

STUDENT FEEDBACK FORM

This section details the *extent* to which the assessment criteria are demonstrated by you, which in turn determines your mark. The marks available for each category of skill are shown. Lecturers will use the space provided to comment on the achievement of the task(s), including those areas in which you have performed well and areas that would benefit from development/improvement.

Generic Assessment Criteria	Marks available	Marks awarded
1. Engagement with Literature Skills		
	30	
2. Knowledge and Understanding Skills		
	20	
3. Cognitive and Intellectual Skills		
	20	
4. Practical Application Skills		
	20	
5. Transferable Skills for Life and Professional Practice		
	10	

Assessment Mark (Assessment marks are subject to ratification at the Exam Board. These comments and marks are to give feedback on module work and are for guidance only until they are confirmed.)	Late Submission Penalties (tick if appropriate)		%
	Up to 1 week late (40% Max)		
	Over 1 week late (0%)		

The COVID-19 pandemic has in many ways caused disruption and change within our society, none more so than education (Varea, González-Calvo and García-Monge, 2022). Moreover, with the emphasis on physical activity being a dominating factor for the wider culture pre COVID, it seems highly relevant to continue in the pursuit of increasing physical activity opportunities for young people, significantly adolescents through the implementation of outdoor educational learning. The COVID-19 pandemic has forced governments to rethink the school curriculum, in terms of policies and teaching, furthermore, teachers are now having to adapt their own teaching of physical education which is already deemed as being socially constructed (Kirk, 2010). The precarious position PE now finds itself in is detrimental in the pursuit of including other means of teaching PE like outdoor adventurous education (OAE) into a school curriculum. Concerningly, there is precarity within health and well-being (Kirk, 2021) and schools are now being placed as key areas where health promotion and lifelong learning can be achieved through different means such as model's-based practices. Schools must now look towards the future of PE and determine how their own school ground can be developed to include more outdoor education provision and what areas can be developed to afford learning experiences through nature, adventurous activities and through open learning spaces.

This essay will present ideas and concepts in line with this job description in how to implement learning within an outdoor environment of the secondary school in question. Firstly, the awareness of learning in the outdoors will be discussed, depicting how this can be of value to students in a secondary school. Secondly, different approaches and ideas will be presented, looking at how schools such as this one can incorporate learning and experiences based on outdoor adventurous activities, specifically underpinning opportunities to develop physical literacy and movement. Finally, concepts will be discussed regarding the physical education department's willingness to adopt new pedagogical models for outdoor education as presented by Williams and Wainwright (2016) as a tool to enhance the outdoor learning experiences for secondary age students in a school such as this.

The need for change in terms of the school grounds must be highlighted and the basis of this essay is to present a case which brings forward developments and concepts which can help towards incorporating more outdoor learning spaces and environments within the school. Research by Christie et al (2015) has indicated how the Scottish government are already adopting more outdoor learning into schools, moreover, Christie et al (2015) convey how the Scottish Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) are introducing a curriculum with more flexibility which promotes cross-curricular learning through coherent approaches (Christie et al, 2015, p.

2). Similarly, the Welsh Government (2020) are actively implementing a whole-school approach to cross-curricular learning through the new Curriculum for Wales, where the four purposes are helping to highlight students' development, specifically within health and well-being where students are seen to be healthy and confident individuals who develop their resilience and emotional well-being through learning and experiences (Welsh Government, 2020). Therefore, this secondary schools must seek to develop primary ideas which can contribute to the developments within the secondary ground which promote the concepts of the new curriculum for Wales.

Qwynne et al (2019) depict how practitioners are now seeking new and innovative avenues of how to improve mental health within adolescents and have highlighted nature as a course of action for this. Louv (2005) encourages the use of nature and states how parents and educators must know “what a useful antidote to emotional and physical stress nature can be” (Louv, 2005, p. 49). The first idea which this paper will discuss is incorporating a garden or green space into a secondary school ground. Dymont and Bell (2008) advocate a green school ground as a site for the promotion of physical activity, moreover, areas which will encourage more diversity and representation of an environment which has health and wellbeing promotion at the heart of the curriculum (Dymont and Bell, 2008; Welsh Government, 2022). The cognitive and emotional development of students can also be enhanced by being in an outdoor space like a garden states Pollin and Retzlaff-Fürst (2021) where there is time for reflection, thinking, and questioning independent responsibilities (Pollin & Retzlaff-Fürst, 2021; Van Pelt, 2015).

The psychological and also physiological effects of being within nature are invaluable to a student's development (Pollin Retzlaff-Fürst, 2021) and with secondary school being a crucial time in the education of these students, incorporating gardens and wellbeing spaces within nature can really enhance their emotional development and will certainly offer a different environment other than the classroom to harness this. Figure 1 highlights an example of the type of garden space which will be incorporated into this school ground, where it will be utilised in improving the mental health of the students across a whole school approach (Welsh Government, 2022). Moreover, the garden spaces will support the physical, mental, and emotional wellbeing of the students (Welsh Government, 2022) through green spaces which are calming and set within nature. In line with the Health and Wellbeing AoLE, incorporating

a garden into the school ground will increase wellness and maintain this throughout the students' lives.

Research by Fiskum and Jacobsen (2013) introduce the possibilities learning in the outdoors brings, in addition to possessing benefits linked to concentration, stress relief and importantly the motivation for learning to take place (Fiskum and Jacobsen, 2013, p. 4). A second concept this paper will adhere to is how to create outdoor learning spaces which can offer students stimulating working environments without walls or ceilings but also provide a safe space for the students to work in. Learning through Landscapes (2022) express this connection between the outdoors and the secondary school curriculum, moreover, how nature is essentially lost within these students who have made the transition from primary to secondary education. By actively moving lessons and creating outdoor classrooms it can offer the students contrasting affordances, specifically how different affordances within an environment can meet the different needs for each individual student (Gibson, 1986). Gilbert (2019) spotlights the array of possibilities implementing such developments can bring to a secondary school and if done correctly will benefit the students in the longer term. Figure 2 shows the type of outdoor learning space this secondary ground could implement, incorporating classroom learning into an environment within nature which is both engaging and stimulating. Once more, Christie et al (2015) offer this synergistic approach to outdoor learning, moreover, how the concept of bringing two interactions together can create this combining effect in which affordances of the outdoors and teaching can co-exist to increase diversity and depict more holistic means of learning (Christie et al, 2015). Therefore, the concept of outdoor learning spaces will be extremely beneficial to the learning of the students and their overall holistic journey.

A third concept this essay will introduce is incorporating an adventurous activity into the school grounds of this secondary school, emphasising the need for adventure within learning and creating meaningful experiences which will provide value in the student's overall experience of outdoor learning. British Cycling (2022) are advocates of introducing mountain biking into the curriculum, adding that the value of this experience offers many lifelong opportunities to participate in cycling and other forms of physical activity, a similar viewpoint to Palmer (2006) who conveys the feasibility of schools incorporating an activity like mountain biking into the curriculum; highlighting how teacher practice can be utilised in promoting physical activity through an adventurous activity such as this (Palmer, 2006, p. 35). British Cycling (2022) also promote the inclusive element of mountain biking, moreover, have seen

behaviour within students improve as a result of including adventurous activities such as mountain biking into a school ground development. Students who also don't usually participate in traditional sports will reap the benefits of trying a new activity which will help their social development and continued physical activity. The use of the school field already in place at this school ground will be a useful area to utilise and transform into a mountain bike track. An initial concept would be to use the field that is already there and bring in mountain bike ramps to initially begin the activity. Figure 3 shows this implementation, through the use of planks and ramps to initially bring the concept to life.

The impact of implementing outdoor environments into a secondary school ground development will be a challenge for teachers and educators, but one which must demonstrate resilience and allow for the students to flourish within these new environments (Shellman and Hill, 2017). The emergence of new practices being developed as a means to improving physical education experiences for students has recently come in the form of Model's Based Practices (MBP) such as Cooperative Learning and Siedentop's 1995 Sport Education model which advocates a more inclusive way of learning. Williams and Wainwright (2016) have however, identified the need for a model which will aid in the development and adoption of outdoor adventurous activities (OAA) within the curriculum, moreover, highlighting the distinct contribution adventurous activities can make to the learning development of secondary students. The use of an instructional model for OAA will intend to support teachers to effectively incorporate outdoor learning into the secondary ground, furthermore, expressing a positive image of outdoor education for the students (Neville, Petrass and Ben, 2022). Countries such as Australia are already implementing ideas for outdoor learning in their school ground, however, the scope for this within schools in the UK is reliant on "school interests, teacher expertise and pre-service teacher training opportunities" (Neville, Petrass and Ben, 2022, p. 2). Williams and Wainwright (2016) recognise the importance of teacher expertise, moreover, evoke the requirement for connection between communities and local amenities which are close to the secondary school, such as a local national trust park, mountain bike centre or a wildlife centre which schools such as this must look at and utilise its incorporation for more outdoor experiences in lessons.

The concerns associated with curriculum adventure are the barriers teachers face in implementing such adventurous activities and outdoor concepts into school grounds, and the perceived risk attached to them. Brown and Fraser (2009) depict risk as a common feature

associated with the management of Outdoor Adventure Education (OAE), and the pedagogical practices which may pose a barrier for teachers trying to adopt new ways of learning in the outdoors. The rationale of OAE is questioned on the tools and experiences of the school (Brown and Fraser, 2009; Sandall and Öhman, 2013), with means such as staff training, courses and planning being avenues which schools like this must consider when designing outdoor learning provision within a school ground. There is also an educational content barrier attached to such activities, however, Sandall and Öhman (2013) convey how the differing landscapes outdoor education offers can be utilised as this educational tool which possesses instrumental values to outdoor experiences which schools must adopt into their practices (Sandall and Öhman, 2013).

Contrary, these educational landscapes and their educational benefits are overshadowed by parent intervention and parents themselves are very often a barrier to the teaching of outdoor education (Parsons and Traunter, 2020). Furthermore, their perceptions of learning in the outdoors and risk are directly affecting the student's own image of outdoor learning and adventurous activities as their parents are shielding them from the risks associated with such activities. Therefore, the school must position themselves to advocate outdoor learning experiences as positive avenues of learning and experience to create activities and school grounds which are engaging and fun environments to learn in. Louv (2005) further expresses the concern around gaming and television as a potential and increasing barrier to students learning within nature, moreover, positions parents as the driving force in stamping out such behaviours and offering their children more activities set within nature, which is becoming more apparent within school curriculums and seen across whole-school approaches. As seen in the new curriculum for Wales (Welsh Government, 2022) and the Scottish Curriculum for Excellence (Christie et al, 2015) governments and schools are now advocating areas for health and the development of well-being through unique approaches set within nature which are linked to beneficial outdoor education experiences.

The educational landscape of OAE has been questioned by Thomas and Raymond (1998), however, initiatives are being discussed recently on the changing narrative towards the inclusion of adventurous activities in school grounds and how they evoke an awareness of "widening the boundaries of the classroom" (Thomas and Raymond, 1998, p. 265). This is highly significant now for the developments within this school ground, moreover, how there is a need to conceptualise outdoor education to work within the landscape of the school (Sandall and Öhman, 2013) and to incorporate outdoor education's intrinsic value for lifelong learning

into meaningful experiences for the students. Different means are relevant to different purposes that being in the outdoors offers, such as mental and physical health (Sandall and Öhman, 2013), furthermore, in line with the Welsh Government (2022), focuses heavily on the health and wellbeing AoLE which includes an area dedicated to outdoor adventurous activities provision within the school curriculum. The value OAA can bring to curriculum learning is one which is cross-curricular in its teaching (Thomas and Raymond, 1998) further highlighting its value to a whole-school approach of experience and learning, certainly evident in the new curriculum for Wales (Welsh Government, 2022).

This essay intended to present a case forward towards the inclusion and adoption of outdoor learning opportunities and outdoor adventurous activities for developments within a secondary school ground. The ideas and concepts addressed within the main body of this essay introduced ideas which were relating to physical and mental health, learning within the curriculum and diversity through adventurous activities. The pedagogy of place associated with outdoor education is conveyed by Wattchow and Brown (2011), who state how outdoor educators are currently finding it difficult to justify the place for their subject area within the curriculum, unlike other more academic subjects. The notion of physical literacy (PL) is a concept outdoor education can adopt, through its recreational opportunities. Lyngstad and Sæther (2020) refer to the term 'Friluftsliv' and how this relates to the learning of outdoor education pedagogy through movement within nature. This combination and the implementation of learning within garden spaces, outdoor learning spaces and more adventurous activities like mountain biking can turn any secondary school ground into an effective environment and development for outdoor educational opportunities which harnesses the students learning within different outdoor landscapes, moreover, incorporating movement in line with the health and wellbeing AoLE of the new curriculum for Wales (Welsh Government, 2022).

This, in turn will help to educate teachers on their overall perceptions of outdoor education and furthermore, aid in their own knowledge and understanding of how to use and implement practices such as the outdoor adventurous education model and how to create high quality learning through the implementation of exciting and innovative outdoor learning concepts and activities. This will indeed, help to foster a love for movement within the students through problem-based ideas which can be used as a tool for the enhancement of outdoor learning provision within a secondary school ground development.

Word Count – 2,525

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Appendix

Figure 1

Image showing garden for school grounds



Figure 2

Image showing outdoor learning space for school ground.



Available at: <https://images.app.goo.gl/zgL2RL3H8dYQUEwz6>

Figure 3

Image showing mountain biking area of school ground



Available at: <https://www.britishcycling.org.uk/mtbleadership/article/20181017-mtb-leadership-news-Teachers-get-Mountain-Biking-on-the-curriculum-0>