

Active Play and Outdoor Learning

Playing is often the best way to learn, indoors or out. The outdoors is an endless and inspiring resource free to everyone. All curricular areas can be learnt outdoors, often with very few resources. Below are links to outdoor learning sites. A simple handful of grass stalks can be counted, ordered according to size, measured, sorted, used to make shapes and letters or a grass soup recipe, to build a mini den for a plasticine figure... you get the idea.



Benefits of the outdoors are huge: just getting fresh air is good for everyone, and pupils generally think things outside are more fun/ game like than 'proper' learning...so they enjoy it, and actually learn even better without realising it. It is almost always active learning- the pupils learn by experiencing and doing for themselves rather than being told or shown. And apparently contact with nature is very good for us, and can be very calming and absorbing for all, but apparently especially people with autism. Just google the benefits of outdoor learning if you need more inspiration.

To get the most out of it, try to be as positive about it as possible- pupils will pick up on your attitudes to bugs, mud, getting wet etc. The only resource you really need is the right clothing. Getting too cold is not good for learning. But with the right clothes and the right rain there are puddles... and endless learning opportunities! You don't need a big outdoor space, and in fact many of the ideas with work well inside...eg a treasure hunt or hide and seek work round the house too. Mud pies do tend to work better outside though!



Websites:

<https://creativestarning.co.uk/> Run by Juliet Roberston, and ex Highland teacher. Has a huge range of ideas for activities to try and lots of advice and links to other sites. First base for outdoor learning ideas.

<https://themuddypuddleteacher.co.uk/> Have a range of resources that can be used, usually under a subscription system but is free for at least a month just now.

<https://education.gov.scot/Documents/cfe-through-outdoor-learning.pdf> Official document supporting outdoor learning in all forms... not as heavy a read as you might think and may inspire you.

<https://www.playscotland.org/> lots of ideas and links to all sorts of active play ideas

<https://www.inspiringscotland.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Loose-Parts-Play-Toolkit-2019-web.pdf> loose parts play is playing with 'stuff' to make rockets, castles, dens, obstacles courses, games... A bit like everyone used to before we forgot how to. This will reinspire you.

<https://www.ltl.org.uk/> Learning through landscapes: an advisory/funding body, they also have a parents section with ideas and links to guidelines and other sites.



All of these images were found on Pinterest by searching for
OUTDOOR LEARNING

