Part 1

The Photo

(Source: Barker, 2021)

Part 2

Feature 1 – Counting; loose parts – Mathematics

In Early years, many learners exhibit collecting schemas and enjoy using pots and pans to serve as receptacles for collecting the natural materials they find in the woods; pinecones and conkers tend to be seasonal favourites. These collections are good a way for learners to develop their counting and addition skills, for example "how many pinecones do you have in your saucepan?" or "if you put three of your pinecones in another saucepan, how many would you have left?" Learners will also often sort these loose parts by shape or size. Lipp (2021) suggests that loose parts should be encouraged when using an outdoor environment for maths.

Number recognition, counting and one-to-one correspondence. Introducing numbers with early years learners will provide a visual of numeral as well as written, which gives them a variety of loose parts for exploring. According to Welsh Assembly Government (2014) Developing mathematical thinking and learning skills, should be part of every learner's daily experience. Learners can count, measure, and explore different shapes and structures, and enhance their understanding of arithmetical concepts and reasoning in context. Learners can learn what they do indoors as well as outdoors, but with enthusiasm, openness, freedom, and scale. Wisby (2018) supports this concept by using Montessori's philosophy, which is to allow learners to connect with the natural world of the outdoors. Learners will develop a curiosity and embrace a sense of connection with nature, which allows structure and purpose.

Welsh Assembly Government (2008) implies that experiences with natural materials are tactile. Learners should have various chances to touch, investigate and explore the properties of these materials before undertaking other organised activities. According to Dancer (2021) *"Outdoor play is one of the things that actually characterises childhood – indeed, many of our favourite childhood memories are of playing outdoors".*

(Source: Outwoods, 2018)

(Source: Food52, 2017)

Feature 2 – Water Play – Science and Mathematics.

Early years learners find water interesting, and it is an ideal learning tool for motor and sensory skills. An outdoor water facility can be made with no fuss and mess. It allows learners time and space to explore water and building a sense of laughter. A water barrel and large containers to fill and empty, including guttering and water pipes in paddling pools. Who can predict how many small buckets fill the watering can?

According to First Discoverers (2020) learners playing with water have many benefits, including with sand. It allows learners to improve fine motor skills, opens opportunities for experimentations and to explore. It also allows sensory and calming experiences, creativity, and imaginative play.

Some learners prefer to play with loose parts because it allows them to be in control and gives them a sense of self-directed play in any setting and provides opportunities to use their own imaginations. Giving a learner a guttering pipe or plastic bottle linked to water will embrace creativity, this is supported by Play Scotland (No date). According to Welsh Assembly Government (2015) learners should explore by estimating and solve real-life problems in the outdoor environment. Learners will develop an understanding of measures, investigating properties of shape and ideas of how to position and move through various practical experiences.

According to Stoecklin and White (1998) learners operate water play materials, they build their scientific enquiry and problem-solving skills, as they begin to understand why and how things happen. A learner may notice that one object sinks in the water and another object floats, which prompts them to add more objects to the water to see what happens. As they continue to investigate which objects sink and float, a learner will soon discover that a heavier object sinks, while lighter objects float, no matter how big or small they are.

The Montessori method supports this fact by stating, “bringing the inside out and the outside in”. This idea was aimed at providing connections between learners and observations of nature and giving learners the opportunity to learn about plants and animals found in the environment of the early years, this is also supported by Issacs (2021). Water and a few inexpensive tools can provide a sensory and learning experience of immense proportions.

Free play with water can build the foundation for learners. Learners having that understanding of a multitude of scientific concepts, including:

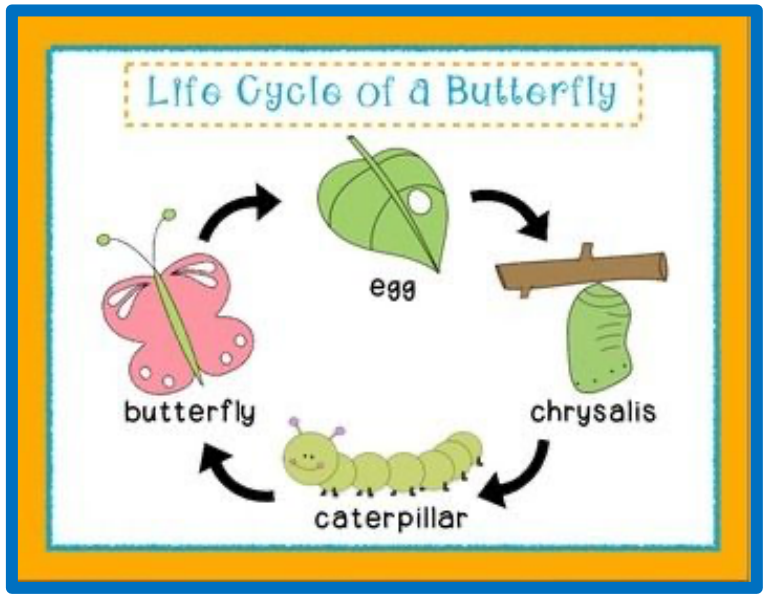
- Physics
- Chemistry
- Biology
- Mathematics

These concepts will support the learner's understanding of educational subjects in later schooling and later in life. Physics will allow the learner to understand flow and motion, Chemistry, Cohesion and Solutions and their own ideas. Biology will allow them to experiment with plants and animal life and Mathematics, opens the learners' minds to various methods, such as measurements, equivalence, and volume.
Science is indeed "*serious play"* (Wassermann, 1990). Science is "*everywhere around us. What can learners do to increase their understanding of science? Everything!"*
(Wassermann, 1990, p107). Learners inquire, perceive, compare, envision, create, experiment, and theorize when they explore natural resources such as water, sand, and mud.

(Source: TTS, 2021)

Feature 3 – Life Cycles – Science

A life cycle is a sequence of changes that an animal or organism will go through over the course of their life.
By learners investigating the world around them, practitioners can support the learner's creativity and support a variety of early years goals. Practitioners will not only support the learners understanding of the world, but they can utilise this topic in maths, literacy, and creative activities also, this is supported by Twinkl (2021). Educating and looking after plants are ways for young learners to be introduced to the importance of caring for living things and their obligation for taking care of the planet.
According to Welsh Assembly Government (2015) knowledge and understanding of the World Outcomes, states that learners communicate their knowledge and understanding of basic features. Learners make observations, ask questions, and respond to their findings, through materials and sources that have been prepared but also by their own initiative. Learners recognise and express their views about features of specific things and how some change. Learners also listen and respond to scientific ideas and react appropriately.
Lynch (2020) suggests that learners need to be challenged to interact with the world around them in a tangible way. This can be achieved by asking inquisitive questions and encouraging independence through experimentation and this will also interlink with cross-curricular content and benefits the learners unilaterally.



(Source: pinterest, 2021)

Part 3 RISK BENEFIT ASSESSMENT

Location / Activity:	School Woodland	**Date:**	20/09/2021
Assessor:	Nathan Barker	**Review date:**	20/10/2021

Experience exploring outdoor space from photograph	How will young people BENEFIT from this activity?	Possible hazards	Who is at risk?	PRECAUTIONS in place to reduce the risk of injury	Overall risk RATING: L/M/H
Learners exploring the things they see such as wood, trees, flowers, leaves, mini beasts.	Learners will have the opportunity to learn about other living creatures and plants. Learners having an opportunity to explore relationships between living things, their habitats, and their life cycles. Becoming aware of other living things and becoming ethical citizens – being kind to other living things – discipline and emotion. Physical development - gross and fine motor skills when lifting, stretching, bending, carrying.	Learners may wonder off become lost or out of sorts to their normal surroundings. Learners may collect some inappropriate materials, such as rubbish, broken glass. Aware of poisonous or irritant plants, i.e., blackthorn. Low level branches could cause a head or eye injury. Could cause scratches, infections. Bits and stings and allergies to insect bites.	Both learners and Adults	• Go down to the area and do a fod plot, collecting rubbish that may have been left behind. • Check if the area has changed since you been down there last - rabbit holes, mole mounds. • Aware of strangers, follow setting policy and procedures. • Boundaries – learners made aware of things that are not nice to collect. • Discuss with learners' things that might be new and surprising. • Have set rules, nothing to go in mouths, always wash hands and when they can. • Explain to the learners not to run and push each other. • Make sure learners do not wear scarves in the woodland to avoid tangling around equipment • Staff supervision adhering to the ratio. • Ensure the environment is suitable for play subject to weather.	Low

Experience exploring outdoor space from photograph	How will young people BENEFIT from this activity?	Possible hazards	Who is at risk?	PRECAUTIONS in place to reduce the risk of injury	Overall risk RATING: L/M/H
Weather conditions.	Become aware of different temperatures, use words such as hot, cold, wet, dry. Learners can identify things in the environment which may be harmful and can act to reduce the risks to themselves and other. Become aware of self-care monitoring own risk.	Possible high winds – trees to fall, branches to breaks, injuries including head and hand - life changing. Learners may be prone to different temperatures; it may be too hot or too cold – can cause hyperthermia. Learners may become wet, causing discomfort and mood changes.	Both learners and adults.	• Check the Met Office – would not go outdoors in high winds over 30 wind speed or stormy weather. • Check in advance if any movement of nature has accrued. • Appropriate outdoor clothing and equipment if needed, are they ready and available and pre-allocated by another class. • Do learners need sun cream, water bottles and sun hats - if too hot. • Do learners need waterproofs, warm layers, wellingtons or gloves and hats to protect their body parts – if too cold.	Medium
Using foraged natural materials	Learners will have the opportunity to learn about other living creatures and plants. Physical development - gross and fine motor skills when lifting, stretching, bending, carrying.	Choking or poisoning Ingesting or absorption of poisonous plants Allergic reaction	Both learners and adults.	• Risk of eating plants, therefore plants within the play area are chosen carefully and screened if harmful to learners. • Adults to remove hazardous plants before the area is used.	Medium

Experience exploring outdoor space from photograph	How will young people BENEFIT from this activity?	Possible hazards	Who is at risk?	PRECAUTIONS in place to reduce the risk of injury	Overall risk RATING: L/M/H
Loose parts - Gravel, pebbles, woodchip, or other pieces of natural material	Learner will have the opportunity to learn about other living creatures and plants that live under these loose parts. Exploration with science and nature. Physical development - gross and fine motor skills when lifting, stretching, bending, carrying.	Choking, grazes and scratches Ingesting of poisonous object.	Both learners and adults.	• Any learner who are likely to explore putting things into their mouths are identified and given greater supervision in this area • Learners to follow a no consumption rule in outdoor areas. • Hand washing when needed, after handling nature objects.	Medium
Building equipment and resources. Wooden reels, tyres, milk crates, guttering, wooden planks, plastic sheeting	To make decisions for themselves, being imaginative and taking pride in their own achievements that support their holistic development. Creativity and imagination with peers building teamwork, building relationships and bonding, story time and different experiences with loose parts. Physical development - gross and fine motor skills when lifting, stretching, bending, carrying.	Slips, trips, or falls. Suffocation Heavy objects. Stagnant Water Splinters, cuts, bumps, head injury, grazes, trapped fingers, stings, or bites. Crush injury or death. Illness to those with cystic fibrosis.	Both learners and adults.	• Learners have a safety talk how to use the equipment. • Daily assessing the risk in their play. • Weather conditions to be considered • Areas to be monitored to ensure that they are clear, and surface is flat. • Equipment checked regularly to look for damage. • Ensure staff are aware of learner's medical problems and relevant first aid treatment.	Medium

Experience exploring outdoor space from photograph	How will young people BENEFIT from this activity?	Possible hazards	Who is at risk?	PRECAUTIONS in place to reduce the risk of injury	Overall risk RATING: L/M/H
Climbing blocks, - freestanding equipment	Physical development - gross and fine motor skills when lifting, stretching, bending, carrying. Manoeuvre themselves around the equipment. Count them, pattern sequence, sharing and teamwork with peers.	Slips, trips, or falls. Heavy objects splinters, cuts, bumps, head injury, grazes, trapped fingers, stings, or bites.	Both learners and adults.	• Learners to be made aware of the risks of trapped fingers. • Adults to show how to move and position blocks safely. • Blocks and tubes to be checked by adults daily for dirt, cracks, or insects. • Adults to mindful of learners climbing in wet weather. • Equipment to be checked and dried after wet weather.	Medium

Part 4

Woods (2013) advises that practitioners contributing to regular outdoor play will learn to recognise the useful links to learner's learning and is likely to result in the practitioners becoming entirely engaged. Early Learning HQ (2018) reports outdoor play increases the mental health and emotional intelligence of learners this is supported by Angus (2011). Angus valued the Waldorf education philosophies that willing, feeling and thinking are the three different forms of social expression supporting a method towards holistic education for learners. Some practitioners plan some complicated lessons, and it is not needed. Identifying different learning objectives for indoors and then outdoors can be combined, creating a better learning environment.

Through keeping with the New Curriculum, Welsh Assembly Government (2018b) identifies that over complicating planning will not always support the learners and not help them make links in their learning or revisiting play sessions. As a practitioner extending the planning and supporting the learner by outdoor activities and experiences, will be more affective. Dancer (2021) suggests that repeating the lessons outdoors with learners can be a more positive outcome, by using natural loose parts. Dancer (2021) also suggests that the role of the adult is to stimulate the environment, by enriched areas of provision. Not all practitioners have a great creative mind and can identify opportunities for maths learning. It is important that the adult role outdoors includes engaging but as a co-player with the learners and to try and extend the learning; it is not a 'hands-off' supervisory role. Practitioners should plan to introduce the activity on times, model if needed and use specific vocabulary, allowing testimonials and open-ended questions about all aspects of any learning. (Slovaček, 2017, p28-29) writes that Joy Paul Guilford began to conduct a research based on creativity in the mid 20th century. Joy defined creativity as an achievement that includes staining, experiencing, and creating different and unusual framework ideas. *"It is believed that a creative person looks at things in an interesting and unusual way*" Huzjak (2008).

Salna (2012) believed that creativity was important to students that were becoming practitioners and other educators. Creative thinking is a critical life skill which is needed for victory in the 21st Century. Salna stated that the next generation will be working in professions that may not even exist today. It is the Department of Education's responsibility to prepare all students by demonstrating how to think not what to think. Salna was committed

to bring imagination and creativity to the Department of Education. The project was focused on working with a group of public-school setting to find different but effective approaches and materials to assist teachers in using creativity tools. Salna knew that teachers were busy individuals who work within time restraints and the demands were high. Having to adjust the curriculum objectives frequently, to enhance learning and abilities and the teacher's preferences was key to Salna's project. A Mystery Box exercise was used to capture the curiosity and essence of both teachers and students. The Mystery Box offered focus, fun, and effective ways to encourage creative thinking while instantaneously connecting to classroom lessons.

Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act - Welsh Assembly Government (2018c) reinforces the need for learners to receive a detailed planning, enables them to approach their natural environment and proposes quality training opportunities to expand their competency and skill set of the childcare workforce which in return will reinforce the importance of Person-Centred Planning. According to SNAP Cymru (2014) it is essential for learners with ALN to identify what is important to them now. This can only be achieved when adults that care for a learner work together to plan for them.

The New Curriculum, Welsh Assembly Government (2018a) focuses on 6 areas of learning, developed from the commendations of the curriculum and assessments review undertaken by Professor Donaldson's Successful Futures (2015). Professor Donaldson identified that to promote health and well-being in learners is essential. Childcare practitioners should take ownership of their learning environment both inside and outside. Practitioners should provide a flexible environment and plan a creative framework that follows the learners' individual development needs, ensuring that the learner flourish holistically in a contemporary environment.

Hwb (2020b) gives guidance, stating that developing appropriate planning, will get the learners to set goals, make decisions and monitor results. Learners should be able to adapt and as well as manage time, people, and resources accordingly. Checking for accuracy will enable creativity and different types of values. Allowing learners to develop these area skills, allows learners to work across disciplines, providing them with opportunities for synthesis and analysis.

(Source: Hwb, 2021)

Gleave 2009; Murray & O'Brien, (2006) stated the importance of outdoor play by encouraging health and wellbeing in all learners. Wilson (1984) shared a similar belief, that changes need to be initiated into environments as they are at risk. If learners remain inaccessible from natural play, which the Welsh Assembly Government (2016) promotes a bilingual and healthier Wales. This allows layers of the foundation to change and the need for quality education and resilient a setting. Learning Outside the Classroom (2009) who agrees with Donaldson's findings, that learners who obtain regular opportunities to learn and these used in an outdoor environment are more likely to grow a healthy lifestyle and well-being.

'Maria Montessori said that "Play is children's work." So, where do you fit into their work? Are you the boss, leader, coach, co-worker? While play may be the work of children, the work does not get done single-handedly. Quality play experiences are created and nurtured when adults are involved in the process.'

Rymanowicz (2015)

Rymanowicz (2015) indicates that it is important that supporting, leading, or controlling are different roles that any adult or practitioner plays. It is said that when an adult lead or an adult tries to take over a learners play, they are violating the basic principles of play being self-chosen and self-directed by the learner. Learners lose the freedom to explore, and their experience loses the purpose. Practitioners best practice is to support the learner's experiences by being near the activity and engage on times but not take over. Allow the learners to build the foundations of the scenario and engage the learning and explore different opportunities to help them stretch and grow their experiences.

National Day Nurseries Association (2019) believe that Mathematics is an important part of learning for all young learners in an early year setting. Practitioners delivering and learners receiving a basic but grounding provision in maths is an essential life skill. Numeracy helps skills such as problem solving, understanding, and using shapes and measure and developing the learners own spatial awareness. It will allow learners to recognise, create and describe patterns, to which is essential for early years problem solving and is also in many assessments at the beginning of most foundation phase academic year settings. According to Hwb (2020) in line with designing the curriculum, Mathematics to learners from an early age helps to develop their understanding of different elements of problem solving and reasoning. The curriculum as a broad range of contexts, where practitioners need to be able to provide various opportunities for learners to practice their developing skills and to improve, their knowledge, competence, and confidence.

According to Essex County Council (2021) it is vital that practitioners respond to each learner's emerging needs and interests. When guiding the learner's development, a warm and positive interaction should reflect and support the learner. Inclusion is a fundamental principle in appreciating all learners. Department of Education (2017), states that a 'key person' model, in which each learner will get an assigned key person to support

their learning and be in contact with the learners' families was thought to foster this. However, staff members stressed the importance of all staff sharing the accountability of supporting the learners, echoing, and monitoring the learners move around a setting and taking part in various activities. Members of staff need to be vigilant of the learners needs to ensure these are being always met. A key role of an adult is to build

good relationships with parents/guardians and seek feedback from them based on the learners' needs and interests, this should be viewed as vital. Learner's joining a setting, practitioners should ask parents for information on their interests and to which stage of development they are currently at.

Having this information and using the feedback correctly, should be merged into the curriculum planning. This vital information can be use in informal discussions with parents and can be revisited at parent evenings to guarantee that everything is in place, correct and current. Bottrill (2019) suggests that putting the focus back on learners and making them leaders in their own learning shifts, the adult's role away from being a teacher. It is a subtle change but an immensely powerful one. No longer is the adult the Knower. No longer are learners 'empty'. Instead, they enter their 'ether' engaging in play, creating alongside them, conversing, and collaborating as an equal. We begin to hear the 'languages' of learners' and not our own.

Foundation Years (2012) states that practitioners have the skills to 'teach', but still need to provide the scaffold for the learner's development but we are no longer planning over the top of learners. Practitioners are no longer the owners of learning. By creating a rhythmic cycle within the day which gives maximum space and time for learners to engage with rich skills-driven continuous provision, practitioners can immerse ourselves in a magical world of awe wonder and imagination. As educators it is important that they unpick the traditional concepts of what 'learning' is (sitting still, being quiet, being 'good') and present each day as an adventure in which being active and being an individual are truly valued.

However, Department of Education (2021) suggests that early year's learners learn, as well as what they want to learn. Learners need opportunities to develop their own play and independence through exploration. Though is it enjoyable and motivating, adults need to 'scaffold' their learning by giving them just enough help to achieve those skills in which they could not do independently. Learners learn and develop more

from birth to five years old than at any other moment in their lives. Learners are at risk of falling behind and the best course of action would be, now is the best time to help them is to catch up and keep up to date.

Early Education (2020) implies that when learners are out and about, the aim is to enable them to take risks, not prevent them, risk taking is good for learners. Taking risks is exhilarating for learners. The role of the adult is to make sure that they enable this, without placing them in actual danger. Though practitioners evaluate the hazards honestly, not just focusing in on the worst-case scenario, but also consider the likelihood of injury and to what the learner will gain by participating in the activity. This is called 'risk benefit' and in the UK has successfully been developed by practitioners and recommended by the Play Safety Forum, the Health and Safety Executive, and the Department of Education.

When learners are given the chance to change, they hold it, and it gives them what they need today. Practitioners set the benchmark and having the right individual in the right setting and in the right class is key, giving the learners every opportunity of success for tomorrow.

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