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Nature and well-being in outdoor learning: authenticity or performativity

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In this paper we look at the ways in which the experience of the natural environment was made available to the pupils and the types of activities provided for specific engagement with the local natural environment. It draws upon research undertaken for the Well-being and Outdoor Pedagogies project and previous PhD research. These projects explored the processes of teaching and learning at one outdoor residential education centre. Data were collected through ethnographic research and included participant observation, interviews with teachers, parents and centre staff, and group interviews with pupils. Previous analyses of this research have highlighted a number of aspects of the experience, such as, for example, whilst the interviewed children reflected positively on the experience, the research highlighted the importance of teachers' interaction with the children in providing for democratic, shared, positive learning. The activities undertaken by the pupils included physical activities focusing upon team work and problem-solving, and activities that focused on exploring nature and the natural environment, which surrounded the residential centre. The dominant philosophy of the residential centre is considered, as are the ways in which nature and the natural environment appear largely taken for granted, but for reasons of safety.

Keywords: *Performativity; Authenticity; Nature; Outdoor classroom*

Introduction

Learning in the outdoors, like learning more generally, does not occur in isolation (Humberstone, 2009). Knowledge and the ways in which it is made available, accessible and meaningful have much to do with the dominant ideologies and cultural preferences flowing within a society and within schooling in a particular culture. Prevailing understandings of what constitutes outdoor education have come largely from Anglo-American routes and have consequently tended to ignore specificities

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of culture and particularly place, with notable exceptions such as Brookes (2004), Wattachow and Brown (2011) and Stewart (2011).

This paper draws upon ethnographic research of teaching and learning in one small English outdoor education centre somewhere to the south west of London. By observing the interaction between primary children aged 6–11 years and their teachers and between pupils themselves, it is possible to explore the nature of the relationships and the processes of learning in this particular situated context.

Here we are adopting the notion of authenticity, which has particular meanings in informal education and life-long learning. In these contexts writers tend to refer to authenticity as representing ‘real’ relations between teachers (workers) and learners in which integrity and trust are central (Zaltz, 2003). It is argued that through authentic relationships in which there is reciprocity and respect the ‘learner’ comes to develop holistically and reflect these values (Smith, 2002). The notion of authenticity is complex and can be understood in a variety of ways. It is not the intention of this paper to consider in any depth the substantial philosophical dialogue around the notion of authenticity and education (see Bonnett & Cuypers, 2003). Nevertheless, it is pertinent to draw attention to two forms of authenticity that emerge in this paper. That is, authenticity as it relates to teacher–pupil relationships and authenticity as it relates to learners’ engagement with the ‘object’ of study (Bonnett & Cuypers, 2003, p. 339). Further, it is suggested that a particular notion of authenticity in which learners engage in a ‘more genuinely open relationship with things, may have a central orientating role in addressing the burgeoning environmental problems that confront the human race’ (Bonnett & Cuypers, 2003, p. 340). Burgeoning environmental problems have much to do with humans’ misuse and overconsumption of natural and other resources.

Sandlin and McLaren (2010) consider the ways in which schooling is influenced by market ideologies of consumption, drawing attention to the need for the development of critical pedagogies of consumption. Unbridled consumption in whatever form has implications for depletion of natural resources. Empathic and authentic engagement with nature sooner rather than later may, as intimated earlier, provide the grounding for informed and ethical decision-making later in life. Nevertheless, various social analysts have highlighted the ways in which neo-liberal¹ ideologies, consumption and ‘governance’ are changing the nature of not only formal education, but also informal education; away from pupil-centred learning towards production and outcomes, rather than these being in balance.

Learning in the outdoors is only one ‘pedagogical site’—that is, a ‘site(s) that have (has) the power to teach, to engage “learners” in meaning making practices that they use to make sense of their worlds and their selves and thereby influence how they act on themselves and others’ (Wright, 2009, p. 7), and, we would suggest, engage with nature. Tinning (2004, p. 228) draws attention to the permeation of the boundaries between ‘education, entertainment and advertising’, citing Steinberg and Kincheloe’s (1997, p. 3) observation that ‘education takes place in a variety of social sites including but not limited to schooling’. Bernstein (2000) makes reference to the ‘totally pedagogised society’ giving analytical purchase to the distribution of forms of socialising agencies including entertainment and advertising, which regulate everyday

experiences throughout a person's lifetime. Pupils, therefore, come to outdoor education (whether it be through the formal curriculum or through informal, outside of school contexts) already having experienced a variety of socialising agencies in addition to those experienced in these systems. It is these diverse influences that pupils draw upon in making sense of themselves and others, and in constructing their identities. It is also through these interactions in specific natural places that young people learn about nature, the natural world and being in nature.

Research methodology

Ethnography

This paper is based on research conducted at a small UK residential outdoor centre as part of the Well-being and Outdoor Pedagogies project,² involving primary school children aged between 6 and 10, their teachers, parents and centre staff. A qualitative approach was adopted, taking the form of an ethnographic study, which was considered to be sensitive to the individual and to the social processes (Davies, 1984; Griffin, 1985; Humberstone, 1986; Willis, 1977) in order to allow for an in-depth understanding of the phenomena explored. This sensitivity of ethnography, its capability of capturing the process in its wholeness (Fetterman, 1989), and the fact that it allows the researcher to have an insight into other people's experiences were factors that influenced the decision to use this approach in this research.

According to Denscombe (1983, p. 107), ethnography aims, 'to describe and explain the culture of a social group and examine the circumstances in which this culture arises'. This research did not focus on the outcome of the teaching process, measuring its efficiency, but rather it was mainly interested in the customs and behaviour of the participants and, particularly, their understanding of the world in which they lived (Denscombe, 1983). Thus ethnographic research is not aligned with performativity but rather is concerned with the authenticity of the teaching and learning situation. In this study, through this approach, it was possible to observe and explore the interactions occurring maintaining a degree of authenticity. What resulted was thick or rich description (Geertz, 1973) of the 'outdoor' classroom, where data were presented in sufficient detail so as to allow the reader to visualise the situation being described, in an attempt to give credibility to the research.

The interpretations made are not considered to be final, as the reader may have a different view of the world represented, but they are informed by the observations in the field, the reflexive account as well as the interviews, and integrated within the relevant theory. According to Hammersley and Atkinson (1995), reflexivity is a significant feature of social research; and they argue that all social research takes the form of participant observation, because it involves participating in the social world, in any role, and reflecting on the products of that participation. Reflexivity was achieved throughout this research by keeping a fieldwork diary, containing recordings of thoughts for the day, considerations of the reasons behind reactions to certain situations or the reactions of the participants to the researcher conducting the fieldwork,

to the environment or towards one another, and dialogue between authors in reflecting upon the data. This process constituted an early stage of data analysis (Fetterman, 1989; Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995).

Participant observation and semi-structured interviews have been used in order to collect a variety of data, which is central to ethnographic research (Walford, 2001). The context in which these data were collected was always taken into consideration when analysing and interpreting the data (Delamont, 2002). The fieldwork took place at a residential outdoor centre set in the English countryside. The observational data were collected over three years (2005, 2006 and 2008),³ mostly during the spring and summer months, when most primary schools would take part in residential outdoor visits. This type of data was recorded as the activities were taking place, using pen and notepads. These instruments did not seem at all intrusive, and were very practical, inexpensive and easy to use. It was felt that using more sophisticated equipment, such as a laptop or a video camera, would be rather cumbersome and impractical. Also, using images had further implications on consent. Participants soon got used to notes being taken all the time and they did not seem to mind it; most of the times they completely forgot about it, as they were too involved in the activity. The interviews were audio-recorded and conducted toward the end of the fieldwork periods, when a strong rapport was built with the participants.

A total of 16 different school groups were observed, during the three phases of data collection at the centre. The groups came from 10 schools, which means that, in some cases, there were two to four different groups coming from the same school at different times. Most of the groups stayed for two and a half days, either arriving on the Monday morning and leaving on Wednesday before lunch, or arriving on the Wednesday morning and leaving on the Friday before lunch. There were two school groups that stayed for five days, arriving on the Monday and leaving on the Friday, and one group that only stayed for one day. The schools that visited the centre were not all the same; there were certain differences with regard to the setting that they came from (i.e. rural or urban), but also with regard to the ethnicity and social background of their pupils. Some of the schools were from in and around London, and some of them were located in the countryside. Most of the schools had pupils from varied ethnic and social backgrounds, but there were some whose pupils were predominantly of white British heritage, and these schools tended to be located in rural areas. Some of the pupils that came from schools in London commented on how quiet it was at night, and that they had trouble sleeping because they missed the sound of traffic. Most of the children enjoyed the outdoor setting of the centre and seemed to be thriving, no matter whether they came from an urban or rural school. From observations it appeared that most pupils appeared to be eager to go and explore on their own, whenever they had the opportunity.

Ethical considerations

Ethical issues are central to ethnographic research, and particularly so for this study since the research involved young children. The British Educational Research

Association's⁴ ethical guidelines for educational research underpinned the project. The research concerning this paper was conducted overtly, with the informed consent of all the participants involved. The researcher, Ina Stan, carrying out the data collection underwent a Criminal Records Bureau check, which is a legal requirement for anybody working with young children. In order to protect the anonymity of the participants, no real names of persons, places or institutions are used in this paper. Interviews were conducted with pupils, parents, teachers and centre staff. Ethics are at the epicentre of this research because ethnographic research is an ongoing process requiring considered, and sometimes immediate, decision-making. Ethnographic research takes place over extended periods of time and it involves immersion in the culture being studied, and in the participants' lives. It tries to go deep and uncover and understand people's feelings, thoughts, behaviours and interactions. Consequently, the researcher is continuously making ethical decisions during the fieldwork regarding how to relate to the participants, what to say to whom and, in particular, whether or not to intervene in situations. That is, the fieldwork researcher took great care during the fieldwork to engage ethically with participants and to balance the need to collect data with not interfering in situations which, as a teacher, she might well have done.

Before discussing the findings relevant to this paper, a brief description of the research setting is given, in order to help the reader contextualise the data and visualise the context.

The setting: the historical, environmental and organisational context

The outdoor centre is situated in the English countryside, set within 24 acres of private grounds, with neighbouring farms and a few cottages. The local countryside provides interesting walks with plenty of opportunities to take a closer look at the wildlife. There are rabbits everywhere, running frightened at the sound of human steps, lazy pheasants and the occasional deer. The house itself is a monument to history. Built in the early seventeenth century, it is an old manor house and has its own ghost stories and plots. When a school group arrives at the centre, they are gathered in the red room. Two large paintings dominate the wall that the four rows of chairs face. Children often ask about the man and the woman in each painting. This is when they are introduced to the Red Lady, who is the ghost of the manor. The ghost myth is perpetuated by both the staff and the visiting pupils. Sometimes children would share stories about wardrobes moving and not being able to get a wink of sleep because they were terrified of the Red Lady. Nevertheless, most of the pupils seemed to thrive on the mystery.

Children are told a little about the history of the house: it is 400 years old, so there are valuable things inside, therefore no running is allowed inside. The house provides accommodation for 50–60 guests. It has large meeting rooms and lounge areas, all furnished in a traditional style. Outside there is plenty of room to run around, there are green fields and two wooded areas. The smaller wooded area is close to the house and has some rare trees and quite a lot of small creatures; this is the area where the

activities in which the pupils are encouraged to explore nature, such as ‘environmental senses’ and ‘creepi crawls’, are experienced.

The facilities also include a recently built low ropes course, a recreation centre with a heated pool, a campsite, a wildlife pond, nature trails, an observatory and an all-weather floodlit games area. These all offer scope for a variety of learning experiences including training, environmental studies, team-building exercises and sports. There is also a fully adaptable sports hall/auditorium with a theatre stage with recording and rehearsal rooms.

The centre is a charity that accommodates school visits and corporate courses in order to sponsor programmes involving youth at risk and disabled young people. The schools that attend are much involved in choosing the activities and putting together the programme. Some of the activities are facilitated by the teachers, rather than the staff at the centre, and schools are aware of this fact before coming to the centre.

Interactions, activities and nature

Previous analyses of observational data from both the early research and the Well-being and Outdoor Pedagogies project and the subsequent publications have largely focused on the interactions between teachers, facilitators and pupils and amongst pupils in which issues around power, empowerment and control in the learning process are considered (see Humberstone & Stan, 2011a; Stan, 2009; Stan & Humberstone, 2011). Whilst, in addition, publications drawing upon interviews with teaching staff, facilitators, parents and pupils have sought to make sense of the experience from a variety of participants’ perspectives and to understand concepts such as well-being, safety and risk that emerge from the experience (see Humberstone & Stan, 2009, 2011b).

None of these analyses has considered in any detail the curriculum or content of the programme that the pupils are presented with. Nor to any degree have the relationships of the children with the natural environment surrounding the centre been examined. We have largely focused on the pedagogic experience, and whilst nature or the natural environment is central, it has largely been taken for granted as given. This often has been the case when ‘classroom’ interaction in the outdoors or outdoor learning is researched.

In order to redress the imbalance and the neglect of the environment in this work, we draw attention to the environmental experiences made available to the pupils and pupils’ engagement with the natural environment together with some of the parents’ comments. Consequently, this paper draws attention, albeit briefly, to the ways in which the outdoor experience examined in the research facilitates encountering, experiencing and exploring nature.

The centre’s philosophy and curriculum

The types of activities that are made available to the pupils who attended the centre are shown in Appendix 1. This shows that, of the 29 activities available, six can be

identified as focusing on nature and the natural environment. These are as follows: environmental senses, creepi crawl, ghost story/walk, shelter building, forest walk and pond dipping. Sixteen of the activities are categorised as group or team orientated, emphasising the organisation's prevailing philosophy that appears to place great importance on team-building and group work. According to one of the directors, group work—teaching children to work together—is the core of the work of the centre. When asked why he thought this, the director answered:

well, it reflects life and it's not realistic to expect to move on into further education [. . .] and not work together as a team, not socialise, not um to be able to communicate, to work with . . . to be sympathetic to peoples' opinions and ideas, um, in their future, and that's one of the reasons why I feel very strongly that the national curriculum is not helping (Paul—13.07.2005) (Stan, 2008).

The emphasis of the centre was therefore largely concerned with social development, developing team work and decision-making skills. These aspects of the centre's philosophy are those much adopted by many conventional outdoor education centres based upon a particular view of what it means to be a responsible citizen. Consequently, in privileging teamwork and social development over learning about nature as appears from the documentation, interviewees' comments and observation, we can suggest that the centre itself is imbibed in performativity. This emphasis can be seen in Appendix 1, column 3, where the majority of activities are seen as group interaction or team-building events.

This particular focus can also be seen in the following quote from a head teacher of a visiting primary school:

I think not only in terms of teambuilding . . . in which you promote social skills, but . . . exercise and ways in which the activities are promoted at these activity centres have their role in the physical and emotional well-being . . . , but it's also working as a team within that, . . . and I think clearly mental well-being is very important (Mr Harris, 14-05-2008) (Stan, 2008).

Nevertheless, the locations or places in which much of this work occurred are located in the natural environment and, as shown in Appendix 1, column 2, all but six or seven of the varied activities were undertaken outdoors and in nature.

One example is the 'creepi crawl' activity. This activity provides opportunities for the pupils to explore the nature around the site and to explore the living creatures existing on the walk. Participation in creepi crawl is individualistic rather than group orientated and has a high degree of teacher involvement. It is also an activity that is led by the school teacher rather than a member of the centre staff.

As identified in previous work (Humberstone & Stan, 2009; Stan & Humberstone, 2011), for teachers and centre staff the safety of the pupils is of paramount consideration and this, as we have shown previously, affected the ways in which the experience was interpreted and made available, particularly by the school teachers. Furthermore, concepts of safety also affected the ways in which the natural environment and the animals within could be 'imagined'. The 'creepi crawl' guidance sheet under safety states: 'Remember to take special care near the pond'.

Engagement with nature—critical incidents?

Observational data collected during the fieldwork suggested that the pupils were eager to explore the wooded and natural areas in the centre's grounds, in which the pond was located. However, in order to scare the children from swimming in the pond, there was a long-standing story narrated that conjured up an imaginary pigmy alligator contained in the pond. Not all the pupils are ready to believe the story about the alligator:

Susan (facilitator): [. . .] Don't swim in the pond! There's an alligator.

Pg1: Is there?

Pg2: No there isn't! (Field notes I, p. 3, 13.06.2005).

The story of the alligator or crocodile was quite a popular one, and some pupils would name it and swear that they saw it. The staff at the centre actively encouraged the perpetuation of this myth. An example of this is from observations at the pond and the pupils appear to be scared of it:

Pg1: Does it (the crocodile) go on both sides?

They quietly look for it. They think they see it. Whispering.

Pg2: What should we call it?

They pupils choose a name. [They seem happy]. They see Jimmy (facilitator). They run to tell him about the crocodile.

Jimmy: Wow, you are very lucky, it's a really shy crocodile (field notes IV, pp. 33–34, 22.05.2006).

In this episode we see the myth of the crocodile being perpetuated. Whilst one of the most dangerous elements for young children is water, we can ask a number of questions regarding the veracity and authenticity of this information given to the children and how and if this form of myth-making helps pupils to understand and engage with the natural environment. Certainly it is factually inaccurate as crocodiles and alligators rarely live for long in UK waters.

Another myth used was that of the bears living in the ditch in the low ropes course. In order to get across this ditch, the pupils would have to walk on the Burma bridge (a bridge made out of ropes). The teachers and the facilitators would perpetuate this myth to keep the pupils in check:

Teacher: Are there bears?

Facilitator (Tom): Yes, but they can't jump very high?

Ps: There are bears?!

Pb1: No, there aren't!

Tom: Yes, there are (field notes VII, p. 20, 12.05.2008).

Again this incident uses nature inaccurately to maintain control of the pupils' movements, thus rendering an inauthentic perspective of nature. Nature and the

animals referred to are merely being used for purposes that tend to value human beings at the expense of nature, rather than provide for a realistic and caring understanding of nature. Pupils in both incidents are ‘taught’ to be afraid of the natural world and not encouraged to take account of their actual natural environment.

Concluding remarks

Here we have provided two simple examples at the level of interaction where we highlight ‘critical incidents’ (Humberstone & Stan, 2011a) in relation to engagement with the natural environment. The teachers’/facilitators’ information was not ‘authentic’ in the sense referred to above; rather, they demonstrated a concern for ‘performativity’, expressed in these cases as safety performance. This knowledge may not be conducive to positive holistic or authentic learning and opportunities for teaching pupils responsibly about nature may have been lost. Arguably, as we suggest elsewhere (Humberstone & Stan, 2009, 2011b), actions of teachers are influenced, on occasions, by particular ‘policy discourses’ (Ball, 2008)—particularly around ‘risk’ and safety. We see this governance pervading the philosophy of the centre, which, as we have shown, is bound up in performativity, largely to the detriment of learning authentically about nature.

Policy discourses contribute to the construction of social meanings; they legitimate what constitutes appropriate forms of relationships, what is important, inevitable and most valued. According to Ball (2008, p. 42), it is through practical ‘policy devices’ or ‘technologies’ such as choice, performance management and competition (market, management and performance) that policy works in various ways to transform and modernise public-sector organisations, such as education, to connect the practices and processes to the ‘political economy of global capitalism’. No longer is the market seen as working for society and its folk; rather, individuals and organisations are required to work for the global markets (Sandel, 2009), through the deployment of policy technologies that organise human capital into reformed functioning systems (Ball, 2008). Through this paper we have shown that much of the teaching in the context of this centre is performative, concerned with emphasising teamwork and controlling the pupils rather than providing for their authentic engagement with nature. These particular practices, influenced through performative philosophy and policies, bring forth particular affects upon pupils and students in and through their learning, potentially transforming what is valued about education and being educated (Ball, 2008, p. 27). Arguably this is being enacted, on occasions, in the teaching and learning made available and accessible at this centre to the detriment of pupils’ authentic learning about nature. For pupils gain knowledge about themselves, perceive what is to be valued and how to understand and feel about their learning and themselves and about the natural world in the context of embedded policy discourse realised through different forms of teaching practice.

We acknowledge here Bernstein (1977, p. 85), for whom educational knowledge is a major regulator of the structure of experience, and who asks important questions in relation to knowledge such as: ‘How are forms of experience, identity and relations evoked, maintained and changed by the formal transmission of

knowledge and sensitivities?’ These questions are particularly pertinent in this climate of ‘performativity’ in western culture, where we understand the notion of ‘performativity’ to be the performance worth value of individuals (see Ball, 2008).

This paper has drawn attention to the taken-for-grantedness of nature and the natural environment in the provision of outdoor learning at one specific outdoor centre. It also highlights the ways in which authenticity may be compromised through the effects of performativity, where notions of safety, team work and social development can be privileged over learning authentically about nature.

However, it is important to note that whilst only a few activities specifically made nature and its living creatures the focus of the learning, most of the activities were located in nature and wooded areas. At the very least, it could be argued that pupils attending this centre were encountering, experiencing and exploring nature in a variety of ways and that nature may have formed a kind of bridge between their formal educational experiences and the non-formal educational experiences that were made available at the centre. But without holistic learning in nature, in which nature is respected and taken seriously, we cannot assume that learning about nature is necessarily and always authentic.

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Notes

1. I refer here to neo-liberalism as, ‘associated with the extension and enhancement of the market economy during the late 1990s and early twenty-first century’ (David, 2005, p. 113). The main aspects of neo-liberal ideology might be identified as the rule of the market, cutting public expenditure for social services, deregulation, privatisation and so forth. Chiapello and Fairclough (2002) critically analyse neo-liberal discourse and its hegemonic practices in management, providing a theoretical framework for the ‘new spirit of capitalism’.
2. Ina Stan undertook her research for her PhD at the centre between 2005 and 2006. Ina Stan was then funded as post-doctoral research assistant to Barbara Humberstone for the Well-being and Outdoor Pedagogies project from monies obtained from funding obtained through the 2008 Research Activity Exercise.
3. Observational data were collected in 2005, 2006 and 2008 as part of the Well-being and Outdoor Pedagogies project.
4. The British Educational Research Association ethical guidelines can be retrieved from <http://www.bera.ac.uk/ethics-and-educational-research-2/>

Author biographies

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Ina Stan was research assistant on the Well-being and Outdoor Pedagogies project and completed her PhD ‘Group interaction in the outdoor “classroom”. The process of learning in outdoor education’ in 2008.

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Appendix 1. Paradigm worksheet: analysis for kinds of activities

Activity	Place	Type	Conducted by	Degree of adult intervention / involvement	Perceived risk
Orienteering	Large area of centre grounds, outdoors	Team-building, competitive exercise	Centre staff / visiting teachers	Low–medium, sometimes high	Low (no safety equipment worn)
Parachute games	Small area of centre grounds, indoors or outdoors	Group interaction, fun orientated	Centre staff	High	Low
Low ropes course	Enclosed activity area of centre grounds, outdoors	Team-building exercise	Centre staff	Medium–high	High (safety equipment worn)
Blind string trail	Enclosed activity area of centre grounds, outdoors	Team-building exercise	Centre staff / visiting teachers	Medium–high	Medium (no safety equipment worn)
Environmental senses	Specific wooden area of centre grounds or at a nearby centre, outdoors	Individualistic experiential learning activity	Centre staff / visiting teachers	High	Low
Art	Small area of centre grounds or at a nearby centre, indoors or outdoors	Individualistic creative activity	Teachers / staff from a nearby centre	High	Low
Creepi crawl	Specific wooded area of centre grounds, outdoors	Individualistic experiential learning activity	Visiting teachers	High	Low
Campfire activities	Specific barbeque area of centre grounds, outdoors	Fun-oriented activity, involves the whole group	Centre staff	High	Low
Sport hall games	The centre's sports hall, indoors	Competitive activities	Centre staff	High	Medium
Swimming	The centre's swimming pool, indoors	Competitive, fun-orientated activities	Centre staff	High	Medium–high (lifeguards and teachers supervising)

(Continued)

Appendix 1. (Continued)

Activity	Place	Type	Conducted by	Degree of adult intervention / involvement	Perceived risk
Spider's web	Enclosed activity area of centre grounds, outdoors	Team-building exercise	Centre staff / visiting teachers	Medium-high	Medium
Krypton puzzles	Small area of centre grounds, indoors or outdoors	Team-building exercise	Centre staff / visiting teachers	Low-medium	Low
Scavenger Hunt	Large area of centre grounds, outdoors or inside the centre building	Team-building competitive exercise	Visiting teachers / centre staff	Low	Low
Eggs can fly	Small area of centre grounds indoors or outdoors	Team-building competitive exercise	Centre staff / visiting teachers	Low-medium	Low
Disco	The cellar of the centre building, indoors	Fun activity, involves the whole group	Centre staff	Low	Low
Toxic waste	Enclosed activity area of centre grounds, outdoors	Team-building exercise	Centre staff	Low-medium-high	Low
Recording studio	The centre's recording studio, indoors	Fun activity, individualistic, sometimes involves groups	Centre staff	Low-medium	Low
Connect force	Large area of centre grounds, outdoors or in the centre building, indoors	Team-building, competitive exercise	Centre staff	Low-medium	Low
Ghost story / walk	A grotto, outdoors or the centre building, indoors	Fun activity, involves the whole group	Centre staff	High	Low

(Continued)

Appendix 1. (Continued)

Activity	Place	Type	Conducted by	Degree of adult intervention / involvement	Perceived risk
Poisoned ground	Enclosed activity area of centre grounds, outdoors	Team-building exercise	Centre staff / visiting teachers	Medium–high	Medium (some safety equipment worn: gloves)
Shelter building	Large wooden area of centre grounds, outdoors	Team-building activity	Visiting teachers	Low	Low
Archery	The centre's sports hall, indoors or enclosed area, outdoors	Individualistic competitive exercise	Centre staff	High	Medium
Diary writing	Indoors	Individualistic activity	Visiting teachers	Medium	Low
Forest walk	The nearby forest, outdoors	Individualistic experiential learning activity	Centre staff / staff from a nearby centre	High	Low
Pond dipping	The centre's pond, outdoors	Individualistic experiential learning activity	Centre staff	High	Low
Video	The centre building, indoors	Fun, individualistic activity	Visiting teachers	High	Low
Raft building	Small area of centre grounds, outdoors and the swimming pool, indoors	Team-building competitive exercise	Centre staff	Medium	Medium–high (lifeguards and teachers supervising)
Climbing	Outside the centre's grounds, indoors	Individualistic activity	Staff from a nearby centre	Medium	High (safety equipment worn)
Astroturf games	Centre's Astroturf, outdoors	Competitive group interaction activity	Visiting teachers / centre staff	High	Low

Source: Adapted from Stan (2008).