

Physical Education and Outdoor Adventure Education Assignment 1:

Section 1:

Introduction:

This paper explores the changes to develop the Health and Well-being AoLE within Cynefin, the outdoor learning centre, in a way that supports physical activity with an emphasis on use of the outdoors. The use of Cynefin will allow a sense of place, belonging, and identity as a framework for promoting physical literacy, adventurous activities, and outdoor learning. The theme of this intervention centres on physical literacy, there are many reasons for this. The concept of physical literacy was formally established by Whitehead in her publication, "The Concept of Physical Literacy," published in 2001. The "motivation, confidence, physical competence, knowledge, and understanding to maintain physical activity at an individually appropriate level throughout life" is what Margaret Whitehead refers to as physical literacy. She believes that physical literacy covers more than just the acquisition of fundamental motor skills or physical fitness. It is a comprehensive idea that encompasses the ability to participate in a range of physical activities with competence and confidence as well as the drive and knowledge required to maintain a lifetime of physical activity. Margaret Whitehead writes about physical literacy as a response to the decline in the amount of time provided and importance to the subject, and an attempt to shift the focus from conventional forms of physical education to sport development (Lundvall, 2015). It is a concept that extends beyond physical competence to include a profound sense of self, shaped by interactions with the world. Rooted in phenomenology, physical literacy considers how individuals experience and engage with their environment, fostering personal growth, self-awareness, and a meaningful connection to place. Outdoor education provides an ideal platform for cultivating this sense of self, enabling learners to develop gross motor skills, physical stability, and a deeper connection to their surroundings. The focus on physical literacy is particularly relevant in the post-COVID-19 context, where lengthening restrictions have had significant consequences for physical activity levels and mental health (The BMA, 2024). The pandemic highlighted the vital role of movement in supporting both physical and emotional well-being. By encouraging active engagement in outdoor and adventurous activities, this intervention aims to address these challenges while using the transformative potential of the outdoors. This proposal aligns with changes in the Curriculum for Wales, particularly the Health and Well-being Area of Learning and Experience (AoLE), which emphasizes holistic well-being, resilience, and lifelong learning. Outdoor learning, as an experiential and inclusive approach, is uniquely positioned to meet these goals by nurturing physical literacy, fostering resilience, and promoting well-being through meaningful interactions with nature.

Decline in outdoor

It is essential that through my changes to Cynefin I can encourage and promote physical activity in the outdoors, especially due to the recent decline and the importance and positive effects the outdoors has on you. According to Kohl et al. (2012), physical inactivity is the fourth most common cause of death globally and costs the economy at least 67.5 billion annually (Ding et al., 2016). Additionally, according to recent data, 24 million adults in England visit green areas at least once every week (White et al., 2016). Of these, 8.23 million adults use green spaces at least once a week in an "active" way, which translates to 2.2 billion health benefits annually (White et al., 2016). This means that parks and rural areas can significantly contribute to a rise in physical activity. Providing nature and green places to encourage physical activity may be one way to solve the global pandemic of physical inactivity, as evidence suggests that people are more active when they are in green spaces as opposed to other settings. This can be related to the significant rise in the accessibility of domestic technological devices (Tandy, 1999), such as television, computers, and gaming consoles, which are thought to "seduce" kids away from peers and the outdoors (Woolley, 2006). There is also growing concern that adults are limiting children's independent access to 'traditional' play spaces, like local parks and streets (Karsten, 2005). This is limiting children's opportunities to play actively and to take advantage of the social and emotional challenges that active play offers (Cole, 2002). 'Constrained parental behaviour' (Ferraro, 1995) has been argued to be driven mainly by safety concerns, including stranger danger and traffic (Valentine, 1997). Despite growing data regarding the types and amount of parental restrictions on children's physical activity (Veitch, 2006), little is known about how these restrictions affect children's active play (Carver, 2008). Additionally, little is known regarding the extent to which children limit their own vigorous play behaviour in reaction to perceived safety risks.

What is play and why is it so important?

Outdoor play is an essential part of holistic development for secondary school students. It nurtures physical and mental health, supports cognitive and social growth, and fosters resilience and a connection to nature. By encouraging outdoor play, schools can create a balanced educational experience that prepares students for the challenges of life. This has been supported by many studies in the past. For example, Tim Gill stated that children can participate in creative and unstructured activities that foster self-regulation and emotional

resilience since outdoor play is open-ended (Gill, 2007). Moreover, cognitive advantages have been associated with exposure to natural environments. According to a study by Chawla (2015), children's creativity, problem-solving skills, and focus are all improved by spending time outside in nature. As you can see, using outdoor learning has several advantages. All children can participate and thrive in outdoor learning situations, which remove barriers that may not be possible in regular school environments. The goal of inclusive outdoor education is to appreciate diversity, provide opportunities that are interesting and accessible to all students, and promote participation from people with different backgrounds and skill levels. Additionally, Bjorklid (2005) shown that when students have access to natural settings, they all become more engaged and exhibit endurance. It was also highlighted in Nalda Wainwrights' research of the curriculum (2016) that the new curriculum within Wales was developing pupils with a motivated, independent and active approach to learning. The new curriculum for Wales has also shown to have a deep focus on the thematic and holistic areas. Whilst we explore the new Welsh curriculum it is also clear to see that it shares links to my project. We will use Cynefin to promote Teamwork which is highlighted in the curriculum, "Learners will be encouraged to understand that, through their lives, they will experience a range of relationships. They will also be encouraged to develop their abilities to form, nurture and maintain relationships." (Welsh Government, 2020a, p.75). In addition, it also mentions our main aim of physical literacy by giving the learners space where they can develop their physical literacy to add to their 'bank of knowledge', "Learners are building up a body of knowledge and have the skills to connect and apply that knowledge in different contexts" (Welsh Government, 2020b). This just shows that outdoor learning is crucial for children's overall development as it provides an interactive platform to foster growth in various aspects. A study conducted by The Mental Health Foundation (2023) has shown that spending time in nature has a positive effect on children's cognitive, social, emotional, and physical well-being. This is why outdoor learning should be promoted as much as possible, especially when many parents intentionally prevent their children from playing outdoors, in an effort to keep them safe (Veitch et al. 2010).

My intervention:

After talking about all the benefits and needs for these students, I will now explain how I intend on changing Cynefin to suit these needs. I will be using zoning to split up my activities. It has been proven that when areas such as playgrounds are divided into different zones it leads to an increased rate of engagement within physical activity (Ridgers et al., 2007). Cynefin will then mainly be split into two zones with two separate activities, being paddleboarding and an

outdoor kitchen, however, the areas between the kitchen and paddleboarding zones include pathways and flexible spaces for relaxation, reflection, or prepping activities. Natural landscaping and benches areas can create spaces for informal learning, promoting connection with nature. Transition spaces might also include signage and educational displays that highlight the importance of sustainability, biodiversity, and the significance of the site, tying into the concept of Cynefin as a place of belonging.

In addition to the new concepts at Cynefin we will also be introducing technology to be a key part of the learner's time at the outdoor centre. They will be provided with an iPad in small groups, they will then use the technology to their advantage to scan QR codes that will be scattered around the paths from each activity, each QR code presenting vital information for their upcoming activity. For example, on route to the paddleboarding area, one QR code will read "Using your core muscles will help you paddle for longer at higher speeds and more efficiently. To use your core effectively you need to rotate your hips". Students will then use this knowledge to further enhance their skills and learn more about their bodies. In a study by Boyce (2014), found that once an iPad were introduced in an outdoor setting the students become more eager to take part in the activities outdoors.

Zone 1: Outdoor Kitchen.

Unfortunately, my photos of Cynefin were not transferable onto my word document, so instead I will describe the areas.

The first area I will transform is the area opposite the yurt where the benches are found. Within this area will be wooden tabletops, bowls, plastic containers and a space to create different objects that will be encouraged through the QR codes around the area, for example a mud cake. Students will be encouraged to find different parts of nature and the area to make their ideas as unique as possible, by using mud, grass, sticks and anything else they can find. The reason I chose this was according to Chawla (2015), sensory experiences in natural settings promote experiential learning and a greater understanding of the world, which in turn supports cognitive growth. The many textures and temperatures of mud stimulate the senses as children mould and shape their creations, promoting sensory integration and enhancing the development of fine motor skills to support their physical literacy. In addition, the making of different objects requires the students to try lots of different objects in their surroundings which will heavily improve their object control skills, which has always been a downside of outdoor education as it is well known to be no good for object control skills. This area also has an abundance of Loose parts, Nicholson (1972) these increase the affordances and increase

creativity. Engaging with nature also stimulates children's thinking process and enhances their problem-solving abilities. It presents them with real-life situations that require critical thinking and decision-making skills, JK Summers (2019). There would also be an emphasis on co-operative learning through the outdoor kitchen, encouraging different students to work together.

Zone 2: Paddleboarding

My second intervention will be creating a safer path down to the lake by Cynefin, this will be walking past the yurt through the current gate. Once down by the lake there will be all the appropriate equipment for large groups stored away in shelter. The main advantage we will gain from paddleboarding is Physical Competency. Physical competence was defined as the ability to move and do tasks with competence (Whitehead, 2010). The movement patterns that interact in a variety of settings are also included in a new definition (Whitehead, 2019). PC is fundamental to the value of "Education and public health agenda—physical literacy (Whitehead, 2010)" and is a basic component of what it is to be human. Furthermore, paddleboarding has massive advantages on fundamental movement skills. Fundamental movement skills are basic, foundational movements that form the building blocks for more complex and specialised physical activities. These skills encompass a range of locomotor, manipulative, and stability skills that are essential for a child's physical development. Locomotor skills involve moving the body from one place to another, such as running, jumping, and hopping. Manipulative skills involve the control of objects, including throwing, catching, and kicking. Stability skills focus on maintaining balance and body control, such as bending, twisting, and turning (Gallahue & Ozmun, 2006). Paddleboarding will have heavy benefits on students' stability, balance and coordination makes it an excellent addition to physical education programs or outdoor learning initiatives, particularly for activities aimed at improving physical literacy and overall body awareness.

Reasons for these two choices:

In addition to all my recent points covering the reasoning for my two zones, there are two main parts that encouraged me to make this choice, this is phenomenology and sense of self.

Phenomenology places a strong emphasis on interactions with the environment and lived experiences. Both activities give students real-world, practical chances to interact with their environment. For the outdoor kitchen students are more engaged in their surroundings and engage in meaningful connections with nature when outside because it encourages their senses of sight, smell, and touch. By engaging pupils in the water, paddleboarding fosters an awareness of flow, balance, and natural forces. It fosters attention and an understanding of how the body adjusts to changing conditions. Through encouraging resilience and personal development, both activities help people develop a strong sense of self. Students can take charge of projects, develop self-confidence, and cultivate a sense of accomplishment in the outdoor kitchen. As students learn new abilities, face their concerns, and achieve balance with their surroundings, paddleboarding helps them develop self-efficacy.

Conclusion:

In conclusion I feel my intervention within Cynefin will promote many beneficial areas using the outdoor kitchen and paddleboarding. It promotes many fundamental learning strategies that promote healthy lifestyles and becoming more understanding in one's movements and becoming one with the outdoors and nature, having a high promotion in physical activity and physical literacy.

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