How does Outdoor Learning Impact Children's Wellbeing and Resilience in Foundation Phase?

Lauren Collins

BA (Hons) in Primary Education with QTS

University of Wales, Trinity Saint David

April 2019

Word Count: 6,372.

Frontispiece

This is to certify that, except where reference is made, the work defined in this research project is the outcome of the enquiry undertaking by the author, and that neither this research project nor any part of it has been presented, or is currently being submitted in candidature of any award other than in part for the degree of BA (Hons) in Primary Education with QTS of Trinity Saint David University of Wales, Carmarthen Campus.

Acknowledgements

I would like to take the time to thank the school, staff and pupils from my elective placement and from my final teaching practice that took the time to be part of my research project. Without their support, this project would not have been completed without their helpful responses and motivating evidence which has made a supportive contribution to this research project.

I would also like to thank Dr Sioned Hughes as this research project could not have been written without her guidance for this module, while inspiring positivity, interest and challenging me throughout.

Table of Contents

Frontispiece……Page Two.

Acknowledgements…….Page Three.

Chapter One: *Introduction*……Page Five.

Chapter Two: *Literature Review*…….. Page Seven.

Chapter Three: *Methodology*…….. Page Thirteen.

Chapter Four: *Results and Discussion*…….. Page Fifteen.

Chapter Five: *Conclusion*……..... Page Twenty-Two.

Chapter Six: *Bibliography*…… Page Twenty-Four.

Chapter Seven: *Appendices*……. Page Twenty-Nine.

Chapter One: Introduction

The aim of this research project is to understand how outdoor learning can be used to impact children's wellbeing and resilience for learners in Foundation Phase setting, aged three to seven. Before addressing this research project, the writer will undertake to investigate present research and a reflect on how outdoor learning is taught across Foundation Phase.

The objective of this project is to examine research to develop the writer's knowledge and understanding of teaching in a Foundation Phase setting and to progress professional practice in teaching effective outdoor education. Outdoor learning has been chosen as a topic, as it is starting to become more of a demand in educational settings. The Welsh Government (2015) clarifies that the skills in Foundation Phase should be learnt through experimental learning activities that should be taught indoors and outdoors. This is evidence how essential outdoor learning is, especially for children in Foundation Phase.

To formulate hypotheses for the research project, the writer needs to understand where outdoor learning stands within the Foundation Phase curriculum as outdoor education has declined over recent years. Additionally, wellbeing could be promoted and supported in outdoor learning through children appreciating different learning environments. It could be speculated that the children will be enthusiastic in new, learning environments, even when being challenged in different tasks to develop rich skills and resilience outdoors, therefore develop better behaviour to learning. The hypotheses are determined from observations across different professional teaching experiences.

The research method chosen to explore the question will include observations, a questionnaire and teacher and children interviews. Investigating both primary and secondary research should provide appropriate findings in order to determine the benefits of outdoor learning and its impact on Foundation Phase children's outdoor learning, wellbeing and resilience. This will allow the writer to gain an insight on advantages and disadvantages on outdoor education.

The purpose of this research project is to understand if outdoor learning is vital to teach to Foundation Phase children. The outdoor environment provides children with beneficial skills such as social, emotional and physical skills; that can be learnt through first-hand experiences. It is essential for children to have positive experiences to discover outdoors which will impact on their education, wellbeing and independence. Outdoor learning experiences allows children

to learn about new experiences that may not be able to be taught inside of a classroom, see appendix one for classroom, outdoor education displays. Therefore, it is significant for children to learn outdoors for them to make sense of the world in which they live.

On reflection, it may seem that outdoor learning could develop children's understanding of healthy lifestyles which could impact children's wellbeing and resilience. This may be interesting to discover benefits of outdoor learning and to realize its effect on children's development of skills in different areas of learning in the Foundation Phase Welsh curriculum (Welsh Government, 2015).

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Outdoor Learning

According to Neill (2002), "Outdoor learning is an experiential education phenomenon which engages people in adventurous activities for enhancement of the wellbeing of individuals, communities, and the environment." It is a known common tradition that most primary schools make productive use of the outdoors as a learning environment. Outdoor learning become popular in the late nineteenth century as outdoor learning and teaching added rich value to educational settings, especially for young children. Known theories of learning, which date back to ancient Greek Period, understood the crucial role of nature and outdoor play in children's development for their future lives. Comenius in the sixteenth century (Pound, 2008) established 'Pansophism,' meaning, 'all-knowing,' explaining the importance of learning through play and senses.

Donaldson's (2015) new, recent proposal for the developing Welsh curriculum explains professionals should teach six Areas of Learning and Experience, from children aged three to sixteen. All six of the Areas of Learning and Experience can play an active role in outdoor learning to renew education and produce generations of healthy and happy children. The Areas of Learning and Experience suggest that skills should develop across all the areas through cross-curricular teaching. Cross-curricular teaching (Barnes, 2011) is many themes taught from one subject, these themes could use the outdoors as a classroom or a learning resource, to improve children's own performance and connect learning for children. Favourably, Hargreaves *et al* (1988) believed that outdoor learning should not be seen as another subject or area to teach but should be used as an approach to teach personal growth and development, which can be applied to every Area of Learning and Experience for an excellent education experience.

The importance of teaching Outdoor Learning

Higgins (2009) arguably raised the question of why professionals ask other professionals, 'why do you want to teach outdoors?' Higgins believed professionals should be asking the question of, 'why do you want to teach indoors?' Beames *at el* (2011) enlightens clear benefits of learning outdoors including knowledge preservation, enjoyment, physical development and improved behaviour management. According to National College for School Leadership

(2012), in the last ten years, numerous primary schools have established and actively embedded the outdoors as a consistent resource for teaching. Robinson (2016) highlights the importance of outdoor learning and play (Moyles, 2006) in education to allow children to grow into content, imaginative individuals through the, 'Dirt is Good' campaign (Unilever, 2019), see appendix two. This seems to relate with the Welsh Foundation Phase curriculum skills.

Outdoor learning includes fieldwork and outdoor visits, outdoor adventure education and school grounds or community projects (Ofsted, 2004). These three aspects support children to develop numerous skills including leadership. Outdoor education can provide children with opportunities that are different from opportunities provided to them inside a classroom, as the outdoors can empower children to achieve direct, active learning experiences that are inspiring and motivating. Outdoor learning spaces and environments can be high-quality learning experiences which prove to be rich learning resources for children, especially in Foundation Phase. This may be difficult to achieve within a classroom setting (Education Scotland, 2009) as children may struggle with learning if a classroom environment is too restrictive, which may lead to aggressive behaviour (Grigg, 2015). Abbey (2012) proposes that the outdoors will increase fascination, concentration and develop better connection with children's senses, which is vital for young children's development. The outdoors provides different types of learning such as experimental, that delivers children with deeper connections with nature, understanding of how to overcome adversity and increases resilience (Ardroy, 2019).

Outdoor Learning in Foundation Phase

Outdoor learning should be essential to teach in Foundation Phase (FP) as outdoor education and play allows children to develop high-order thinking, problem-solving and logical-reasoning skills, while engaging them to reflect on their own learning through being creative (Walsh and Gardner, 2005). Practitioners should motivate and encourage young children to achieve their full potential (DfES, 2005) through outdoor play (Bruce, 2012) and provision, which enables them to fully understand themselves and the world around them, helping them to realise their full potential. In FP, professionals should be creating environments where children undertake activities, for young children to explore the world through first-hand experiences. Palaiologou (2010) concludes that FP is where children learn through play to enjoy and achieve new skills. FP teachers should enable environments such as the outdoors, to extend children's learning and development through support, effective observations, planning and assessments.

DfE (2012) introduced the, 'Unique Child.' to allow FP children to relate to effective learning where they can learn all areas of learning through active play and exploring. Outdoor learning can be involved deeply within this process, see appendix three. Bruner (1960) believes a child is drawn to natural environments, through excitement with natural materials, this demonstrates a sense of wellbeing. Elemental play allows children to be environmental aware, therefore children will be content for longer when playing with natural resources (Woods, 2017). Piaget (1976) would explain that if children are not giving opportunities to explore their own thoughts through play, inquiries and confidence become under-developed.

Kirsty Williams (Welsh Government, 2017) states in the, "National Mission," that she wants all children to be healthy and confident learners, who are equipped with skills and knowledge that are needed for now and the future. Outdoor learning provides FP children with some of these vital life-skills, such as leadership and promoting wellbeing, which are needed for children's futures to be successful. Practitioners who are open-minded and permit children freedom to experience the outdoors habitually will create healthy and confident learners. This is highlighted in Donaldson's developing curriculum (2015) as one of the four main purposes is, "Healthy and Confident Individuals." Outdoor education can be taught as a part of this purpose, as outdoor learning is needed for children to have successful futures through the development of various significant skills and milestones.

According to the BBC (2019) young children who explore and spend more time outside develop better language skills, are healthier and have fewer behavioural problems. UNCRC (1990) stresses that children have the right to lead cultural and artistic lives for them to develop personal talents and to promote respect for cultural individualities. This involves outdoor education for children to explore different localities and cultures, while exploring their own identity. This links to the, "knowledge and understanding of the world" (Welsh Government, 2015) area of learning. Outdoor education can provide FP children with better creative and imagination skills while enjoying their time learning, which may be holistically interlinked. Consequently, outdoor education can develop curiosity (Thomson, 2010) and make sense for young children who may have additional learning needs or learning difficulties. The Welsh Government (2014) explain how valuable outdoor learning is within education, through connecting children to the natural world and securing enjoyment (Chapman, 1995). They also explained that outdoor learning has long-term benefits on children's wellbeing and health.

Outdoor Learning and Wellbeing.

Wellbeing is now a major aspect that is included in most primary schools as every child wellbeing is important. Wellbeing is included because if children are not happy in school, then they will not achieve their full potential (Welsh Government, 2017). The Telegraph (2019) have stated that four out of five teachers have seen a rise of pupil mental health issues over the last two years. The Telegraph article concludes that physical education, which can be taught outdoors, can close these mental health issues for children to grow up healthy and happy.

Allowing children freedom in education, whether that be outdoors, will raise attainment and wellbeing levels. Estyn (2011) reported that outdoor learning in Welsh schools was not promoted enough or not at all within FP settings. Estyn urged the importance of outdoor learning to raise standards, especially with children under the age of five. The purpose of Estyn's report (2011) was to provide evidence that outdoor learning increases engagement, health, fitness and wellbeing. If could be assumed that teachers need to be reassured that they will be supported to teach outdoor education. This could imply that teachers lack knowledge and experience for teaching children outdoors. This may result in lack of outdoor learning through pressure of safety issues also (Tickell, 2011). Safety outdoors is becoming more of a concern when planning outdoor activities (Gilbertson *et al*, 2006).

This could be speculated that increasing pressure and expectations on teachers, especially national testing children in Year Two, may spend less time outdoors significantly. On reflection, Louv (2009) explored the potential effects of children missing out on outdoor education, he proposed that children will result in nature deficit disorder, which can be damaging on children's development. Louv suggested that experience in nature may reduce symptoms such as ADHD and can improve children's resistance to depression. Although, Waite (2009) quotes that children in higher Key Stages spend less time outdoors due to other pressures in education.

The Guardian (2016) specified that three-quarters of UK children are spending less time outdoors than prison inmates due to the rise of technology and parent fears of the outdoors According to Joyce (2012), the school playground is sometimes the only place where children play outside, due to parental fears. Unilever (2019) also propose that due to technology, lack of time, space and poverty, children have less opportunities to play outside. This could link to the rise of obesity in young children in Wales as NHS (2014) stated that over a quarter of five-year olds in Wales have an unhealthy body mass index. The BBC (2019) expressed that there is a direct correlation between obesity and lack of time spent outside as children do not have

the freedom to go outside due to weather or parental links, rather than having healthy lifestyles in the outdoor environment. This contradicts Donaldson's four main purposes of healthy and confident individuals, as not allowing freedom for children to explore outdoors can lead to low wellbeing levels and lack of needed life skills.

Young children need to be educated how to be healthy and fit in the outdoors for them to carry on being healthy throughout their future lives (Welsh Government, 2016). Gray (2012) believes that children who exercise outdoors often tend to be better at multi-tasking and performing difficult mental tasks. Parents should be onboard with this concept to make sure children's home routine imitates healthy lifestyles such as regular exercise outside. The outdoor environment allows children to be healthy through adventurous play that will keep them active and fit, this will raise wellbeing levels. Collins and Foley (2008) believe the Early Years curriculum has a strong focus on children's wellbeing through physical aspects such as, health care, access to the outdoors and emotional aspects for instance, making friendships.

Physical development in Early Years curriculum can be fostered through outdoor play through balancing, building dens, crawling through tunnels (O'Hara, 2008). Children need to understand that they are secure and safe in outdoor environments in order to raise their confidence in outdoor environments. This will provide a basis for active living and can spark life-long outdoor interest (Doherty and Brennan, 2008). Exploring natural surroundings, such as woodlands or beaches, will develop children's enthusiasm and intelligence. If children have low wellbeing levels due to not visiting outdoors often, young children may be depressed which will influence them to stay indoors. This will lead to life-long negative effects, providing children with unhealthy futures. Therefore, outdoors should be included frequently to raise wellbeing levels (Robertson, 2014). School-based outdoor and adventurous activities can develop children's self-awareness and confidence as well as developing trust and communication (Pickup and Price, 2010).

Outdoor Learning and Resilience.

Children need to understand that challenges and mistakes are natural and should not be feared. Challenges outdoors allows independence to grow and build flexibility for children due to space, freedom and fresh air to develop their interests (Bilton, 2010). The outdoors allows children to express themselves and become resilient (McBer, 2000). Resilience is now an important skill to develop as Donaldson's (2015) desires children to be resilient for them to develop growth mindsets for their future lives. Forest schools (Pound, 2008) help raise

wellbeing levels, build resilience and self-esteem through effective provision. Forest schools are integral part of early childhood education in Denmark and now is growing in the UK by connecting nature to the curriculum. Forest schools enable children to enjoy the freedom of outdoors as well as developing parent's knowledge of outdoor education. Rickinson et al (2004) claims there is significant evidence that outdoor projects with community involvement can develop positive relationships with parents and the wider community.

Adventurous activities develop children's personalities through understanding their own strengths and weaknesses which reinforces resilience and peer-support for others. Physical challenging activities will help build resilience as it is relevant to life's perspective (Bailey *et al*, in press). Children who lack in confidence, become more confident and stop depending on adults which they would normally rely on in a classroom setting. This allows children to be more relaxed while learning, and children can express self-assurance (Laevers and Heylen, 2003). Forest school activities permit children to understand that outdoor learning is engaging and safe while developing resilience through understanding safe boundaries (Huizinga, 2000), while allowing children to work towards personalised targets from all the areas of learning in the curriculum such as: knowledge and understanding of the world, mathematics, physical development and language development. Forest schools control children with challenging behavioural issues or any additional needs by improving their concentration and developing speech about their social, cognitive and emotional needs (Grigg, 2015). On reflection, this is evidence that outdoor learning can control behaviour problems.

In summary of the literature review, there is profusion of research to imply that outdoor learning is fundamental for all children to explore and to develop important skills that can be embedded for future lives. The following chapter will be discussing the chosen methods used to collect primary research to assist the writer to answer the research proposal.

Chapter Three: Methodology

Within both aspects of this research project, it was crucial for contributors to understand and know that all data collected, would be kept confidential due to the data protection act (GOV.UK, 2018). In following the ethical procedures, the contributors were shown consideration throughout the entire project. The contributors were also told that the data collected for personal professional teaching development, would be no longer needed after the research project is finished, therefore the information collected will be destroyed by April 2019. The interviews and questionnaires remained confidential due to data protection. Contributors were only asked for the year group they were currently teaching, to ensure the best research was conducted from the correct key stages. Upon reflection, the questionnaire and interviews should have referred and followed the British Education Research Association (BERA) guidelines. BERA highlight in their guidelines the importance of allowing contributors to withdraw at any given time, due to their interviewee's rights. The contributors were told this before any research was collected from the interviews. BERA (2011) also establish educational researchers can develop knowledge and understanding in different educational areas from various, different perspectives.

Prior to the primary research collected through interviews and questionnaires, an application of ethical agreement was completed by the writer to request approval before researching further for this research project. After this approval was received, further consent was asked from the former electives school to provide the writer with permission to collect research from school A through signing a confidential form, see appendix four. Johnson and Christensen (2014) state that ethical guidelines should be followed to certify that contributors give informed consent before any research can be composed.

To accumulate the appropriate data for this research project, the writer used three methods for the research to be valuable and meaningful. Firstly, paper questionnaires (see appendix five) were distributed to a School A, where electives took place and then further questionnaires were given to other teachers who work in Foundation Phase settings from various primary schools, to allow a wider range of responses and more scope for understanding on outdoor learning. The contributors were given a week to complete the questionnaires, which they clarified was enough time. There were both open and closed questions on the questionnaire (Saris and Gallhofer, 2014) as this technique of questioning generated responses that were more concise

and allowed comparisons to be made from different school settings. There were mostly open questions used on the questionnaire, to collect evidence that was more detailed through prompting teachers to provide this research project with deeper and up-to-date insight of their views and opinions. The research project gained unexpected and important answers from using this method (Farrell, 2016). However, the writer is aware that open-ended questions do not provide higher responses and easy to collect data, like closed questions provide. Nevertheless, open ended questions allow the writer to collect richer, qualitative insights rather than statistical insights (King and Horrocks, 2010).

Secondly, organised interviews were arranged with an excellent forest school trained teacher assistant, a group of Year six children from school A to conduct research from children's point of view of outdoor learning (Kothari, 2004). Questionably, it was beneficial for this research project to interview children to understand children's insights about outdoor education. Also, interviewing the forest school trained teacher assistant was valuable to recognise what outdoor lessons consist of and what effects outdoor learning has on children. The teacher assistant and children were asked the interview questions in an informal setting amongst other peers, to encourage them to speak without feeling any pressure or intimidation. On the other hand, this made some children exaggerate on answers in front of their peers. Interviews were a good and valuable method to use as the writer may have needed the teacher assistant or the children to elaborate on some questions to extract more precise data. In contrast, using this method, the writer understood that the interview answers may have been misheard or misquoted, therefore a written transcript was provided to ensure that all contributors were content with their answers they gave, and they were correct before using the data in the research project.

Lastly, classroom and corridor displays (appendix one) were observed, as well as the outdoor learning resources such as the playground and other areas around School A, to provide my research project with evidence of outdoor learning taking place as well as supporting the information collected from the interviewees.

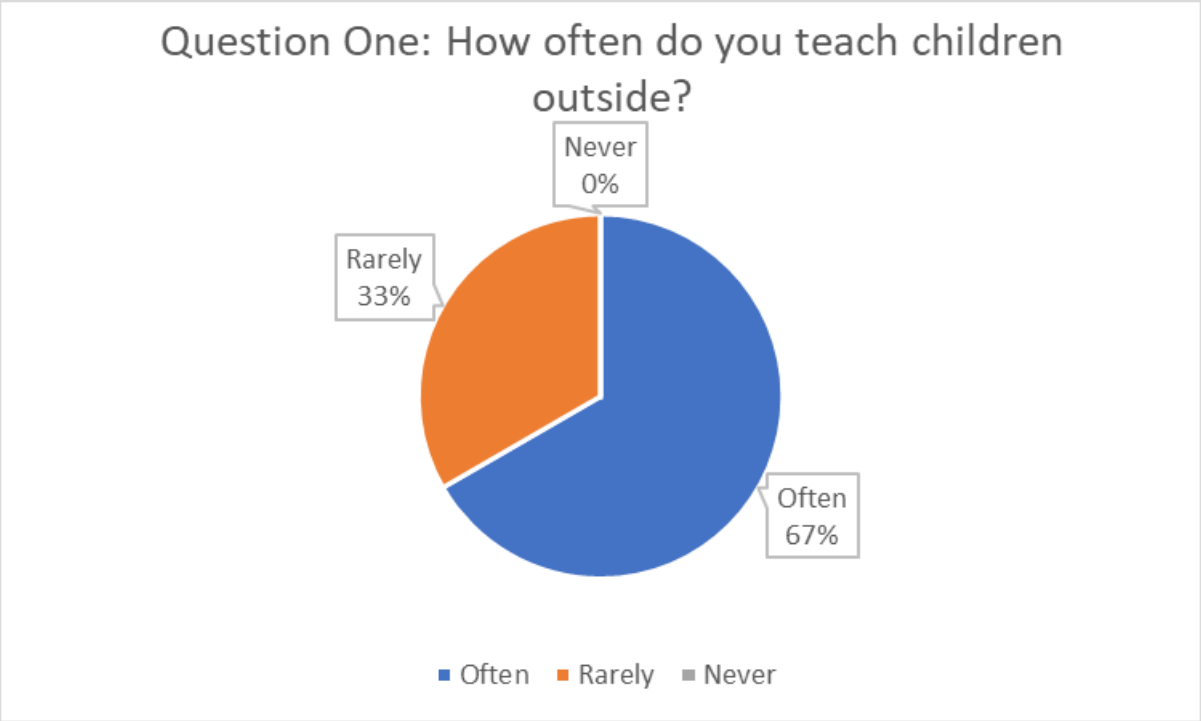
Chapter Four: Results and Discussion

Throughout this chapter, the writer will aim to analyse and evaluate the results of the findings from the primary data. In addition, the writer aimed to produce qualitative data to understand true reflections of what teachers understand and think about outdoor learning.

Note: 1 contributor equates to 16.6% (6 contributors in total), hence, 1÷6x100.

The questionnaire had twenty questions which comprised of nine key questions which will be used to draw upon conclusions and aims for this research project. A mindful effort was made to ensure the paper questionnaires were sent out directly to the teachers in School A. 50% of the responses were from Foundation Phase (FP) and 50% were from Key Stage Two (KS2) teachers. Although, one of the FP questionnaires was from School B. KS2 teachers were included in the questionnaires from School A, as most of the questions were opinion based therefore, helpful to comprehend the importance of outdoor learning overall from a range of opinions. All questionnaire responses can be found in appendix six.

Question One
How often do you teach children outside?



As discussed in chapter three, within the questionnaire there was only one closed question that allowed the writer to receive quantitative data which was question one. This question allowed the writer to see if teachers from FP and KS2 used the outdoors. As you can see from the graph above, 67% of teachers said often and 33% of teachers said rarely. After collecting this data, it was clear to see that Nursery, Reception, year three, four and six teachers explained they often go outside to teach children. The other two responses who give the answer of rarely, was from the special need teacher who taught children from year three to year six and a teacher from a year one and two class. This shows a diverse use of the outdoors from the two phases. This contradicts what Estyn (2011) articulates in chapter two, as most of the teachers from FP do teach outdoors often according to the questionnaire results. Therefore, this could show improvement made for outdoor learning in the FP. Similarly, this result would argue against Waite (2009) as he suggested that children in higher key stages spend less time outdoors due to other pressures. Although, every KS2 questionnaire results show that they often go outside so, this opposes Waite's statement.

Question Two
Do you see outdoor learning as a seasonal opportunity? If Yes, why? (Teachers/parents/students).

This question was a controversial question. Some responses were saying no as the weather does not affect opportunities to go outside due to FP classes having sheltered areas, therefore children could still go outside even when raining. Although, some of the responses explained that the weather does occasionally affect outdoor learning because the children and teaching staff do not like to go outside when the weather is not permitted. One of the KS2 teacher stated, "I would like to say no, but in reality, we shy away from going outside in cold/wet weather." The teacher from Year one/two class explained, "occasionally, we tend to go outside more when the weather is better." This would correlate with the BBC's (2019) statement of children staying indoors due to weather is correct, which will lead to a future of unhealthy children. These responses may show that children do not have regular opportunities to go outside as weather in Wales is normally wet. Consequently, these responses do not relate with answers from the previous question, which 67% of teachers responded, "often."

Question Three
What do you think outdoor learning is about?

Most of the teachers agreed that outdoor learning is an opportunity to develop greater number of physical skills and imagination for children, this would relate to the findings from Collins and Foley (2008), who state that children develop important life-skills from outdoor learning, found in chapter two. Other responses included; outdoor learning provides children with opportunities to learn in various environments, where they can gain better experiences to widen their understanding of different environmental settings. One of the responses describes, "outdoor learning is teaching children to be comfortable and used to being outside." This can relate to Donaldson's (2015) approach of allowing children to learn in different outdoor settings to become healthy and confident individuals. Not one response used the words, "experimental learning," which is how Neill (2002) explains what outdoor education is.

Question Seven
What provision areas do you have to support outdoor learning? (FP and KS2).

This question allowed the writer to research and analyse how outdoor provision is used to promote outdoor education and to see where outdoor learning stands within the curriculum, especially FP. The nursery and reception teachers explained in the questionnaires that they have access to outdoor provision area as such as an investigation area, sand and water tray, outdoor reading area, construction area, creative area and wheeled toys. These areas allow the children to learn through choice outside, also these areas link to the FP curriculum. This is also evidence that pupil-voice is taken into consideration through allowing children the freedom to choose what they want to do outside, through teacher led activities. This could show that children have high wellbeing levels due to freedom of learning outside also (Bilton, 2010).

Other responses included the community farm is often visited for children to experience the different outdoor environments. The playgrounds are also considered to be part of outdoor learning provision for KS2 children for example: the trim trail, vegetable patches, peace mala garden, firepit and the outdoor tents where all children can go outside to work, if the weather is permitted. According to one teacher, the tents are only built when the sun is out, due to the tents breaking easily in bad weather conditions. These responses show evidence that the School A and B (reception teacher) relate to the Welsh Government (2014) statement which explains how valuable outdoor learning is within education, through connecting children to the natural world. The schools also show that they secure enjoyment within the outdoor provision to make outdoor learning respected and appreciated.

Question Ten
Do you see an increase or decrease in pupil participation? How?

Question ten was included as one of the highlighted questions as it can relate to wellbeing and resilience, as well as reflecting if outdoor learning changes children's behaviour through outdoor learning. Most of the responses included that children are more enthusiastic to be in a changed environment, as well as seeing high participation and enjoyment when the children are outside. The special unit teacher explained, "many children arrive lacking confidence or frustrated by their speech and language needs and learning difficulties, we have to develop a wide-ranging curriculum to meet their needs incorporating everything that motivates them," including the outdoor environment. This response highly relates to what the BBC (2019) state about quality time spend outside will develop better language skills, healthier children and reduce behavioural problems.

Question Eleven
Do children act differently towards outdoor learning? For example: behaviour management, confidence, etc.

This question relates closely to question ten. Although, some responses differ from the previous question, as some teachers explain that many children have freedom that children generally crave, and it allows their enthusiasm and confidence to grow. Another response explained that children use the outdoors to play and display affection to being outdoors through showing calm and more focused emotions, as outdoors provide sensory engagement. This connects with Abbey (2012) findings who explains that connecting children with their senses is essential for their development. The year six teacher elucidated that the outdoors can have a positive and negative effect, however this point was not elaborated on.

Question Twelve
Do you think outdoor learning impacts children's wellbeing? How?

All responses explained the word, "yes." This was expanded on by most teachers explaining that outdoor learning enables children to be active, healthy and improves their physical capabilities which promotes children's wellbeing. This relates closely to what the Telegraph (2019) reported that physical education improves wellbeing for children. Another response clarified that outdoor learning supports children to relax and build on teamwork skills which is

used less in a classroom. One of the responses replied with, “nature is an essential part of everyone’s wellbeing. As part of out work on ‘mindfulness’ we encourage children to see, hear and feel the things around them.” Another response was that wellbeing is greatly impacted through children being outdoors due to children being provided with diverse learning environments which has positive effects. This shows that teachers from the schools can all see the benefits outdoor learning has on wellbeing. These responses relate to Beames (*et al*, 2011) as stated the outdoors has benefits upon physical development and behaviour.

Question Seventeen
Do you see a pattern through gender engagement in outdoor learning?

This question was also a controversial question, as most of the teachers responded that boys seem to enjoy outdoor learning more. However, responses did mention that both genders like to participate outdoors due to enjoyment of the outdoor provision, although boys in general prefer being outside. Despite this, during the children interviews which will be discussed later on in this chapter, the boys claimed they preferred the classroom structure whereas the girls said they preferred to be outside due to more space to think clearly and creatively (Walsh and Gardner, 2005).

Question Nineteen
Do you think outdoor learning benefits resilience and self-esteem?

This question has similar findings to question twelve, as wellbeing links closely to resilience. The responses were similar, although some responses did add that outdoor learning encompasses a wide range of learning experiences which is beneficial, due to an increase in confidence and children eager to try things. One teacher responded that, “group tasks and assigning children roles can contribute positively,” to outdoor learning. These responses all show outdoor learning impacts upon children’s resilience, similar findings to forest schools.

Interviews

Within School A, interviews from a forest-school certified teacher assistant and a group of year six pupils were conducted to gain insight about outdoor learning. To begin, the writer will discuss findings from the teacher assistant (TA). It was decided that the writer was going to interview the TA as she was forest school trained for four years, therefore this was valuable

research for this project. One of the questions was, does she have any issues teaching outdoors, she explained that each phase has their own set of waterproof equipment and clothing, so every child has opportunities to experience the outdoors in diverse weather conditions. She explained that outdoor provision is not affected by funding as the headteacher is supportive about outdoor learning.

The second question was how often she teaches outside. She explained she takes children outside every week through carousel lessons. She stated that children find themselves in the outdoors through enjoyment in developing new life-skills. This connects to what Donaldson (2015) wants to achieve in the new curriculum. The question was asked how she recorded progress made and she responded that pictures are taken for evidence, revisiting different outdoor topics to review children's findings and she tracks in a journal to monitor any progress.

Another question asked was, if pupil-voice is heard outdoors, in which she answered that pupil-voice is included deeply in outdoor learning as the children are developing their own outdoor area involving the headteacher, they are building the area for better outdoor learning experiences that suits their needs. Through other questions, she added that children with special educational needs develop better confidence and behave differently when outside also due to freedom and choice of learning, which relates closely to Beames (*et al*, 2011) statement of better behaviour. She touched upon how wellbeing and resilience is impacted on from being outdoors as girls who normally care about their appearance, stop caring due to enjoyment and exploring the outdoors. More of the TA's interview can be found in appendix seven.

Student interviews

Finally, the group of year six children was beneficial for the research proposal, even though the research is about FP children, as the writer could gain knowledge about older children's viewpoints of the outdoors to increase better research. The children were asked fourteen questions (appendix eight), although the writer will only discuss three. The children explained that they were in the progress of constructing their wildlife area to improve school grounds and their learning environment. They added that they wanted more seating areas for them to take work outside.

The first question was do they enjoy outdoor learning, all the children replied that they all enjoyed outdoor learning as the fresh air outdoors enabled them to think more clearly and creatively, Robinson (2016) would agree with this statement. Few of the children highlighted that they go to gardening club every Monday as they appreciate being outdoors. Chapman

(1995) would provide evidence that children enjoy the outdoors through connecting to nature. One child explained, they did more outdoor learning in FP due to visiting the community farm regularly, yet according to the children they have not visited that farm since. This was a crucial response as it enabled the writer to assume that the children had more outdoor experiences in FP which contradicts with answers from question two, as Waite (2009) did explain children have less opportunities outdoors in higher key stages. On reflection, the children may still experience other outdoor experiences, other than the farm.

The second question was would they like more lessons outdoors, all the girls in the group got excited and explained that they would prefer more creative lessons outdoors. Although, one boy explained he did not want any outdoor lessons as he did not like being outdoors due to his fear of bugs. This contradicts question seventeen as responses explained boys prefer being outside, nevertheless this boy detested the outdoors. Perhaps this was due to less time spending outdoors which the Guardian (2016) stated could happen. They were also asked if they preferred learning outside or inside the classroom. The boys responded that they prefer to be inside due to the structure of the classrooms and tables, whereas outside they write on clipboards which is distracting to them. On the other hand, girls explained they preferred being outside as it assisted them to reflect on their progress more clearly due to better engagement outdoors. Bilton (2010) would agree that the outdoors space provides freedom to think.

Limitations of the research

There were some limitations in this research, one being that perhaps the questionnaires should have included more closed questions, as well as making the questionnaires electronic instead of paper. Therefore, this could have provided participators to email them once completed, instead of collecting them. Also, as the questionnaire was mostly open questions, perhaps typing would have been quicker for the contributors, meaning there might have been more responses.

Conclusion

The writer aims to finalise all the evidence and information collected to form a conclusion. The aim of this project was to identify if outdoor learning impact upon wellbeing and resilience in Foundation Phase (FP), highlighting good practice of outdoor learning and education and how it provides skills to benefit children aged three to seven.

After reviewing the evidence provided from the questionnaires and interviews, it is evident that outdoor learning can be used as a successful learning environment or resource to connect children to the world around them. Reflecting upon the initial aims of this project, in chapter two and four, references have been identified and reviewed from a wide range of literature, to imply that outdoor learning does impact upon children's wellbeing and resilience and understanding the importance of connecting children to the outdoor environment (Pound, 2008). The many aspects of outdoor learning such as outdoor visits, outdoor adventure education and school grounds or community projects (Ofsted, 2004), can provide an active learning experience for children, to encourage independence, resilience, better behaviour and healthier lifestyles. This has been addressed through the FP curriculum to ensure pupils make progress and develop these vital skills. The importance of these skills has been highlighted within chapter two to ensure children have successful futures (Donaldson, 2015).

The research project has gathered that practitioners do have challenges when teaching and trying to implement outdoor learning, such as fears, safety aspects and weather. However, many of these barriers can sometimes be overcome due to sheltered areas, waterproof equipment and good outdoor provision to allow children to make sense of the world in which they live.

To conclude this research project, following this research project the writer has expanded her knowledge and understanding of how valuable outdoor learning is, especially for children in the FP setting. This can make the writer a better practitioner within the classroom and outside of the classroom, especially in FP classes. Outdoor education is a vital aspect that children should experience in educational settings as it has a positive effect and benefits which provide children with engaging, enjoyable and exiting lessons that develop multi-skills through playing outdoors (NFER, 2004), shown in appendix nine. Bringing children closer to nature will make

them more aware and in awe with their outdoor surroundings to develop happy, resilient and independent citizens.

Bibliography

Abbey, B. (2012) Promoting Awe and Wonder in Children, Early Edition, Childcare by Design: Childcare Queensland News. Available at: https://www.childcarebydesign.com.au/uploads/brenda_abbey_awe_and_wonder_article.pdf [accessed on 21.03.2019].

Ardroy (2019) *What is Outdoor Education?* Ardroy OEC, School Outdoor Education: Scotland. Available at: http://www.ardroy-oec.co.uk/schools-outdooreducation.asp [accessed on: 16.02.2019].

Bailey, R., Armour, K., Kirk, D., Jess, M., Pickup, I., and Sandford, R. (in press) *The Educational Benefits Claimed for Physical Education and School Sport: An Academic Review*, Research Papers in Education.

Barnes, J. (2011) Cross-Curricular Learning 3-14, London: Paul Chapman.

BBC (2019) *Why Should Children Play Outside?* Cbeebies: BBC. Available at: https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/grownups/why-should-children-play-outside [accessed on: 19.02.2019]

Beames, S., Higgins, P. and Nicol, R. (2011) *Learning Outside the Classroom: Theory and Guidelines for Practice*, London: Routledge.

BERA (2011) *Promoting Educational Research*, British Educational Research Association, London. Available at: https://www.bera.ac.uk/promoting-educational-research [accessed on 29.03.2019].

Bilton, H. (2010) *Outdoor Learning in the Early Years, Management and Innovation* (3rd ed), Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.

Bruce, T. (2012) *Early Childhood Practice: Froebel Today*, London: SAGE.

Bruner, J. (1960) *The Process of Education*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Chapman, S. McPhee, P., and Proudman, B. (1995) *What is Experimental Education?* Sited in Warren, K., Sakofs, M., and Hunt, J (eds.), *The Theory of Experimental Education*, Dubuque: Kendall- Hunt Publishing Company.

Collins, J. and Foley, P. (2008) *Promoting Children's Wellbeing: Policy and Practice,* Bristol: Policy Press.

DfE (2012) *Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage*, London: DfE.

DfES (2005) *The Common Core of Skills and Knowledge*, Department for Education and Skills, Nottingham: DfES Publication.

Doherty, J. and Brennan, P. (2008) *Physical Education and Development 3-11*, London: Routledge.

Donaldson, G. (2015) *Successful Futures, Independent Review of Curriculum and Assessment Arrangements in Wales*. Available on: http://gov.wales/docs/dcells/publications/150225-successful-futures-en.pdf [accessed on: 13.04.2019].

Education Scotland (2009) *Outdoor Learning: Practical Guidance, Ideas and Support for Teachers and Practitioners in Scotland*, Glasgow: Education Scotland.

Estyn (2011) *Outdoor Learning, An Evaluation of Learning in the Outdoors for Children Under Five in the Foundation Phase*, Cardiff: Estyn. Available at: https://www.estyn.gov.wales/sites/default/files/documents/Outdoor%20learning%3A%20%20an%20evaluation%20of%20learning%20in%20the%20outdoors%20for%20children%20under%20five%20in%20the%20Foundation%20Phase%20-%20September%202011.pdf [accessed on 20.02.2019].

Farrell, S. (2016) *Open-Ended vs. Closed-Ended Questions in User Research*, World Leaders in Research-Based User Experience: Nielsen Norman Groups. Available on: https://www.nngroup.com/articles/open-ended-questions/ [accessed on: 11.03.2019].

Gilbertson, K., Bates, T., McLaughlin, T., and Ewert, A. (2006) *Outdoor Education, Method and Strategies*, United States of America: Human Kinetics.

GOV.UK (2018) *Data Protection Act (2018)*, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/data-protection-act-2018 [accessed on: 28.03.2019].

Gray, R. (2012) 'Regular exercise can improve memory and learning,' *The Telegraph*, 19 February. Sited in Grigg, R. (2015) Becoming an Outstanding Primary School Teacher.

Grigg, R. (2015) *Becoming an Outstanding Primary School Teacher*, Abingdon: Routledge.

Hargreaves, A., Baglin, E., Henderson, P., Leeson, P., and Tossell, T. (1988) *Personal and Social Education: Choices and Challenges*, Oxford: Blackwell.

Higgins, P. (2009) *Why Indoors? The Role of Learning in Sustainability, Health and Citizenship*, Moray House School of Education: University of Edinburgh. Available at: http://www.docs.hss.ed.ac.uk/education/outdoored/higgins_why_indoors.pdf [accessed on: 26.02.2019].

Huizinga, J. (2000) *Homo Ludens: A Study of Play-Element in Culture*, London: Routledge.

Johnson, R. B. and Christensen, L. (2014) *Educational Research: Quantitative, Qualitative and Mixed Approaches*, London: SAGE Publications.

Joyce, R. (2012) *Outdoor Learning, Past and Present*, McGraw-Hill Education, England: Open University Press.

King, N., and Horrocks, C. (2010) *Interviews in Qualitive Research*, London: SAGE Publications.

Kothari, R. C. (2004) *Research Methodology, Methods and Techniques* (2nd ed), New Delhi: New Age International (P) Limited Publishers.

Laevers, F., and Heylen, L. (2003) *Involvement of Children and Teacher Style, Insights from International Study of Experimental Education,* Leuven University Press.

Louv, R. (2009) *Last Child in the Woods: Saving our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder*, London: Atlantic Books.

McBer, H. (2000) *Research into Teacher Effectiveness: A Model of Teacher Effectiveness,* London: DfEE.

Moyles, J. (2006) *The Excellence of Play*, Buckingham: Open University Press.

National College for School Leadership (2012) *Research Associate Report, Leadership for Embedding Outdoor Learning within the Primary Curriculum*, National College for School Leadership. Available at: http://www.lotc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/Leadership-for-embedding-outdoor-learning-within-the-primary-curriculum.pdf [accessed on: 03.03.2019].

Neill, J. (2002) *What is Outdoor Education? Definition (Definitions),* Outdoor Education R&E Center. Available at: http://www.wilderdom.com/definitions/definitions.html [accessed on: 16.02.2019].

NFER (2004) *Engaging and Learning with the Outdoors: The Final Report of the Outdoor Classroom in a Rural Context Action Research Project*, England & Wales: National Foundation for Educational Research. Available on: https://www.nfer.ac.uk/engaging-and-learning-with-the-outdoors-the-final-report-of-the-outdoor-classroom-in-a-rural-context-action-research-project/ [accessed on: 23.04.2019].

NHS (2014) '*Child obesity rates higher in Wales than in England,'* NHS Wales. Available at: http://www.wales.nhs.uk/sitesplus/888/news/33512 [accessed on 15.02.2019].

Ofsted (2004) *Outdoor Education, Aspects of Good Practice,* Better Education and Care: Ofsted. Available at: http://www.docs.hss.ed.ac.uk/education/outdoored/ofsted_oe_report_2004.pdf [accessed on: 20.02.2019].

O'Hara, M. (2008) *Teaching 3-8*, London: Continuum.

Palaiologou, I. (2010) *The Early Years Foundation Stage. Theory and Practice*, London: SAGE Publications.

Piaget, J. (1976) *The Child and Reality*, New York: Penguin Books.

Pickup, I., and Price, L. (2010) *Teaching Physical Education in the Primary School*, London: Continuum.

Pound, L. (2008) *How Children Learn*, A Division of MA Education Ltd, Practical Pre-School Books: London.

Rickinson, M., *et al* (2004) *A Review of Research on Outdoor Learning*, Shrewsbury, Field Studies Council. Available at: http://www.peecworks.org/PEEC/PEEC_Research/S01795BFC-017AD05F [accessed on: 26.02.2019].

Robertson, J. (2014) *Dirty Teaching, A Beginners Guide to Learning Outdoors*, Carmarthen, Wales: Independent Thinking Press.

Robinson, K. (2016) Sir Ken Robinson Speaks on Outdoor Play, Rethinking Childhood. Available at: https://rethinkingchildhood.com/2016/04/05/sir-ken-robinson-outdoor-play-dirt-is-good/ [accessed on: 25.02.2019].

Saris, E. W., and Gallhofer, N. I. (2014) *Design, Evaluation, and Analysis of Questionnaires for Survey Research* (2nd ed), Research and Expertise Centre for Survey Methodology, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Tickell, Dame C (2011) *The Early Years: Foundations for Life, Health and Learning:* An Independent Report on the Early Years Foundation Stage to Her Majesty's Government, Norwich, The Stationery Office: DfE. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/180919/DFE-00177-2011.pdf [accessed on: 27.02.2019].

The Guardian (2016) *'Three-quarters of UK children spend less time outdoors than prison inmates – survey,'* Guardian News & Media Limited. Available at: https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2016/mar/25/three-quarters-of-uk-children-spend-less-time-outdoors-than-prison-inmates-survey [accessed on 15.03.2019].

The Telegraph (2019) *Schools urged to use PE to tackle mental health 'crisis',* Telegraph Article, Telegraph Media Group Limited. Available at: https://www.telegraph.co.uk/sport/2019/04/17/schools-urged-use-pe-tackle-mental-health-crisis/ [accessed on: 05.03.2019].

Thomson, W. (2010) *The Early Years Foundation Stage, Theory and Practice*, London: SAGE Publications.

UNCRC (1990) The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, UNICEF: London. Available at: https://downloads.unicef.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2010/05/UNCRC_united_nations_convention_on_the_rights_of_the_child.pdf?_ga=2.129345420.1848894209.1556296923-1567094274.1522009229 [accessed on: 30.03.2019].

Unilever (2019) *Dirt is Good, Our Mission,* Unilever. Available at: https://www.dirtisgood.com/home.html [accessed on: 25.02.2019].

Waite, S. (2009) Outdoor learning for children aged 2-11: perceived barriers, potential solutions. University of Plymouth: UK. Available at www.latrobe.edu.au/education/downloads/2009_conference_waite.pdf [accessed on 27.02.2019].

Walsh, G. and Gardner, J. (2005) 'Assessing the quality of early years learning environments', *Early Childhood Research and Practice.* Available at: http://www.ecrp.uiuc.edu/v7n1/Walsh.html [accessed on 24.02.2019].

Welsh Government (2014) *Further Steps Outdoors, Guidance,* Early Years Team, Cardiff: Welsh Government. Available at: https://learning.gov.wales/docs/learningwales/publications/141013-further-steps-outdoors-en.pdf [accessed on 13.02.2019].

Welsh Government (2015) *Curriculum for Wales, Foundation Phase Framework (Revised 2015),* Early Years Team, Cardiff: Welsh Government. Available at: https://learning.gov.wales/docs/learningwales/publications/150803-fp-framework-en.pdf [accessed on: 13.02.2019].

Welsh Government (2016) *Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015*, Cardiff: Welsh Government. Available at: https://gweddill.gov.wales/topics/people-and-communities/people/future-generations-act/?lang=en [accessed on 23.02.2019].

Welsh Government (2017) *Education in Wales: Our National Mission*, Cardiff: Welsh Government. Available at: https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-03/education-in-wales-our-national-mission.pdf [accessed on: 19.02.2019].

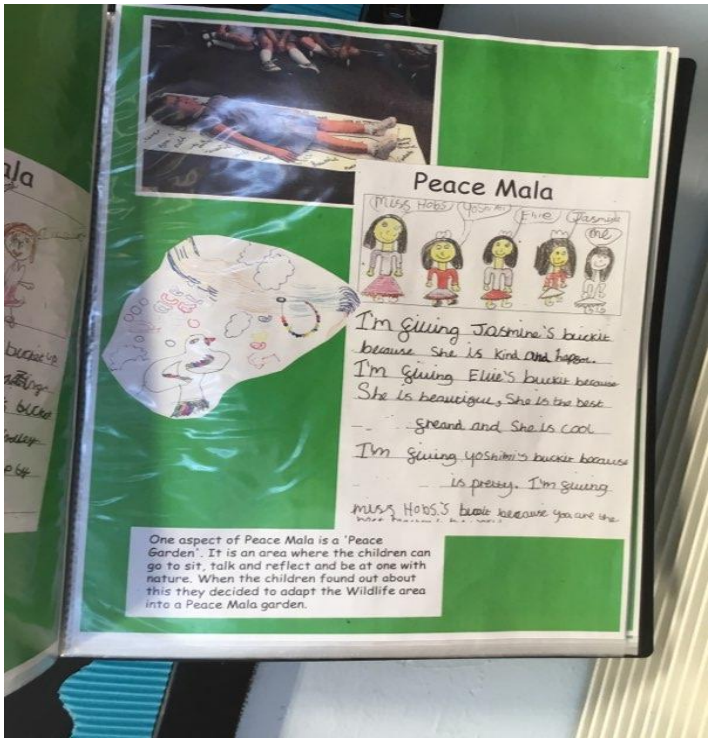
Woods, A. (2017) *Elemental Play and Outdoor Learning, Young Children's Playful Connections with People, Places and Things,* Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.

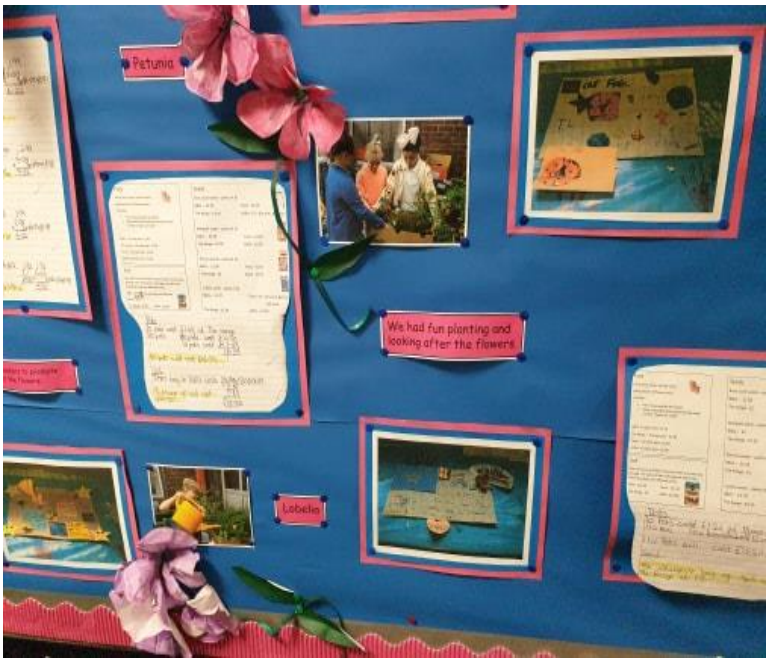
Appendices

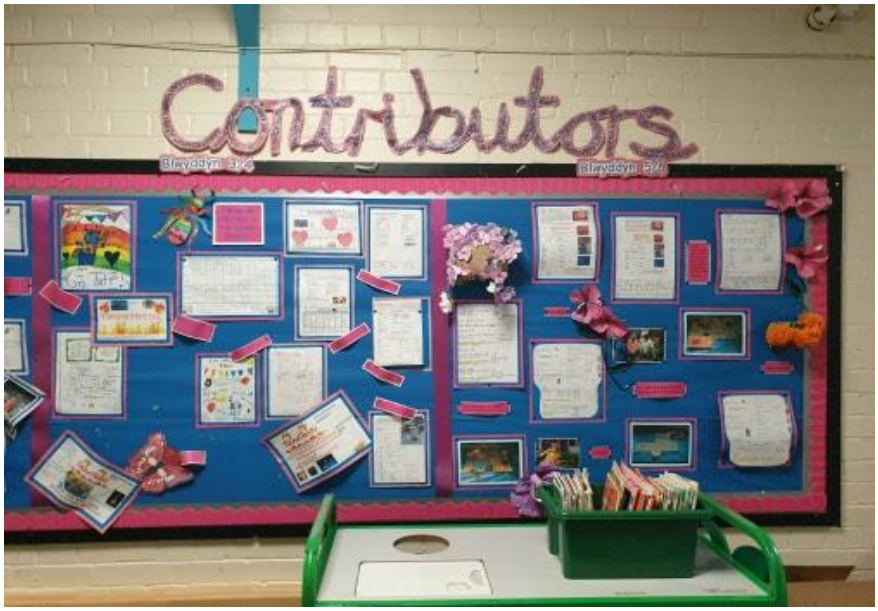
<u>Appendix One</u> - indoor provision from School A which features outdoor education.

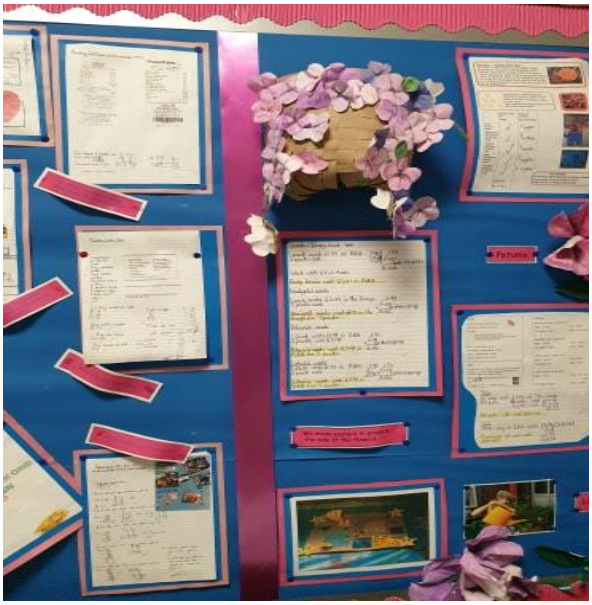
Wildlife
area!

Peace
Mala
Wildlife
area!

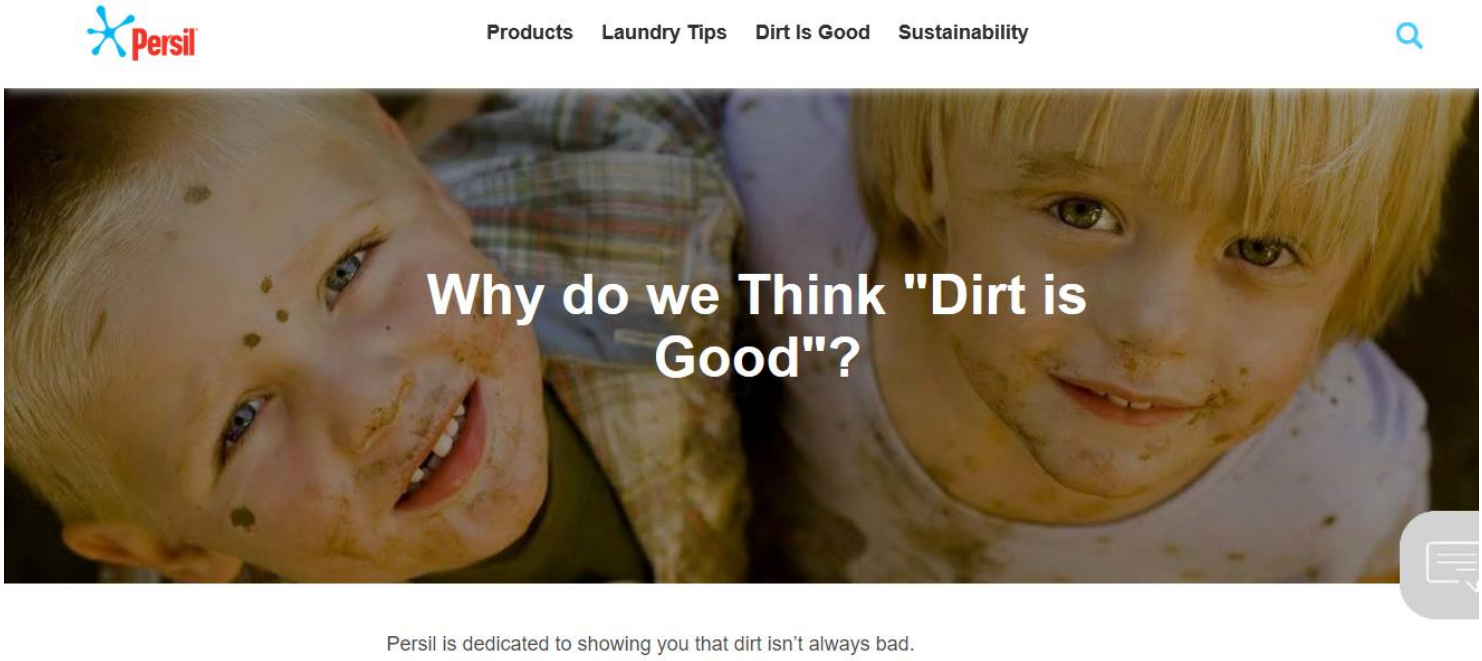

Peace Mala
I'm giving Jasmine's buckle because she is kind and happy.
I'm giving Ellie's buckle because she is beautiful, she is the best friend and she is cool.
I'm giving Yoshiki's buckle because is pretty. I'm giving
One aspect of Peace Mala is a 'Peace Garden'. It is an area where the children can go to sit, talk and reflect and be at one with nature. When the children found out about this they decided to adapt the Wildlife area into a Peace Mala garden.


Petunia
We had fun planting and looking after the flowers
Lobelia


Contributors
Blwyddyn 3/4
Blwyddyn 5/6

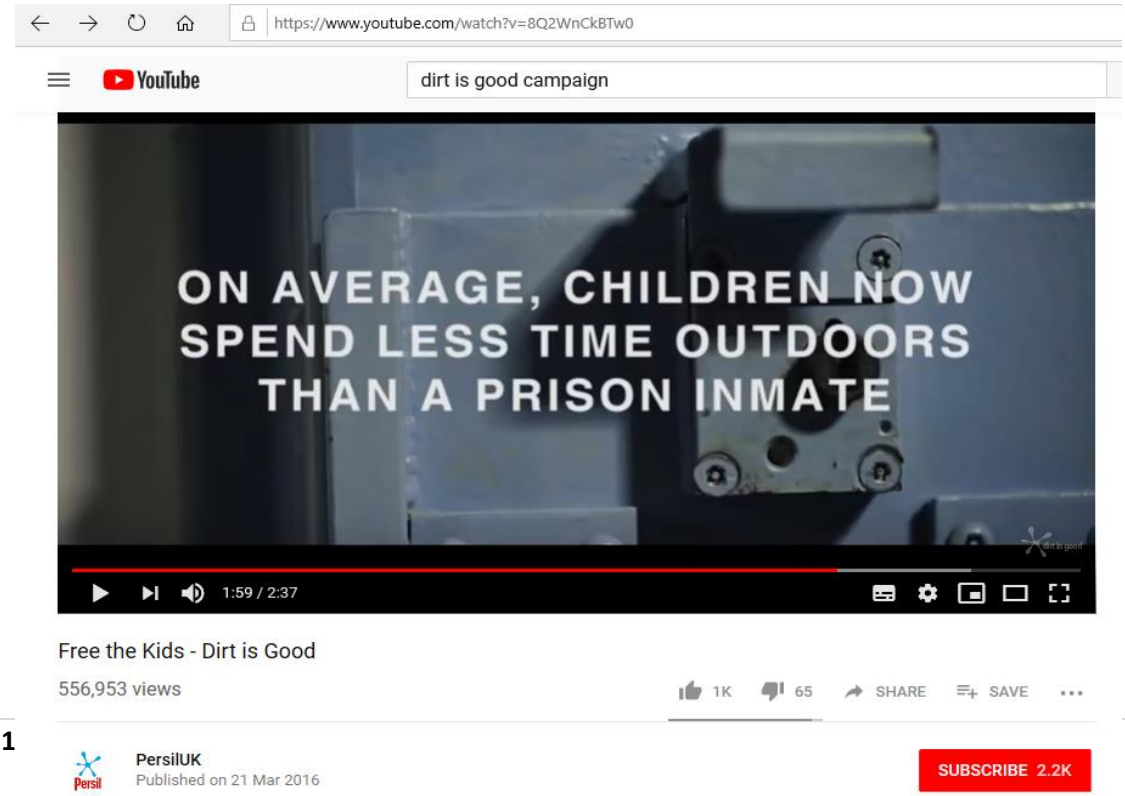


Appendix Two – the, "Dirt is Good," campaign is a movement to start children going outside to enjoy the world around them. This is a good campaign for parents to understand it is okay for children to get dirty and muddy, as they are children developing important milestones and developing their understanding of the world and environments around them.



Here is a video to understand a part of Persil's campaign which connects to the Guardian (2016) article about children spending less time outdoors than prisoners.

Youtube link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8Q2WnCkBTw0



Appendix Three – The "Unique Child" is where a young child can play which will prepare them to develop friendships and explain what they are thinking, which will lead them to be resilient and confident individuals.

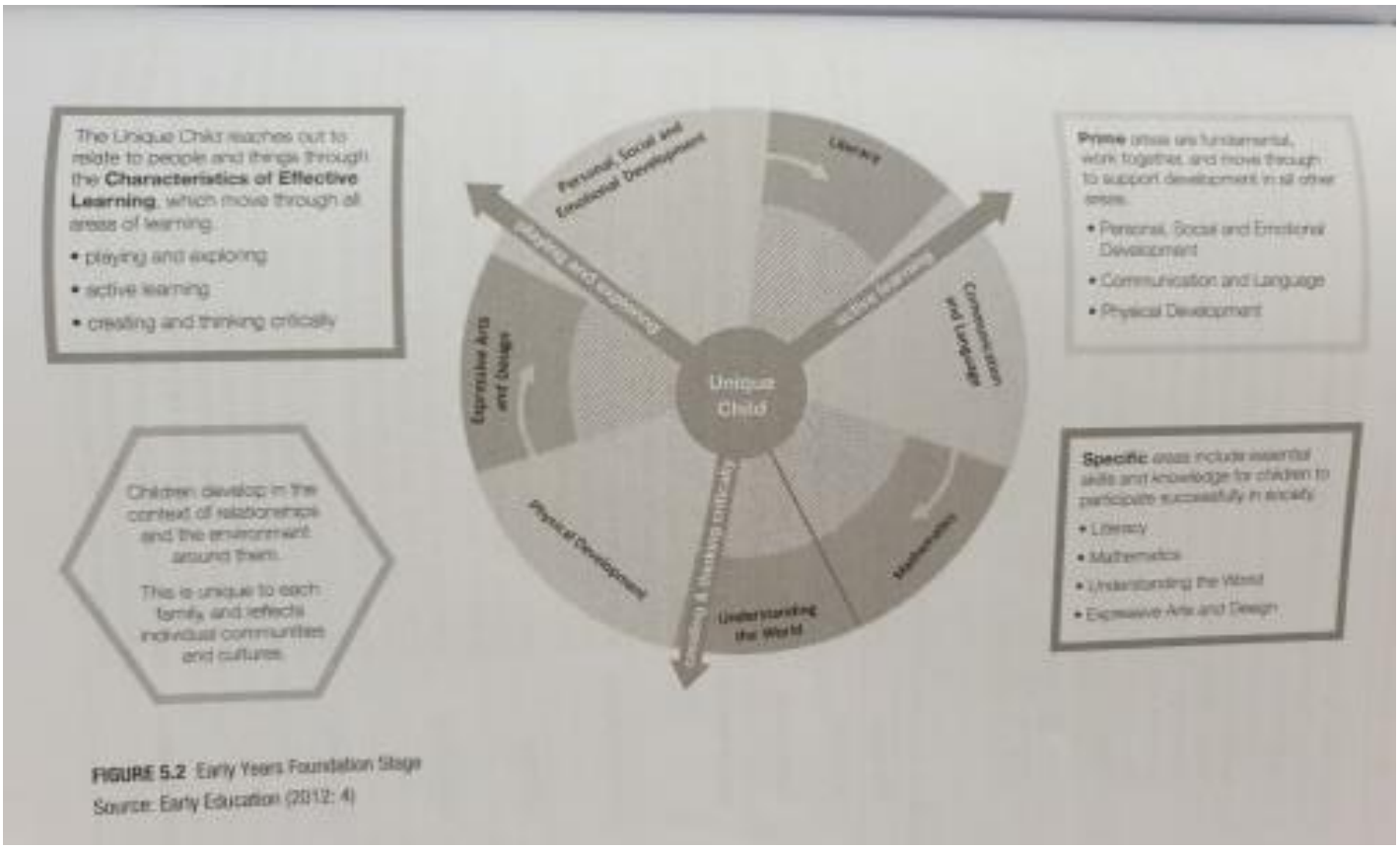


FIGURE 5.2 Early Years Foundation Stage
Source: Early Education (2012: 4)

Outdoor learning can be apart of this process by allowing children to play outside and exploring all the areas of learning. This process will develop the child's relationships with the environment around them.

Other reference for this picture:

Early Education (2012) *Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage*, London: Early Education.

Appendix Four – consent form to take evidence from School A, following the Ethics Form and BERA guidelines.

Prifysgol Cymru
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
University of Wales
Trinity Saint David

Consent form

Trainees must gain the following written consent of the head teacher before taking photographs, filming or audio recording learners.

I agree to Lauren Collins as a representative of Yr Athrofa to:

Take photographs	Interview	
Take video	Quote school policy documents	
Tape-record	Questionnaires	(Tick accordingly)

Name of Head teacher Mr. J. Richards Signed

Name of school CADLE P.S.

To be completed by the trainee:

If I am granted such permission, I agree to abide by the ethics embodied within the EWC Code of Conduct and will not distribute any such material to audiences beyond the University authorities without their permission.

Name of trainee: LAUREN COLLINS

Signed:

Telephone number: 07903 895098

Email address: lauz96@hotmail.co.uk

Programme (e.g. BA Ed/PGCE Primary/PGCE Secondary):

Date: 11.02.19

12

Appendix Five – blank paper questionnaire to show what the questionnaire looked like and what the questions were.

Questions

Year Group:

1. How often do you teach children outside?

   Often Rarely Never

2. Do you see outdoor learning as a seasonal opportunity? If yes, why? (Teachers/parents/students)

3. What do you think outdoor learning is about?

4. How do you record evidence of progress in outdoor learning? For example, Estyn requires in writing etc.

5. Is pupil voice included in outdoor learning lessons/ activities?

6. How do you and the children reflect on progress developed in outdoor learning?

7. What provision areas do you have to support outdoor learning? (FP and KS2)

8. What resources / equipment do you have use outside? For example: does the school provide children with waterproof items/clothing.

9. Is outdoor learning restricted due to funding?

10. Do you see an increase or decrease in pupil participation? How?

11. Do children react differently towards outdoor learning? For example: behaviour management, confidence etc.

12. Do you think outdoor learning impacts on children's well-being? How?

13. What subjects are difficult to teach outdoors?

14. Do you see more creativity/creative thinking within children outdoors?

15. Do you think outdoor learning is promoted more in the new, developing curriculum?

16. How can you prove well-being is promoted through outdoor learning?

17. Do you see a pattern through gender engagement in outdoor learning?

18. Is outdoor learning used more in Foundation Phase or Key Stage Two?

19. Do you think outdoor learning benefits resilience and self-esteem?

20. Do you think there is an approach to suit all children's learning needs within the outdoor environment?

Thank-you for your time and participation. The questions will be collected on 14.02.2019.

Appendix Six – this is evidence for all the responses the writer received back from the questionnaires. These were the responses from School A and one Reception Teacher from School B. Six in total.

Questions

Year group: Nursery

1. How often do you teach children outside?

Often Rarely Never

2. Do you see outdoor learning as a seasonal opportunity? If yes, why? (Teachers/ parents/students)

No, not at all.

3. What do you think outdoor learning is about?

Outdoor learning is about giving children the opportunity to develop their imagination, physical skills and better understanding of their environment.

4. How do you record evidence of progress in outdoor learning? For example: Estyn requiring in writing etc.

Observing children doing a specific activity and record on the Ipad and repeat termly.

5. Is pupil voice included in outdoor learning lessons/ activities?

Not so much outside, but by observing the children at play and engaging with them, often leads to informed decision on enhancement in the outdoor area.

6. How do you and the children reflect on progress developed in outdoor learning?

During carpet/circle time.

7. What provision areas do you have to support outdoor learning? (FP and KS2).

We are currently improving provision the outside areas. We currently have an investigation area, sand/water, reading area, construction, creative area and wheeled toys.

8. What resources/ equipment do you use outside? For example: does the school provide children with waterproof items/clothing.

Children bring their own waterproof items that are left in school. We have a covered area outside, enabling children to access most outside equipment in extreme weather conditions.

9. Is outdoor learning restricted due to funding?

No.

10. Do you see an increase or decrease in pupil participation? How?

All our children enjoy the outside area and participation is always high.

11. Do children react differently towards outdoor learning? For example: behaviour management, confidence, etc.

For many children the outdoor learning gives them the freedom they generally crave and some children are more confident in the outside environment.

12. Do you think outdoor learning impacts children's well-being? How?

Yes. Outdoor learning enables children to be active, healthy and improve their physical capabilities eg. climbing, running, exploring etc. All promoting a sense of well-being.

13. What subjects are difficult to teach outdoors?

It is possible to take the classroom outside and teach all subjects.

14. Do you see more creativity/creative thinking within children outdoors?

Depends on the guidance given, along with questioning and freedom to experiment. Sometimes children are afraid to be creative and need encouragement to have a go.

15. Do you think outdoor learning is promoted more in the new, developing curriculum?

I think there is now greater emphasis on outdoor learning as the benefits are enormous.

16. How can you prove well-being is promoted through outdoor learning?

From observations.

17. Do you see a pattern through gender engagement in outdoor learning?

Many boys are eager to access wheeled boys but generally boys and girls enjoy all aspects of outdoor provision.

18. Is outdoor learning used more in foundation phase or key stage two?

In my opinion, foundation phase uses outdoor learning more than KS2.

19. Do you think outdoor learning benefits resilience and self-esteem?

Outdoor learning encompasses a wide range of learning experiences and with adult support, I believe that the outdoor experience is very beneficial.

20. Do you think there is an approach to suit all children's learning needs within the outdoor environment?

I believe that by encouraging children to have a go, time to develop skills and supporting children's feelings will suit all children's needs.

Thank you for your time and participation. The questions will be collected on 14.02.2019.

Questions

Year Group: Reception

1. How often do you teach children outside?

(Often) Rarely Never

2. Do you see outdoor learning as a seasonal opportunity? If yes, why? (Teachers/parents/students)

No, as my class has waterproof clothing kept in school, so often go outside in our garden to Play.

3. What do you think outdoor learning is about?

Playing while exploring senses in different environments.

4. How do you record evidence of progress in outdoor learning? For example: Estyn requires in writing etc

Is not recorded, Pictures can be evidence.

5. Is pupil voice included in outdoor learning lessons/ activities?

More teacher-led activities, but freedom of choice to play in the outdoors in which ever area they choose.

6. How do you and the children reflect on progress developed in outdoor learning?

Through oral/communication - circle time/ on carpet area.

7. What provision areas do you have to support outdoor learning? (FP and KS2)

Own garden area, wheeled toys, mud Kitchen, sand / water pit.

8. What resources / equipment do you have use outside? For example: does the school provide children with waterproof items/clothing.

Children bring wellies + coats in school to go outside.

9. Is outdoor learning restricted due to funding?

Yes, can be.

10. Do you see an increase or decrease in pupil participation? How?

Increase as children enjoy their time playing outside.

11. Do children react differently towards outdoor learning? For example: behaviour management, confidence etc.

Yes, they are relaxed when gardening with our TA. We like to look after our garden area.

12. Do you think outdoor learning impacts on children's well-being? How?

Definitely, children are happier when outside, this raises their well-being. When outside, children have fresh air to explore. (better thinking)

13. What subjects are difficult to teach outdoors?

None.

14. Do you see more creativity/creative thinking within children outdoors?

Yes, as children are more spontenuous to discover what is around them.

15. Do you think outdoor learning is promoted more in the new, developing curriculum?

Yes, it is needed! Especially more in KS2.

16. How can you prove well-being is promoted through outdoor learning?

As children always want to go outside when asked. Teaching staff can see that the children like being outdoors.

17. Do you see a pattern through gender engagement in outdoor learning?

All children enjoy the outdoors.

18. Is outdoor learning used more in Foundation Phase or Key Stage Two?

More FP.

19. Do you think outdoor learning benefits resilience and self-esteem?

Definitely, children have confidence through exploring + developing new skills through first hand experiences.

20. Do you think there is an approach to suit all children's learning needs within the outdoor environment?

Yes all children can be catered for outside.

Thank you for your time and participation. The [illegible]

Questions

Year group: Y1/2

1. How often do you teach children outside?

Often (Rarely) Never

2. Do you see outdoor learning as a seasonal opportunity? If yes, why? (Teachers/ parents/students)

Occasionally - we tend to go out more when the weather is better

3. What do you think outdoor learning is about?

Opportunity to develop a greater number of skills outside - team work / fine + gross motor skills / cooperation

4. How do you record evidence of progress in outdoor learning? For example: Estyn requiring in writing etc.

If outdoor learning consists of PE or PE skills are assessed on Building Blocks.

5. Is pupil voice included in outdoor learning lessons/ activities?

Yes, children are always involved

6. How do you and the children reflect on progress developed in outdoor learning?

Lots of talking after lesson has taken place.

7. What provision areas do you have to support outdoor learning? (FP and KS2).

My own outdoor area outside classroom - Main playground
Trim trail on KS2 yard
Community farm

8. What resources/ equipment do you use outside? For example: does the school provide children with waterproof items/clothing.

Waterproof clothing provided depending on activity
Children can bring wellies to school.
- Construction / dressing up.

9. Is outdoor learning restricted due to funding?

NO

10. Do you see an increase or decrease in pupil participation? How?

Increase - more children enjoy the activities

11. Do children react differently towards outdoor learning? For example: behaviour management, confidence, etc.

Sometimes children see it as an opportunity to play - depending on group size.
All children love opportunity to go outdoors to learn

12. Do you think outdoor learning impacts children's well-being? How?

Working together, less contained environment so children learn more relaxed

13. What subjects are difficult to teach outdoors?

All subjects can be adapted for outdoor learning - if maths is a focus - this tends to be indoors

14. Do you see more creativity/creative thinking within children outdoors?

Yes, are PE outdoors although we can incorporate maths / English outdoors too

15. Do you think outdoor learning is promoted more in the new, developing curriculum?

Yes very much so, lots of opportunities to develop these in the 4 purposes.

16. How can you prove well-being is promoted through outdoor learning?

This is through teachers interacting with the children - and specific skills focus when planning lessons.

17. Do you see a pattern through gender engagement in outdoor learning?

All children tend to join in.

18. Is outdoor learning used more in foundation phase or key stage two?

It is used in both phases although seems to be used more regularly in FP

19. Do you think outdoor learning benefits resilience and self-esteem?

Children seem more confident and willing to try things more.

20. Do you think there is an approach to suit all children's learning needs within the outdoor environment?

Yes, all children need to be catered for, whatever their ability + need.

Thank-you for your time and participation. The questions will be collected on 14.02.2019.

Questions

Year group: 3/4

1. How often do you teach children outside?

Often Rarely Never

eather
rmitted/
eltered
areas.

2. Do you see outdoor learning as a seasonal opportunity? If yes, why? (Teachers/ parents/students)

we have sheltered areas where they are used during spring/summer as the wind can break the tents

3. What do you think outdoor learning is about?

Providing children with the opportunities to learn in various environments to widen their experiences.

4. How do you record evidence of progress in outdoor learning? For example: Estyn requiring in writing etc.

we use EPIC planning where the children track and record their own progress in books. Video and photo evidence is used to celebrate their learning experiences

5. Is pupil voice included in outdoor learning lessons/ activities?

This is derived from our EPIC planning 'Everyone plans in class' where the children plan their own activities from their current topic.

6. How do you and the children reflect on progress developed in outdoor learning?

Discuss and evaluate their learning experiences and what skills they have gained in respect to the learning objective.

7. What provision areas do you have to support outdoor learning? (FP and KS2)

> Rose Play
> Tents (weather permitted)
> Trim trail
> vegetable patch
> peace mala.
> Farm next door to school.

8. What resources/ equipment do you use outside? For example: does the school provide children with waterproof items/clothing.

funding applies here.

9. Is outdoor learning restricted due to funding?

No, there has been opportunities where I have planned classes outside just sitting on the yard

10. Do you see an increase or decrease in pupil participation? How?

more enthusiasm due to change of environment.

11. Do children react differently towards outdoor learning? For example: behaviour management, confidence, etc.

more enthusiastic about their learning.

12. Do you think outdoor learning impacts children's well-being? How?

Greatly' children are provided with diverse learning environments which can create positive effects if planned and delivered appropriately.

13. What subjects are difficult to teach outdoors?

only subjects which require indoor resources. I have taught across the curriculum outdoors and incorporate it into my planning when appropriate

14. Do you see more creativity/creative thinking within children outdoors?

Natural resources can be a fantastic tool for learning.

15. Do you think outdoor learning is promoted more in the new, developing curriculum?

Yes. There is an opportunity to teach outdoor learning across the curriculum and areas of learning.

16. How can you prove well-being is promoted through outdoor learning?

17. Do you see a pattern through gender engagement in outdoor learning?

N/A

18. Is outdoor learning used more in foundation phase or key stage two?

Balanced- if planned appropriately
-opportunities for all

19. Do you think outdoor learning benefits resilience and self-esteem?

Group tasks and assigning roles to children outdoors can contribute to this positively.

20. Do you think there is an approach to suit all children's learning needs within the outdoor environment?

each individual child is different and will all respond to diverse learning environment differently. So knowing your children well in your class, you will be able to suit their needs appropriately when using the outdoor

Thank-you for your time and participation. The questions will be collected on 14.02.2019.

The STF teacher added that the children were working at Foundation Phase level. Therefore, suitable for this research project.

Questions

Year group: STF - Y 3,4,5,6

1. How often do you teach children outside?

Often Rarely Never

2. Do you see outdoor learning as a seasonal opportunity? If yes, why? (Teachers/ parents/students)

I would like to say no, but in reality we shy away from going outside in cold/wet weather.

3. What do you think outdoor learning is about?

For our children it is a very real opportunity to understand how the natural world changes. It gives them space to develop their co-ordination/ gross motor skills and soothes their brains, making them more receptive learning

4. How do you record evidence of progress in outdoor learning? For example: Estyn requiring in writing etc.

We are aware that in its truest form, outdoor learning does not really need to be recorded but as a minimum we would put photographic evidence in books

5. Is pupil voice included in outdoor learning lessons/ activities?

We try to listen to children, using each child's interests to hook them into learning is an essential part of motivating them to engage in learning.

6. How do you and the children reflect on progress developed in outdoor learning?

This is an area we need to develop - usually done orally

7. What provision areas do you have to support outdoor learning? (FP and KS2).

area outside Lower juniors currently under development. Also have raised beds, trim trail (juniors) and extensive development outside FP including mud kitchen.

Outdoor learning co-ordinator - Miss John

8. What resources/ equipment do you use outside? For example: does the school provide children with waterproof items/clothing.

Waterproof coats and leggings. Previously had storage for wellington boots

9. Is outdoor learning restricted due to funding?

I think the pressure from ERW for data / book scrutiny has crowded it out of the curriculum.

10. Do you see an increase or decrease in pupil participation? How?

I'm not sure what this question means. All pupils from the STF are referred to us by the SOW panel, many arrive lacking confidence or frustrated by their speech + language needs/ learning difficulties, we have to develop a wide ranging curriculum to meet their needs, incorporating everything that motivates them.

11. Do children react differently towards outdoor learning? For example: behaviour management, confidence, etc.

Yes - they are often calmer and more focused - there are more opportunities for sensory engagement

12. Do you think outdoor learning impacts children's well-being? How?

Nature is an essential part of everyone's well-being. As part of our work on 'Mindfulness' we encourage children to see, hear and feel the things around them.

13. What subjects are difficult to teach outdoors?

None

14. Do you see more creativity/creative thinking within children outdoors?

Yes definitely! It encourages more spontaniety from adults and children - more smiles and laughter.

15. Do you think outdoor learning is promoted more in the new, developing curriculum?

Yes it is something we used well when the foundation phase was first introduced. I am optimistic it will be embedded firmly in the new curriculum.

16. How can you prove well-being is promoted through outdoor learning?

We are about to adopt 'Thrive' as a tool. Measuring well-being is difficult. In our class a successful day for a child can be measured by lack of violent outburst / willingness to engage in learning.

17. Do you see a pattern through gender engagement in outdoor learning?

I would imagine boys enjoy it more, but in our class, sensory needs impacts more than gender - children who dislike different textures are often reluctant to engage. This may be due to extreme response to sensory stimulation.

18. Is outdoor learning used more in foundation phase or key stage two?

Foundation Phase

19. Do you think outdoor learning benefits resilience and self-esteem?

Definitely!

20. Do you think there is an approach to suit all children's learning needs within the outdoor environment?

Yes - individualised programmes can make this an even more effective vehicle for ALN pupils.

Thank you for your time and participation. The questions will be collected on 14.02.2019.

Questions

Year group: Yr 6.

1. How often do you teach children outside?

Often Rarely Never

2. Do you see outdoor learning as a seasonal opportunity? If yes, why? (Teachers/ parents/students)

No, all weather!

3. What do you think outdoor learning is about?

Teaching children to be comfortable and used to being outside

4. How do you record evidence of progress in outdoor learning? For example: Estyn requiring in writing etc.

Work in books

5. Is pupil voice included in outdoor learning lessons/ activities?

Yes. in EPIC planning sessions every term

6. How do you and the children reflect on progress developed in outdoor learning?

Plenaries

7. What provision areas do you have to support outdoor learning? (FP and KS2).

field.. fire pit.. trim trail for P.E

8. What resources/ equipment do you use outside? For example: does the school provide children with waterproof items/clothing.

Yes for waterproofs Anything you use inside can be used outside.

9. Is outdoor learning restricted due to funding?

No.

10. Do you see an increase or decrease in pupil participation? How?

Some children have a positive reaction to learning outdoors; others don't

11. Do children react differently towards outdoor learning? For example: behaviour management, confidence, etc.

Yes it can have a positive + negative effect

12. Do you think outdoor learning impacts children's well-being? How?

Yes, fresh air and excercise benefits

13. What subjects are difficult to teach outdoors?

None..

14. Do you see more creativity/creative thinking within children outdoors?

Yes. children are free to ~~expo~~ explore more

15. Do you think outdoor learning is promoted more in the new, developing curriculum?

Yes! lots. It is actively promoted

16. How can you prove well-being is promoted through outdoor learning?

Through pupils reactions

17. Do you see a pattern through gender engagement in outdoor learning?

Boys seem to enjoy more

18. Is outdoor learning used more in foundation phase or key stage two?

Foundation

19. Do you think outdoor learning benefits resilience and self-esteem?

Yes.

20. Do you think there is an approach to suit all children's learning needs within the outdoor environment?

Appendix Seven – the full interview with the TA and the questions asked.

Questions for Teacher Assistant (Forest School Trained)

Interview took place outside where the TA was building a fire in the school yard for children to cook their Welsh-cakes on, ready for St. David's Day.

1. How long have you been Forest School Trained?

I have been forest school trained for the last four years, I enjoy every second of teaching the children how to be safe and enjoy the outdoors. I was trained in Margam for two weeks, it was intense but interesting and fun. I am the only trained forest school member in this school.

2. Do you have any issues teaching outdoors?

Not at all, as I teach in any weather. This is capable as the children from Foundation Phase to Key Stage Two have their own set of waterproof clothing. Foundation Phase children have a red set and Key Stage Two children have a blue set. It includes a waterproof overall that is one size so will fit all children and wellies. Therefore, every child can explore the outdoors, even when it is raining due to the equipment the school provides.

3. Does funding effect outdoor learning?

No, not at all. The headteacher of the school is brilliant and is very caring, therefore, he is happy for all the children to be given the waterproof sets for them to have opportunities to discover the outdoors. He is a very supportive Headteacher, we are very lucky as a school to have him.

4. How often do you teach outdoors?

I teach the children once a week outside, every child can come outside to learn as the lessons are taught in a carousel style, therefore, this enables children to have a fair chance to be taught outside with me. I usually teach them how to build dens in our playgrounds which is a lot of fun for the children. They don't usually have the chance to do this at home, so it is a great chance for the children to do it with me. They learn many new skills doing these types of activities, teamwork is one skill that is mainly taught to the children which is needed for their futures.

5. How do you record the children's progress?

I usually track the children's progress through photos taken on the school's iPad and I also have my own journal to note down anything I think is good progress from individual children. I often teach some activities twice as the children enjoy them but also, it allows them to revisit the progress they made from the previous lesson. For example, if it was building a den, they may have improved one of their techniques that made their den stronger than the last time. Revisiting lessons does show the children's improvements.

6. Do you think pupil-voice is included outdoors?

The children's voices are listened to, the year six children are currently planning and developing the outdoor area by their classroom with help from the headteacher and the governors. The children have given great advice to them by asking for more picnic benches to be added for the children to have space to write and learn on those benches outdoors. This will enable the children to have better learning experiences outdoors and provides the teachers to have more teaching time outdoors also, if children have more areas to suit outside. You can see the children have more confidence outdoors as they are more knowledgeable about the different learning environments that they can achieve from.

7. Do you see a difference in behaviour management when teaching outdoors?

Yes, I do. The children are more enthusiastic to learn outside which promotes them to be better behaved. Also, when providing them with activities like today (cooking on the fire), the children need to be on their best behaviour in order for them to be safe in activities. The children know the rules when learning outside, which promotes good behaviour management. Children with SEN also behave more positively outside due to them having more freedom to explore different outdoor environments. The choice of work allows them to happy, relaxed and be more self-assured in the outdoors. This builds the children's resilience outside which is needed for their futures.

8. Does outdoor learning have an impact on children's wellbeing?

Definitely, girls more importantly as often they care about their appearance more, especially children from upper KS2. They start caring about what they look like, but outdoors they relax and are excited to learn outdoors therefore, they stop caring about their appearance and they do not worry if they get mud on their face or if they hair gets messy. They are still children at the end of the day, they need to be outside to explore the opportunities nature provides for them. You see the girls' self-esteem rise when outdoors. Boys seem to be more engaged as they love being outside digging and climbing, which girls do too. This shows how outdoors impacts children's wellbeing by them enjoying themselves while learning. as they are having fun, they don't realise they are actually learning and developing new skills.

9. Do you see more creativity with the children outdoors?

Yes, the children are out of their comfort zone when outdoors, therefore their creative thinking is better due to the fresh air the outdoors provides and they are not afraid to try new things.

Appendix Eight – the full interview with the year six children and the questions asked.

Questions to ask children about outdoor learning.

1. Do you enjoy outdoor learning and why?
2. How often do you go outside?
3. What lessons would you like outside?
4. Would you like more lessons outdoors?
5. Do you feel more motivated outside?
6. How do you feel after a lesson outdoors?
7. Do you think your voice is heard within outdoor plans/lessons?
8. Why did you want to change that area?
9. Can you remember your ideas as well as the pond?
10. Who did you ask for that area?
11. Is there anyone outside of school helping to build that area?
12. What lessons would you like to have in that area?
13. How often do you use your gardening patches/pods?
14. Do you prefer going outside to learn than being in the classroom? Why?

Responses to questions from Children in year 6

1. *Yes- They feel they remember the lesson more and enjoy it more due to better engagement. Fresh air helps them to think more creatively. Every Monday after schools there is Gardening club which they enjoy. Used to like visiting the Farm next to the school in foundation phase visit but as they are now in key stage 2, they do not visit the farm at all. they liked visiting the farm to learn about the animals.*

2. *Not very often, more in the summer. P.E. is outside which is the most common subject to be taught outside. Gardening is an outside activity, but they do it as groups.*

3. *They would like to learn more about wildlife, bugs and the environment.*

4. *Yes. 1 boy said no due to fear of the outdoor life (bugs and plants).*

5. *More active and ready to learn outside, 1 boy said he doesn't due to it being too cold in the winter and too hot in the summer.*

6. *More energised, happy, ready to learn, breaks up the day.*

7, 8 and 9. *All voices are heard. All year 6 had their voice heard to build the new outdoor area outside. Why was this built? The children replied that the school was not environmentally friendly, not safe and overgrown. Wanted trampolines in the group and more active, seating such as more benches. they explained the outdoor area currently is muddy and unattractive, therefore needs to be changed. More patio to sit on if grass is wet. Shaded area for different weather types, outside library. Would like more provision: Barrels, table and chairs, picnic benches.*

10 and 11. *Headmaster. Building companies and B&Q to help build it.*

12. *Art- painting scenery. English- Story writing. Maths- Area and perimeter to see it more realistic.*

13. *Group of children every week. Flowers and fruit. Planning to plant vegetables.*

14. *The boys explained that they would rather be inside as it is easier to concentrate, they explained tables and chairs are comfier than clipboards used outside. They also explained that they cannot take computers outside. Girls find learning outside more appealing, different, boosts their creativity and they can reflect more through better ideas.*

The answers have been simplified and this was explained to the children. They were happy with the answers they had provided.

Appendix Nine – outdoor provision from School A, for children to play with and enjoy through the freedom of choice.

Other Appendix:

For the Ethics Form (appendix Ten) and Elective Report (appendix Eleven) can be found in the other link on submission through Turnitin.