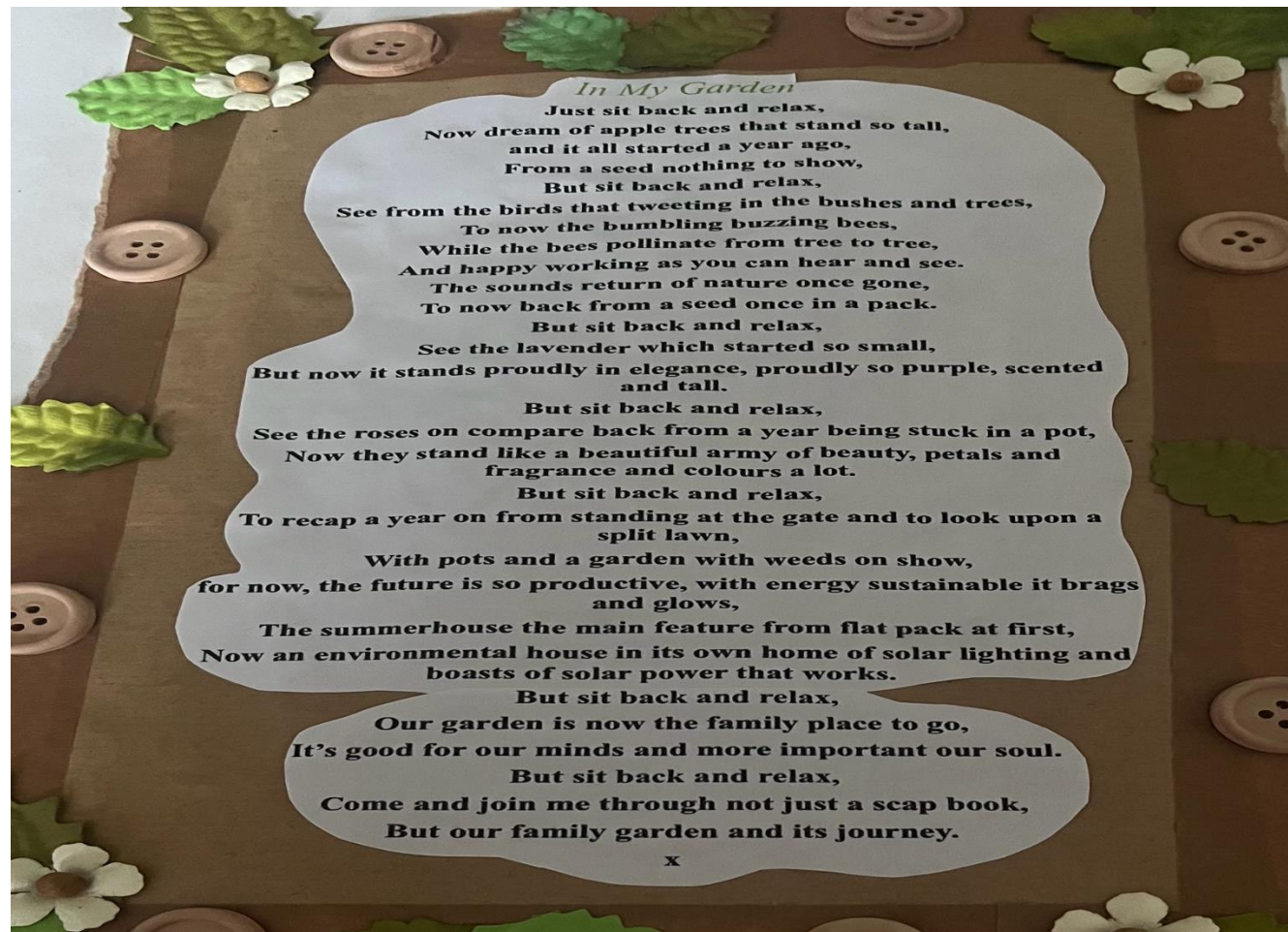


ECEY6005,
Regaining
Paradise?
Sustainability in
Early Years
Part1

By Samantha
Morris
(2115614)



POEM OF OUR FAMILY GARDEN BY S. MORRIS



DISCOVER



My chosen idea towards part of the John Muir Award will be 'My Family Garden.'



This journey of choice became apparent when I was recovering after a brain tumor , and while recovering I wanted a place of tranquility and nurture but having an ambition to create a natural summer house where my family and I could chill together through all seasons within our garden.

The start of summerhouse
2025.

As a family we wanted to be part of the garden
and experience nature through natural
landscape but also adding to attract nature to
flourish through our journey together.



ALL the turf was pre used and dug up and
rolled in piles and free to good home and
this was re-used for another garden
locally. Weve as a family were resourceful
and used local garden centers clippings
and even a hand cement mixer to build
foundations to help with the carbon
footprint. Once constructed we wanted to
not dig holes and preserve more via solar
power installed into the summerhouse and
so we did.

Solar power journey

This started with a power pack and then simply connected to a solar panel being constructed within natural garden and nature surroundings so to limit disturbing any natural habitats within the area of our family garden.



John Muir Award Inspiration

- Fantastic summerhouse looked amazing however having in mindset of the inspiring work of John Muir and what his award set out to promote I sat within the summerhouse and looked out into few weeds, one or two potted fruit trees and a lonely rose tree. Granted beautiful within its own presence but what more could I do and how could this be also incorporated within my dream and inspiration.

- Our garden we felt needed to be productive through nature and so this began with an idea.



Through John Muir Award I wanted to incorporate more pollinators with plants and to add more fruit trees so the garden would be more productive naturally by attracting wildlife such as bees, and even birds. We purchased via local small private garden centers such as Dunvant Garden center, and Pontardulais garden center as these were closer to our home location.

Fruit trees all potted and so our journey of the unknown and nature's guidance hopefully we would see something.

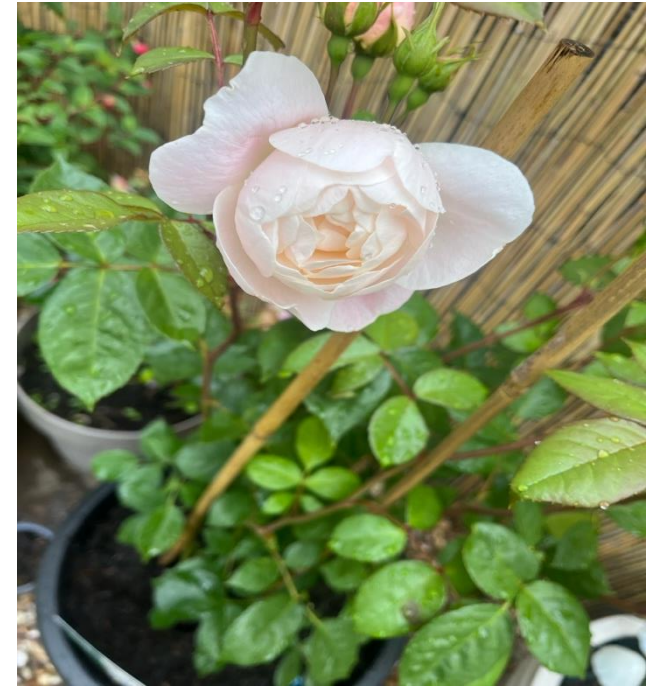
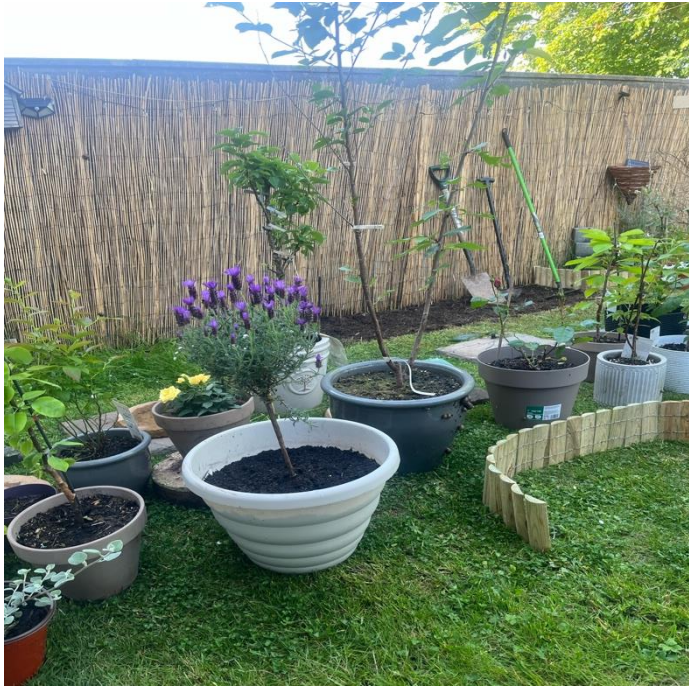
We created our mini apple orchard and fruit garden which consists of four apple trees, three orange, one lemon and one lime.

And all we had to do was sit back and relax.



Natural Beauty, Elegance and fragrance

- Nature's elegance is captured via the addition to our fuchsia bush with the rose family to add splendor, grace and most of all fragrance, with vibrance of colour and our appreciation to our lovely exploring pollinators the Bee family's.



John Muir,
'Everybody needs beauty as well as bread,
places to play in and pray in, where nature
may heal and grow strength to body and
soul.



This above reading from John
Muir made me feel complete
after embracing this module with
love and inspiration and still
healing through my brain tumour
challenges I can chill in nature
and all year round heal within our
family garden

HERB GARDEN AND WATER FEATURE

Within this part of the garden where you will find fragrances' such as lavender, curry plant, rosemary, thyme, mint, lemon balm, sage and an added water feature to create all sensory aspects of natural touch.



Berry garden

In our garden we have a berry garden which has raspberries, blueberries, blackberries and cherry tree. Hopefully being sustainability with reducing the trips to the supermarket and using the natural fruit from the garden.



Fruit and Apple orchid garden

Within our family garden we wanted to grow apple trees, and even fruit trees such as oranges, limes and lemons.

The fragrance these trees produce is beautiful and delicious to eat.

Hopefully the trees will produce jams and preserves to save another trip to the supermarket. This helps with the carbon footprint.



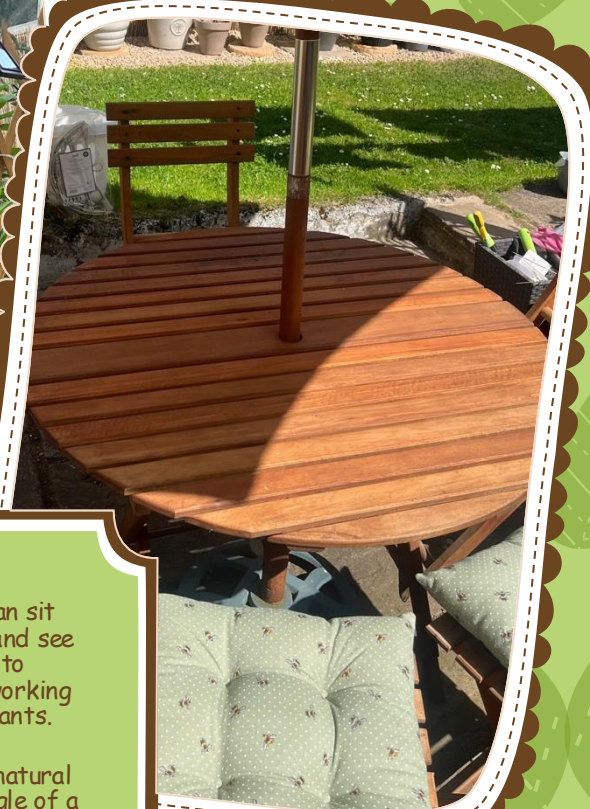
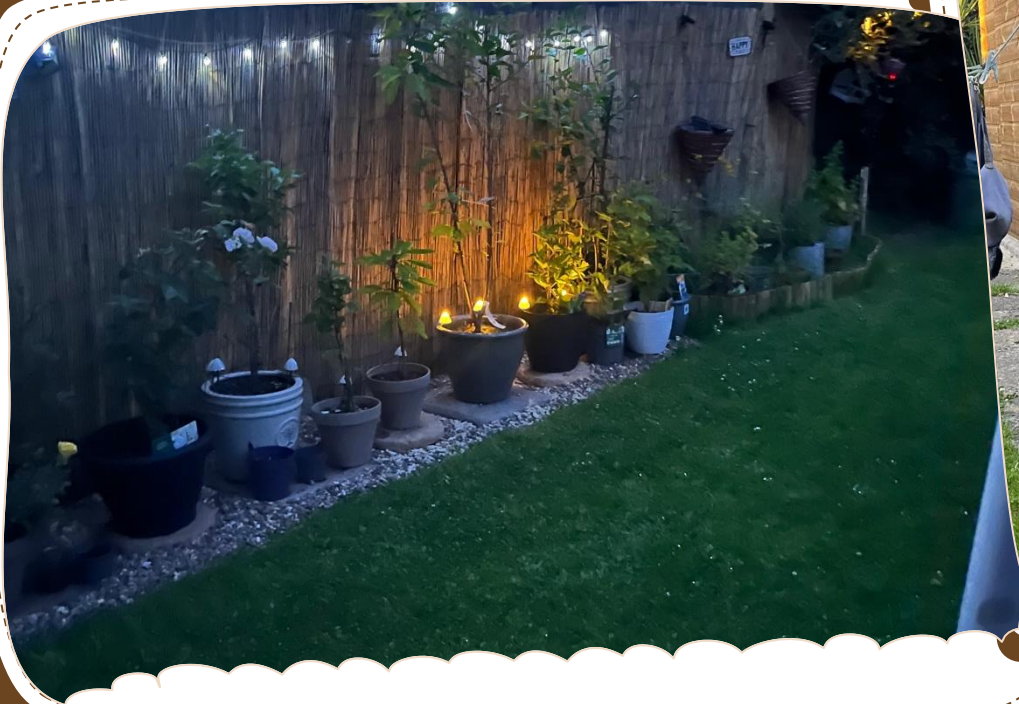
Explore

Exploring all the areas with all the seasons and weather change with the inspiration and guidance of the John Muir Award. There was room for my productive garden and not just sensory inspired through my work in early years. We we as a family wanted to be productive and so we produce fruit and miniature apple orchid to beery garden and not forgetting the herb garden and all this was within our back garden.



Our family garden

is ideal for nature where we have provided pollinators plants such as lavender, roses, fushia's, meadow plants. Within the garden the aroama's , water feature and pond expands on natural wildlife.



Within the garden we as a family can sit back, relax and hear birds tweeting and see them fly from tree to bush, and to experience the bumbling bees also working away to polunating our tress and plants.

I've chosen our family garden as its natural and hidden away in the concrete jungle of a housing estate.

It's a natural garden no pesticides used just our family constantly loving our tranquil garden in nature .

The garden

We will continue to produce in the future Marmarlade, Jams, Herbs to add flavor to our cooking, Lavender to fragrance the house, to even add more nature to our surroundings .



Conserve

By clearing and adding water feature to our family garden we were able to invite bugs and insects whom liked damp wood landed and cooler shade area. We placed more shrubs and plants around and even kept the odd weed so not to disturb the natural creatures homes.



The pond we added a solar water feature and extra pots and old pieces of natural branches to encourage the natural bugs, insects and other creatures.

Inspired from the John Muir award on conserving nature.

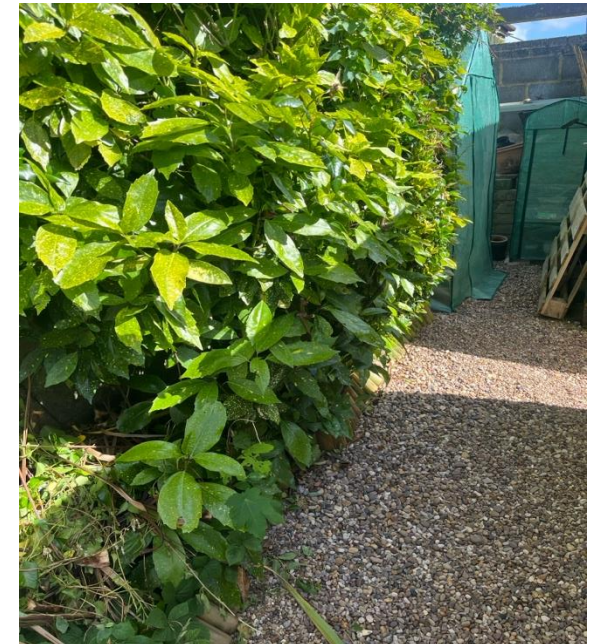


Our family garden where it started to bring the family together within a natural environment where our summerhouse was built and our vision to expand to preserve nature and trying to find nature balance to also protect our places to I've decided to support John Muir Trust with pollution and helping protect bees and other insects, bugs within their natural environment.

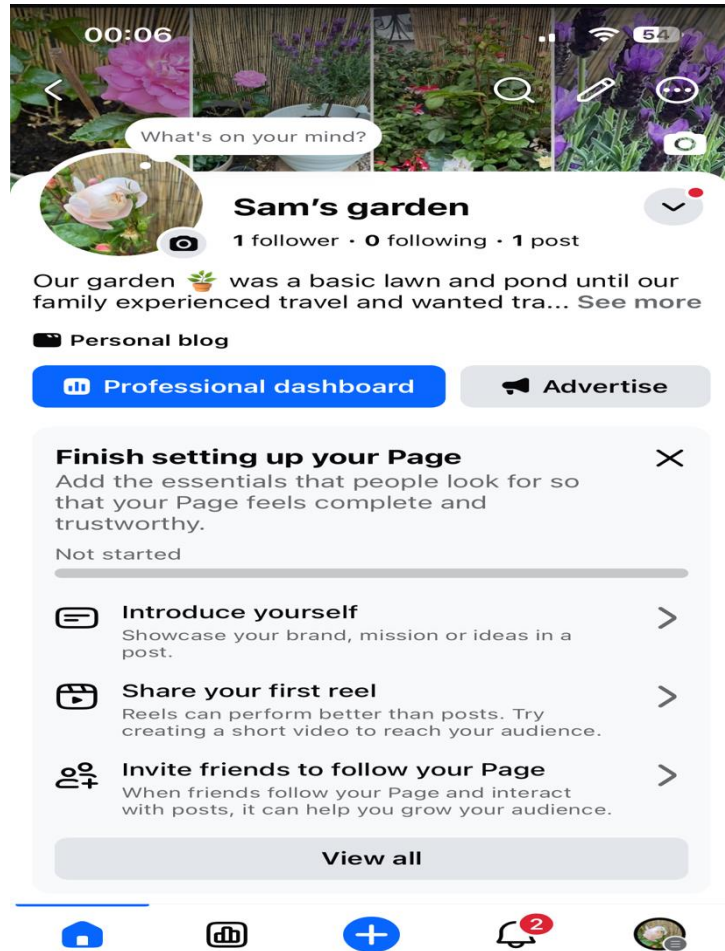
We've further gone to support our family garden with purchasing two green houses and placing them in space where it was rubbish storage.

We cleared the area delicately not to destroy the bugs' lives and replaced with the green house and ready to plant to expand the garden from clippings off the plants already there.

Still conserving and utilizing what we already grown within the natural surroundings of the garden.



Share



Being inspired I also started to wonder as John Muir in my mindset on inspired by and that I wanted to expand and promote John Muir's positive insirapation further and include early years within my flying start setting and social media.

I started firstly social media via 'Facebook" and where I began to promote outside the family and friends with a weekly update on the garden and problems wev'e had to also positive factors and outcomes.

Sharing and adding to Early Years And Sensory in a concrete school yard area.

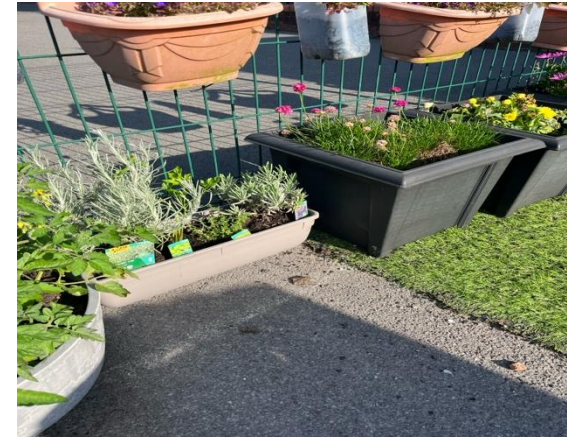
Within my work place we have small concrete outside area which is fenced in from the main school.

So how could I create more but bring nature into another concrete area and have in mind child friendly and sensory.

This challenged I embraced with permission of my manager and help with my team and more so the children.

This was the outcome.

Which was a mini herb garden and recycled planters.



Thankyou for visiting my scrap book of our family garden.



Reflections on Our Garden: A Journey Through Nature

In reflection in our garden we, stepped back sat down and relaxed and as we did so we , noticed various detail, and our thought process was becoming more mindful and considerate within our surrounding world.. Inspired by the John Muir Award and Iolo Williams' naturalist approach, Our garden becomes more than a space with few pots and plants dotted here and there but to enjoy and be productive throughout nature. — it also becomes a place to observe, enjoy mother nature, learn, and appreciate. As we and our family spend time here, we begin to see the garden as a living outdoor adventure and educator to nature, where nature teaches through every leaf, bird song, and shifting season to season and every weather element to experience the changes of nature throughout and more so be apart of it naturally.



Our Garden, our hidden gem

The garden feels like a small peaceful natural habitat that is full of colour, scent, and nature. From apple trees and other fruit trees that it also provides proudness, elegance, shade, and a sense of seasonal changes as they blossom and fruit. Roses soften the space with their beauty, and elegance in abundance, while the herb garden, especially lavender, adds colour and fragrance close to the ground and even in the air. A pond and water feature bring reflection and life, encouraging attention to the importance of water in the garden where the family cats chill and the birds with all this combined to feature and create a rich and varied habitats to encourage various plants and animals that can live together in nature.. The garden feels alive, with each area producing their own gifts of nature and helping each other within a delicate balance.



John Muir Award Inspiration

The John Muir Award has been so inspiring our family where we have explored wild places, care for the environment, which we surround and to be able to share what we have discovered and learnt. To also remain mindful of nature and that it is not only found in landscapes a far but also in the spaces we know so close to home. From sitting back and observing our garden closely, and the natural produce it provides within its wild space full of life, ever changing and truly full of surprises. The John Muir award encourages to be respectful, curious and with a responsible side, also helps us understand that even a family garden can also provide surprises something ive learnt through sitting back and actually lloking around and observing.



Learning with Iolo Williams

Iolo Williams another inspiring person who observes wildlife with passion, care, and respectfully . Being a naturalist with showing a mindful understanding that every creature has main role and with every habitat there is a story by viewing . With his encouragement for everyone to be mindful and watch out for the smallest detail that might otherwise be clearly lost. Our garden, with this mindset and approach gives us the knowledge to pay closer attention to birds, insects, and the changes nature. With his enthusiastic approach that reminds our family the experience often can be found within ordinary areas where we sit back and watch.



Future journey ✨

Our family journey of understanding and to be observant will not does not finish here here; this now will continue from season to season and with every visit to our family garden, from new attention. We as a family have learnt that we have and sharing our journey that through experience with choice and other input we develop and build from nature. Now our family is ongoing commitment and mindfulness to caring to our family garden with our relationship with nature that we can keep gaining knowledge throughout and keep doing so.



Sustainability in Early Years Children



Nurture Early years for a Greener Future

Curiosity

In early years children learn through being curious through exploring their environment

Life skills.

Children in early years learn through life behaviour and learning off others.



Model

Promoting sustainability in early years with educating children to develop a sense of understanding their responsibility for the planet.

Educating and learning new values now will guide them — and protect the Earth — hopefully for generations to come.

Through fun and learning children develop and to incorporate this into early years through play and its provisions such as planting activities to include all the children and further then to teach them how to look after the plants from making them aware to water the plants daily.

To also introduce nature walks and story time with books including nature from plants to bugs, birds and other creatures.

Even create a bug hunt within the yard and natural surroundings the children are living in.

most important make it fun.

In early years to sustainable is daily.

Trying to encourage children within early years through curious approach and visual learning. Include this with parents and in early years include this through activities .



Welsh Government and other related groups in sustainability

Eco-Tots Cymru

That provides nature as its vision of learning for early years through six sustainability themes, including wildlife, trees, and reuse, helping practitioners introduce environmental learning in age-appropriate ways as without practitioner's understanding how could they educate others so this was a fantastic inclusion of promotion of educating through early years.

• **Healthy and Sustainable Pre-School Scheme (HSPSS)** That includes health, environmental understanding, and sustainability in nurseries, Flying Start settings, and other children provision's throughout Wales.



Eco-Schools Wales started back 30 years ago and was aimed to encourages climate action projects, with the intention to link sustainability activities to the curriculum and encourage development of ethical, informed citizens.

Early Childhood Play, Learning and Care Plan (ECPLC) unifies Welsh Government program set for children aged 0-5 and placed within a play-based learning at the centre of highest standard inclusive early years provision.



More examples of early years where, Little Feet Program promotes walking to school for children aged 2-5, instead of cars usage and to encourage to be more active , healthier, and early awareness of sustainable transport decisions.

Welsh Active Early Years Program where this aims to strengthens physical wellbeing within early years settings and supported through the Healthy and Active Fund, linking movement, health, and positive daily practice within setting providers.

Also sustainability Communities for Learning which invests in updated, sustainable educational with buildings, including early years facilities, supporting long-term quality and environmental duties.



Early Years Wales promotes high standard within early years provision, where it includes with the to policy to discuss further, and supports organisations that promote sustainable childcare and within childcare settings..

Children in Wales acts as a national umbrella body, where it's an influence within early years policies from the child's wellbeing, to reduce poverty and better outcomes for children and their families.

Mudiad Meithrin provides Welsh-medium early years education nationwide and children learn through developing bilingual, culturally rooted provision that aligns with wider community sustainability.

Urdd Gobaith Cymru in which supports youth well being, to include awareness of the climate crisis, and within this develops international partnerships that connect young people in Wales with peers beyond the country.. This will also be beneficial to younger parents to educate hopefully early years also through their knowledge and understanding.



There are also international influences such as Better Planet Education, known as the Young People's Trust for the Environment (YPTE), in which promotes with learning through free sustainability teaching resources that support educators and introduce environmental learning to be accessible and its practicality.

The Royal Foundation Centre for Early Childhood (unicef), has contributed to the international where its understanding within early years and the results achieved and highlighted the important of understanding that awareness at its earliest years in educating the shaping for long-term wellbeing and through development.



BY EDUCATING ALL THEN AND NATURE ENVIROMENTAL EXPERIENCES THAT Children learn through outdoor exploring with nature and wildlife understanding and visual, smell, touch, hear, with a natural environment.

Children can develop through play and experiences.

Being outside can also be good the well being and mindset where within a child's developmental stage having choices of various environment's provides more experiences with learning the elements such as seasonal changes and adaptions.

As a practitioner and promoting sustainability be mindful of the age of the child and learning abilities so encouragement and inclusion via adapting for enjoyment and choice.

To conclude with the mindset of sustainability and with early years within flying start we have a concrete yard however we've created a miniature garden with recycled milk containers as plant pots and pots with herbs. Our activities have incorporated planting and nurturing by the children with adult supervised watering the plants and see them grow.

The children have also learnt through our activities to expand on taking their individual plant home where we try to include parental and carers to.

This will continue within our setting on planning with new starter' s so we carry on the sustainability learning once again.



REFERENCES

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council (n.d.) **Sustainable Communities for Learning Rolling Programme**. Available at: <https://www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk/en/resident/schools-learning/sustainable-communities-for-learning-rolling-programme/> (Accessed: 4 July 2026).

•Children in Wales (n.d.) **Early Years Action Group**. Available at: <https://www.childreninwales.org.uk/professionals/our-work/early-years/early-years-action-group/> (Accessed: 4 July 2026).

•Early Years Wales (n.d.) **About Us**. Available at: <https://www.earlyyears.wales/en/about-us> (Accessed: 4 July 2026).

Early Years Wales (n.d.) **Cwlwm Calls for a Fairer Future for Children and Young People**. Available at: <https://www.earlyyears.wales/en/news/cwlwm-calls-fairer-future-children-and-young-people> (Accessed: 4 July 2026).

Early Years Wales (n.d.) **Welsh Active Early Years**. Available at: <https://www.earlyyears.wales/en/welsh-active-early-years> (Accessed: 4 July 2026).

Keep Wales Tidy (n.d.) **Eco-Tots Cymru**. Available at: <https://keepwalestidy.cymru/eco-tots/home/> (Accessed: 4 July 2026).

Public Health Wales (n.d.) **Healthy and Sustainable Pre-School Scheme (HSPSS)**. Available at: <https://phw.nhs.wales/knowledge-article/healthy-and-sustainable-pre-school-scheme-hspss/> (Accessed: 4 July 2026).

- Torfaen County Borough Council (2026) **New Net Zero School and Childcare Centre Officially Opened**. Available at: <https://www.torfaen.gov.uk/en/News/2026/February/27-New-net-zero-school-and-childcare-centre-officially-opened.aspx> (Accessed: 4 July 2026).
- Welsh Government (n.d.) **Flying Start Childcare Guidance**. Available at: <https://www.gov.wales/flying-start-childcare-guidance-html> (Accessed: 4 July 2026).
- Welsh Government (n.d.) **Written Statement: Early Childhood Play, Learning and Care Wales Plan**. Available at: <https://www.gov.wales/written-statement-early-childhood-play-learning-and-care-wales-plan> (Accessed: 4 July 2026).
- Welsh Government Media Centre (n.d.) **Supporting Little Feet to Get Walking**. Available at: <https://media.service.gov.wales/news/supporting-little-feet-to-get-walking> (Accessed: 4 July 2026).
- Welsh Government Media Centre (n.d.) **Welsh Young People Lead the Way Championing 30 Years of Eco-Schools**. Available at: <https://media.service.gov.wales/news/welsh-young-people-lead-the-way-championing-30-years-of-eco-schools> (Accessed: 4 July 2026).

Better Planet Education. Available at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Better_Planet_Education (Accessed: 4 July 2026)

Mudiad Meithrin. Available at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mudiad_Meithrin (Accessed: 4 July 2026).

Royal Foundation. Available at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Royal_Foundation (Accessed: 4 July 2026)

Urdd Gobaith Cymru. Available at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Urdd_Gobaith_Cymru (Accessed: 4 July 2026).

John Muir Trust. Available at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Muir_Trust (Accessed: 4 July 2026).

Iolo Williams. Available at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iolo_Williams (Accessed: 4 July 2026).