



Summer 2021  
Issue 2

# The Outdoor Practitioner



## NATURAL PLAY PRINCIPLES

Building your approach and pedagogy for playing and learning outdoors

## Outdoor Hub

Make sun prints and bunting



## HAND WASHING

Effective outdoor hand hygiene

How to build a foot-operated soap dispenser



Outdoor case studies



BROUGHT TO YOU BY  
**MUDDYFACES**

IDEAS, ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS FOR THE OUTDOORS



# Welcome

to Issue Two of the

**Outdoor Practitioner** magazine!

Summer 2021



Hello to all Outdoor Practitioners

Whether you are newly emerging or established mud & fire experts – you are very welcome to join us round our imaginary campfire!

Our main feature this issue is all about hand washing in the outdoors - we're offering loads of tips and solutions to outside hygiene - always important and especially crucial at this time.

Other highlights include Jan White introducing the Natural Play Principles, fun with sun prints, and spotlights on projects doing great work outdoors.



Thank you as ever to all our contributors - from local projects to national organisations.

We were so delighted with the positive response to our first issue of The Outdoor Practitioner - thank you to everyone that got in touch, made nice comments, and shared and liked it all over the place! We're still learning and welcome your feedback and ideas for future issues.

Next time we'll have a Forest School focus, ready for Forest School Day on 11 October - yet another reason to celebrate playing and learning in the outdoors!

We encourage your contributions! We want this magazine to include a diverse range of articles about outdoor play and learning, representing all sorts of experiences and settings - tell us about your innovations, good practice, the barriers you face, etc. If you are an outdoor practitioner with something to share with the amazing community we're part of, do get in touch with your thoughts and ideas.

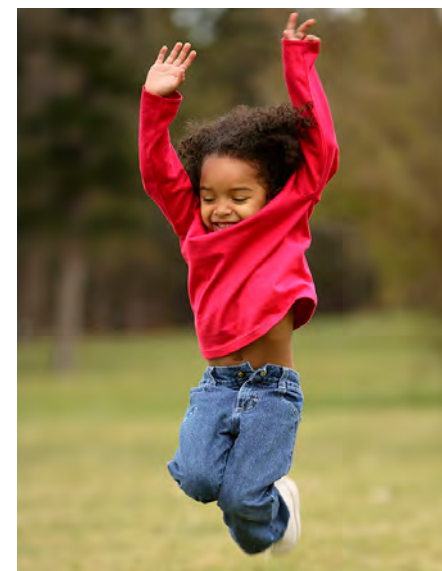
Have a great summer  
**Beccy Golding**  
The Outdoor Practitioner editor



## CONTENTS

### 4 The Natural Play Principles

Guiding principles for achieving the vision for all young children.



### 8 Learning Outside the Classroom

5 top tips for taking your lessons beyond the classroom walls.

### 9 Nature chatterbox

From the National Trust.



### 10 Sun print activities

Make the most of our summer sunshine & create fun sun prints and bunting.



### 12 FEATURE! Hand Washing

Information & advice on effective hand hygiene outdoors.



### 20 Build a foot-operated soap dispenser

An advanced Forest School activity from Richard Irvine.

### 23 Outdoor case study

From Learning through Landscapes.

### 24 Outdoor learning providers

Information from the Forest School Association, the National Forest & the Tree Council

### 27 Tree ID: oak

Learn how to identify the majesty of our UK woodlands, the oak tree.



### 28 Outdoor case study

Glasgow Clyde College.

### 30 Thrive outdoors

Supporting Scotland's children to grow, play and learn outdoors.



## The Outdoor Practitioner

A FREE online magazine for people passionate about working outdoors, brought to you by the outdoor specialists at Muddy Faces.

Muddy Faces has a range of resources to buy & the fantastic Outdoor Hub with free downloadable activities and ideas to get you outdoors.

Please contact us if you would like to contribute an article or share activities - our next issue will be a **Forest School Special!**

Outdoor Practitioner magazine: [beccy@muddyfaces.co.uk](mailto:beccy@muddyfaces.co.uk)  
Tel: 0114 221 9617

**Contributors:** Professor Jan White, Early Childhood Outdoors; Council for Learning Outside the Classroom; National Trust; Richard Irvine; Marianne Thomas, Learning through Landscapes; Forest School Association; The National Forest; The Tree Council; Deborah Meechan, Glasgow Clyde College; Inspiring Scotland.

**Editorial team:** Beccy Golding – editor, Neal Jobling - design, Liz Edwards, Clare Whiteley - writers, Clare Ruskin - research.

**Disclaimer:** Muddy Faces cannot take any responsibility for accidents or damage that occur as a result of following activities in our magazine.







# THE NATURAL PLAY PRINCIPLES

**BUILDING YOUR APPROACH AND PEDAGOGY FOR PLAYING AND LEARNING OUTDOORS** by Jan White

As settings strive to do their best for children and families, and when work practices are developing, it is critical to bring into full awareness the reasons for what we are doing and the values that underpin how we work – and it is important that these values are shared by all involved.

Our values create a firm basis for all thinking about playing and learning outdoors, providing solid foundations from which all decisions about provision and practice for young children will be made.

Establishing a belief in the importance of being outside, trust that learning happens well in the outdoors, and commitment to increasing the amount of time and the quality of experiences children can access in the outdoor environment is a slow and long-term process that requires on-going energy, lots of small steps of success and, very importantly, a clear set of guidelines.

Whilst ‘values’ articulate internally held beliefs, turning them into ‘principles’ gives more specific external ‘rules’ for enacting our values in the real world. We need to work from this clear pedagogical base to determine what we actually do in practice – the very many decisions and actions we carry out through provision and adult support.

In a series of articles, we plan to explore the Natural Play Principles, designed to articulate a child-centred and nature-focused approach called Natural Play (*White et al. 2011 & 2018*), developed over many years as a working collaboration\*. Natural Play foregrounds both the child’s inner and emerging natural curriculum and the very significant role of the natural world in enabling this. Natural Play enables children’s natural ways of growing, learning and thriving with the help of the natural world.

\*Collaboration between Jan White (Early Childhood Natural Play), Suzanne Scott (Sandfield Natural Play Centre), Ann Thompson (Naturally Creative and Sandfield Natural Play Centre) and Menna Godfrey (Quackers Playgroup & Natural Play Centre).

## THE NATURAL PLAY PRINCIPLES

Twelve principles that can guide the development of your approach, provision, pedagogy and practice:

- **A natural curriculum** (*see overleaf*)
- The natural world
- Authentic experiences
- Embodied learning
- Imagination, creativity and science
- Child-paced learning
- Adventure and adventuring
- Risk is an intelligent behaviour
- Belonging and caring
- Building an ecological identity
- Parental engagement and involvement
- Enabling adults to enable children





# A NATURAL CURRICULUM

A Natural Curriculum is the first Natural Play Principle and is often described as child-led play.

*“At the heart of our thinking is a belief that children’s own need and drive to learn can be trusted. The young child’s body and mind has its own developmental agenda and processes, which they should be empowered to find and follow. We respect their natural urge to play and enable a truly inclusive and child-led curriculum.”*

## WHY IS CHILD-LED PLAY IMPORTANT?

Research in children’s education makes it clear that learning that is satisfying, rewarding and effective occurs when the child is deeply engaged and involved – and that this happens when the learner is strongly motivated by the experience, because it is relevant and matters to them at that moment.

Children’s enormous curiosity and drive to explore, discover and come to know their world is innate and natural – it has been coded into us biologically through evolution so that we can survive and thrive in a continually

changing world. This means that children are driven intuitively to do what is needed to develop well, and to interact and experiment with the things, stuff and people that are in their world. Children therefore have a strong need to interact with and come to make sense of what is in the world, how the world works and how they fit into it, and are especially hard-wired to be interested in natural processes and how nature works.

By trusting each child’s own agenda – what they want to do, feel or be in this particular moment – we support them to find out about what they are naturally drawn to, investigate what they are really interested in, and follow this line of enquiry to their satisfaction.

Evolution has also crafted children to learn through playing with their world. In playful interactions with no set outcome, things, people and forces can be messed about with, moved, modified, recombined and fully explored.

The questioning, creativity, critical thinking and problem solving that this child-driven approach to finding out develops so well, have been identified as vital dispositions and skill sets for the economy and employment in the 21st century. Trusting child-driven, play-filled activity enables every child to be the highly-motivated self-directed learner that they are designed to be.



## PLANNING FOR POSSIBILITIES AND THE PLACE OF 'ACTIVITIES'

Enabling child-initiated and child-led play requires a rich and open environment, filled with possibilities that are appropriate to the children’s level of development and range of likely interests, and this comes from both knowing about children in general and knowing each individual child well.



Within such an environment, adult-initiated activities are likely to be of interest when they match what a child is currently interested in and driven to learn more about. Successful introduction of activities therefore needs alert adults who are attuned to this child and tuned into what is currently motivating them, so that a relevant activity can be offered. In this context, specific activities can be used in two effective ways: firstly to respond to and provide further opportunity

for the child to investigate and play with their demonstrated interest(s); and secondly to ‘seed’ new ideas – to offer provocations that give the child wider experiences, spark new thoughts and present additional ways to follow their interest.

Children are usually drawn by what others show energy for, and such interest can be contagious, so that one child’s involvement draws and inspires others. Activities that are flexible and open to being used in several ways are more playful and interesting, and therefore have much more value for children’s learning. A combination of simplicity with versatility (which nature is so good at) allows the child to take the activity in multiple directions, playing with it beyond the obvious or expected. However, flexibility in the supporting adult is also required – enjoying surprise and finding pleasure in what children do with the ideas we offer!

Plenty of non-directed time is also critical to success. Time-limited activities can suffer from a focus on product over process – the glue may well be far more interesting than the item being made! So, factor in lots of uninterrupted time, be prepared for a child to take the activity in entirely new directions, and leave the possibility for children to return to it at a later time to carry on investigating and experimenting. If the opportunity fits with their interests, they will probably come back to it when the time is right for them.

*‘Valuing the outdoors’ and ‘Putting Values into Practice’ by Jan White and Liz Edwards*



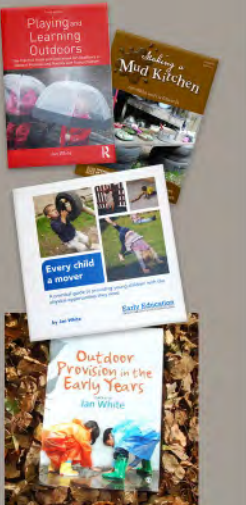
## ABOUT PROFESSOR JAN WHITE

Working across the UK and internationally, Jan is a leading thinker and writer on outdoor play, advocate for high quality outdoor provision for services for children from birth to seven, and co-founder/director

of Early Childhood Outdoors (ECO), the national (UK and Ireland) organisation for play, learning and wellbeing outdoors. With almost forty years’ experience in education, including working with Learning Through Landscapes and Early Excellence to develop national support for early years’ outdoor provision and as an Associate Lecturer at Sheffield Hallam and Birmingham City Universities (CREC), she has developed a deep commitment to the consistently powerful effect of the outdoors on young children. She is currently an Associate with Early Education, co-director

of training company Outdoors Thinking, and convenes the Landscapes for Early Childhood national network. With a childhood love of rocks and soil, leading to a degree in Soil Science, a masters in Ecology and post-graduate teaching certificate in Science and Outdoor Education, she realises that she has always been, at heart, a committed mudologist!

Jan is award-winning author of *Playing and Learning Outdoors: making provision for high quality experiences in the outdoor environment with children 3-7* (Routledge 2014), *Making a Mud Kitchen* (Muddy Faces 2012) and *Every Child a Mover* (Early Education 2016), editor of *Outdoor Provision in the Early Years* (Sage 2011), and collaborated with Siren Films to make the award-winning training DVDs *Babies Outdoors*, *Toddlers Outdoors* and *Two Year-olds Outdoors* (Siren Films 2011).





# 5 top tips for learning outside the classroom

Learning outside is more important today than ever before. The Council for Learning Outside the Classroom shares their top tips for taking your lessons beyond the classroom walls.

## 1. Just do it!

Don't wait until the outside 'classroom', garden or playground is finished, just take your group outside and work with what you have. Regardless of the size of the space you have – a few square metres of tarmac or a huge playing field, it offers a new and different learning environment. Once you start using it regularly you'll start to find new possibilities and opportunities.

## 2. Little and often

Don't set out with a vision for day-long full curriculum experiences, start small and grow. Give your pupils time to become familiar with preparing to go outside and increasing the amount of time they spend outside as part of their lessons. You'll also learn how long an activity can last and how you can expand or extend it and how it can be incorporated into other indoor lessons.

## 3. Make it a 'must do' rather than a 'nice to do'

Learning outside is a free or low-cost way to enhance your lessons and support your pupils. Learning outside has immense benefits for both your pupil's health and wellbeing and your own. It also provides context for classroom-based learning, making it relevant and understandable for your pupils.

## 4. Variety is the spice of life!

Once you are confident leading learning in your school grounds, why don't you walk to your local park, canal or town? As well as the excitement of venturing off-site, these different spaces will open up a host of new learning opportunities and help your pupils understand that learning can, and does, happen everywhere.

## 5. Get some help

The Council for Learning Outside the Classroom is the national voice for learning outside the classroom and has a wealth of resources and information to help you plan, deliver and evaluate your learning sessions. Members can also access activity ideas and curriculum-linked lesson plans as well as receiving a host of other benefits. Find out more about how CLOtC can help you get the most from your outdoor learning experiences at [www.lotc.org.uk](http://www.lotc.org.uk)



**Join CLOtC and take your teaching outside the classroom more often**

**FREE** curriculum-linked resource packs

**FREE** online workshops and discounted CPD training

**FREE** on-line CPD courses

**DISCOUNTS** on learning outside the classroom resources

**Join today: [www.lotc.org.uk](http://www.lotc.org.uk)**

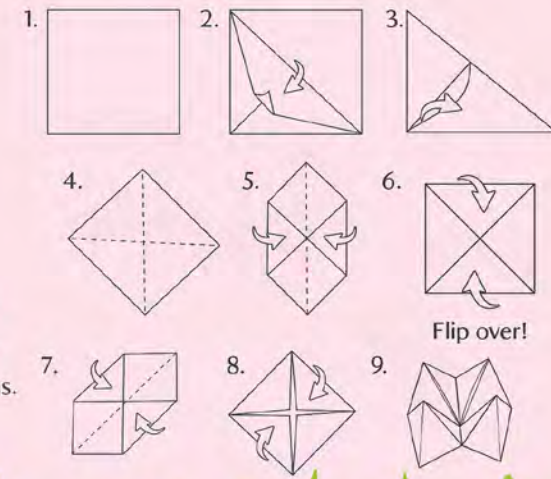


National Trust

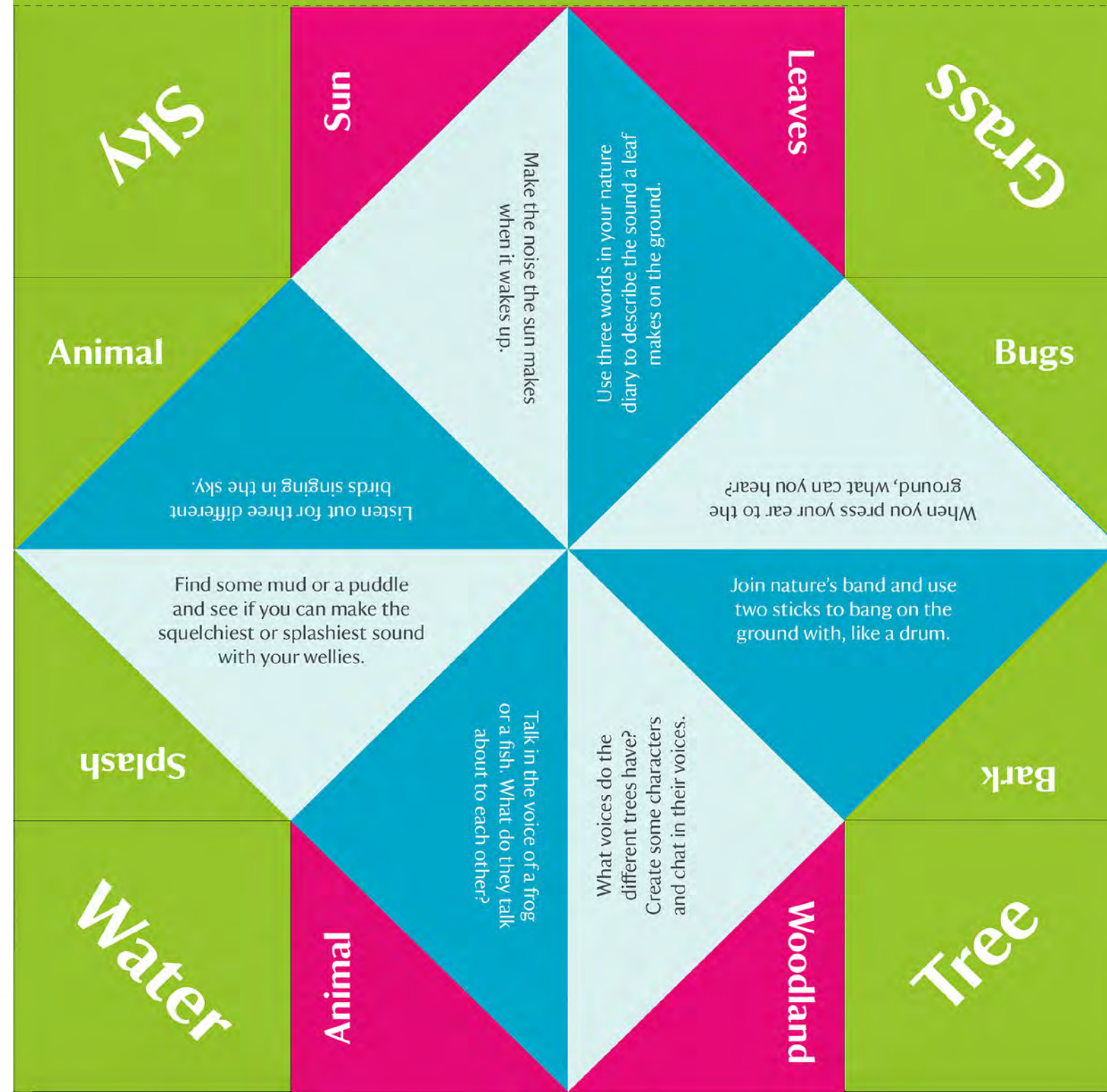


Nature chatterbox

Tune in to nature's voice when you print out this chatterbox and follow the instructions. You might be surprised at how much noise nature can make!



Discover more fun activities to do with the kids at: [nationaltrust.org.uk/for-families](http://nationaltrust.org.uk/for-families) © National Trust 2020. The National Trust is a registered charity no. 205846





# Sun print bunting

Cyanotype is a photographic printing process using the sun. Use it to create beautiful bright blue fabric bunting or sun prints!

## Introduction

The blue print fabric is light-sensitive, 100% cotton, treated for cyanotype. Cyanotype is a printing process that produces a cyan-blue print. Engineers used to use the process as a low-cost way to produce copies of drawings, referred to as blueprints. Two chemicals are used: ferric ammonium citrate and potassium ferricyanide.

## What you'll need:

- Colour changing fabric • natural materials • cardboard • pins • scissors
- string/wool • water & container • protective waterproof gloves

## Preparation

You will need a bright, sunny day for this activity and somewhere to show off the finished product! Prepare some cardboard to

pin your fabric pieces onto. Collect some natural materials (or have a collection to use if you don't have much on your doorstep). Look for interesting-shaped leaves and flowers. If you are doing this activity away from mains drainage you'll need water and a container to hold the used rinsing water, to be taken off site for disposal.

## Environmental and health & safety considerations:

- Leave no trace
- Dispose of water used for rinsing in mains drainage
- Follow your usual operating procedures and carry out appropriate risk benefit assessments
- Wear protective gloves when rinsing – chemicals used are mild irritants, or when using scissors and string
- Hand wash after activity



## Step 1 – prepare the fabric

Remove the blue print fabric from the packaging-though it is called blue print the un-exposed fabric is green. Cut the fabric as desired for making bunting or a picture. We cut some triangular bunting pieces and used the off-cuts for mini-bunting – waste nothing! **NB:** Exposure to indoor daylight/incandescent light will not affect the fabric so you have time to prepare indoors or in a shaded area. Fluorescent light and sunlight will affect the fabric.



## Step 2 – create your image

Pin your fabric pieces onto the cardboard. Place your objects on top of the fabric and play around with your positioning and arrangements. **Tip:** Flat natural materials will give a much crisper print; non-flat materials will leave a more delicate shadow effect. **Tip:** Use pins to hold objects down. Push the pin right through the card to avoid a pin shadow print. We also experimented with a 'tie dye' style wrap-up!



## Step 3 – expose the fabric

Expose the fabric to direct sunlight. The process takes 5-10 minutes on a sunny day (we left ours out for 10 minutes), and 15-30 minutes on cooler/less bright days. The fabric will change from the original green to a grey-green colour.



## Step 4 – remove from sunlight

Remove the objects from the fabric. From now on keep the fabric out of direct sunlight.



## Step 5 – stop the process

Wearing protective gloves, rinse the fabric under a tap until the water runs clear, or rinse it in a container (you will notice the water changing to a slight green colour). Dispose of the rinsing water into a mains drain.

## Step 6 – drying

Dry the fabric flat, out of direct sunlight. The images will sharpen during drying time.

## Step 7 – make the bunting

Attach your bunting to string – we used a hole punch then threaded wool through to hold it all together. Now you can show off your beautiful bunting!



## Take it further:

- have a go at tie dye
- use a large piece of fabric and get creative on a grander scale
- have a go at sun printing on paper (next page)

See this sun print bunting activity on the **Outdoor Hub**

# Making prints with sun print paper

## Introduction

Cyanotype is a photographic printing process that uses the sun to create wonderful cyan-blue prints.

## How does it work?

The sun-sensitive material is coated with light-sensitive chemicals. When exposed to light the chemicals react to the light waves and particles. When objects are positioned on the material they block the light and the effect the sun has on the chemicals. Water is then used to stop the process and fix the images. The area protected from the sun by the object will be a pale blue/white and the area exposed to the sun will be a richer colour, depending on the type of paper, card or material that you use. In the activity below we're using sun print paper.



## Environmental & health & safety considerations

- Remember to leave no trace and dispose of water used for rinsing in mains drainage
- Be aware when collecting natural materials
- The chemicals – ferric ammonium citrate and potassium ferricyanide – are mild irritants, so wear protective gloves and wash hands afterwards

- Follow your usual operating procedures & carry out appropriate risk benefit assessments

## What you'll need

- water
- a pack of sun print paper, card or fabric
- a piece of thick cardboard and some pins
- a selection of natural materials/objects
- a waterproof container the size of the print paper

## Preparation

Choose a nice sunny day for this activity! Have everything you need to hand and ready to go – the process starts to happen quickly.



## Step 1 – gather your objects

Explore your local surroundings and find some **FLAT** objects to print. You can experiment with non-flat items but the contrast of the print isn't as clear. You could have a basket of objects, like keys, buttons or lace, to experiment with. Talk about what the image may look like and discuss how the sun paper works.



## Step 2 – prepare your sun-sensitive paper

Ideally do this step in the shade and have your items to hand so you can place them quickly.

Remove a sheet of sun-sensitive paper from the pack and pin it to each corner of the cardboard (**BLUE SIDE UP**). This will hold the paper in place and stop it from being blown away. Alternatively, place the paper in a high-sided container for wind protection.

**NB** If you use thumbtacks or drawing pins you will get small circle prints in each corner. Using needlework pins will reduce this effect.



## Step 3 – arrange your objects

Arrange the objects on top of the sun sensitive paper – do this in the shade and/or act quickly – as soon as the paper is exposed to the sun it will begin to react and will leave the background of the finished print a lighter shade of blue (see hand in main photo at top).

**Tip:** If you want to use lightweight items like feathers you can cover the



whole thing with clingfilm or a piece of clear plastic (like an acetate sheet that might be lurking at the back of a store cupboard!) instead of using pins. You could also punch holes in the corner of the acetate (cut to the size of the sun-sensitive paper) and pin the whole lot together.

## Step 4 – expose the paper

Carefully move your paper and arranged objects into direct sun. Expose the paper to strong sunlight until the blue paper turns a very pale blue. This will take 2-5 minutes.

**Tip:** Place the sun paper/card/container on a raised surface to prevent items being knocked off the paper; particularly if you are doing this with very young children.

**Tip:** Adjust the position to minimise shadows that are cast from more solid objects.



## Step 5 – stop the process

Carefully take your exposed sun paper into a shady area. Remove the objects & whilst protecting the print from direct sun soak it in a container of water for about 1 minute.

**NB** Any image will disappear whilst the paper is soaking and then will gradually reappear towards the end of the minute.

## Step 6 – dry the paper

Dry the print flat. The images will sharpen during drying time. If it is windy weigh down the print to stop it blowing away.

**Tip:** The paper will go a bit wrinkly; try blotting the excess water first with a cloth.

## Take it further

- experiment with a range of objects, light sources and exposure time
- cut the prints out and make a collage or make a card for someone

See this sun print activity on the **Outdoor Hub**

Disclaimer: Muddy Faces cannot take any responsibility for accidents or damage that occurs as a result of following this activity. Follow your usual operating procedures and carry out appropriate risk benefit assessments.



# hand washing

Enhanced hand hygiene is at the core of public health measures underpinning the reopening of early child care services across the UK. Settings are now expected to ensure that there are increased hand washing facilities available, allowing children and practitioners to access them more frequently throughout the day.

Article written by Liz Edwards



## What is effective hand washing?

We have heard a lot about this in the media over the last year and we are all now aware that washing our hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds at appropriate and regular times throughout the day will help prevent transmission of a variety of infectious diseases.

## Soap vs hand sanitiser

Using soap and water has now been highlighted as the most effective and practical way of cleansing your hands. Soap contains a fat-like material that dissolves parts of the SARS-CoV-2 virus making it inactive. In tests it has been shown that you need a lot of antibacterial gel to be as effective as soap and water.

The effectiveness of gel is also decreased when hands are dirty, eg covered in mud.

*\*\*Non-statutory guidance for early learning and childcare (ELC) providers states only use antibacterial hand gel for children when soap and water is unavailable. Antibacterial hand gel should not be used by children under 12 months.*



## Dry hands thoroughly

A system that does not allow cross contamination is required - no shared towels.

Disposable paper towels or kitchen roll are the obvious choice to be used as each piece is thrown away after use - but this does bring with it environmental considerations. Many settings have designed systems using small towels (hand flannels) that are used once and put in a bin to be washed and reused. Others have devised named hand towels and peg systems that are re-used throughout the day by the same individual and washed at the end of the day. This is harder to achieve with larger numbers.

### Practitioner comment:

*"As practitioners we all know that getting 30 children to wash their hands thoroughly requires expert management and takes time! This can be more challenging if you only have one sink, an empty soap dispenser and somebody has just flooded the toilets again!"*

## Water use

Use clean, running, tepid water. Running water is important as it washes any contamination off the hands. Do not use a communal bowl. Ideally the water should be tepid (lukewarm). Although water temperature doesn't affect the effectiveness of hand washing, it will make the experience more comfortable, which means that the individual is more likely to wash their hands for the required length of time than if the water is too cold or too hot.

Provide height-appropriate hand washing stations and consider the type of tap being used for age and ability. Explore ways to make hand hygiene more fun - use visual cues, hang photographs up, and sing songs, ideally ones that the children have created themselves for increased ownership.

Gradually incorporate hand washing into daily routines and always supervise children washing their hands and provide assistance if required.

## When to hand wash

For hand washing to be effective practitioners need to create and apply protocols for their own settings. Hand washing should be encouraged on arrival, after toileting, before and after eating, and when moving between different areas.

## Intuitive hand hygiene

Ideally children need to hand wash independently, the systems and equipment used need to support this.



**Q:** How are settings supposed to create increased hand washing facilities?

**A:** The most straightforward way to do this is to increase the number of hand washing stations available. This will reduce the demand at each station and speed up the process significantly.

**Q:** How do we install more handwashing stations when plumbing for hand washing facilities indoors can be expensive, and where do you put them when space is a premium?

**A:** Your outdoor space could offer the options you need to increase the number of hand washing stations available.





### Hand washing outdoors

There are many advantages of adding hand washing stations to your outdoor space but also a couple of significant barriers and issues. It's important to consider what sort of hand washing system will work best for your setting.

#### Why outdoors?

Settings are being encouraged to maximise the use of their outdoor space with hand wash stations outside because:

- Children & practitioners can clean their hands without having to head indoors to a confined space
- Portable stations can be placed & moved wherever you like and do not need to be plumbed in, making them a versatile & cheaper option
- There are not the same concerns about spillages & splashes outdoors that you may have indoors
- Sunlight or, more specifically, solar UV radiation (UV) acts as a natural virucide which means there is a natural sanitation of surfaces occurring when in direct sunlight, helping to reduce chances of virus spreading

#### What are the potential issues?

- A non-plumbed system needs filling

& emptying - with lower capacity units this could become tiresome and a chore that pulls practitioners away from supporting rich play to frequent visits to empty waste water

- The weather - a successful system will be required to protect hand towels from the rain. If it is cold then it's even more important to dry hands well to prevent chills & chapping. In temperatures below freezing, units with water in them will need to be protected

- Cleaning & maintenance - an outdoor wash station may well require a different cleaning regimen to an indoor sink & a cover may be required to prevent bird droppings etc

#### Choosing a hand washing system - factors to consider:

##### Effectiveness

**Ask:** Does it work? Will it support your setting in the correct way? Watch out for cheap systems that have not been built or engineered robustly/ drips or leaks that mean there won't be enough water available when needed.

##### Ease of use

**Ask:** Is the station the correct height for the user? Is the water outlet in a comfortable place? If it is too high water will run past the elbows soaking

clothing, and if it is too low then it will be awkward to use. Ensure the child doesn't have to reach excessively to rinse their hands.

##### Water flow and taps

Using systems that are not connected to the mains requires a balance between water conservation & having enough flow to wash hands effectively. Be aware that a tap without an auto close could be left on, allowing all the water to run out. A foot pump is ideal as there is no need for hands to touch taps. Some foot pumps require a certain amount of strength. **Ask:** Can younger children use a foot pump system independently?

▼ Flappy or spring tab taps are good as you press them and they release a set amount of water.



▼ A SaveAqua tap releases water when you press up with the back of your hand - water flows over the tap onto your hands.



##### Capacity

One of the main considerations if you are increasing your hand washing provision and using a non mains connected system is capacity. A larger capacity system needs to be filled up & emptied much less often than a smaller capacity tank.

##### Hand wash capacity comparison

Different systems release different amounts of water. This chart compares different capacity systems based on a 200ml 10-second wash. If the system releases more water on each wash the number of washes will decrease, and vice versa.

Capacity	Number of 200ml 10 second washes
1 ltr	5
3 ltr	15
10 ltr	50
35 ltr	175
50 ltr	250

##### Waste water disposal

**Ask:** How is the waste water removed if it flows to a tank? The larger the tank capacity the less often it will need to be emptied. But if the tank is too large it can be heavy to transport & empty.

##### Health & hygiene

**Ask:** What is the system made out of? Some materials are better for supporting virus reduction, such as non absorbent surfaces like stainless steel or plastic. **Ask:** Is it easy to clean and are parts removable & wipeable? Does it have a cover to help it stay clean when not in use?

##### Cost

Your budget will dictate what systems you can purchase, but you could surprise yourself with a little ingenuity. If you are feeling creative you could create a cheap system that works really well for your setting using recycled items.

##### Do it Yourself

A well-known system that is used all over the world is the Tippy tap - there are plenty of 'how to' videos on the internet to make your own.

A new one-foot-operated system we've seen on YouTube is called a **Tubey tap by Chris Ensor** and

Richard Irvine has kindly shared instructions on how to make a foot operated soap dispenser (*you'll find them on p20*).

Juliet Robertson from [creativestartlearning.co.uk](http://creativestartlearning.co.uk) has a useful [blog exploring hand hygiene outdoors](http://blogexploringhandhygieneoutdoors) particularly if you are heading offsite. In it she highlights an inexpensive washing line system using a spa tap. The children move along the line from left to right. (*see photo below*)

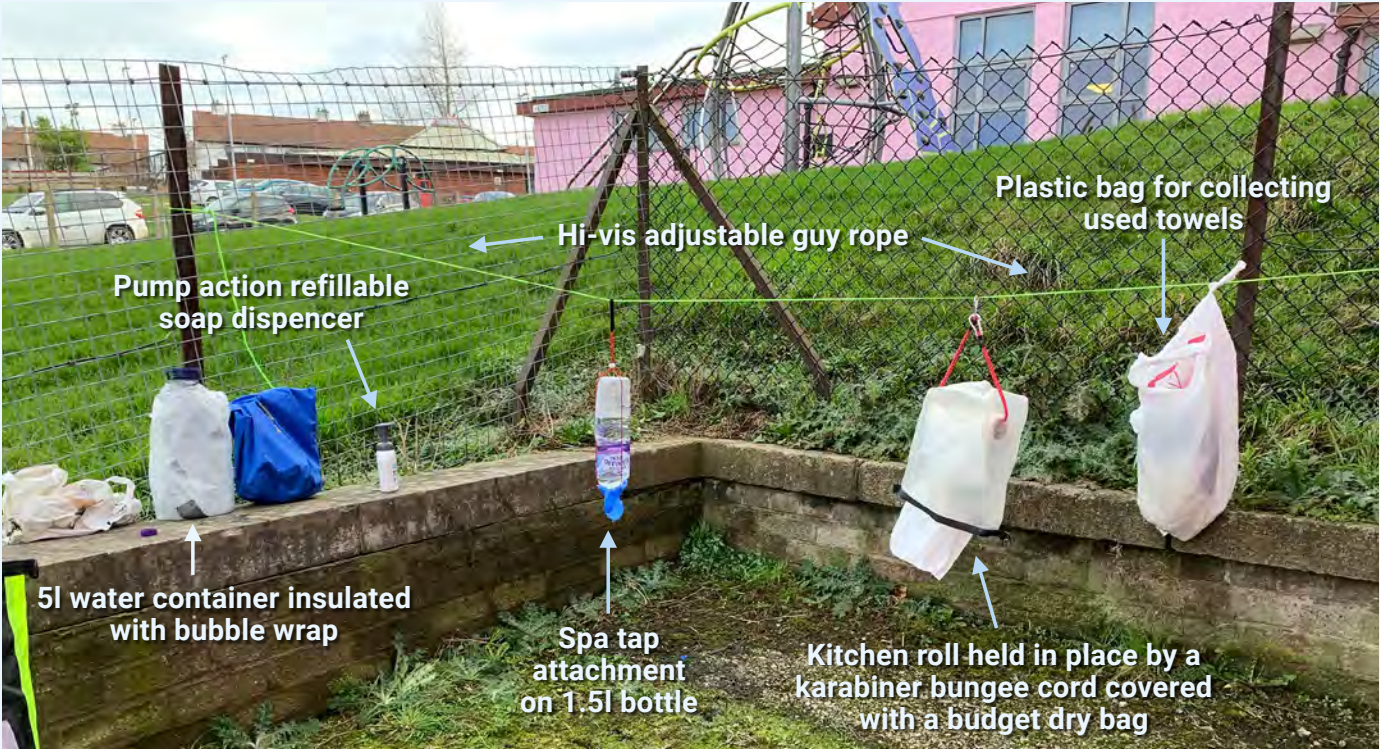
Creating a system like this with the help of the children involved will increase the likelihood of the system being used effectively and independently by them.

##### Space

The space you have may dictate what systems you can use. **Ask:** How far away is your water source for filling tanks and emptying waste? What is the ground like - will it get muddy if water is spilt frequently on it?

##### Longevity

The system needs to be robust enough to handle frequent hand washing. If it is cheap or not designed for purpose you may find you are replacing the system frequently.







## What hand washing systems are available to buy?

The number of ideas, products & systems for hand washing are increasing all the time, with many options for different budgets. Most of these options are available from Muddy Faces.

### Portable mains free systems - low capacity

There are some clever devices, specifically designed to enable effective hand washing where there is limited water supply. These work really well if you are travelling or have a small group.



#### ▲ The Spa Tap Portable Tap (capacity - varies)

A fab ultra-light (just 82gms) invention made from highest quality UV-stable, food & water-safe flexible silicone. It can be squashed down very small and attached to different sizes of bottles, transforming them into a flow-controllable water-saving tap. Hang it on a tree or fence with the hook and loop strap for quick, easy hand washing. It can even be attached to a big watercooler bottle to give a large capacity option.

**Disadvantages:** It fits some bottles better than others. This juice bottle (above) fitted perfectly but a 2ltr pop bottle with a wide top didn't fit as well, letting air in and making it drip. You need to touch the plug to switch the tap on and off.



#### ▲ The SaveAqua Self Closing Tap (capacity - varies)

A really nifty gadget made from high quality durable materials, which can be used in various ways:

- A.** Use the internal cutting device to cut a perfect hole in the lid of a bottle then attach the tap to the lid. Fill the bottle, attach the lid and tap, turn upside down and you have an instant hand washer.
- B.** Attach it to a solar shower for a warm wash.
- C.** Simply use the cutter to cut a hole in a container and hang it up. ▼



The SaveAqua Tap works by pushing up with the back of your hand, releasing the water over the tap, rinsing any contaminants away. When you remove your hand the tap

drops down to block the flow and the water stops. It's easy to use and very effective. We've seen devices like this before but they were poorly made and dripped, but the SaveAqua Tap is well-engineered and we had no drips at all in our testing. It was designed to save water and releases the ideal amount to wash your hands without wasting water.

**Disadvantages:** It has a cutting device in it under a screw top. But if you do not want or require the cutting device it can be removed with pliers and/or the cap glued shut.



#### ▲ KiddiWash Xtra (capacity 8ltrs)

Portable, robust and easy to clean, this is specifically-designed to provide an effective and fun hand wash. It's entirely self-contained: just fill with warm water and the KiddiWash Xtra will keep the water warm for hours. The lightweight flippi-tap is perfect for little fingers, enabling children to activate a steady spray of warm water that's the perfect temperature for hand washing every time – both indoors and out!

**Disadvantages:** It's capacity is on the lower range, requiring it to be refilled and emptied more often than larger units.

### Non mains connected systems - mid capacity

There are a number of different items in this mid capacity (15-30ltr) range, most of which are not designed specifically for hand washing but do a good job. Separate waste collection will need to be organised as well as a way to minimise cross contamination from taps.



#### ▲ Jerry Cans

A jerry can with a tap is a very cheap option. You can usually increase and decrease the flow. A good quality jerry can is robust and designed to be transported around.

**Disadvantages:** The taps can be a bit stiff and tricky to use for independent hand washing, plus you have to touch the tap to turn it on and off.



#### ▲ Solar Showers

Solar showers are flexible and roll up small. They can be 20-40ltr in capacity and are designed to add some warmth to the water if the sun is shining. They can be hung up at a convenient height. On some makes the shower pipe can be cut down to turn it into a hand wash. The tap allows flow to be increased or decreased. Different brands have different tap mechanisms, some better than others. We have found that Mil-Tec camp showers have an easy-to-use tap and a SaveAqua Tap can be added to

create a touch-free system if you wish.

**Disadvantages:** They are designed to warm water but they can struggle in the UK weather. On the other end of the scale, if it is very sunny the water can get very hot, so always check temperature before use.

#### ◀ Thermal Water Dispensers

Different brands range significantly in price. Of the better quality brands, Igloo dispensers are one of the cheaper ones on the market. This yellow range is available in 11, 19 & 38ltrs capacities. They are designed for keeping drinking water cool but some settings use them as hand washing systems, using the thermal capacity to keep water warm. The corded lid prevents heat loss and maintains hygiene. The handles are reinforced to provide extra strength.

**Disadvantages:** The push button tap is quite tricky to use for hand washing but you can unscrew it and swap the tap it comes with for a different flip-style tap that would work better. Larger tanks are heavy and need to be placed on a very stable surface.





Non mains connected systems  
- large capacity

These systems have been designed and created by Muddy Faces, specifically for educational and outdoor settings.

The Gravity 35Ltr system

Holds a lot of water, allowing for many hand washes - approx 170 per refill - and the waste drains away into handy-sized jerry cans making overall daily maintenance less frequent and much easier than units with smaller capacities.

The Gravity 35Ltr system utilises the easy to use SaveAqua Tap - a simple yet clever system that allows water to be released with a touch from the back of a hand, reducing cross contamination.

**Disadvantages:** The tank is heavy when filled and needs to be positioned on a very stable surface

The Pump 50l system

Has a massive tank that requires no connection to the mains and the easy-use foot pump system allows you to wash your hands with no hand contact and therefore little opportunity for cross contamination. The unique pump system has been designed to make the flow of the water just right for hand washing and reduces unnecessary water consumption. The unique pump design requires only light foot pressure making it ideal for children and people with limited physical strength.

Our systems can be placed on a sturdy table or a wall. A fence/tree pump system is great if space is tight but may only be suitable for older children who can use the foot pump.



Gravity 35l system



Pump 50l system

Mains connected systems

The simplest of these options is a hose over a drain, very easy to install and even better if you can run warm water through the hose and attach a SaveAqua Tap.

A permanent outdoor sink plumbed to the mains is at the upper end of the

budget scale but is a very effective solution, especially if warm water can also be plumbed in and suitable drainage built in as well. Having a sink installed means you can have it built at the correct height for children and you can choose a tap system that they can use independently.

A mains connected mobile unit would be another option at the higher

end of the budget scale. The main problem with these is that they are adult height and not effective to use with small children. They also require mains and drainage, and some also require mains electricity, which opens up more complications. If looking at these options, make sure the units are suitable for the outdoors.



Newly plumbed in sinks at Quackers in York

Environmental considerations

Increased use of water and its safe disposal, and increased use of disposables such as PPE and hand towels.

Drains

If you plan to run your outdoor handwashing directly into the drain you need to check what type of drain it is first. Drains are underground pipes that take water away from your buildings, they can be combined or separate.

• Combined

A single pipe collecting your wastewater and rainwater runoff. Properties built before 1970 are likely to have a combined drains system.

• Separate drains for waste and rainwater

Rainwater is untreated. It's also described as 'storm water'. The surface water drain takes it directly to rivers and beaches. The drain for **rainwater** collects rainwater from roofs, driveways and roads.

The **wastewater** drain takes foul water to the local wastewater treatment works. Wastewater comes from toilets, sinks, baths and showers, washing machines, dishwashers, etc. Most properties built since 1970 have separate drains for rainwater and wastewater.

**IMPORTANT!** If you run detergents or soap into the rainwater drain, you could be causing water pollution.



# How to make a foot operated soap dispenser for Forest School



by Richard Irvine

## An advanced Forest School activity for children to practise the skill of drilling.

"Returning to running training or Forest School sessions after lockdown requires a few adaptations to the informal, pre-covid way of doing things. Reading reams of conflicting government advice and writing new risk benefit assessments and operating procedures takes quite a lot of time and mental energy, so it was good to get hands on and invent the main thing that I was missing – a hands free soap dispenser. Soap on a rope might have been a safe and practical option but could quickly become unappealing and is counter intuitive for users. I had a training course due to start that had been postponed for 4 months and needed a solution.

This article shows the results with enough step-by-step photos for you to make your own if you want to. I made one for the camp and another by the loo. They sit alongside a standard Tippy Tap and have had a weekend of testing with a group of 9 adults and seemed to keep working well – how it would hold up to use by children remains to be seen!

Once you have gathered everything you need, this project should take no more than one hour from start to finish."

### Tools you will need:

- bow saw
- knife
- twist drill with 7 or 8mm bit
- auger bit and brace – sized to fit the top of the soap bottle
- axe or froe
- mallet
- hammer

### Materials:

- liquid soap in a pump bottle
- old bike inner tube
- paracord
- clout nails
- 5m endless ratchet strap
- length of roundwood, 10 – 15cm diameter (ash or chestnut are ideal)



**1.** Split your length of wood through the centre. This piece was axed flat years ago as part of a camp seat. It was close at hand so I grabbed it to use.



**2.** With the wood held securely in a sawhorse, saw a groove in the bark side about 5 or 6cm from the end. The groove should stop at least 2cm from the flat side of the wood.



**3.** Place the bottle on the wood as shown, to measure how tall the stand needs to be. Saw it off a few cms beyond the top of the pump handle when it is extended.



**4.** Place the wood upright on a stump and very carefully measure up where to cleave with your axe or froe. The aim is to remove the section of wood above the groove, leaving a backplate with an integrated shelf. It will look like a high backed chair.



**5.** Hopefully you now have something that looks like this.



**6.** Time to use the offcut from cleaving to make the top block that will press on the pump handle. Saw a groove a few mm deep, all the way around the bark side. This should be about 1cm from the end of the wood. Pay attention to holding this short length of wood safely while you saw.



**7.** Use your knife to carve a V shaped channel down to the base of the saw cut made in step 6.



**8.** Turn the wood over and drill a large hole using the bit and brace. This hole should have a diameter as wide as that of the pump handle. It should be a couple of cms deep but not go all the way through the wood.



**9.** Use the knife to carve a tapered channel from the auger hole to the edge that will house the nozzle of the pump handle.



**10.** Turn the wood over and saw off the section that you have been working on. The gap from the back of the drilled hole to the back edge of the wood should be small enough to not touch the back piece of the stand when the device is assembled.

(continued overleaf)





**11.** Cut a length of the bicycle inner tube long enough to wrap around the backplate with some overlap. Wrap the tube around in a position where it will hold the soap bottle firmly against the backplate. Attach it with a clout nail or two. Check the length so that they don't go through the backplate and puncture the soap bottle!



**12.** Choose a tree or post to attach the soap dispenser to. Place it at a comfortable height for users to place their hands. Strap the backplate to the tree or post with an open ended ratchet strap (£4 each from Screwfix). If the dispenser is going to be in place for any length of time, use some

form of bark protector underneath the strap. Mine will be removed every couple of days so there shouldn't be any damage to the bark occurring.

**13.** Either split a plank from your leftover wood in step 1 or find a bit of scrap wood to make the foot pedal. Cut to length (30cms ish). Drill a large hole in one end and a smaller 8mm hole in the other end.



**14.** Cut a peg to hold the front of the pedal in place through the big hole.



**15.** Cut a length of paracord a bit longer than twice the height of the ground to the top of the pump block. Find the middle and place it in the groove at the top of the pump block.



**16.** Thread both ends of the paracord through the small hole in the pedal board and adjust the length so that they hold the end of the board up enough to give one squirt of soap when the pedal is depressed. Tie them in a double overhand knot under the hole. This can easily be adjusted and finely tuned to exert the right amount of pressure on the block. Make sure that this small hole is directly underneath the shelf that the soap sits on otherwise the top block will be pulled forward off the soap bottle. This stage takes a bit of testing and tweaking but hopefully will result in a functional woodland soap dispenser in the end.



**Richard Irvine**  
FSA endorsed Forest School trainer  
and verified practitioner

I enable staff and pupils to get the most from outdoor experiences. Through training adults, leading one-off sessions or running bespoke programmes, the genuine cross-curricular potential of learning outside the classroom can be unlocked. Promoting child-initiated learning is central to what I do, based on 20 years of teaching, management and training.  
[richardirvine.co.uk](http://richardirvine.co.uk)

Richard's books: [Forest Craft](#) and [Wild Days](#) are available in our shop



CASE STUDY:

# Overcoming outdoor learning barriers at Grand-y-Care Academy

By Marianne Thomas

Staff at Grand-y-Care Academy in Lanark, Scotland, are eager to make the most of every outdoor learning opportunity. With plenty of green space in the Grand-y-Care school grounds, the staff team have made a vegetable patch, have implemented Forest School sessions for early years, and take children outdoors for learning and play every day.

However, recent staff changes and social restrictions during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic have meant that not all teachers at Grand-y-Care Academy have felt confident to lead outdoor learning.

Claire, Manager and Forest School Leader at Grand-y-Care Academy, said: "Due to COVID restrictions it has been difficult for us to offer support and guidance to each other on outdoor play. This has meant that the children are missing out on some vital learning opportunities."

That's why Grand-y-Care applied for a Local School Nature Grant from Learning through Landscapes, the UK's leading charity in outdoor learning and play. Recipients of the grants can access free, expert-led outdoor learning training for up to 25 members of staff, as well as £500 of outdoor learning equipment of their choice.

Grand-y-Care Academy chose to focus their training on loose parts and den building, learning simple techniques for construction and exploring the use of resources to support the lessons.

Claire said: "We all really enjoyed the training and Jane, our trainer, was fantastic! As the training was interactive, it gave the staff team the opportunity to experience the learning that children can gain through play. The training has also helped the staff working with younger children develop their knowledge of how even young children can take part in loose part play."

"We hope that from the training we will be able to develop children's awareness of risk assessing for themselves and, by taking part in more risky outdoor play, for them to continue to develop their creativity, confidence and physical skills."



Learning  
through  
Landscapes

As the UK's leading charity in outdoor learning and play, Learning through Landscapes has over 30 years' experience in transforming school grounds and helping children and young people to better connect with nature. Funded by players of the People's Postcode Lottery, Learning through Landscapes' Local School Nature Grants are open to all schools and early year settings with at least 5 staff and a dedicated building across England, Wales and Scotland.

Find out more about how you can apply at [ltl.org.uk](http://ltl.org.uk)





## Forest School Provider

RECOGNISED

The national FSA Recognised FS Provider Scheme is open to applications from individuals or settings wishing to be recognised by the FSA as providing Forest School experiences in line with all 6 core Forest School principles.

It is a supportive development tool, offering benchmarks that help you meet professional standards for Forest School provision. Any nursery, school, organisation or freelance provider, may apply.

Membership provides a supportive Forest School network, and offers the opportunity to promote your Forest School provision to the public and the Forest School community via a searchable online map and database. Each Registered Provider receives up to four individual FSA memberships, building the confidence and practice of your Forest School team.

Members identify the value of the reflective process. Supported throughout by the FSA, this scheme helps members raise the quality of their provision, improving outcomes for their groups:

*"As soon as we saw the new FSA Recognised Forest School Provider scheme, we knew this was one for us. Forest School is a key part of our ethos and values ...it is a vital part of our children's education and character development. We were delighted to receive the recognition... it emphasises our commitment to Forest School and the hard work of our whole school team. It will help us go from strength to strength in this approach and give us even more confidence when we promote what we do and offer support and training to other schools."*

Headteacher, Sparkwell Primary School

Visit [www.forestschoollassociation.org](http://www.forestschoollassociation.org) to continue your learning journey.



THE NATIONAL FOREST

# Creating a Forest for Learning

Since the first trees were planted in 1991, three decades on and the **National Forest** in the Midlands has come into its own as a rich resource for its communities. Not only during this last strange year, when people have had unexpected time to discover the Forest on their doorstep, but the woodlands have now grown into spaces in which children can wonder and learn.

**The National Forest Company** has cultivated outdoor learning and environmental education for children in the Forest for many years, and extended this to youngsters from nearby inner city schools when funds have allowed, but three years ago we established a dedicated project called **Creating a Forest for Learning**, aiming to help every child in the Forest spend part of their school week regularly learning outdoors. To date, 90% of primary schools in the Forest offer outdoor learning, with 55% running regular sessions, embedded in the school plan.



Not only do we want children to benefit from the experience of learning in outdoor woodland 'classrooms', but the approach is a fundamental part of the forest culture we are creating. We want to ensure that those who live in this Forest feel at ease exploring, playing and walking in the woods, and understand that the woods need to be looked after. So that our next generation of National Forest dwellers are poised to value and make the best use of the Forest around them.

To find out more visit [nationalforest.org](http://nationalforest.org)



We at The Tree Council are passionate about connecting young people with the wonder of trees, giving them the tools, knowledge and skills to become a #ForceForNature.

Trees are planetary heroes. And as we face crises in both our climate and children's mental health, it's more important than ever that we make the most of all they have to offer.



Our two schools programmes can help you get your students engaged with nature:

- Apply for a **free School Orchards** or **Fruiting Hedgerow tree pack** which comes with all the guidance you'll need to plan, plant and care for your trees, as well as a gift pack and resources to help incorporate your orchard into your students' curriculum.

With their incredible carbon-busting, habitat-protecting and wellbeing-boosting powers, trees are vital to ensuring a healthy, happy future for all of us. Evidence shows that time spent with trees can lower our blood pressure, benefit our mental health and help build children's emotional resilience and resourcefulness. Deepening young people's connections with the natural world can improve their wellbeing and help them make an

impact in their local area. 89% of young people surveyed think that their generation can make a difference on climate change and our schools programmes give them the perfect opportunity to get involved.



- Our **Young Tree Champions** programme inspires teachers and children to unlock the power of trees. You'll get free access to curriculum-linked activity plans, our news bulletin, training opportunities and competitions through our exclusive club space, encouraging children to become a #ForceForNature. You can find more info at: [youngtreechampions.org](http://youngtreechampions.org)

Visit us at [treecouncil.org.uk/schools](http://treecouncil.org.uk/schools) for more information.



## Tree identification



### Oak

#### What does oak look like?

The English oak is a large deciduous tree up to 20-40m tall.

As common oaks mature they form a broad and spreading crown with sturdy branches to the woodland floor beneath. Their open canopy enables light to penetrate through to the woodland floor, allowing bluebells and primroses to grow below. Their smooth and silvery brown bark becomes rugged and deeply fissured with age.



**Leaves:** around 10cm long, the edge of the leaf is lobed and wavy with 4-5 deep lobes with smooth edges on each side of the leaf. Leaf-burst occurs mid-May. The leaves have almost no stem and grow in bunches.

**Flowers:** are long yellow hanging catkins which distribute pollen into the air.

**Fruits:** the oak's fruit, commonly known as acorns, are 2-2.5cm long, borne on lengthy stalks and held tightly by cupules (the cup-shaped base of the acorn). As it ripens, the green acorn takes on a more autumnal, browner colour, loosens from the cupule and falls to the canopy below. Following successful germination, a new sapling will appear the following spring.



**Buds, bark and stem:** buds tend to be clustered near the end of the winter twig; they have rusty brown over-lapping scale leaves. The bark is grey and in older trees fissures, and it often supports a rich lichen flora.

**Value to wildlife:** oak forests provide a habitat rich in biodiversity; they support more life forms than any other native trees. They host hundreds of species of insect, supplying many British birds with an important food source. In autumn mammals such as badgers and deer take advantage of the falling acorns.



#### Interesting facts:

- Acorns are not produced until the tree is at least 40 years old. Peak acorn fecundity usually occurs around 80 - 120 years.
- The Christmas Yule Log was originally an oak log decorated with mistletoe and holly.
- Our ancestors carried acorns for good luck, and to ward off illness.
- The ancient Greeks, Romans, Celts and Druids all thought the oak tree was magical. Roman soldiers even wore oak leaf crowns when celebrating victory.



# Spotlight

## Embedding Outdoor Play Training in Early Childhood Courses at Glasgow Clyde College

Lecturer and Forest School Leader Deborah Meechan explains how Forest Kindergarten and Forest School approaches are used within the Early Learning and Childcare faculty of a Further Education college.



### How?

By including outdoor play training within units connected to play, we explore a variety of play types, providing opportunities for students to develop skills and knowledge necessary for inspiring quality outdoor play sessions for young children. Previously this was undertaken outside on campus or at a local park, however, recently we scaled up our approach to explore play in nature. This requires networking with the senior park ranger to secure permission to use the land and working in partnership with several outdoor nurseries who afford students the opportunity to observe the children playing in woodland.



### What?

#### Forest Kindergarten (1)

For our HNC (level 7) Early Childhood Practice students we include a three-day Forest Kindergarten Award. This introduces students to the 'place', the 'people' and the 'pedagogy.'

- Day one involves site appraisal and familiarises students with risk assessment, with time given to acclimatise to the woodland.
- Day two links to the people involved in making Forest Kindergarten a success and presents a chance to see the benefit of regular outdoor play in nature as we observe staff and children at a woodland kindergarten. This is a powerful experience.
- Day three combines learning from days one and two and explores the pedagogy of place and space. Students are invited to plan several play experiences together, presenting them to the team thereafter. This is always great fun with students having the opportunity to walk in children's shoes, whilst revisiting their childhoods!

Students who may have considered themselves to be 'averse' to the outdoors begin to have a change of heart having witnessed the benefits of working and playing outdoors.

#### Forest School (2)

We also offer sessions of Forest School to our students on the schools and HNC programmes. The immersive nature of the Forest School philosophy sees students begin to slow down and connect with the forest's rhythm, gain confidence in developing skills – shelter and fire building and tool use - and develop a deeper appreciation of the natural world.

### Why?

**Including outdoor training on our curriculum is vital and relevant to sector needs.**

As we emerge from the pandemic, as part of the green and educational recoveries, many more settings will seek to take play outdoors. In Scotland, there are 36 outdoor nurseries, doubling in two years. Glasgow has ten outdoor nurseries planned.

This year over 100 students successfully completed the Forest Kindergarten award, along with some lecturing staff.

At Glasgow Clyde College, we aim to equip our students to be 'future ready' and ensure that they have the capacity to support quality play outdoors. Demand for practitioners with these capabilities is set to rise and we are responding to this.

### Student voices...

The Forest Kindergarten journey can be a profound experience. At the beginning of the training, participants discuss thoughts and concerns about the course. This allows the trainer to understand levels of comfort within the group and highlights those who may consider themselves "*not outdoorsy*." Being mindful of those unsure is helpful when we reach the woodland, to be on hand to offer guidance or reassurance. It is always humbling to see people connect with nature who were perhaps hesitant at first.



Deborah Meechan

Students work together at the woodland site, appraising and risk assessing, setting up the shelters and engaging in play.

At the end of each day, we reflect... on day one, one word to sum up the day's experiences is requested, two words the next day and a small paragraph on the final day.

Some typical reflections include *inspiring, thought-provoking, unexpected, fun, refreshing and energising*.

Inevitably, comments may include '*wet and cold*' which we do acknowledge and use as an opportunity to reinforce the need for good personal protection equipment!

The final day's reflection paragraph has captured some transformational understandings. One student reported a complete change of approach with her own child. Having previously left the outdoor activities to her husband, the student was so captivated by observing the children in the woods that she began taking her child outside more and valued this change!



Some students do encounter a considerable shift that they have called *life changing*. Here students reconsider their employment destination and aim to gain employment at an outdoor nursery when this had not previously been a consideration. Since gaining this additional award, some students have secured employment in nursery settings where staff are seeking to expand and enhance their outdoor provision.

We listen to all the comments and are aware of our students' onward journeys. It is heartening to note the impact of the Forest Kindergarten Award and the student voice and opinion confirms the necessity of its inclusion to our HNC Childhood Practice Programme.

To find out more contact Deborah Meechan on LinkedIn or Twitter @DeborahMeechan1 or email [dmeechan@glasgowclyde.ac.uk](mailto:dmeechan@glasgowclyde.ac.uk)



### References

- (1) Forest Kindergarten SQA Level 7 HX5L 47 available from [www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/82694.html](http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/82694.html)
- (2) Forest School – <https://forestschoollassociation.org/what-is-forest-school/>



# thrive outdoors

Supporting Scotland's children to grow, play & learn outdoors

## National Position Statement on Outdoor Play relaunched

Outdoor activity plays a major role in supporting our health and wellbeing – something that has become increasingly clear over the past year. For children and young people, playing outdoors has an even greater impact – enhancing and supporting learning and development. Scotland has become the first part of the UK to directly incorporate Children's Rights into law, and one of those is the right to play. As we look forward to recovery, it is vital that a recommitment to outdoor play and learning is at the heart of it.

In 2018, Inspiring Scotland worked with Scottish Government to form Scotland's Outdoor Play and Learning Coalition by bringing together people and organisations from education, childcare, healthcare, environment and government. This group developed National Position Statement: Outdoor Play and Learning, which has now been signed by over 100 organisations, committing to work together to embed playing and learning and outdoors as an everyday activity and a fundamental part of growing up in Scotland.

Scotland's National Outdoor Play and Learning Position Statement



Outdoor play and learning for children and young people aligns with the aims and objectives of many public bodies and organisations across a number of sectors, including those addressing pressing issues, such as poor health and wellbeing outcomes, and those supporting national efforts to close the attainment gap in education.

It is now more apparent than ever before that enabling more playing and learning outdoors can go a long way to ensuring the best outcomes for Scotland's children and young people. That's why Inspiring Scotland is relaunching this position statement, to get more organisations involved and raise awareness of the benefits of outdoor play and learning.

Organisations that sign up to the position statement commit to:

- Widening access to diverse greenspaces and natural landscapes to ensure that all children, young people and families have easy, local access to excellent outdoor play.
- Opening up more of our communal and publicly-managed spaces for playing and learning outdoors, ensuring that children and young people know they are entitled to access these spaces and feel safe and comfortable using them.
- Enhancing and enriching urban greenspace and built environments to be inviting, play-friendly places, offering easy access to the outdoors and nature close to home.
- Empowering every adult involved in the lives of our children and young people with the confidence, enthusiasm and skills to encourage and support them to play and learn outdoors.
- We welcome organisations that wish to become a signatory. You can also get involved in our digital campaign or share how you have incorporated outdoor play and learning into your organisation with the hashtags **#NeverMoreNeeded** and **#OutdoorCoalition**.

[Read more about the position statement here](#)

[Sign up to the position statement here](#)







## FOREST SCHOOL, OUTDOOR PLAY AND LEARNING RESOURCES



### Outdoor Hub

Massive **FREE** online resource filled with **activities, information** and **events**, special sections for **Mud Play, Forest School** and back issues of our **FREE** online magazine **Outdoor Practitioner**.



Sign up to our **e-newsletter** to receive outdoor focused news, activities and to be kept up-to-date with any developments.

### Shop

Walk your fingers this way to visit our online shop with its inspiring range of innovative outdoor play and education resources.

**Clothing, UK wood products, playhouses, shelters, clothing, footwear, tools, hand washing, fire & cooking, den building, curriculum learning, books, art & craft materials, mud kitchens.**

[www.muddyfaces.co.uk](http://www.muddyfaces.co.uk)



BROUGHT TO YOU BY  
**MUDDYFACES**

The **Outdoor Practitioner**

