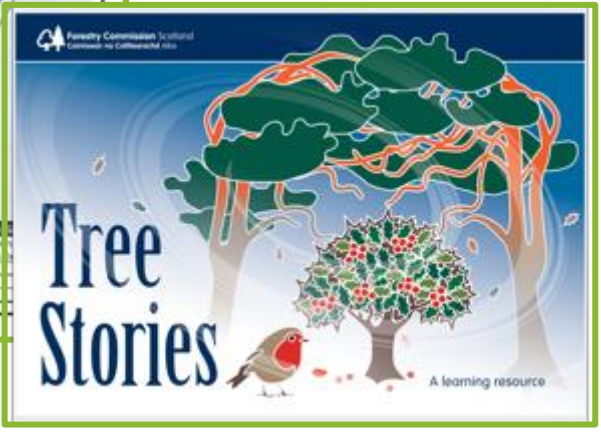
Varied topography stimulates varied play.

- Allow pupils to explore the mounds, hollows, and slopes that feature on the school grounds.
- They will naturally provoke running, rolling and jumping.
- They also help to break up large open spaces into more interesting child-friendly micro-spaces that can become a context for more imaginative and small-world play.
- A good playground should have places for the fairies to live – discuss!

Trees

- Deliver 'trees stories' see link in resources below
- Tree rubbings and tree art
- A map of the School Grounds demarking the trees is included for use with the tree stories and other tree-based activities
- Leaf bashing art





Did you know…

- Northwood has a large population of trees of various ages, species and height
- There are 46 individual trees and 11 groups of shrub species
- There is an Apple and Pear Orchard situated in the Early Years Outdoor Classroom
- Playing Field: Sycamore, Maple
- Playground/Trim Trail/Grass Areas: Elder, Horn Beam, Crimson Maple, Sycamore, Birch, Ash, Poplar, Pine, Ash, Beech, Cherry
- Early Years – Birch, Ash,
- A map of the trees on the school grounds is included at the end of this booklet.

What's beneath your feet at Northwood?

Explore the grounds using the documents below for further activities relating to what is under our feet:

THE WORLD BENEATH OUR FEET-SOILS AND CURRICULM

The Pod: What's under your feet?

BRITISH TRUST FOR ORNITHOLOGY (BTO)

Early Years Outdoor Classroom

The Early Years Outdoor Classroom is multi-functional and is accessed on a daily basis by Nursery and Reception pupils.

This area is located behind the Outdoor Classroom; accessible via a pathway leading from the main playground and Early Years Outdoor Classroom.

The Early Years Outdoor Resources:

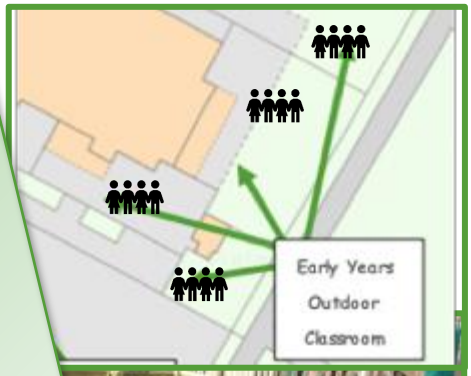
- A 'Recycled Garden'
- A Music Wall
- Raised bed planters for seasonal vegetables
- A Large Sand Pit
- The Watering Station
- Loose Part Areas for minibeasts and mark-making

EY KIT BOX

Core Subject Resources

Insect Resources

Tarpaulin



Early Years Outdoor Classroom

In the Outdoor Classroom, you could:

- Deliver a story linked to Core Areas or the Wider Curriculum
- Utilise the sand/water in creative curriculum delivery or Science focus
- Record findings under the shelter
- Observe wildlife discreetly from viewing windows
- Go on a 'Tiny Treasure Hunt' or a Sound Safari

Additional Resources/Links:

- Information linked to resources in the Early Years Outdoor Classroom can be found here: RMStaff-Staff Resources-Documents-Learning Outside the Classroom – School Grounds Guide – Early Years Outdoor Classroom.

Large Sand Exploration

In the Early Years, there is long tradition of providing sand play for children but primary schools are now recognising the valuable experiences that sand can offer their children.

- For example, maths concepts are supported through experimenting with volume, mass, and flow.
- Engineering abilities are developed as children construct and excavate.
- Motor skills are enhanced by digging, constructing, carrying and jumping and creativity is supported as children construct imaginary worlds.
- A common feature of sand play is the way that it promotes cooperation as children work together on their play projects.

Water Provocations

In the Early Years, a water centre can be the catalyst for building concepts, developing language, and promoting social skills. Water is intriguing. It seems to draw children to explore its structure and properties. Concepts can be built about force, energy, properties of liquids, states of matter, displacement, surface tension, pollution, solutions, and ecology. Some ideas below can be adapted to suit the age/stage of the pupils in your class:

- Fill the water table with ice cubes, and provide shakers of salt and lengths of string.
- Suspend a funnel low, over the water table.
- Put salt in the water, then try to float and sink objects.
- Place a large chunk of ice in the table. Provide safely goggles, rubber mallets, ice lolly sticks, and rock salt.
- Provide lengths of plastic pipe, whole and also in sections cut in half lengthwise, to use as canals and ramps for rolling marbles, small toy cars, of blocks. Use the piping dry, then wet, and compare results.
- Make a water lens by dropping water on newspaper that has been placed inside a zippered food-storage bag.
- Give children heavy aluminum foil to shape into boats.
- Suspend a pulley just above the water tables. Thread a rope through the pulley and attach a bucket to one end of the rope.
- Experiment with all kinds of paper (blotters, newsprint, tissue, foil, waxed, corrugated cardboard, paper towels).
- Experiment; with waves by making a wave machine. What do we need to do with a marble or ruler to make waves? How can we vary the pattern of the waves?
- Sprinkle pepper on the water, then add floating bar soap.
- Experiment with varying the amounts of water and air inside zippered sandwich-storage bags.
- Predict which of a variety of seeds will float and which will not. Try out the predictions. Use nuts in shells, maple seeds, cottonwood, coconuts, buckeyes, and any others children can collect.
- Challenge children to create a boat from found objects, then move it from one end of the water to the other without using their hands.
- Challenge children to make a bridge over a portion of the water, using scrap materials.

Key Stage 2 Roof Terrace

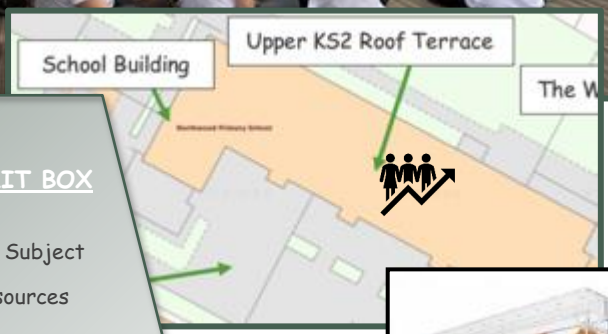
The Roof Terrace is located outside the corridor joining all KS2 classrooms on the first floor of the school building.

This area is accessible from the first floor or via the central staircase from the main playground and the Early Years Outdoor Classroom.

The Roof Terrace Outdoor Resources:

- Wooden, decked area on first floor
- Seating/benches
- Access to KS2 classrooms (Yrs. 3-6)

Key Stage 2 Roof Terrace



On the Roof Terrace you could:

- Deliver a story linked to Core Areas or the Wider Curriculum
- Establish as a meeting point
- Use as an outdoor transition area to change into outdoor clothing and footwear
- Grow plants/herbs/root vegetables etc for classroom growing topic
- Use as a vantage point; offering a difference in height/perspective
- Undertake observational art (drawing, sketching, painting, sculpture etc.) of the school grounds/surrounding areas
- Undertake photography (Computing link) from a height
- Activities involving the sun i.e., sun print activities, time, shadows etc.

RT KIT BOX

Core Subject Resources

Tarpaulin

IDEAS FOR THE ROOF TERRACE:

- Set up a mini wormery: RHS MINI WORMERY
- Pupils may wish to investigate the two main types of worm (earth and tiger). They could set up two containers and compare what happens in them, developing their scientific skills
- Grow your own potatoes: GOYP

IMPORTANT:

- This area can become wet due to the wooden decking and furniture-please ensure that all surfaces are dry before learning commences to avoid hazards.

Weather and LOTC

"There's no such thing as bad weather only inappropriate clothing"

Scandinavian proverb

Ways of managing outdoor learning in all weathers include the following:

- Go for planned spontaneity. If the weather is inclement, wait until it improves before going out but don't let a light shower dampen your plans. There is usually a let-up at some point in the day. Be realistic about how lessons and will alter according to weather conditions- you may decide to have a shorter session during the cold season or have lots of active games which keep the children moving (and can be part of the PE curriculum).
- Learning intentions can be shared prior to going outside to ensure a relevant and coherent purpose. Review sessions can happen back inside too.
- On cold days, plan activities that involve moving about. When using dens or shelters, have fleece blankets and other warm material to help children stay warm if they are sitting down or staying still. Children need not be subjected to deeply uncomfortable conditions. However, being out in the snow, for most children is a wonderful and uplifting experience. We can justify taking them out as part of their learning in a huge variety of ways.
- Children and young people need to learn to cope with ice and snow. Invite them to think about how to behave on icy surfaces. Plan investigative activities where the children can move but have no need to run around. If the ground is like an ice rink, then consider postponing an activity. In any case, proper briefings, clear expectations and a sense of purpose will help to limit slips and falls. Use common sense!
- Children and young people should bring sun hats and wear sunscreen, in line with school policy, on sunny days if they are outside for a long time. On sunny days, the teacher or responsible adult should face the sun. Wear light-coloured lenses if wearing sunglasses so that eye contact can be made.
- Use portable insulated seating mats if there are activities that involve sitting. These can be put on benches, grass or anywhere, ensuring there is always a warm, dry place to sit. Alternatively, challenge the children to create their own from basic household materials, which meet agreed criteria.
- Another good rainy / cold day activity is emergency shelter stories. Pupils sit in emergency shelter and either listen to a story or make up one of their own using a talking stick. This works well if pupils add in their own sound effects. Extension activities can then lead on from the story topic."

To be available throughout the year, your resources will need to withstand the cold, wet and windy weather too. Through autumn and winter, there's much outdoor learning to explore. Rainfall provides a wonderfully tactile way of exploring water in a different context. Standing in, walking through and splashing in puddles will provide meaningful opportunities for children to explore new experiences and develop new vocabulary too. You might want to put together a rainy-day box or a collection of resources which will be perfect for using in the rain. Long handled brushes are perfect for sweeping the puddles to create waves and streams.

If you're looking for ideas of what to include in a rainy-day box, try:

- Chalk for marking the depth of a puddle onto wellington boots or drawing around a puddle to see how quickly it dries.
- Paint and brushes for mixing in puddles. This can be a great context for colour mixing, but watch out that children don't stray too far as it makes a bit of a mess!
- Adding materials that float or can be made into boats can be interesting too, another way to use puddles or running water
- Umbrellas are also a great resource for rainy days – and experimenting with the sound of the rain on different surfaces is interesting so provide these. For example, placing a piece of kitchen foil over the top of an umbrella and listening for the pitter patter of raindrops.
-

There are lots of possibilities for outdoor learning in windy, icy, and frosty days too. For example, a collection of kite making materials can lead to fantastic physical engagement on the windiest of days. In icy spells, leaving different shaped shallow containers in your outdoor space will allow rainfall to collect and turn to sheets of ice. At this point, explore with the children how to melt the ice quickly by adding salt or warmth. Ice is also a great material for artwork and sculpture. The children will enjoy mark making on different surfaces with pieces of ice and you might want to share some of Andy Goldsworthy's stunning ice sculptures.

Getting outside

- Send out letters to parents requesting that outdoor clothes and footwear are brought to school daily throughout the year- ask for donations of spare outdoor clothing in case any pupil forgets or does not have any. This can take a long while to establish as not everyone will remember to do it. It needs frequent reminders in newsletters and on websites. Alternatively, source some sets of outdoor clothing, wellies and woolly socks. Over-trousers are especially useful as these are rarely donated.
- Save time and do an activity outdoors just before or after break, lunchtime, arriving in the morning or leaving in the afternoon.
- Routines can be developed that encourage learners to do this quickly and without fuss. This includes going to the toilet before going outside.
- Have outdoor clothes in a class box and let children in younger classes practise getting outdoor clothes on and off.
- Encourage children to carry resources and put them in a designated place outside and back inside
- Spend time planning a series of outdoor activities that link to indoor classwork. Initially, keep these short and simple whilst learners get used to working outside. Often games work well to begin with.
- Be aware of the possibilities or restrictions of any outdoor space. Learners may need to safely stand, sit down, squat and move around. They have to be able to hear the leader, and each other.
- Using sound calls or a whistle can be an excellent way of setting boundaries for children in a range of environments, especially where there are no physical barriers. Another option is to request that learners work where they can see an adult at all times.

Planning Guidance for School Grounds

Northwood 'Wilderness Warriors' Non-Negotiables

1. To have at least <u>one</u> session of learning outside the classroom a week*
2. Opting out of an activity should <u>not normally</u> be an option**
3. Establish, <u>rules, routines and boundaries</u> when LOTC
4. Create a <u>risk-benefit assessment</u> which includes meeting the specific needs of pupils in your class
5. Plan activities that are <u>fully integrated</u> into <u>the curriculum</u> using the SAGED model.

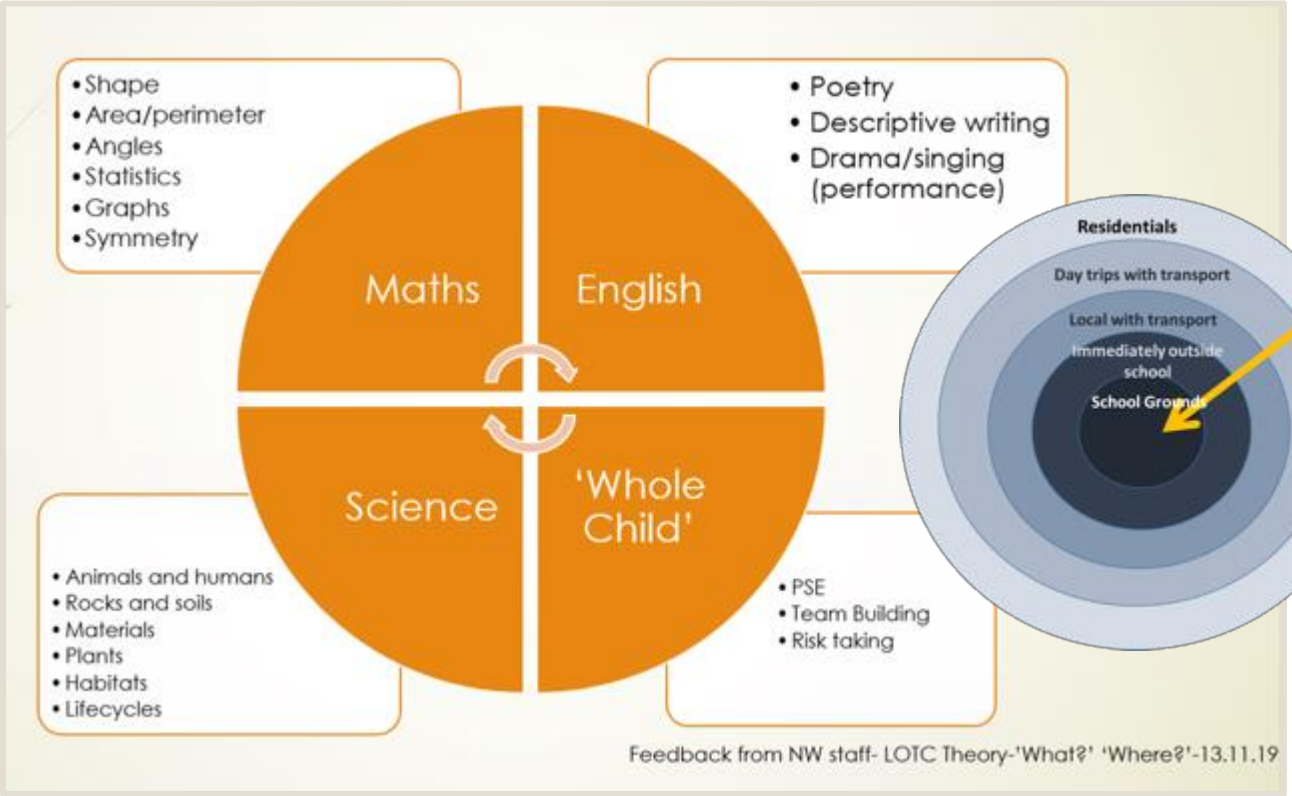
*Please refer to LOTC LTP for further ideas of how to plan for this.

**Please refer to the Weather and LOTC (page 17).

Taking the curriculum outdoors

The Wilderness Schooling programme delivered by Jenny is a good basis to begin planning opportunities for LOTC in core areas of the curriculum. Resources and planning for these ideas can be found on the school's remote platform.

I have provided **some** examples of the many possibilities to give you an idea of what may be possible in the school grounds already, as well as to help you think about how the outdoor areas could be enhanced to improve their value for learning.



It is the **responsibility of all staff** to ensure that outdoor learning is **embedded in the curriculum** so that it becomes a reality for all children and young people. This means that every teacher and educator **needs** to plan and integrate outdoor learning as part of a range of learning and teaching approaches within interdisciplinary projects as well as within and across all curriculum areas.

Rather than offer an 'outdoor learning week' or a special 'outdoor learning day', most formal activities that take place outside need to be part of a planned holistic approach to learning and teaching that links to ongoing work.

The LOTC Long Term Plan serves all of these factors; a balance between planned whole school activities and specific year group lessons, linked to the curriculum.

Getting to know the school grounds

These activities are designed to help learners and practitioners get to know and use the school grounds.

Play games such as follow my leader, grandmother's footsteps and hide and seek. These help children develop spatial awareness. Play guessing games, asking questions such as 'Look around you, who or what lives in here?'

What are your top ten favourite things about the school grounds? List them and create a group wordle. What are the most popular features or activities? Is anything missing that would improve the school grounds? Share your findings with the class/year group/school council for further action.

Which is the most interesting part of your school grounds? Justify your decision with evidence collected within 30 minutes.

Find an interesting object outside and write as many questions as you can about it. Think about its physical features, construction, function, age, value, origin or design. Which question would you most like the answer to? Have a discussion about questions and whether it is better to be able to ask one good question or lots of questions of varying quality. Decide what makes a good question.

Risk BENEFIT Assessment

Physically the area has to be safe but still allow risk and challenge.

"Safeness is about enabling things to happen, not shutting down opportunities."
Playing Outside – Helen Bilton

To make a safe environment consider the following.

- Be aware of dangers in the setting and get rid of these hazards, eg outside poles in the play area, poisonous plants, splinters in sheds and fences, loose or uneven paving slabs, unsecured gates etc.

- Make a risk assessment of the outdoor area and check this regularly.

- Make sure that there is a challenge.
- Decide what clothing and footwear you feel is suitable for outside.

- Discuss regularly with children safeness, risk and challenge.

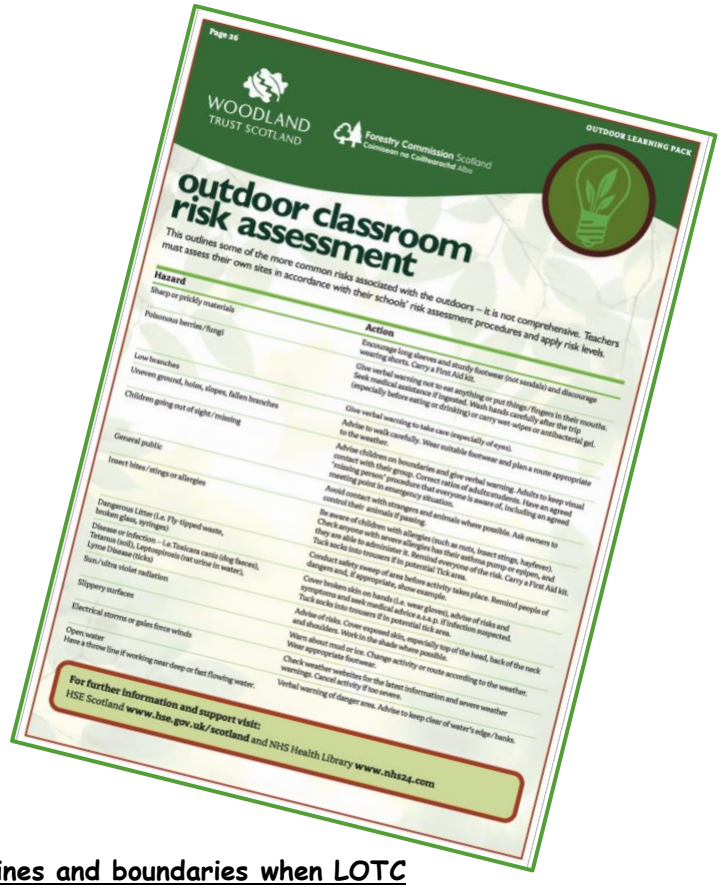
- Make sure the area is safe for all children to have a go at any activity.

- Outside staff need to be ever watchful, even if they are engrossed in an activity with a particular group of children.

- Have a flexible adult rota so that one member of staff can swap and go outside when another member continues work with their group inside.

The benefits of outdoor learning and play are far too important to forfeit, and by far outweigh the risks of an accident occurring.

Click the link box above to find guidance, risk assessments and templates for a variety of outdoor learning contexts (learning through landscapes). For further support with this, contact G. Sanderson.



Establish, rules, routines and boundaries when LOTC

- Initially, keep the sessions short and focused until routines have been embedded.
- Ensure that the time outdoors is part of ongoing curriculum work and not a bolt-on activity.
- Have the same expectations as inside. If a pupil is misbehaving, then follow the school behaviour policy.
- Extend the collaborative learning environment to being outside.
- Allocate roles and tasks, and make sure everyone knows what to do.
- Have equipment and resources accessible and organised.
- Raise the profile of being outside as part of learning and teaching activities.
- It is worth discussing the use of school grounds if there is limited space outside with other staff. Indoor activities can be affected by classes working outside. It may be necessary to have shared agreements in place.

SAGED Model

When planning to take learning outside the classroom, consider the **SAGED model** introduced by Anita Foster to NW in November 2019.

Staff -Your experiences, the experience of the other adults assisting you? How many?

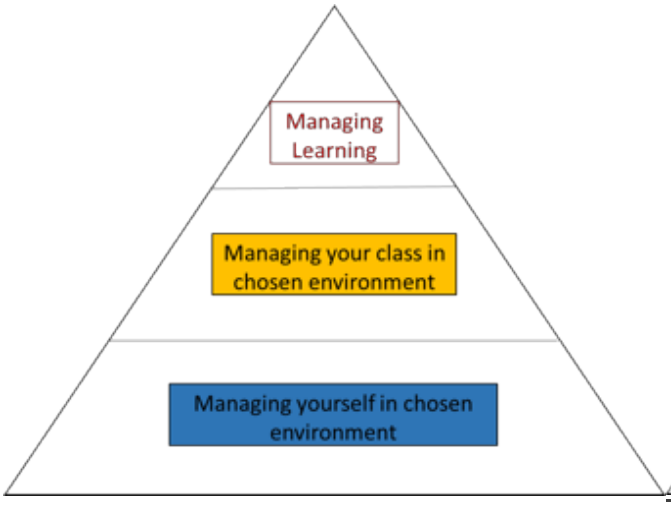
Activity - Have you or the group done the activity before? How complex is the activity?

Group - The previous experience of the group, age, maturity and previous behaviour of individuals

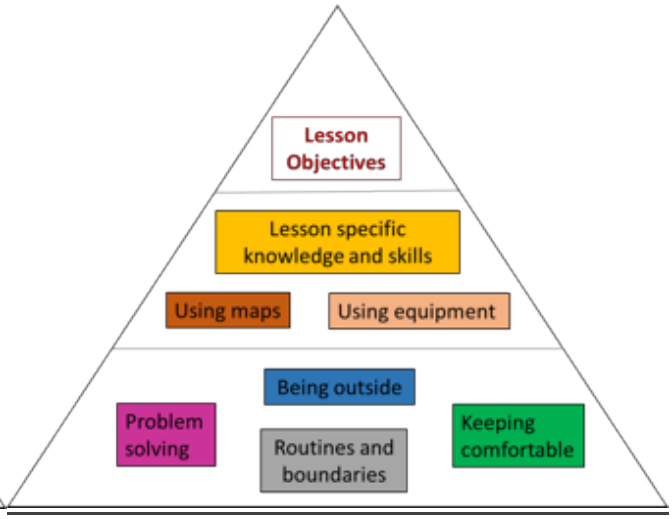
Environment - Weather, other people

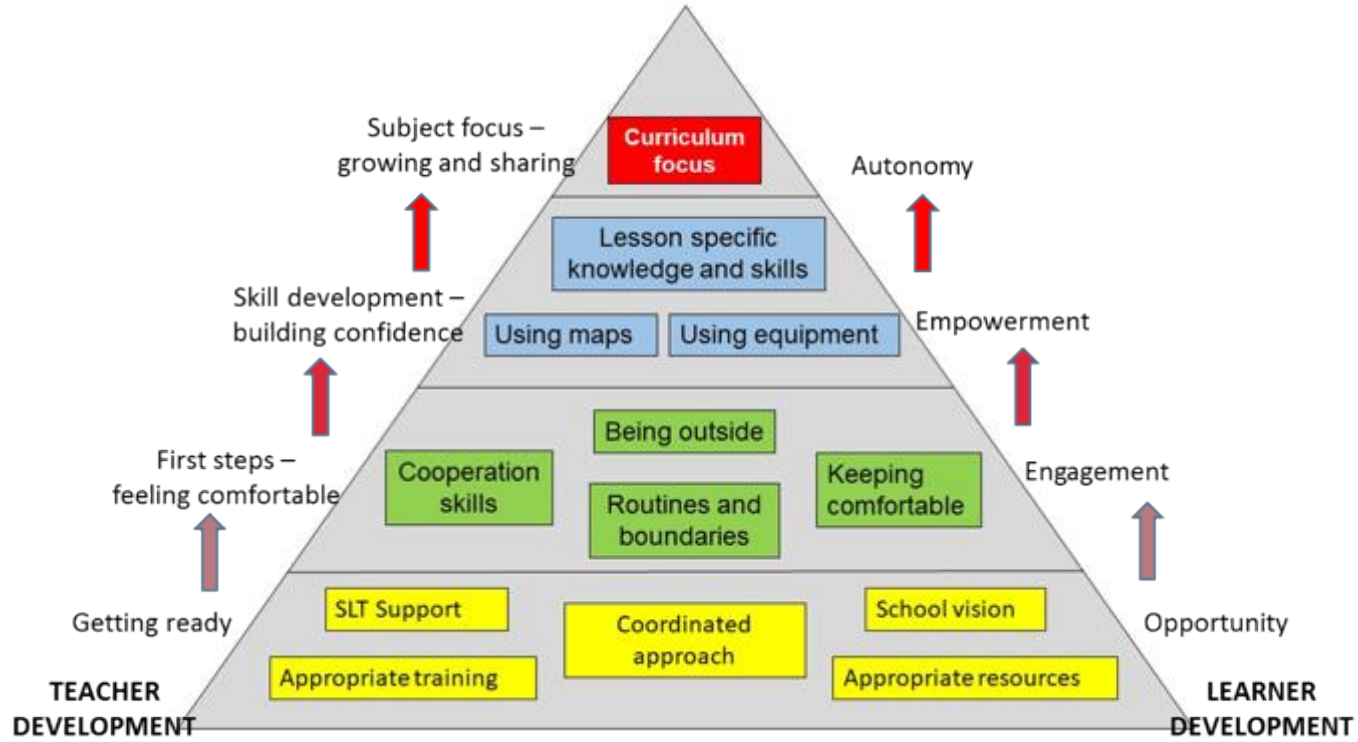
Distance - How close to assistance are you? How big an area are you using?

Levels of Management



Outdoor Skills





Outdoor Learning and Teacher Development Model (Harvey, 2018)

Core Subjects (KS1, KS2)

English

Many of the UK's well-known poets and authors use nature and outdoor events as creative inspiration. Some children and young people who are reluctant to write or mark-make indoors will choose to do so outdoors in a less formal setting.

Engaging with events and processes outdoors allows children and young people to build specific vocabulary. Back inside, their practical outdoor experiences can help them understand the content of books and the information in written text.

Learners benefit from engaging with environmental print and learning about the process and purpose of writing in the real world. There are meaningful opportunities to use different texts, including charts, maps, instructions and timetables.

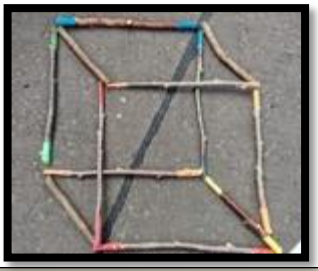
Some suggestions for taking English outdoors…

- Teachers often report that being outdoors stimulates higher quality creative writing and poetry than is possible indoors. This isn't just the case in good weather; schools have used snow to stimulate writing about the Inuit, storms to inspire pirate stories and dark gloomy winter afternoons as a context for creating spooky tales.
- Create fantasy characters and landscapes from clay and natural materials and then write their stories.
- One school re-enacted the classic 'Bear Hunt' story in their grounds in Gaelic (see the Taking it further section) while others have used the links between Scotland's native trees and letters of the Gaelic alphabet to create a Gaelic tree trail.
- Trees and shrubs can be labelled in English and Latin and a range of outdoor features can be labelled in languages that are being taught in the school or which are represented in the school community.
- The outdoors can often provide a more imaginative context for story telling; whether sitting round a fire, below a tree or under a tarpaulin in the rain.
- Try to find different ways of mark-making or writing in the outdoors with natural materials. Write on different types of ground, in the air, with water and on leaves. Make short poems or phrases and photograph as a way of recording the work.
- Ask each participant to find an object outdoors and bring it to the gathering place. Select an object and begin telling a story that includes your object. Pass the story to each person in turn, who continues it, including a new object each time. to increase challenge, incorporate subject-specific knowledge connected to the objects in the story.
- Create a 'kids read anywhere' presentation where children choose specific books to read in different locations in the school grounds such as up a tree, upside down from a climbing frame or lying on the ground. the title of the book must reflect the location chosen. decide how best to record and present the work. this can also work for poetry readings in different places.
- Create a poem based around an outdoor or subject theme. it could be a particular type of tree, plant, animal, activity, weather or scientific process observable in the outdoors. Consider the characteristics, appearance, actions and emotional connections of the subject and use these to structure the content and shape of the poem.

Core Subjects (KS1, KS2)

Mathematics

In order to develop **deep mathematical understanding** and secure numerical skills, children and young people need to engage with maths in **meaningful contexts** where abstract mathematical concepts can be applied to **real-life situations.** Taking maths into the outdoors provides an ideal vehicle for this approach. Numbers are tools people use to make their lives less complicated outside or in.



Some suggestions for taking mathematics outdoors…

- An area of open asphalt and a box of chalk can provide a context for all sorts of fun and challenging outdoor mental maths. Shout out sums and ask teams to race to the correct answer or chalk out graph axes and ask pupils to become data points.
- Nature in your grounds creates many maths opportunities; estimating the volume of a tree trunk or using trigonometry to measure its height, looking for symmetry and patterns like Fibonacci sequences.
- The built environment is full of maths; symmetry, shapes, angles, gradients, heights, areas and distances that can be estimated and measured. How does the diameter and frequency of drain pipes relate to the roof area and can we predict the down pipe flow rate from the rainfall rate?
- A school garden creates many real-world maths opportunities. If the plant spacing is X cm and we want to grow Y number of plants, how big do the beds need to be? If the germination percentage is G, how many seeds do we need to sow? How much will it cost us to buy the materials and what is the market value of the produce? What's our profit (or loss) and our annual rate of return?
- Pick a spot in the playground and mark it. Spread out in the playground at a distance from the spot and choose a way of moving to get back to it. Estimate how many of those moves it might take. Test your estimate. repeat with different types of movement.
- Get a handful of stones and find a partner. Who has the most and least? Chalk a symbol (<, > or =) to show what you have found. Move to a new partner and repeat the activity.
- What factors affect the flow or speed of water? Use the formula speed = distance ÷ time. Decide what equipment you will need. Allocate roles if needed. Groups will be expected to demonstrate their work to the rest of the class
- How big are the school grounds? How can pupils work this out? How can the height of the tallest school building be measured accurately?

Click here for further guidance and ideas:

Learning Through Landscapes: KS1/KS2 Maths- https://www.ltl.org.uk/free-resources/?swoof=1&pa_subject=mathematics&pa_age=all

RSPB: KS1/KS2 Maths- http://ww2.rspb.org.uk/ourwork/teaching/resources/numeracy/index.aspx

Wild Time Learning: https://wildtimelearning.com

Wild About Learning - An outdoor learning numeracy/literacy resource pack for Years 1 to 6: ADD LINK

Thinking Child: Over 100 Ideas for Outdoor Numeracy Key Stages 1 and 2: ADD LINK

Core Subjects (KS1, KS2)

Science

All science subjects have elements that are better taught outdoors. Environmental sciences are particularly relevant and demonstrate principles and practice that cut across biology, chemistry and physics.

Children and young people can have a very different learning experience outdoors from that in the classroom. Outdoor learning frequently involves teamwork and a different ethos of working in a less structured environment. In sciences, this learning can lead to a lifelong interest in a particular aspect of the environment.

Science taught outdoors encourages considered thought about our use of resources and the impact of this on the local environment, and about the scale of the natural world. It demonstrates the wonders of the environment and allows learners to learn to interact with the living world in a climate of safety and respect.

The learners' experience of observing class-based theoretical examples can be enhanced through real-world experiences. Many basic scientific concepts can also be demonstrated through games. A simple walk around the school grounds can provide opportunities for learners to experience and observe a range of scientific principles and their applications.

Some suggestions for taking science outdoors…

- Planet Earth can't be seriously studied without getting outside. Grounds can be used to explore biodiversity, interdependence, energy sources, the carbon cycle, photosynthesis, pollination, sustainability and the process of climate change. Much of this learning will be enhanced by creating a variety of habitat types. Boulders can illustrate major rock types and the process of fossilisation.
- Where better to study the weather than outside? Build a weather station and measure rainfall, temperature and wind speeds. Create a sun dial and study the movement of the sun and shadows through the day and the year. Explore cloud formation and types and learn about the prevailing wind directions and the impact of wind direction on temperature and rainfall.
- Explore the equations of motion on a larger scale. Investigate forces, resistance and aerodynamics with rockets, kites, paper planes, parachutes, levers and catapults. Experiment with different designs and learn how and why this impact on their performance. How could you estimate the speed of sound outdoors?
- Create a fire pit to explore the science of fire and of cooking, as well as to create a focal point for storytelling.
- Germinate broad bean seeds in jam jars in the classroom. use the germinating seeds to identify the parts of the plant. at a suitable time, plant some seeds or plants outside in pots or the school garden. discuss and plan how to look after the plants outside. What do they need to help them grow? How can pupils help them to grow?
- Send pupils out into the playground with cameras. Challenge them to photograph living and non-living things beginning with the letters in their school's name. display their results with reasons for their choice. the same activity can be done on a walk or in a different environment.
- Take children and young people into the school grounds. ask them to write down lots of questions about what they see, hear and feel outside within the space of a few minutes. With a partner or small group, share the questions and identify which ones are science-related. Put together a list from the whole class and decide which ones to research the answers to.
- Does the sun warm the tree trunks and cause the snow to melt around them? during snowy weather, send pupils out to find out if the snow is melting evenly around the playground. Look at the area around tree trunks and at the base of railings, the mounds of snow pushed up in the car park, next to busy paths etc. Have pupils take photos of their observations and explain them in terms of particles, the heat energy from the sun and changes of state. try this with jars of warm water, poles of different materials etc.

Foundation Subjects (KS1, KS2)

Art and design

Expressive arts outside can offer opportunities for collaborative working on a **large scale.**

Outdoor spaces and places also offer an increased variety of contexts for creating and presenting ideas. Contributing to or creating public performances outdoors can enhance the sense of community and understanding of what it means to belong to a place.

There are specific practical skills and problem solving associated with taking expressive arts outdoors, such as projecting voices, making works of art that can withstand the elements and managing musical instruments outdoors.

Expressive Arts (Drama, music, dance and art)

- Outdoors can provide a fitting setting for the performance of drama, dance and music. Providing a dedicated outdoor performance area such as a stage or amphitheatre will make formal performances more practicable but will also tend to encourage informal use during break time.
- A varied and attractive outdoor space can provide inspiration for a wide range of expressive arts as well as a stimulating space for creating and exhibiting art in many of its forms.
- It can also provide natural materials for use in various art forms and, as considered in the Placemaking section can provide a space for the creation of sculptures, carvings, murals, mosaics and various forms of temporary art.
- When in a natural place or space, create transient or land art outdoors. Before going outdoors, have a look online at work by Andy Goldsworthy, Richard Schilling and Marc Pouyet. Think about the best place to undertake the task and the elements of art that will feature most prominently.
- Identify and visit public works of art in your community. Build up a journal or blog about one or all of them. Find out other people's thoughts about the artwork and their ideas about what the pieces represent.
- Use audio recorders to capture different sounds in an area that includes a range of habitats or urban places. On return, use audio editing software to create a story of a journey that uses the different sounds for inspiration and its soundtrack.
- Hold a dancing event outdoors. this could be dances:

  - from different countries
  - created by the children based on mirror work or to interpret music
  - to retell a local story or poem
  - which are traditional or popular within the community, for example invite Highland dance or Morris dancing instructors to deliver a session.

Foundation Subjects (KS1, KS2)

PE, PSHE, Citizenship

Health and Wellbeing

- A lack of indoor PE facilities is often cited as a reason for not providing enough PE time in the curriculum. With appropriate clothing, your grounds can become a quality outdoor PE space in all but the most inclement weather. Dedicated sports pitches or other open areas are useful but can be complemented with features such as hoops, nets, targets painted on the ground, traversing walls, bike skills loops, trim trails, cross-country running circuits and orienteering.
- Part of the power of school grounds is that, through play and recreation, they can provide significant health and wellbeing benefits out of formal class time. Developing a sense of place, enriching nature and providing opportunities for free play helps pupils to be active, develop physical skills, learn to manage risk, build supportive relationships and feel happy and fulfilled.

By working with others outdoors, children and young people learn about relationships and develop effective communication skills.

Through exposure to everyday risks outside children and young people can develop an awareness of their own and others' safety. They can learn to assess and manage risk for themselves.

Many outdoor activities require more physical activity and skill than those indoors. This develops motor skills and puts in place good exercise habits that will enable children to stay fit and healthy throughout their lives.

Draw a road on the playground with chalk. add a zebra crossing or traffic light. Practise crossing the road safely. Make up some road safety action games to play.

In a natural space or school grounds, create a temporary fitness trail using natural materials and PE equipment. Include activities that will build up stamina, speed, strength and agility. Remember to take account of risk and safety in your design. Use your trail to test and build up your fitness.

Find out about labyrinths online. The purpose of these structures is to enable controlled, reflective walking. Look at ways of creating simple temporary labyrinths in your school grounds, using chalk or paint, or by mowing the grass. Give learners the opportunity to walk in these structures as part of an outdoor circle time that focuses on a theme that requires an element of reflection. Link to pattern work in maths about mazes.

Using google earth explore the layout of streets and pathways. As a group or class, choose a route to walk that creates an interesting shape on a map, e.g. the name of the area where you live or a zig-zag pattern. On the walk note all the street furniture used to direct traffic and keep pedestrians safe.

Foundation Subjects (KS1, KS2)

Computing

Undertaking technologies outdoors provides opportunities to investigate and experiment with the earliest and latest in human technology, making connections between our past and present. Being outdoors aids reflection on the designs, materials and processes that are used and which influence all our lives.

By visiting and considering the producers and consumers of products within the local community or authority, learners can see innovation and change management in work environments and evaluate 'live' products, systems and services.

Links between the planet and consumption of finite resources can be made through gardening, allotment and farming projects. growing plants that have different purposes, such as medicinal or dyes for clothing, can help embed sustainable principles when explicitly taught and demonstrated. School grounds and outdoor spaces benefit from design projects such as building window boxes, animal homes, outdoor ovens, seating, etc. interpretation of the grounds and signage is a design process.

Technology

- Many of the features described in this guide can be designed and created by pupils as part of their technologies study. Simple projects include bird boxes, feeders and baths. One school set pupils the task of designing a box that could be used by birds and bats. Add an IT component by designing in a web cam.
- Loose materials such as planks, crates and ropes can be used to set design challenges such as building bridges or temporary structures.
- More complex projects include the creation of bespoke seating and shelters. The technology department of one secondary school created a metal shelter with the school's motto and logo. Others have created green oak shelters with living roofs.
- Build and test your own wind turbine or tin can solar heaters. Computer aided design can be used for these individual features, as well as for creating a more comprehensive design plan for the whole outdoor area.
- A larger scale outdoor improvement project can use online surveys to gather pupil views and a blog to share progress.
- Growing your own produce enriches the teaching of food technologies and several schools have built their own outdoor ovens.
- Build dens in groups either in your school grounds or in a natural habitat off-site. Make some basic technologies like string available to help. What techniques work best and why? How can these ideas be used in modern buildings?
- Look around outside. Ask students for a definition of technology and then ask each person to give an example that they can see or hear. If necessary, encourage learners to categorise the examples they give.
- Build a structure one metre high from natural materials. Agree criteria with learners such as accuracy of height, load-bearing capacity and structural strength. Give learners time to find these matters out in advance.
- Investigate how food travels from farm to mouth. Go on a trip to follow a food product from being grown or reared to being manufactured, sold and then consumed.

Foundation Subjects (KS1, KS2)

Geography/History

Real-world learning outdoors is a fundamental experience all young people need in order to have a good understanding of past, present and future societies, places and environments, and the North East's /UK's rich culture and heritage.

Some suggestions for taking Geography/History outdoors…

- Outdoor geography opportunities are almost endless. Explore the weather. Measure evaporation by chalking the perimeter of a puddle as it evaporates through the school day. Learn about rivers by creating water rills (or getting outside in heavy rain to watch them form naturally) and looking for erosion and deposition.
- Create physical maps of your grounds or map how the spaces are used at break time. Look at first edition OS maps of your school or ask your local community for early photographs of the site. Compare these with Google's satellite view. Are any of the original features still present? How and why have they changed?
- Paint a world or regional map on the ground or create temporary maps with chalk and sand to help pupils understand spatial relationships between the UK's towns or the major continents.
- Developing social studies skills such as map making becomes purposeful and relevant outdoors. It improves learners' spatial and temporal sense of place in the world through learning experientially how to locate, explore and link features and places locally and further afield.
- Create an outdoor museum. Ask children to bring something old from home that they could use outside. Share everyone's ideas during an outdoor gathering time, extended over several days if needed. enjoy playing with and using the old objects. Invite parents and grandparents into the class to talk about their favourite old outdoor objects.
- Go on a planned walk with a selection of pictures that have been taken of people along the route. Ask your group to work out where they were taken and to stand where the photographer would have been. Can they put the pictures in chronological order?
- Ask pupils to use coloured pencils to create value maps of their school grounds that reveal places that are (un)fair, (un)equal, (un)caring and (un)sharing, and that show different degrees of love or the respect of human rights.
- Visit a battlefield, taking with you a number of short readings and evidence about the soldiers who fought there and why. Allow time for your group to develop a sense of place and the history of the location before sensitively exploring the role of key cultural or religious issues in the battle. Depending on the battle, you could also discuss the battle's role in changing the history of a religion or country or relate this to current wars that are happening in the world today.

Local distinctiveness

- Plan activities that ensure pupils are familiar with the local area and its history and stories.
- Think about how you can make the absolute most of your local context to develop distinctive spaces and learning experiences that help pupils to learn about, celebrate and develop a sense of affection for their local places and heritage.
- This could be the natural heritage; planting locally important plants or encouraging locally important insects.
- It could be the built heritage; using local materials, techniques and crafts people to create bespoke outdoor shelters and structures.
- Or it could be any aspect of local history, interpreted and celebrated through outdoor art.

Experiencing the sights and sounds of their school grounds, outdoor space and local area can help children and young people to become more connected to their local community. When studying local or national issues the subject may become more relevant and meaningful and make greater sense. Using local outdoor spaces and engaging with their sights and sounds enables pupils to empathise with past or present communities and environments. enterprising projects that have an element of outdoor work foster community links.

Foundation Subjects (KS1, KS2)

Religious education

Outdoor learning can provide opportunities for exploring how beliefs and values are held, expressed and developed. There is an immediacy to being outside that heightens the senses, prompts a sense of connection to the environment and raises the questions of identity, meaning and purpose fundamental to learning about what it means to be human in religious and moral education.

Religious and Moral Education

- School grounds have the potential to be places where children experience awe and wonder at the beauty and complexity of the natural world. They can provide calm in the bustle of a busy school day. Create a space that will encourage contemplation using nature and features such as water and art.
- Ask pupils to sit quietly on the ground (even in the rain) for 5 minutes. Ask them to observe and experience what's around them, from the tiny details of a bug to the clouds overhead, and then to write a sentence or two. You will be amazed at the depth of emotion and insight that emerges.
- Incorporate faith symbols into outdoor art, create Rangoli patterns and display important texts from different faith and philosophical traditions.
- Use your grounds to explore religious festivals or the telling of important faith narratives in story, music, dance or drama.
- As well as making the most of religious and cultural events taking place in local communities, establishments can develop opportunities for learners to explore spirituality, religious texts, symbols and festivals in their school grounds or outdoor space. examples include:
    - creating peace gardens and quiet areas outside for reflection
    - designing temporary or fixed labyrinths
    - putting multicultural games and markings on the asphalt, such as an Islamic hopscotch or dance steps from traditional dances in different cultures
    - creating murals that depict an aspect of this curriculum area
    - placing artefacts that capture important or special events, the passing of the seasons, reminders of growth and change
    - providing pathways for journey making, doorways and entrances for moving through different spaces, circular trails for work on life stages and life cycles
- Through community events and practical work to care for their environment, children and young people are able to put their beliefs and values into action. Visits to different places of worship and participating in cultural celebrations enable learners to witness first-hand how religions express themselves. This exposes learners to alternative belief systems and ways of thinking. This shows that outdoor learning does not just use the natural environment but includes the built environment.
- Using a multicultural calendar, make a note of key religious events and celebrations that take place throughout the year. Plan simple outdoor activities related to one or several of them. This can be linked to outdoor assemblies and seasonal times for reflection.
- Sing spiritual or religious songs indoors and outdoors. How does singing the same song outdoors change how the experience feels?
- Play games that explore the meaning and importance of values such as fairness and trust. For example, blindfold players, who become dependent on instructors to navigate an obstacle course of noisy things on a playing field.
- Look at symbols in your locality, especially on road signs, buildings and advertising hoardings. Do any of them have a religious association? Use these experiences to investigate the role of symbolism in understanding and articulating personal faith.
- Have children design and construct a 'sukkah' from natural materials and plan a small meal to share inside it. The Jewish Harvest Festival of Sukkot involves the building of outdoor shelters in remembrance of the exodus story and god's provision during a long desert journey.
- Lantern making, campfires and stargazing can all lead to discussion and reflection on light and dark in different religions and the festivals and activities associated with those themes.
- Engaging with animals and minibeast collection stimulate work on life cycles and introduces children to questions of life and death, loss and bereavement in a natural and uncomplicated way.

Websites

These websites have been signposted for further guidance and support with LOTC:

Here you'll find resources on;

- Sources of individual lesson plans
- Websites that also have dozens of links to even more great resources
- Curriculum based and non-curriculum activities
- Outdoor play ideas
- Sources of inspiration
- …. & more!

- **BEETLES (activities)**

Better Environmental Education, Teaching, Learning & Expertise Sharing (BEETLES) - Activities

Visit Website

- **International Tree Foundation Resources**

Visit Website

- **International School Grounds Month**

International School Grounds Months activity guide

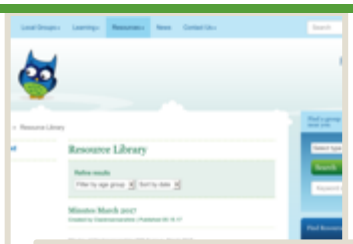
Visit Website

- **The Institute for Earth Education (IEE)**

Earth Education - I.E.E Tree

Visit Website

- **Outdoor + Woodland Learning (OWL)**



Resource Library | Outdoor and Woodland Learning

Visit Website

- **Forestry Commission: Outdoor Classroom**

Forestry Commission - Outdoor Classroom

Visit Website

- **Outdoor Learning Directory**

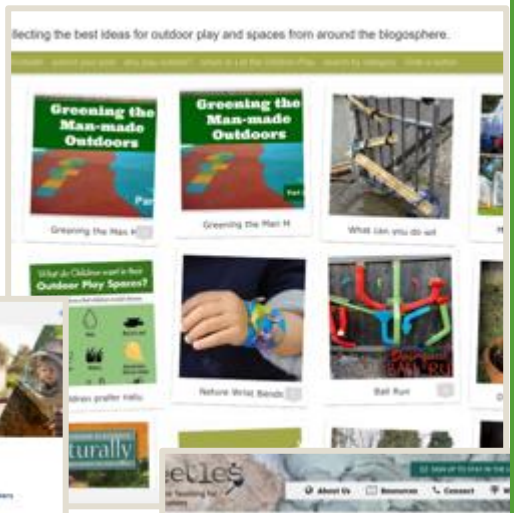
Visit Website

- **Earth Education**

Earth Education resources

Visit Website

- **Outdoor Play Ideas**



Outdoor Play Ideas

Visit Website

- **Environmental Education Resources**

Environmental Education Resources (NEEF)

Visit Website

- **BEETLES (lessons)**

Better Environmental Education, Teaching, Learning & Expertise Sharing (BEETLES) -

Visit Website

- **Science + Plants for Schools (other)**

Beyond the Classroom

Visit Website

- **Muddy faces**

Muddy faces activities

Visit Website

- **Learning through Landscapes (LtL)**

Outdoor Learning and Play - training, lesson plans, resources

Visit Website

- **Forestry Commission: Learning in Tree**

Information page for Learning in the Forest in England

Visit Website

- **TES search for Outside the Classroom**

TES search for Outside the Classroom

Visit Website

- **Eco Explorer**

Eco Explorer

Visit Website

- **RSPB**

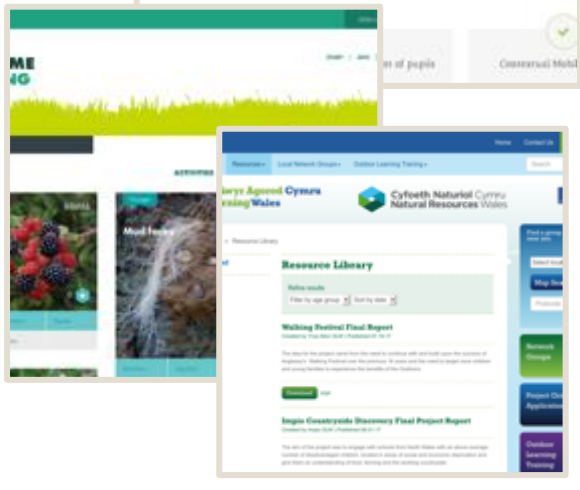
Teaching Resources for Classroom + Outdoor Lessons - The RSPB

Visit Website

- **Wild Time Learning**

Wild Time Learning - Wild time for Schools

Visit Website



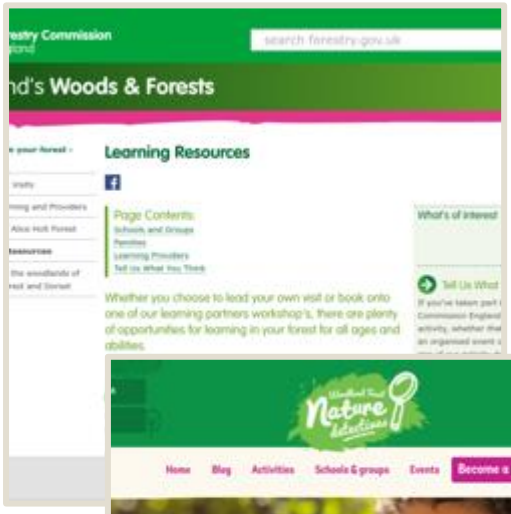
- **Outdoor Learning Wales (OLW)**

Resource Library | Outdoor Learning Wales

Visit Website

- **Forestry Commission: Learning**

Learning resources for learning in the Forestry Commission woods



Visit Website

- **Nature Detectives**

Discover exciting wildlife activities to help kids explore nature!

Visit Website

- **Muddy Faces**

Muddy Faces - Links

Visit Website

- **The Growing Schools Garden**

The Growing Schools Garden

Visit Website

- **NatureNet: Games**

NatureNet - Games and Activities

Visit Website

- **OpAL (Open Air Laboratories): Education**

Learn more about the environment around you with these free education packs

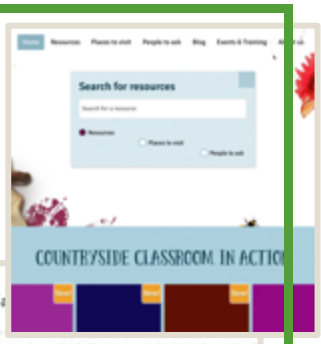
Visit Website

- **Wilderdom**

Index to Group Activities, Games, Exercises + Initiatives

Visit Website

- **Countryside Classroom**



Countryside Classroom - Connecting schools with food, farming and the natural environment

Visit Website

- **NatureNet: Environmental Education Links**

NatureNet - Environmental Education Links

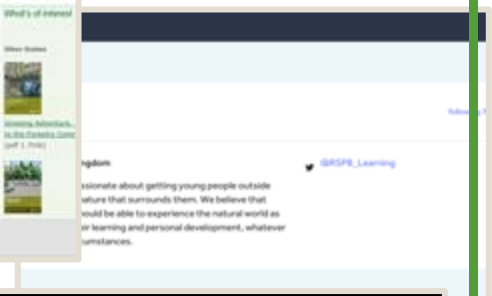
Visit Website

- **Forestry Commission: Nature play**

Nature Play. Simple and fun ideas for all

Visit Website

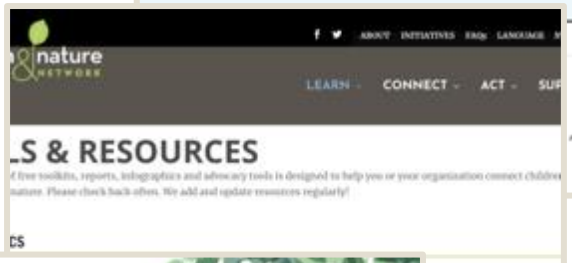
- **RSPB on TES**



RSPB resources on TES

Visit Website

- **Children + Nature Network**



Tools + Resources | Children + Nature Network Tools + Resources

Visit Website

- **Forests for the Future**

Resource Guide | Forests for the Future

Visit Website

- **TES search for School Grounds**

TES search for School Grounds

Visit Website

- **Science + Plants for Schools (primar**

Science + Plants for Schools (primary)

Visit Website

- **Council for LOtC: resources**

Resources category | Council for Learning Outside the Classroom

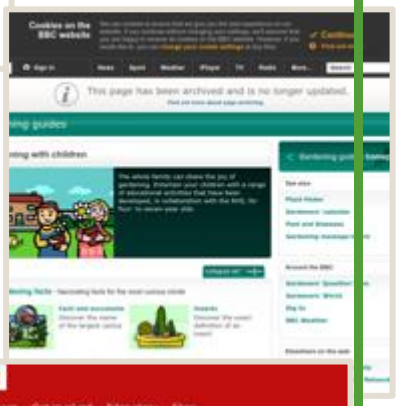
Visit Website

- **Wild Explorers App**

Wild Explorers App from The Wild Network

Visit Website

- **BBC Gardening with Children**



Bring the joy of gardening to your children with gardening activities and knowledge

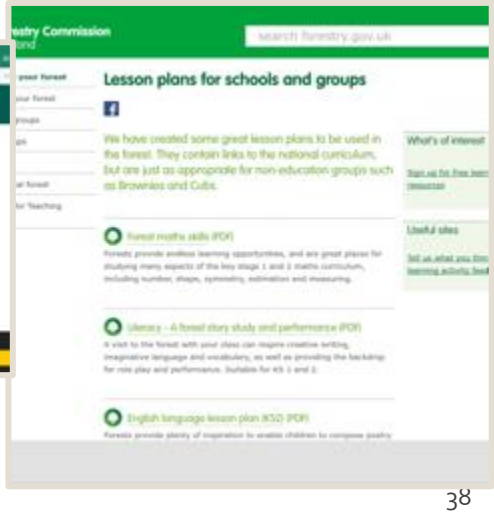
Visit Website

- **The Eden Project**

Free curriculum-linked lesson plans from biology to design

Visit Website

- **Forestry Commission: for schools and groups**



Learning in the Forest - Lesson plans for schools and groups

Visit Website

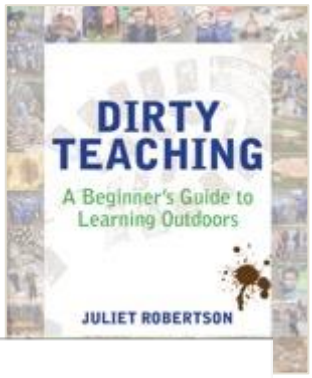
- **Woodland Trust**

Curriculum linked resources - Woodland Trust

Visit Website

- **Creative Star Learning**

https://creativestarlearning.co.uk/support/outdoor-clothing-boxes/



- **Explorify**

https://explorify.wellcome.ac.uk/dashboard/saved-activities

- **Wild Time Learning**

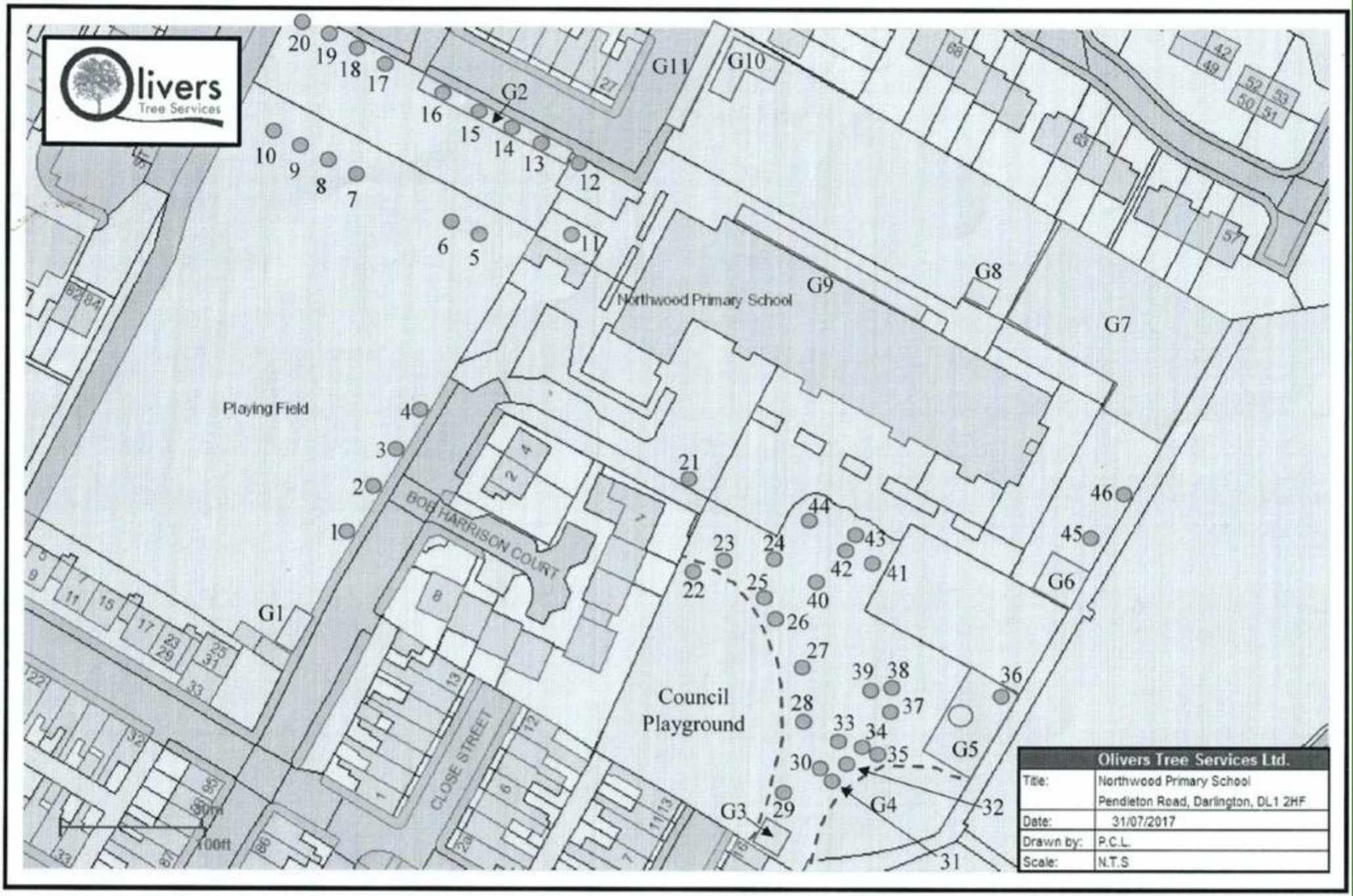
https://wildtimelearning.com

- **Why Farming Matters?**

https://visitmyfarm.org/why-farming-matters

Activity	English	Maths	Science	Art & Design	Geography
Getting started	✔	✔			✔
Drama, drought and deluge	✔		✔		✔
Postcards from vegetables	✔				
Fruity diaries	✔		✔	✔	
Habitats and food chains			✔	✔	
Hedge/pond for sale	✔		✔		
Water use					✔
Energy for the future	✔		✔		
Produce in the flag		✔	✔	✔	
Farming diary	✔				
Country collage				✔	
What would you grow?	✔			✔	
Where does our food come from?	✔	✔			✔
Have we always eaten the same food?	✔	✔			✔
Who provides our food?	✔	✔			✔
Farming maths	✔	✔			✔

e-resources available: www.whyfarmingmatters.co.uk 5


Olivers
Tree Services
Northwood Primary School
Playing Field
Council
Playground
BOB HARRISON COURT
CLOSE STREET
G1
G2
G3
G4
G5
G6
G7
G8
G9
G10
G11
100ft
Olivers Tree Services Ltd.
Title: Northwood Primary School
Pendleton Road, Darlington, DL1 2HF
Date: 31/07/2017
Drawn by: P.C.L.
Scale: N.T.S