

Sustainability in the Early Years John Muir Award

The School Garden

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Discover

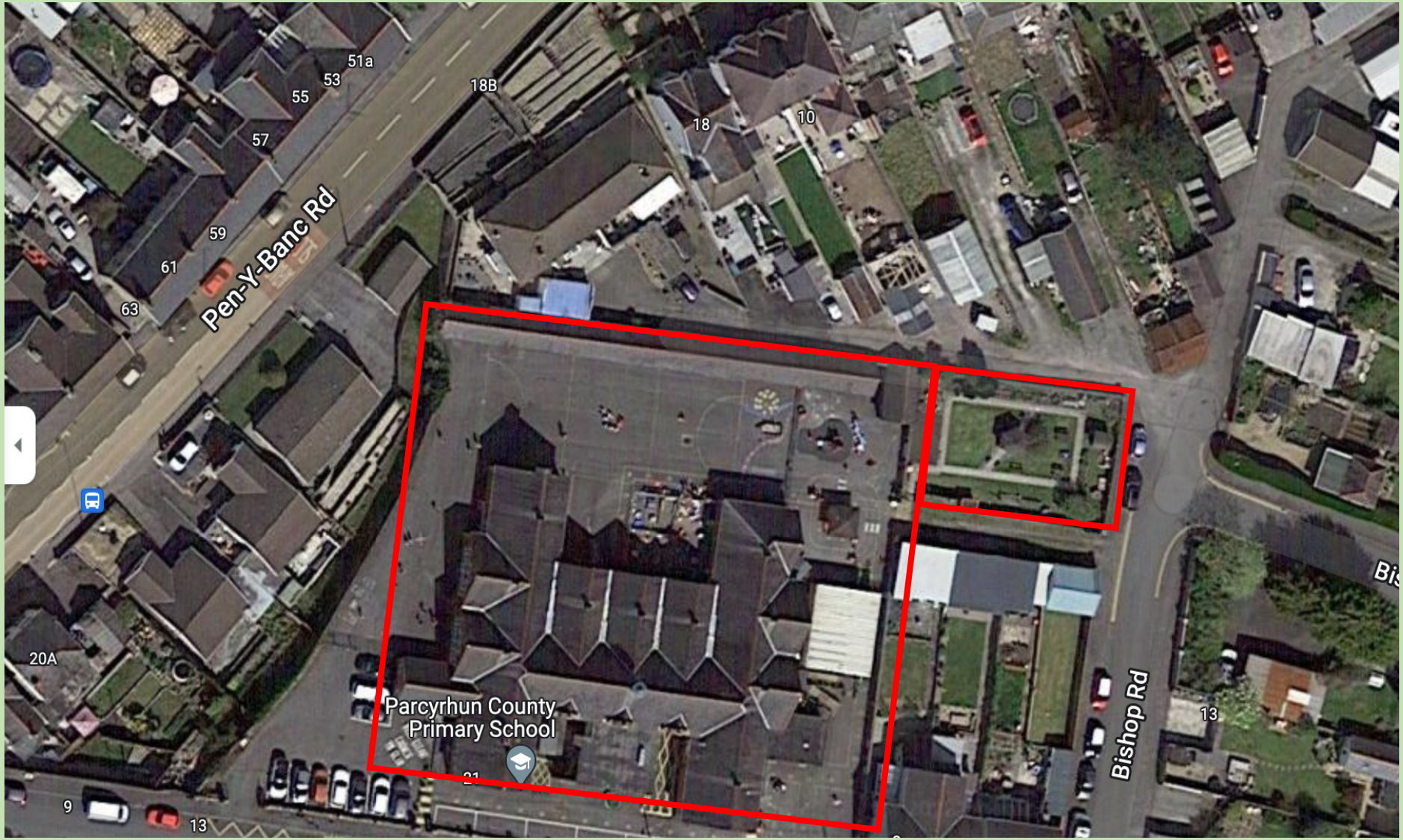
The wild place that shone out to me the most was within the setting where my career started the flourish, Parcyrhun School. This area is not somewhere children could just explore and learn in but also an area where myself and my colleagues would go to relax on our dinner breaks.

The school garden is an area that is becoming an environment that specifies in the New Curriculum, interconnecting all areas of learning, enhanced outdoor learning.

This environment becomes a great place to incorporate in my award activity. Not only will it support and enhance sustainability, protecting the wildlife, insects and animals but the children's knowledge and understanding of the world around them and the impact of their actions.



On the map...



Throughout lockdown, the school garden experienced great negligence.

As a whole, the school has always been an eco and sustainable setting which provides authentic opportunities for pupils to experience and protect the natural environment that are fortunate to encounter within learning.

Lockdown provided barriers to these experiences, leaving the garden to become mistreated.









Explore the area

When you first look at the scene, especially with it being an area which children have the opportunity to learn in following the New Curriculum - it can be seen as quite basic to individuals who may not have the experience of working with children and may identify as hazardous in some areas.

However, as an experienced Early Years practitioner there are a wide range of opportunities for children to experience the natural environment, fortunate enough to be able to have areas like the school garden within their learning environment.



The changes in seasons offer understanding of rotational changes in nature and living things.

A willow tree previously planted which has warmly welcomed birds to make nests and feel safe to reproduce and shelter.







Wild plants untouched creating habitats for small living things.



An empty flower bed with small living things beneath such as worms and snails.

Exploring the area closely to discover nature









Beneath the lonely working-from-home school garden, laid living creatures comfortably in their undisturbed homes.

Under the unused, concrete slabs the ants and beetles have made nests for shelter and breeding.





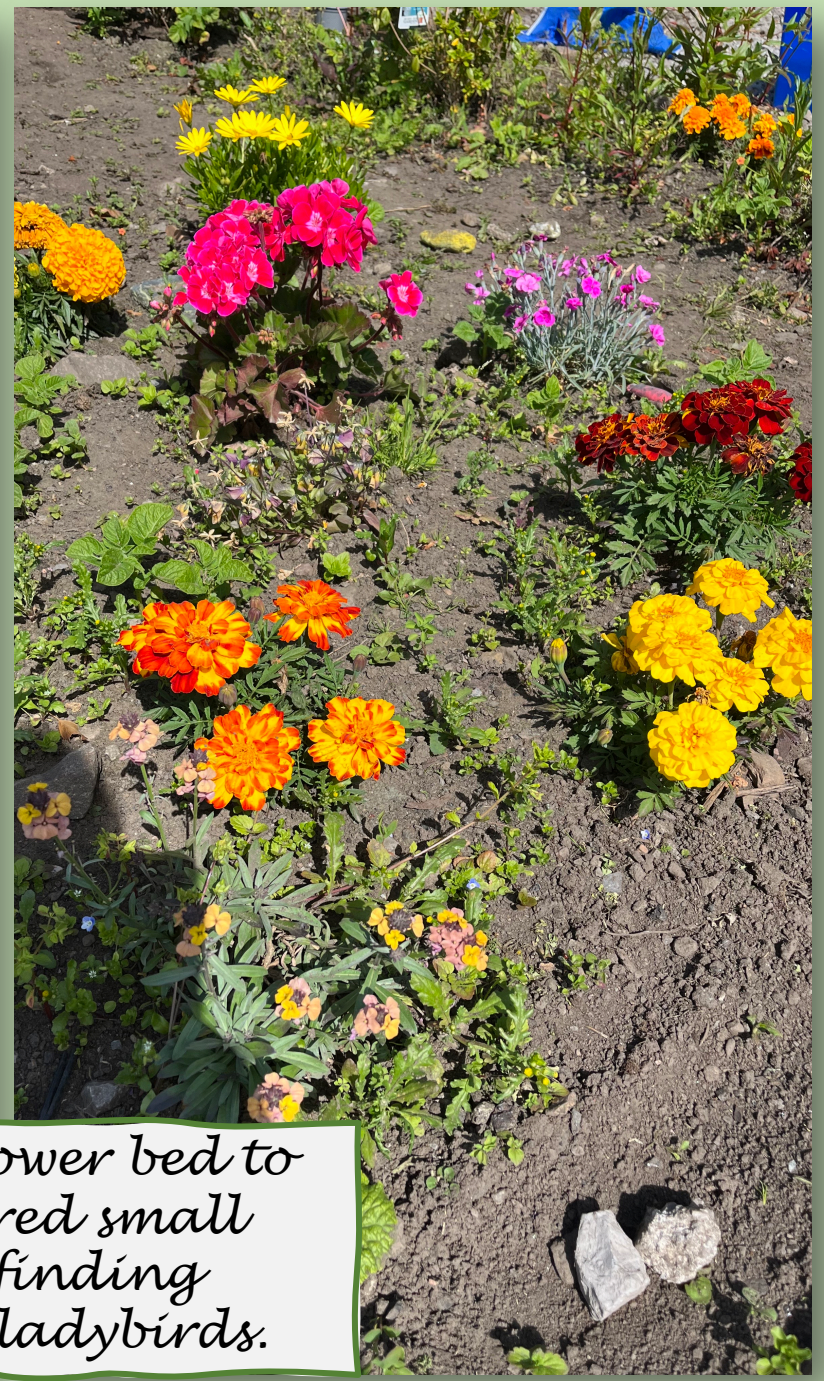






Conserve





We decided to plant flowers in the empty flower bed to attract more wildlife. Although we discovered small living things on the ground, we lacked in finding living things such as butterflies, bees, and ladybirds.





Whilst exploring the environment, although authentic living creatures were often found living beneath the rocks and stones, we were lacking to identify any additional areas where these insects could be found.







As an Eco School, we designed and created bug hotels to enhance safer places for the minibeasts and insects to shelter, lay their eggs and develop.

With the spare compost and flowers donated to the school, we used up some of the donated flowerpots in the garden, to attract more wildlife.







Although the purpose was to promote more wildlife in the garden to support sustainability, I could not help but feel excited to see all the attractions in the garden - The ecstatic colours and the refreshing smell in the inviting environment for human and non-human living things.

Fresh is best!



We planted radish and lettuce to support the sustainability of human-things too.

Planting our own vegetables supports healthy consumption.











We designed more bird houses out of recycled wood to attract birds to breed, grow and explore the world.

What did I discover after conserving the area?

The spiders created silk webs in the bug hotels to secure their eggs.







Whilst looking very closely, I could see the spiders have comfortably made homes amongst the straw, growing and growing - shedding their skin.



A common Speckled Wood Butterfly wandering on the growing grass.



The trees are big, the fields are vast,
The trees give off oxygen for us all to last.

The grass is long and filled with dew,
The sunshine comes over the horizon into view.

The birds they sing, the flowers are bright,
This would be a bumble bees delight.

The gardens a pleasure from natures endeavor,
So, never forget our environment is a treasure.



The bird songs, morning and evening fuel the body with relief ready to start the day with positive energy and end the evening reflecting on the daily to-do lists whilst the singing birds begin to settle in their cozy nests, the petite, harmless insects begin to burrow, and the sun begins to set ready for another day to rise.

Providing myself with opportunities to take part in the John Muir Award has allowed myself to really connect and spend more time outdoors in the authentic, refreshing and ever-changing natural environment. The outdoors has provided a multitude of benefits to support and empower my mental health and well-being, sparking a sense of fresh smelling endorphins and bubbles of happiness that never seem to

P O P!