LEARNING OUTDOORS
in the early years

A Resource Book
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This resource has been compiled by members of the Early Years Interboard Panel in response to requests by practitioners in Early Years settings for guidelines on provision and progression in learning outdoors.

The methodology and suggested progression in this document is appropriate for pre-school and proposed Foundation Stage as recommended by CCEA.

It is proposed that teachers will use this resource as a starting point for their own planning.

We hope you find it useful.

Carol Bratton
Una Crossey
Dawn Crosby
Wendy McKeown
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to those Early Years settings and schools who contributed the inspiring photographs used throughout this document.

**BELB**
- Bethlehem NS
- St Teresa’s NS
- Edenderry NS

**NEELB**
- Steeple NS
- Kylemore NS
- Mossley NS
- Buick Memorial NU
- St Columba’s NU, Kilrea
- St Columba’s PS, Draperstown
- New Row PS

**SELB**
- The Grove NS
- Dromore NS
- Annalong NS
- Kilkeel NS

**SEELB**
- Fort Hill PS
- Killowen NU
- Holy Trinity NS
- St Mary’s PS, Ardglass
- St Malachy’s PS, Bangor
- Pond Park NS
- St Therese NS

**WELB**
- Ballykelly PS
- Limavady NS
- Galliagh NS
- Lisnagelvin NS
- Lisnagelvin PS
- Grove NU Barrack St Boys, Strabane
- Belmont NS
- Steelstown NU

Thank you to Mairead O’Boyle (NEELB – Early Years Administration) for her endless patience and her word-processing skills.

Finally, a special word of thanks to The Early Years Interboard Panel and colleagues for their support.
RATIONALE AND PRINCIPLES

SECTION 1

in the early years
RATIONALE

The outdoor area provides young children with one of the best possible environments in which to learn. Any adult who has watched children playing in a well planned and well resourced outdoor area with involved adults will have observed the joy and excitement they experience as they learn new skills and make fresh discoveries.

“the best kept classroom and the richest cupboard are roofed only by the sky”

Margaret McMillan (c1925)
Nursery Schools and the Pre-school Child NSA Publication
The garden was arranged on different levels, on grass and hard surfaces. There were paths, steps, logs, trees, shrubs, ponds, seats, tables, slides, ropes, swings, playhouses, planks, ladders, barrels and blocks.

There was a kitchen garden, a wild garden and a rock garden. There was a plethora of natural materials – twigs, leaves, stones, bark, seeds and so on. The moveable equipment included trucks, wheelbarrows and bicycles. Children used real tools. Sand, water and builders bricks were available. Children had access to dressing up materials. The garden naturally attracted birds and they were further encouraged with bird boxes, bird baths and bird tables. Animals, including chickens, tortoises, rabbits and fish were kept. Children had access to scientific equipment and small games apparatus."

Margaret McMillan’s Open Air Nursery School, Deptford 1914.
OUTDOOR PLAY PRINCIPLES

- Indoors and outdoors need to be viewed as one combined and integrated environment.
- Indoors and outdoors need to be available to the children simultaneously.
- Outdoors is an equal player to indoors and should receive planning, management, evaluation, resourcing, staffing and adult interaction on a par with indoors.
- Outdoors is both a teaching and learning environment.
- Outdoor design and layout needs careful consideration.
- Outdoor play is central to young children’s learning, possibly more to some children than others.
- The outdoor classroom offers children the opportunity to utilise effective modes of learning – play, movement and sensory experience.
- Children need versatile equipment and environments.
- Children need to be able to control, change and modify their environment.
- Staff have to be supportive toward outdoor play.

These principles underpin the Early Years Outdoor Curriculum.

Well planned and well resourced outdoor play experiences allow for progression in a child’s thinking and understanding. These can provide the context in which these principles become the reality for all our children.

Principles of Outdoor Play in the Early Years – Helen Bilton
PURPOSE
in the early years

SECTION 2
WHY DEVELOP OUTDOOR PLAY?

• It allows and encourages children to relive their experiences through their most natural channel – movement.
  – Movement is one of the four vehicles through which children can learn. The others are play, talk and sensory experiences.
• It provides access to space to nurture mind-body growth.
• Physical development is the pre-requisite for the children’s growth. It:
  – enhances the development of motor skills (gross and fine);
  – develops co-ordination, balance and body awareness;
  – keeps the body, heart and other organs healthy; and
  – develops a life-long good habit of daily exercise.
• It provides the opportunity for assessed risky freedom, where children can play and socialise freely and use their own imagination and initiative.

• All the areas of learning can be achieved outside while the children’s long-term social, emotional and mental health are being enhanced.

• Exercise can affect emotions allowing for relaxation and calmness and a heightened sense of well being (Armstrong 1996).

Young children’s basic need for well-being and involvement, and their urge to explore and make sense of the world, is developed through high-quality play in an outdoor environment.
AREAS OF LEARNING in the early years

SECTION 3

The Arts
Language and Literacy
Mathematics and Numeracy
Personal, Social and Emotional
Physical Development and Movement
The World Around Us
THE ARTS

Art and Design

Children will have opportunities to:

• explore a variety of materials and appreciate colour, shape, texture and sound at vertical and horizontal levels;

• experience a variety of media and techniques such as painting, drawing, mark making, modelling and printing, both large and small scale;

• develop their sense of spatial awareness through the use of 3D and other materials, eg working with recyclable materials to shape, rearrange and create environments supporting imaginative play; and

• observe and experience outdoor characteristics using all of their senses.
**Music**

Children will have opportunities to:

- listen and respond to a variety of sounds, rhythms and songs in the outdoor environment;
- make music by vocal sounds, body sounds, singing, clapping and playing percussion instruments with extended volume;
- make and use instruments to invent music which expresses thoughts and feelings;
- participate in simple dances and singing games;
- listen to and recognise sounds in the outdoor environment; and
- use outdoor features as a stimulus for music.
**Drama/Imaginative Play**

Children will have opportunities to:

- plan, design and engage in stimulating role play, which encourages them to play co-operatively, negotiate roles, agree rules and act out scenarios;

- express their thoughts, ideas, feelings and imagination with confidence, enhancing self-esteem and oral language;

- link imaginative play scenes inside and out, providing much more scope for large movement, noisy play and involving the whole child; and

- access a wide range of equipment, resources and props to promote quality outdoor play.
LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Talking and Listening

Children will have opportunities to:

- talk about their experiences in the outdoor environment;
- talk about features of the outdoor environment;
- use language to describe, explain, predict, and ask questions;
- interact and converse with adults and peers to extend language;
- develop ideas and follow directions and instructions;
- listen, respond and link language with physical movement in action songs and rhymes, role play and practical experiences; and
- talk, listen and interact with each other in all areas, including a quiet space.
**Reading**

Children will have opportunities to:

- access a wide range of texts – books, leaflets, catalogues, reference materials, magazines, posters, maps, charts;
- enjoy stories, rhyme and songs in the outdoor environment; and
- experience a variety of meaningful print (eg labels, symbols, signs, and directions), and begin to understand some purposes for reading.
Writing

Children will have opportunities to:

- experiment with early writing using water and rollers, brushes, chalk, sand and paint, clipboards and pencils;
- use their drawings, written marks or writing to express their ideas and feelings;
- see themselves and adults using writing for a purpose, and discuss and agree the best way to present the writing, eg lists, messages and reminders; and
- write during role play and other activities.
MATHEMATICS AND NUMERACY

Children will have opportunities to:

• sort and categorise resources, equipment and naturally occurring objects;
• identify, understand and use numbers – both cardinal and ordinal, eg numbers on parking bays, number lines, number plates, counting games, rhymes, jingles and stories;
• develop appropriate mathematical language through counting games, rhymes, jingles and stories;
• recognise, explore and create patterns, shapes and colours, eg with leaves, pebbles and 2D shapes;
• match objects, eg match photographs with outdoor features;
• compare size, length, capacity and weight, eg playing on a see-saw;
• experience and talk about the routine and the passing of the time of day, the week, months and seasons;
• investigate and talk about patterns, colours and shapes in the outdoor environment, eg shapes of trees, leaves and clouds;
• sort, design, plan and build with a range of 3D shapes;
• explore spatial awareness through the different types of movement, eg balance, locomotion and manipulation;
• begin to understand and use positional and directional words – forwards, backwards, in front of, behind, above and below; and
• use mathematical language such as heavy, light, full, empty, long, short etc., in relevant contexts.
PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL

Children will have opportunities to:

- develop confidence, self-esteem and a sense of security;
- develop independence as they acquire new skills, eg children plan, choose and organise equipment for the day/week, manage the transition from inside to outside play co-operatively, and share resources;
- care for themselves and their personal safety;
- take care of the outside environment with respect and concern;
- become aware of and respect the needs and feelings of others, and reflect this in their behaviour;
- learn to follow rules;
- develop tolerance and perseverance; and
- explore, experiment and be adventurous.
PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT AND MOVEMENT

Children will have opportunities to:

- enjoy physical play and the sense of freedom and well-being it brings;
- begin to understand the importance of physical activity for good health and fitness;
- develop spatial awareness and how to share space safely with others;
- move confidently with increasing control and imagination;
• acquire essential movement skills like:
  - Balance – develop co-ordination and control of body actions by using equipment; playing games; walking along chalk lines, rope pathways, small balancing beams, climbing equipment, and stepping stones; building using large equipment, and carrying heavier objects;
  - Locomotion – focusing on basic motor skills such as running, jumping and moving the body around in different ways, eg games like “What’s the Time Mr Wolf?” or “Simon Says”;
  - Manipulative skills – using equipment to develop aiming, predicting and estimating techniques, eg throwing balls into containers or through hoops;
  - experience the vocabulary of movement and words of instruction; and
  - understand simple rules and use tools and equipment appropriately, safely and with increasing control.
"Intrinsically linked to sensory experience is emotion… Children need to have experiences which heighten emotions such as wonder, joy and excitement, and children need adults who will use the natural resources to bring out and develop these emotions."

Outdoor Play in the Early Years Management and Innovation – Helen Bilton
THE WORLD AROUND US

Children will have opportunities to:

- develop their powers of observation by using their senses, eg access to tools such as magnifying glasses;
- recognise objects by sight, sound, touch, smell, taste, eg multi-sensory garden;
- ask questions, experiment, design, make and solve problems, eg use flexible equipment that encourages experimentation like guttering and bricks;
- recognise and experience that some things change over time, eg trees during autumn and clothes people wear;
- talk about and experience features in their local environment, such as the school setting and community;
- care for and respect living things and handle them sensitively, eg a wormery;
- listen to stories while outside about people and places, eg fairy stories;
- talk with adults and other children about themselves, their home, their setting and people who work within the setting and local community;
• use drama/imaginative play to communicate their understanding of events, eg jobs done by people in the community or a barbeque;

• record what they have seen, made, found out (individually and in groups), eg through drawings, photographs, paintings, models and simple maps;

• explore through first-hand experience, eg properties of materials and sounds in the environment;

• become aware of everyday technology and develop the skills to use tools for woodwork, construction and gardening, including cutting, sticking, folding, pouring, joining and taking apart;

• learn about themselves by talking with adults and engaging in role play, eg “fire station” or “ambulance depot”;

• talk about their observations and predict what will happen if water is added to sand, hand is placed on an icy surface, plants are not watered, etc.;

• experiment, eg to find out how water will move from one piece of guttering to another or how some objects float and others sink;

• talk about environmental issues (eg litter and recycling), and how to nurture these in the school environment.
AREAS OF PLAY – LEARNING BAYS

in the early years

SECTION 4

Imaginative Area
Creative Area (Art/Design & Music)
Snack Area
Horticulture Areas (Gardening/Wild & Digging)
Large-Scale Construction Area
Sand and Water Areas
Quiet Area
Large-Movement Area
Small-Equipment Area
Climbing Area
Wheeled-Vehicle Area
Storage Suggestions
Play Resource Centres – Northern Ireland
IMAGINATIVE AREA
A-frames
Planks – commercially made and cut to order by a DIY store
Ladders
Cubes
Heavy pieces of material
Plastic sheeting/tarpaulin
Plastic crates – bread, milk, supermarket
Blocks – wooden and plastic
Large cardboard boxes
Industrial tubing
Cable spools (a variety of sizes up to one metre in diameter)
Tree trunk sections, various sized pieces of wood
Pieces of carpet and carpet squares
Tents
Large cones
Broom handles
Hose pipe – cut to lengths for the firefighter and for sand and water play
Large and small umbrellas
Ropes and string
Masking tape
Elastic bands
Wheeled vehicles, large and small
Trucks, hay carts, wooden pushchairs, prams, buggies, scooters, wheelbarrows

Trolleys with a host of props
Dressing up clothes – overalls, rubber gloves, aprons, uniforms, dresses, cowboy and Native American outfits
Accessories such as bags and hats, sunglasses, hard hats, police hats, suitcases, baskets
Holiday equipment – backpacks, sleeping bags, cooking equipment, picnic bags
Builder’s tools and equipment – mallets, screwdrivers, spirit levels, pulleys
DIY tools and tool belts
Mechanic’s tools
Decorator’s tools – brushes, pots
Ropes and pegs
Gardening tools – shovels, spades, watering cans
Home tools – cameras, mobile phones, personal stereos, binoculars, umbrellas, money, purses, tickets, cards
Fire-fighter equipment
Doctor’s bag and equipment

Contexts for imaginative role play
Ambulance
Building/construction site
Bus railway or airport
Camping
Garage/Carwash
Drive through McDonald’s
Farm
Pizza shop/Pizza delivery
Fire-fighters
Garden centre
Market stall
Police
Picnic
Fairy-tale castle
Dinosaur land
Ice cream seller
Library
Post office
Pirate’s ship
Campsite
Road safety
Zoo
Igloo
Books, rhymes and songs

Tom and the Island of Dinosaurs – Ian Beck
Mrs Mopple’s Washing Line – Anita Hewett
The Wind – Richard Harris
Washing Up Day – John Agard
Machines – June Mitchell
The Wind Blew – Pat Hutchins
Percy the Park Keeper – Nick Butterworth
We’re Going on a Bear Hunt – Michael Rosen
The Sun and the Wind – Aesop’s fables
Where’s Julius? – John Burningham
The Green Ship – Quentin Blake
Someone Bigger – Jonathan Emmett
Harry and the Dinosaurs Romp in the Swamp – Ian Whybow
Blue Rabbit and the Runaway Wheel – Chris Wormwell
Going Shopping – Sarah Garland
The House that Jack Built – Liz Underhill
Miss Brick the Builder’s Baby – Allan Ahlberg
Out and About – Shirley Hughes
Lucy and Tom at the Seaside – Shirley Hughes

My Granny Was a Pirate – Margaret Mahy
One Eyed Jack – Penny Dale
The Owl and the Pussy Cat – Hilary Knight
Rosie’s Walk – Pat Hutchins
Where the Forest Meets the Sea – Jeannie Baker
CREATIVE AREAS (ART/DESIGN & MUSIC)
**Art/Design**

Picnic tables or portable desks
A storage trolley containing art / craft resources, eg paint, chalk, scissors, glue
Clips to hold paper on the tables
Chalk to use on the ground
Rolls of paper to attach to walls or fences for group art
A wheeled box of junk art materials
Clay and tools
Clipboards
Buckets, paint brushes and rollers for pretend painting of walls and paintings
Squeezy bottles to squirt paint onto large sheets of paper
A large chalk board fixed to the wall and made of varnished external plywood painted with easel / blackboard paint
A selection of natural materials, eg pine cones, sawdust to mix or use for printing
Laminated children’s work displayed outdoors under a covered way
**Music**

**Banging**
A drum area including a metal dustbin, pots and pans mobile, logs and sticks, old PC cases, upturned metal buckets

**Tapping**
Old CD Roms hung on trees or fences
Various lengths of piping strung together and suspended at the children’s height
A table tennis bat or flip flops to tap the tops of the pipes
Musical notes cut out of plastic, wood or metal and hung up. Children enjoy learning real naming words, so use musical language when appropriate

**Blowing**
Pipes
Tubing
Cylinders
**Scraping**
Ridged car mats
Willow fencing
Sticks to trail along fences, walls and tree bark

**Clicking**
An old computer mouse suspended by its cord

**Splashing**
Hoses, buckets, rainmaker, bells, and triangles for water play

Add to these scrap materials by:
- providing a range of commercially produced instruments stored in a wheeled trolley for ease of transportation, eg horns, drums, tambourines, recorders; and
- collecting books / booklets of rhymes / songs for staff to use outdoors.

*Children will have opportunities to listen and respond physically to sounds they hear.*
SNACK AREA
Picnic tables / portable desks
Trays so children can help carry food from indoors to outside
Bin
Crates for empty bottles
Large baskets for bread, biscuits, etc.
Picnic rugs for dry days
Story books and children’s magazines
Use a rhyme, phrase or sign so children know that snack is going to be a picnic outside today
Basins for soapy water, so children can help clear up
Bird tables for leftovers
HORTICULTURE AREAS
**Gardening / Wild**

Plot of land where children can plant, tend and harvest flowers and vegetables

A digging area

Wooden boxes, tubs, plant pots, growbags, washing up bowl, a bucket, an old sink can be used if land is not available

Camera to record change over time

Books to record what happened

Child-sized spades

Trowels

Forks

Hoes

Watering cans

Hoses

Canes

Wheelbarrows

Seeds/bulbs/plants

A herb tub for smell comparisons

An area left to grow naturally

Old rotten logs or a piece of carpet to gather mini beasts

An old sink or bathtub for water-loving mini beasts
Magnifying glasses
Gathering jars
Pond dipping equipment
Pencils and clipboards
Reference books and books made by children and staff
Bird tables, bird boxes and baths
A wormery
Themed play boxes – Sunny Day Box, Windy Day Box, Snowy Day Box, Rainy Day Box

**SAMPLE**

**A Sunny Day Box**

Sunglasses – Sun hat – Books about sunshine
Bucket and spade – A towel to sit on
Chalk to trace shadows
SUGGESTIONS FOR PLANTS AND FLOWERS

Check with the supplier that the plant is suitable for the place and purpose you intend.

**Climbers**
- Convolvulus
- Ivy
- Morning Glory
- Honeysuckle
- Nasturtiums
- Hop (Humulus)
- Boston Vine (Parthenocissus)
- Glory Vine (Vitis Coignetiae)
- Sweet peas

**Sun lovers**
- Pinks/Carnations (Dianthus)
- Aubretia
- Ice plant (Sedum)
- Houseleek (Sempervivum)

- Blue lily (Agapanthus)
- Pansies
- Daisies (Bellis)
- Marigolds (Calendula)
- Erigeron (daisy flowers)
- Geraniums
- Helichrysum (everlasting)
- Chinese Lantern (Physalis)
- Golden Rod
- Nasturtiums
- Verbena
- Mesembryanthemum
- Achillea (Yarrow)
- Montbretia (Crocosmia)
- Poached-egg plant
  (Limnanthes Douglasii)

**Shade lovers**
- Hostas
- Ivy
- Primula/primrose
- Violets
- Periwinkle (Vinca)
- Dead nettle (Lamium)
- Forget Me Nots (Myosotis)
- Lady’s Mantle (Achemilla)
- Astilbe
- Granny’s Bonnet (Aguilegia)
- Bleeding Heart (Dicentra)

Please note: make a risk assessment of the plants and planting areas. It may be appropriate to refer to ASE BeSafe (3rd edition) Health and Safety, or consult with suppliers.
**Tubs and baskets**
- Pansies
- Alyssum
- Busy Lizzie (Impatiens)
- Petunia
- Marigold (Tagetes)
- Begonia
- Harebell (Campanula)
- Lobelia
- Mimulus
- Viola
- Lobelia

**Fast growers**
- Morning Glory
- Nasturtiums
- Sweet peas
- Sunflowers
- Busy Lizzie (Impatiens)
- Golden Hop (Humulus)
- Boston Vine (Parthenocissus)
- Glory Vine (Vitis Coignetiae)

**Ground dwellers**
- Periwinkle (Vinca)
- Anthemis (Chamomile)
- Thyme (Thymus)
- Candytuft (Iberis)
- Speedwell (Veronica)
- Hardy geranium
- Rock rose (Helianthemum)
- Ground cover roses (Rosa)

**Evergreen / Winter interest**
- Grasses
- Cyclamen
- Heathers
- Myrtle (Myrtus)
- Flax (Phormium)

**Perfumed foliage**
- Myrtle (Myrtus)
- Pelargoniums
- Choysia

**Perfumed flowers**
- Pinks (Dianthus)
- Alyssum
- Wallflowers

**Bulbs**
- Crocuses
- Snowdrops
- Hyacinth
- Small daffodils
- Grape hyacinth (Muscari)

**Everlasting flowers**
- Straw flowers (Bracteantha)
- Limonium
- Love in a Mist (Nigella)
- Helichrysum
- Chinese Lanterns (Physalis)

Or you could sow some wild flower seeds in a patch of grass which is left to grow taller than the rest.

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Please note: make a risk assessment of the plants and planting areas. It may be appropriate to refer to ASE BeSafe (3rd edition) Health and Safety, or consult with suppliers.
SUGGESTIONS FOR SHRUBS

Check with the supplier that the plant is suitable for the place and purpose you intend.

**Climbers**
Wisteria
Thornless Blackberries
Cotoneaster horizontalis
Honeysuckle
Passion flower (Passiflora)

**Sun lovers**
Lavender
Berberis
Wygela
Shade lovers
Hydrangea
St John’s Wort (Hypericum)
Spiraea
Convolvulus

Ivy
Morning Glory

**Perfumed trees**
Eucalyptus

**Perfumed flowers**
Lavender
Philadelphus
Daphne
Wisteria
Lilac (Syringa)

**Fast growers**
Morning Glory
Kerria (grows anywhere)

**Spiny or prickly**
Holly
Mahonia
Pryocanthus
Gorse (Ulex)

**Screening**
Cotoneaster (prickly)
Box (Buxus)
Forsythia
Lavender (Lavandula)
Currant (Ribes)
Lonerica
Black bamboo (Phyllostachis)
Striped bamboo (Pleioblastus)

Please note: make a risk assessment of the plants and planting areas. It may be appropriate to refer to ASE BeSafe (3rd edition) Health and Safety, or consult with suppliers.
Evergreen / Winter interest
- Cornus (Red stems)
- Choysia
- Clematis
- Eucalyptus
- Yucca
- Hazel (Corylus)
- Tassel Bush (Garrya Eliptica)
- Willow (Salix)
- Viburnum

Trees
- Birch (Betula)
- Rowan (Sorbus)
- Crab apple (Malus)
- Plum and Cherry (Prunus)

Flowering
- Butterfly bush (Buddleia)
- Ceanothus (Blue)
- Hebe (low growing)
- Prunus (flowering)

Berries
- Cotoneaster horizontalis
- Hawthorn (Crataegus)
- Holly (Ilex)
- Firethorn (Pyracantha)
- Rowan (Sorbus)

Please note: make a risk assessment of the plants and planting areas. It may be appropriate to refer to ASE BeSafe (3rd edition) Health and Safety, or consult with suppliers.
SUGGESTIONS FOR FOOD PLANTS

Check with the supplier that the variety is suitable for the place and purpose you intend.

Climbers
Thornless blackberries
Tomatoes
French/runner beans, peas
Marrow, squashes, cucumbers, courgettes
Or try a grape vine!

Sun lovers
Sage (Salvia officinalis)
Nasturtiums
Onions (Allium)
Garlic
Most herbs

Tubs and pots
Small varieties of apples and pears (make sure you have a self-fertile type, or plant two)
Strawberries
French or runner beans, peas and cucumbers grow up sticks or trellis
Tomato plants grow in tubs or grow bags
Ornamental cabbages
Potatoes in buckets
Basil and parsley

Herbs
Marjoram (Origanum)
Thyme (Thymus)
Rosemary (Rosemarinus)
Cotton lavender (Santolina)
Lemon thyme (Melissa Officinalis)
Mint (Mentha)
Chives
Fennel
Basil
Dill

Please note: make a risk assessment of the plants and planting areas. It may be appropriate to refer to ASE BeSafe (3rd edition) Health and Safety, or consult with suppliers.
**Fast growers**
Carrots
Beans
Lettuce Marrows
Pumpkins
Radishes
Spinach

**Decorative**
Kohlrabi
Red cabbage
Ornamental cabbage
Artichokes and cardoons
Alliums, leeks and onions

**Attractive to insects and butterflies**
Butterfly bush (Buddleia)
Sedum
Alyssum
Calendula
Dianthus
Myosotis
Solidago
Aster
Ceanothus
Lavender (Lavandula)

Please note: make a risk assessment of the plants and planting areas. It may be appropriate to refer to ASE BeSafe (3rd edition) Health and Safety, or consult with suppliers.
**Digging Area**

There needs to be a digging patch, separate from the horticulture area. This can be for building and construction works where children can build structures using mud, bricks and wood, or it can be for imaginative play, where children may be tunnellers or bury treasure.

Spades with strong shafts  
Trowels  
Natural materials  
Bricks  
Stones  
Shells  
Peat  
Gravel  
Pebbles  
Bark  
Leaves  
Feathers  
Conkers  
Wooden blocks  

Firewood/sticks/logs  
Sand Pit  
Sand  
Water  
Water pistols  
Squirty bottles  
Targets to shoot water at  
Buckets  
Brushes  
Rakes  
Combs  
Moulds  
Sieves
LARGE-SCALE CONSTRUCTION AREA

It’s a plane with big wings.
Woodwork bench
Wood off-cuts
Logs
Planks
Balsa wood
Hardwood
Chipboard
Plywood
Crates
Guttering
Drain pipes
Builder’s trays
Real tools – hammers, pliers, hand drill
Nails
Nuts, bolts
Gardening tools
Ropes
Plastic tubing
Hose pipes
Access to water – hose, water butt
Wooden blocks
| Boxes – cardboard, wooden, plastic                        | Clothes horses                              |
| Masking tape                                              | Tents                                       |
| Spades                                                    | Buckets                                     |
| Wheel-barrows                                             | Building blocks                             |
| Trolleys                                                  | Natural materials – stones, shells, twigs, leaves, bark and sand |
| Builders’ trowels                                          | Cork, gravel, straw                         |
| Hard-hats                                                 | Diggers, tractors, trailers                 |
| Visibility tabards                                        | Pulley system                               |
| Wellington boots                                          | Clipboards                                  |
| Overalls                                                   | Pens                                        |
| Tyres                                                     | Spirit level                                |
| Community blocks                                          |                                            |
| Off cuts of carpet, rugs, canvas                          |                                            |
| Ground sheets                                             |                                            |
Tape measures
Measuring sticks and wheels
Architect’s plans
Builder’s chalk
D.I.Y. books
Homes magazines
Design and construction magazines
Construction site sign

Hard Hats must be worn

Danger Keep Out

Maps
Mobile phones
Traffic cones
Site warning tape

Estate agent’s signs
Pictures of castles, houses, flats, airport terminals, office-blocks, ships, sailing boats, shops, cars, lorries, cranes, aeroplanes

Fluorescent safety jackets – use life jackets, puffer vests, etc.

Large sheets of paper for plans and sketches

First-aid box

Lunch boxes

**Equipment to support imaginative/constructive play:**

- Hospital, airport, garage, McDonald’s
- House play – renovate a kitchen, bedroom, utility room
- Camp site
- Igloo
- Desert island

*Equip each construction site above with relevant scene props, eg provide storage baskets, trolleys and boxes clearly labelled with equipment name and pictures.*
Books, rhymes and songs

Bob the Builder
Mr Gumpy’s Motor Car – John Burningham
The Green Ship – Quentin Blake
We’re Going on a Bear Hunt – Michael Rosen
The House that Jack Built – Liz Underhill
Miss Brick the Builder’s Boy – Allan Ahlberg
The Lighthouse Keeper’s Books – David Armitage
My Granny Was a Pirate – Margaret Mahy
The Three Billy Goats Gruff
The Owl and the Pussy Cat
Little Red Riding Hood
The Three Bears
Three Little Pigs
Little Yellow Digger – Nicola Baxter

Additional resources, including commercial kits and themed construction environments for construction play outdoors, can be found on pages 127–133 of the Learning Through Play resource file.
SAND AND WATER AREAS
**Sand**

A covered sandpit offers the best solution to keep rain and animals out. Pits can be made by building a square of bricks or laying four railway sleepers on the ground. A tyre from a large tractor or heavy goods vehicle also acts as a solid wall, which can be filled with sand.

- Buckets and spades of different sizes
- Moulds
- Sieves
- Diggers, lorries, bulldozers
- Guttering
- Old pots
- Spoons
- Sticks
- Rakes, combs
- Twigs, shells
- Cardboard boxes
- Bricks

Treasure – fake coins, play jewellery, maps
- Junk materials
- Sand wheels
- Watering cans
- Funnels
- Feathers
- Conkers

For additional resources, see pages 30–35 of the *Learning Through Play* resource file.
**Water**

Nature – rain, puddles, dew, frost, snow, etc.
Umbrellas
Wellington boots
Decorator’s painting brushes, sponges, rollers
Rain barrel with a tap / outside tap
Pots and pans
Buckets
Splash suits/overalls
Guttering, drainpipes
Paddling pool
Rain measuring equipment, eg wide necked bottles for rain collection
Hoses
Watering cans

Create separate storage for labelled sand and water equipment
Plastic spray bottles, squeezy bottles
Large transparent plastic sheets, eg shower curtain
Washing line and pegs
Shampoo, bubble bath, shaving foam
Bubble blowing equipment
QUIET AREA
Section 4 – Areas of Play – Learning Bays

**Seating**
- Carpet squares
- Materials
- Blankets
- Chairs and cushions
- Table
- Crates
- Wooden seat enclosed with a pergola (if funding is available)
- Gazebos
- Deck and patio chairs
- Garden umbrellas
- Large pieces of cloth
- Travelling rugs over an A-frame or play house
- Tent or shed

**Screens and boundaries**
- Hedges, growing plants
- Trellis, net, clear plastic and fencing
- Low walls, paths, cones and lines
- Furniture brought out from inside
IDEAS FOR BOUNDARIES AND SCREENS

**Protection**
- Sunshades
- Gazebos
- Awnings and parasols
- Screens of bamboo, willow
- Trees and bushes
- Planting tubs with herbs or other fragrant plants
- Umbrellas and wind breaks

**Activities**
- Tape recorder
- Tapes – songs, stories, rhymes, sound games
- Books – reference and fiction
- Dictaphones / headphones
- Soft toys
- Language and mathematical games which cannot be blown by the wind
- Small motor-skill games
- Writing and drawing materials
- Mirrors and magnifiers
- Small world play
- Small construction
Nature Watch

Bird tables and feeders, small ponds, wildlife sanctuaries
Streamers
Quiet bells, windchimes
Binoculars
Beetle boxes
Cameras
Spotter’s guide
Weather chart
LARGE-MOVEMENT AREA
Children who begin physical activity young experience more significant and longer lasting results.

In your setting, try to allocate a space for the physical activities of running, jumping, throwing and striking with a bat. If there is no such area outside, consider using a P.E. hall.

**Running**

Cones to weave in and out of
Crates or boxes to climb onto and jump off
Ropes and chalk to encourage running in pathways
Whistles so children can start the races
Large egg timer to time races
A windy day box containing objects which stream behind the child. These may include a windsock, a kite, plastic bags and string, lengths of ribbon
Jumping

Stepping stones made from tree trunk sections, large floor 2D shapes, laminated coloured card

P.E. mats to practise landing

Rhymes and songs to encourage jumping, eg “One Little Speckled Frog”
“Locomotor, or gross motor, development is about moving through the environment, which involves large movement patterns, such as: walking, running, jumping, hopping, skipping, leaping, crawling, standing, sitting”.
Playing Outside – Helen Bilton
SMALL-EQUIPMENT AREA

Pegs, washing line
Ticket and stampers/punchers
Old cameras
Mobile phones
Bean bags
Bats
Quoits
Balls of different shapes, colour, textures, sizes
Skittles
Laundry baskets
Skipping ropes
Cones
Netball rings
Markings on ground / walls for targets
Suspended hoops
Top Start equipment
Egg timers
Whistles

“Outside is the ideal place for children to practice and refine small motor skills…”

Playing Outside – Helen Bilton
SMALL APPARATUS RESOURCES
A SAMPLE RESOURCE TROLLEY

Children need to access resources outdoors with the same degree of independence we encourage them to display indoors.
CLIMBING AREA
Planks
Slides
Ladders
A-Frames
Crates
Barrels
Tunnels
Large fixed equipment, where available
Bars
Rope ladders
Tree trunk sections
Portable modular system

Children should display “strong grip on the apparatus; comfortably managing body weight; smooth and fluent motion; opposite arm-leg action in use; confidence.”

Supporting Physical Development and Physical Education in the Early Years.
Jonathan Doherty and Richard Bailey
SECTION 4 – AREAS OF PLAY – LEARNING BAYS

WHEELED-VEHICLE AREA

[Images of children in a wheeled-vehicle area]
SECTION 4 – AREAS OF PLAY – LEARNING BAYS

Wheeled Vehicles
- Prams
- Wedding car
- Scooters
- Wheelbarrows
- Tractors
- Taxi
- Ice cream van
- Fire engine
- Bus
- Step on trikes

Playground Markings
- Road ways
- Roundabouts
- Crossings
- One way arrows
- Bicycle/pram lane
- Parking bays/disabled bays/mother and baby bays
- Yellow no-parking lines

Roadway Accessories
- Roadsigns
- Traffic lights
- Driving licence
- First-aid box
- Number plates
- Speed detector (old hairdryer)
- Road maps
- Car park tickets
- Road safety posters
- Traffic cones
- McDonald’s drive-through
- Picnic
- Postal Service
- Building site
- Driving test centre
- Grand Prix
- Car boot sale
- Supermarket

Contexts for Wheeled Vehicles
- Garage
- Car wash / mechanic / MOT
- McDonald’s drive-through
- Picnic
- Postal Service
- Building site
- Driving test centre
- Grand Prix
- Car boot sale
- Supermarket
BOOKS, RHYMES AND SONGS

Bears in the Night – Stan and Jan Berenstain
Snail Trail – Ruth Brown
Handa’s Surprise – Eileen Browne
Mr Gumpy’s Motor Car – John Burningham
We’re Going on a Lion Hunt – David Axtell
Follow My Leader – Emma Chichester
The Train Ride – June Crebbin and Stephen Lambert
Rosie’s Walk – Pat Hutchins

STORAGE SUGGESTIONS

• Ensure resources can be accessed and cleared away easily.
• Keep equipment safe, eg use a locked garden shed.
• Choose open-ended versatile equipment.
• Use rucksacks, themed backpacks stored on a row of coat pegs, or a stretched wired area.
• Store Wellington boots using upturned wooden pegs or open shelving.
PLAY RESOURCE CENTRES
– NORTHERN IRELAND

Creative Play Resource
4 Artillery House
Artillery Road
Coleraine
BT52 1QU
Tel: 028 7032 7817

Crafty Bitz
Moylinn House
21 Legahory Centre
Brownlow
Craigavon
BT65 5BE
Tel: 028 3834 8467

Play Resource Centre
North City Business Centre
2 Duncairn Gardens
Belfast
BT15 2GG
Tel: 028 9035 7540

Playhouse Resource Centre
5 –7 Artillery Street
Londonderry
BT48 6RG
Tel: 028 7126 8027
SUGGESTED GUIDANCE FOR PLANNING
SECTION 5
in the early years
IMAGINATIVE AREA
## IMAGINATIVE AREA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POSSIBLE EXPERIENCES</th>
<th>INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES</th>
<th>ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>PROGRESSION</th>
<th>PROVISION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DRAMATIC PLAY IN THE OUTDOORS</td>
<td>Recall own experiences</td>
<td>Create a</td>
<td>Extend by providing a cash till to pay with</td>
<td>Prop box of equipment associated with shop, petrol station, garage etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Develop literacy skills – use talk during role play</td>
<td>• Shop</td>
<td>• Put notices up to show print in the environment</td>
<td>Writing equipment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use language to describe, explain, predict, ask questions and develop ideas</td>
<td>• Petrol station</td>
<td>• Link imaginative play scenes inside and outside</td>
<td>Appropriate books and magazines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use mathematical language appropriate to the learning situations</td>
<td>• Garden Centre</td>
<td></td>
<td>Refer to pages 16-18 in the Learning Through Play resource file</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Develop self-care skills through dressing for outdoor play and accessing equipment independently</td>
<td>• Drive-in take-away</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Encourage the negotiation of roles and respect for others’ views</td>
<td>• Picnic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Create a:
- Shop
- Petrol station
- Garden Centre
- Drive-in take-away
- Picnic
- Market
- Campsite
- Car wash
- Holiday play
- Beach scene
- Swimming pool
- Travel agency
- Beach shop
- Fish & Chip shop
### IMAGINATIVE AREA CONT.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POSSIBLE EXPERIENCES</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| DRAMATIC PLAY THROUGH STORY | To stimulate imagination and provide starting points for imaginative play and creative activities  
To re-enact main points of the story | Choose pirate clothes from the dressing up box and talk about what they are wearing  
Build a pirate ship  
Make pirate hats, swords, cutlasses | Make treasure maps, talking about what is on them  
Hunt for the treasure outside, following route marked  
Number hunt – hide large plastic or wooden numerals and chant “We’re going on a number hunt. We’re not scared. We’re not scared.” | Black paper, white paint, cardboard, silver foil, box for treasure with toy gold coins and beads, sparkly jewellery  
Dressing up clothes for pirates  
Blocks of wood, large plastic bricks  
Sand tray, cardboard boxes, milk crates, large construction toys |

*Ref. “My Granny was a Pirate” – Margaret Mahy*
## IMAGINATIVE AREA CONT.

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To express and communicate ideas in role-play</td>
<td>Draw wild animals on the playground with chalk</td>
<td>Go on safari on wheeled vehicles</td>
<td>Visit to zoo or wild life park</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To use language to imagine and re-create roles</td>
<td>Go on a pretend wild animal hunt</td>
<td>Try to camouflage</td>
<td>Visit to the centre by an unusual animal and its owner</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use talk to organise ideas</td>
<td>Make animal traps or cages from large construction equipment</td>
<td>Play hide and seek</td>
<td>Refer to pages 16–18 in the Learning Through Play resource file</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To build and construct imaginatively using appropriate resources</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**DRAMATIC PLAY THROUGH STORY**

Ref: “Rumble in the Jungle” – Giles Andreae and David Wojtowycz

![Image of a construction play area]
### IMAGINATIVE AREA CONT.

<table>
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</table>
| Ref. “Mrs Mopple’s Washing Line” – A Hewett | • Make up their own stories  
• Explore and respond to sound, express ideas through sound and music  
• Communicate their feelings  
• Use mathematical language as appropriate | • Make washing machines out of boxes to set up laundrette or dry cleaners outside  
• Make instruments to make noises like the washing machine  
• Wash the dolls’ clothes  
• Sort the washing and hang it on the line  
• Create washing lines with numbered t-shirts | • Laminate relevant words, prices and instructions and leave outside for play  
• Make book of instructions when the washing machines are made  
• Visit to the local laundrette  
• Make wind chimes  
• Sort clothes by size, eg small t-shirt progressing to largest | • Recycled materials  
• Dolls and a variety of dolls’ clothes  
• Prams and buggies for the dolls  
• Large boxes, crates  
• Large construction  
• Refer to pages 16–18 in the Learning Through Play resource file |
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</table>
| **DRAMATIC PLAY THROUGH STORY** Ref: “Rosie’s Walk” – Pat Hutchins | • To move with control and coordination  
• To observe, find out about and identify features in the place they live and the natural world  
• To express and communicate ideas, thoughts and feelings | • Go on journeys with vehicles, animals and figures, re-enacting “Rosie’s Walk” or “Little Red Riding Hood”  
• Playing on wheeled toys, moving around a course that has been set as a route around the farm | • Play at being on tractors, visiting their animals to feed them and round them up  
• Climb in and out of tyres and hoops  
• Ring games, eg “Farmer’s in His Den” or “Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush”  
• Involve the children in the choice and design of focused imaginative areas | • Dressing up clothes for a farmer or farm worker with scarves, hats, wellingtons and overalls  
• Props such as toy lambs and babies’ feeding bottles for the lambs  
• Wheeled vehicles |
CREATIVE (ART/DESIGN & MUSIC)
## CREATIVE AREA – ART/DESIGN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POSSIBLE EXPERIENCES</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **EXPLORING PAINTING OUTDOORS** | • Express ideas and observations through painting  
• Collaborate with friends on a large scale piece of work  
• Use large scale movements to paint big areas | • Fix rolls of paper onto table tops or benches using bull dog clips  
• Select, store and maintain paint and brushes independently  
• Use buckets, paste brushes and rollers to “pretend” paint walls and fences  
• Access clipboards and paper to do personal paintings  
• Enjoy splatter painting a suspended sheet or other fabric | • Help laminate and display work outdoors  
• Mix a required shade of paint  
• Paint terracotta pots to display plants  
• Paint construction models  
• Create a height chart using hand prints | • Wallpaper rolls, rolls of paper  
• Paint displayed in squirty bottles, eg handwash containers  
• Brushes in a variety of sizes, rollers, buckets  
• Bulldog clips  
• Clipboards  
• A selection of large and small paper  
• Pots  
• Laminator  
• Blu-tac  
• Large lengths of fabric |
### CREATIVE AREA – ART/DESIGN CONT.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POSSIBLE EXPERIENCES</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **EXPLORING DRAWING** | • Express ideas and observations using a variety of tools  
• Share and co-operate with friends on a large scale drawing | • Mark trails on the playground using chalk, eg bicycle trail, parking bays  
• Draw ideas on the ground using chalk  
• Access a large outdoor blackboard for personal work or work with friends  
• Use small black or white boards to sketch ideas / observations  
• Access colouring pencils, markers, felt pens and clipboards | • Begin to make representational drawings of interesting things to see/do outdoors  
• Take photographs of special drawings  
• Observe and record detail  
• Chalk numbers on walls/floor surfaces  
• Chalk patterns in different colours on paving slabs  
• Decide as a small group what the group picture might be and share jobs | • Varnished external plywood painted with easel/blackboard paint fixed on a wall at the children’s height  
• A trolley of resources to include chalk, paper, clipboards, markers, pens, pencils, duster, sponges |
<table>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Create 3D models of observations and ideas</td>
<td>• Use junk materials to create models representing what has been done outdoors, e.g., a mini climbing frame, a garden</td>
<td>• Use the outdoor workbench to make 3D models using wood</td>
<td>• An area to work on, e.g., a tablecloth on a piece of grass or a table top</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Access materials required and tidy these away</td>
<td>• Select, use and store own materials</td>
<td>• Combine junk materials and other construction materials if appropriate</td>
<td>• A trolley and tubs with various boxes, paper, glue, scissors, staplers, tape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Use skills of cutting, folding, sticking, joining</td>
<td>• Paint models</td>
<td>• Weave natural fabric, bark, ribbon, willow through fencing to create a texture area</td>
<td>• Materials for large-scale weaving like willow, ribbon, hessian, rope, fabric, twigs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Weave numerals into fences</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**EXPLORING JUNK ART**
## CREATIVE AREA – MUSIC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>BANGING</strong></td>
<td>• Make loud music on a variety of drums using banging</td>
<td>• Collect objects for the drum area, eg pots and pans, metal buckets</td>
<td>• Begin to play along with a simple beat in taped music</td>
<td>• Pots and pans mobile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Enjoy the drum area</td>
<td>• Use a variety of beaters, eg old whisks, drumsticks, spoons, ladels to make loud music</td>
<td>• Beat out a familiar rhythm</td>
<td>• Metal buckets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Collect objects for the drum area, eg pots and pans, metal buckets</td>
<td>• Perform a song and drum along to it</td>
<td>• Perform a song and drum along to it</td>
<td>• Large drums</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Use a variety of beaters, eg old whisks, drumsticks, spoons, ladels to make loud music</td>
<td>• Begin to maintain a steady beat</td>
<td>• Begin to maintain a steady beat</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TAPPING</strong></td>
<td>• Enjoy tapping sounds made with a variety of objects</td>
<td>• Hang up old CD Roms on trees or fences, tap these together</td>
<td>• Play chime bars and xylophones outdoors</td>
<td>• Old CD Roms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Use appropriate vocabulary to describe the sounds</td>
<td>• Hit various lengths of pipe with a ping pong bat or flip flop</td>
<td>• Make decisions about whether banging or tapping sounds suit a particular piece of music</td>
<td>• Pipe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Co-operate with friends to make music together</td>
<td>• Hang up musical notation cut outs and use vocabulary with the children</td>
<td>• Bring in items from home to add to the tapping resources</td>
<td>• Flip flops / Ping Pong bats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Number line made of hanging numbered plastic bottles that children can tap</td>
<td>• Cord</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Indoor instruments, eg xylophones, triangles and beaters</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### CREATIVE AREA – MUSIC CONT.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>PROGRESSION</th>
<th>PROVISION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| BLOWING              | • Blow through objects to create sound  
                       • Have fun experimenting | • Blow across the tops of milk bottles  
                       • Experiment with bottles filled to various points with water  
                       • Play with pipes and cylinders to create sound | • Use homemade blowing instruments to play a tune for peer/adult  
                       • Make train noises to help tell train stories and rhymes  
                       • Use commercially produced whistles | • Bottles  
                       • Water  
                       • Pipes  
                       • Tubing  
                       • Cylinders  
                       • Whistles  
                       • Books |
| SCRAPING             | • Create sounds by scraping objects  
                       • Use vocabulary to describe the sounds | • Scrape a beater or finger nails along ridged car mats  
                       • Create a patch of woven willow fence to run sticks across | • Look at home for items that can be scraped and bring them to share  
                       • Select scraping instruments from the box of musical instruments | • Old car mats  
                       • Willow lencing  
                       • Sticks to trail along fences, walls, tree bark |
| CLICKING             | • Make clicking sounds | • Suspend old computer mouse to make a clicker mobile  
                       • Select clicker instruments from the box of musical instruments | • Practise clicking fingers  
                       • Use vocabulary to talk about loud clicks, soft clicks  
                       • Contribute to an interest table of “clickers” | • Old computer mouse  
                       • Commercial clickers  
                       • Flat discs to click into containers, eg Leap Frog Game |
<table>
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<tr>
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<th>PROVISION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SPLASHING</td>
<td>• Enjoy making sounds in water play</td>
<td>• Play with water resources to make a variety of sounds, eg drip, splash</td>
<td>• Use musical instruments, eg rainmaker, bells</td>
<td>• Variety of water play resources, eg rainmaker, bells, triangles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SONGS / RHYMES</td>
<td>• Develop ability to walk in a circle and sing and move together</td>
<td>• Enjoy traditional songs and rhymes, eg &quot;In and Out of the Dusty Bluebells&quot;</td>
<td>• Play ring games with friends</td>
<td>• Song and rhyme tapes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Explore louder sounds</td>
<td>• Sing along to taped music</td>
<td>• Select and play favourite song tape</td>
<td>• Tape recorder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• To encourage friendship and social interaction</td>
<td>• Learn songs and perform them for others</td>
<td>• Create a stage area to perform</td>
<td>• Microphone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• To develop self confidence</td>
<td>• Enjoy action rhymes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SECTION 5 – SUGGESTED GUIDANCE FOR PLANNING

SNACK AREA
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POSSIBLE EXPERIENCES</th>
<th>INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES</th>
<th>ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>PROGRESSION</th>
<th>PROVISION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **EXPERIENCING SNACK OUTDOORS** | • Be helpful and carry out jobs independently  
• Follow usual indoor snack routines outdoors, establish where symbol will go  
• Experience the fun of outdoor eating in all seasons – depending on the weather  
• Enjoy feeding the birds with leftovers | • Help prepare trays of food for outdoor picnic tables or rug areas  
• Carry manageable items outdoors  
• Remember indoor snack routines, eg putting your symbol in a special place  
• Wash up plates and cups in a basin of hot, soapy water  
• Relax and enjoy the sounds and sights outdoors/chat with friends  
• Save leftover bread/fruit for the birds | • If an indoor and outdoor classroom are running simultaneously, children should be able to access snacks from either indoors or outdoors if routines have been established  
• Read books about picnics  
• Develop a picnic/barbeque role play area indoors and out | • Picnic tables or rugs  
• Trays  
• Basins  
• Bird tables  
• Baskets for bread/fruit  
• Crates for empty bottles  
• A place for symbols or placemats |
HORTICULTURE
(GARDENING / WILD & DIGGING)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POSSIBLE EXPERIENCES</th>
<th>INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES</th>
<th>ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>PROGRESSION</th>
<th>PROVISION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>EXPERIMENTAL PLAY</strong></td>
<td>• Share equipment and space</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Discuss and recognise the need for rules</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Name toys and equipment</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Experience properties of soil – wet/dry in a digging area using hands and spades</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Observe creatures</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Learn about seeds and weeds</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Practise keeping hands clean after each session</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Establish rules/routines</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Develop picture symbols to represent the numbers allowed in the garden/wild area, eg Six pictures/tags/labels on a wall, children take one, replace it when finished</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Share factual books about growing things</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Look at seeds and seedlings</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Discuss digging using vocabulary, eg squealch, slimy, crumbly, messy, muddy</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Look for worms and mini-beasts under logs or old carpet</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Work as a group, being aware of the needs of others</td>
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<td>• Name, select and store tools independently</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Learn digging/growing, songs/rhymes</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Explore measures using large-scale balance, natural materials, eg sand, gravel and wooden blocks</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Establish seedlings and maintain their growth</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Learn about mini-beasts, naming and habits</td>
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<td>• Keep a wormery and learn about how worms break up the soil</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• An area for digging</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• An area for growing</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Simple tools, eg various sizes of spade</td>
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<td>• An area left to grow wild</td>
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<td>• Logs/old sacks or carpet for children to look under</td>
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<td>• Appropriate fiction / non-fiction books about gardening and insects</td>
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<td>• Magnifying glasses / dishes for mini-beast observation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• A container to develop a wormery</td>
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</table>
### Free Exploration Using the Senses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Possible Experiences</th>
<th>Intended Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Progression</th>
<th>Provision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Explore the textures of a variety of plants in the environment</td>
<td>Plant or maintain a mixed shrub bed and encourage the children to experience and use texture vocabulary</td>
<td>Use reference books to look up pictures and learn names of all the different plants</td>
<td>A raised bed, eg old tyres, pots, old sink, basin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoy the smells of plants like rosemary, mint and lavender</td>
<td>Plant a small raised bed (an old sink or tyre) with herbs</td>
<td>Use mathematical vocabulary, eg positional language, size, shape, colours to describe the plants</td>
<td>Cuttings or seeds to plant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mirror the colours of the garden/wild area in creative work</td>
<td>Grow herbs and vegetables to explore taste and smell</td>
<td>Create an herb interest table – encourage children and parents to provide items, eg lavender pillows</td>
<td>Old CD Roms, wind chimes, bamboo</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use herbs in cooking to taste various flavours</td>
<td>Use paint and colouring pencils to make pictures of plants</td>
<td>Use herbs like mint in a dip to taste it</td>
<td>Paint, clipboards, paper, pencils</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listen to the sounds of nature in the garden</td>
<td>Hang up old CD Roms and wind chimes or plant bamboo to listen to the wind sounds</td>
<td>Keep a booklet of paintings/pictures and discuss it indoors with peers and staff</td>
<td>Willow for tunnel</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Go on a number walk or shape walk in the garden</td>
<td>Create a willow tunnel</td>
<td>Logs, stepping stones</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Grow potatoes and leeks – make soup, enjoy smell and taste</td>
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<td>Develop a themed garden, eg jungle</td>
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</table>
### HORTICULTURE AREA CONT.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POSSIBLE EXPERIENCES</th>
<th>INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES</th>
<th>ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>PROGRESSION</th>
<th>PROVISION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CARE AND SUPPORT – HOW TO WEED AND WATER</td>
<td>• Develop vocabulary, eg soil, bulb, seed, seedling, vegetables, flower, herb, shrub</td>
<td>• Plant appropriate seasonal seeds, seedlings or bulbs in a small plot or container</td>
<td>• Encourage parents to join with their children and create a garden plot/containers at home</td>
<td>• Plot of land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Be aware that without care, the plants will not grow</td>
<td>• Check regularly to see if the soil feels dry, if so water it</td>
<td>• Develop a garden centre in the role play area where children can buy and sell produce</td>
<td>• Containers – tubs, pots, growbags, buckets, tyres, wooden or brick tubs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Commit to looking after plants regularly</td>
<td>• Leave a few plants without water, observe and discuss what happens</td>
<td>• Display flowers in the playroom</td>
<td>• Spades, trowels, forks, hoes, hoses, canes, wheelbarrows</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Develop the skill of testing soil by ‘touch’ to establish if plants need water</td>
<td>• Leave a patch of the wild area – allow weeds to build up and choke the plants, observe what happens, take photographs</td>
<td>• Use vegetables to make soup</td>
<td>• Watering cans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Become familiar with common weeds and be able to pull weeds and leave plants</td>
<td>• Regularly weed the flower / vegetable / shrub patch</td>
<td>• Visit a market garden, greengrocer’s and garden centre</td>
<td>• Gardening books and magazines</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>*SEASONAL PLANTS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| | | • SPRING – daffodils, crocuses, snowdrops, tulips | | \*
| | | • SUMMER/AUTUMN – candytuft, nasturtium, stock, anemones, freesia, iris, marigolds, petunias, beans, carrots, potatoes, peas, tomatoes | | \*
| | | • WINTER – purple sprouting broccoli, winter pansies | | \*
**INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES**

- Observe plants at various stages
- Develop appropriate vocabulary to describe these changes
- Record change over time

**ACTIVITIES**

- Take photographs of the growing process
- Make a diary of the growth using photographs
- Use the diary at story time to help develop appropriate vocabulary, e.g., roots, shoots, longer, wider, darker, lighter
- Look at plants through magnifying glasses to encourage “really looking”

**PROGRESSION**

- Make clipboards using laminated card and pegs – children can write or draw their observations
- Make children’s drawings into a booklet so change can be reviewed
- Introduce children to the language of time – days, months, seasons
- Develop and observe a compost bin

**PROVISION**

- Camera
- Notebooks
- Magnifying glasses
- Homemade clipboards and pencils
- Treasury tags
- Story books about growth and time
- Compost bin

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**HORTICULTURE AREA CONT.**

**PLANTS DEVELOP AND CHANGE OVER TIME**

- Observe plants at various stages
- Develop appropriate vocabulary to describe these changes
- Record change over time

- Take photographs of the growing process
- Make a diary of the growth using photographs
- Use the diary at story time to help develop appropriate vocabulary, e.g., roots, shoots, longer, wider, darker, lighter
- Look at plants through magnifying glasses to encourage “really looking”
LARGE-SCALE CONSTRUCTION
### SECTION 5 – SUGGESTED GUIDANCE FOR PLANNING

#### LARGE-SCALE CONSTRUCTION AREA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POSSIBLE EXPERIENCES</th>
<th>INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES</th>
<th>ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>PROGRESSION</th>
<th>PROVISION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>MATHEMATICAL SKILLS AND EXPERIMENTAL PLAY</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Develop co-ordination fine/gross motor skills&lt;br&gt;• Develop concepts associated with size, shape, height, weight, position, space&lt;br&gt;• Begin to question, predict, experiment&lt;br&gt;• Begin to solve problems as they lift, carry, build on top of etc.&lt;br&gt;• Talk about what they are making / constructing&lt;br&gt;• Observe that carefully stacked materials are less likely to fall&lt;br&gt;• Explore relationships of objects to each other, eg building walls, stacking different shapes&lt;br&gt;• Problem solve&lt;br&gt;• Begin to negotiate, discuss and select&lt;br&gt;• Begin to predict, collaborate and communicate</td>
<td>• Use a wide range of construction materials to explore, experiment with and find out about the properties of materials&lt;br&gt;• Assemble and re-arrange construction materials&lt;br&gt;• Have fun with a variety of empty boxes&lt;br&gt;• Build a large bridge using crates, planks, ladders &amp; poles&lt;br&gt;• Build a construction using crates, guttering, wood, logs, soft blocks, foam blocks, click wood flooring, cork tiles</td>
<td>• Relate construction to buildings, eg home, castle, farm, airport&lt;br&gt;• Record through photographs and drawings&lt;br&gt;• Play with large empty boxes – getting inside, how many children will fit&lt;br&gt;• Storing construction hats on numbered hooks or pegs&lt;br&gt;• Talk about construction with confidence&lt;br&gt;• Select own equipment and materials&lt;br&gt;• Record through drawing photographs&lt;br&gt;• Describe construction&lt;br&gt;• Introduce architect’s plans and encourage their own creative designs&lt;br&gt;• Observe building being constructed in local community</td>
<td>• All types of construction materials&lt;br&gt;• Pictures of buildings&lt;br&gt;• Camera&lt;br&gt;• Clipboards&lt;br&gt;• Hard hats&lt;br&gt;• Spirit levels&lt;br&gt;• Wheel-barrow&lt;br&gt;• Real tools&lt;br&gt;• Overalls&lt;br&gt;• Hard hats, tape measures&lt;br&gt;• Design and construction magazines&lt;br&gt;• Construction site signs&lt;br&gt;• See resource list on pages 55–58</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
### SECTION 5 – SUGGESTED GUIDANCE FOR PLANNING

#### LARGE-SCALE CONSTRUCTION AREA

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>PROGRESSION</th>
<th>PROVISION</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IMAGINING, THINKING AND COMMUNICATING</td>
<td>• Begin to develop skills of imagining, co-operating, listening, communicating, observing, problem solving, selecting/choosing, questioning</td>
<td>• Create role play contexts for construction play, eg Bob the Builder, Humpty Dumpty, Postman Pat's van and post box, Mary Mary Quite Contrary Garden, a bridge for the Three Billy Goats Gruff</td>
<td>• Create homemade books focusing on the process and sequences of construction</td>
<td>• Relevant books, songs, rhymes etc</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Develop social inter-action</td>
<td>• An aeroplane</td>
<td>• Opportunities for children to use these books to retell the process of story-time</td>
<td>• Hard hats</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Use language to imagine and recreate roles and experiences</td>
<td>• A boat</td>
<td>• Create shelters using sheets, umbrellas, etc.</td>
<td>• Goggles</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Retell narratives in correct sequence</td>
<td>• Harland and Wolff crane</td>
<td>• Use woodwork bench &amp; real tools</td>
<td>• Aprons</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Encourage safe use of tools and negotiate rules</td>
<td>• An igloo</td>
<td>• Create wood work house</td>
<td>• Visibility vest</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Link construction play to relevant stories, rhymes and songs</td>
<td>• Appropriate environmental print</td>
<td>• Safety signs</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Mr Gumpy's Motor Car</td>
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<td>• See resource list on pages 55–58</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>– The Green Ship</td>
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<td>• Refer to pages 140–151 in the Learning Through Play resource file</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>– The House that Jack Built</td>
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<td>– The Lighthouse Keeper's Books</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>– The Owl and the Pussy Cat</td>
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<td>– Little Red Riding Hood</td>
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<td>– Cinderella</td>
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<td>– Three Bears</td>
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<td>– Three Little Pigs</td>
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<td>– Lucy and Tom and the Island of Dinosaurs</td>
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SAND AND WATER AREA
### SAND AND WATER AREA

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<th>POSSIBLE EXPERIENCES</th>
<th>INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES</th>
<th>ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>PROGRESSION</th>
<th>PROVISION</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| SAND – WET SAND / MUD | • To use writing as a means of recording and communicating  
 • Experiment with adding liquids to sand  
 • Experiment with pouring, filling, building with different textures  
 • Explore sand with large-scale containers | • Use tool in sand to record scores/tally chart  
 • Make pictures or patterns with natural resources  
 • Mix dry sand and clay. Mix water and then washing-up liquid to clay. Mix beans, lentils and peas with sand and add water  
 • Explore the resources in each of the textured sands/mud  
 • Fill/empty big buckets and spades  
 • Extend indoor activities on a larger scale | • Child can develop letter formation or write own name  
 • Offer a set of challenges  
 • Use descriptive words to tell of their experiences – rough, sticky, soapy  
 • Use comparative language | • Builders tray with cover  
 • Sand  
 • Twigs  
 • Feathers  
 • Shallow tray  
 • Deep bucket  
 • Assorted sand  
 • Wet and dry cups  
 • Bottles  
 • Tubes  
 • Jugs  
 • Spoons  
 • Funnels  
 • Plastic sheets  
 • Lentils  
 • Beans  
 • Peas  
 • Design tools – combs, dowels, trowels  
 • Refer to pages 39–53 in the Learning Through Play resource file |
## Section 5 – Suggested Guidance for Planning

### Sand and Water Area Cont.

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<tr>
<th>Possible Experiences</th>
<th>Intended Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Progression</th>
<th>Provision</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use stories as stimulus for imaginative play</td>
<td>Create a dinosaur swamp</td>
<td>Children can add own props or suggest changes to provision</td>
<td>Compost, logs, shells, stones, bark, leaves, conkers.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Create environments to encourage a range of imaginative role play</td>
<td>Children will access and return resources to storage areas</td>
<td>In construction area, make props/resources for swamp</td>
<td>Storybook “Romp in the Swamp”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Build and construct with a range of materials</td>
<td>Fill a variety of coloured socks with sand</td>
<td>Use a series of pulleys and suspended buckets to move sand from one place to another</td>
<td>Flexible piping</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transport with a purpose</td>
<td>Hunt in sand, eg potatoes, pinecones, root vegetables, treasure</td>
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<td>Tubing</td>
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<td>Transport items to another area</td>
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<td>Slicks</td>
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<td>Building site – make, transport and use the “cement” in buckets</td>
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<td>Rakes</td>
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<td>Sweeping</td>
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<td>Brushes</td>
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<td>Plastic figures</td>
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<td>Toy vehicles</td>
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<td>Plastic gloves for those children who do not like to be messy</td>
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<td>Socks</td>
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<td>Hard hats</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Shovels</td>
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<td>POSSIBLE EXPERIENCES</td>
<td>INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES</td>
<td>ACTIVITIES</td>
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</table>
| WATER                | • Explore the properties of moving water  
• Explore and select materials and equipment  
• Experiment moving water around | • Use buckets of water and a variety of paintbrushes to paint fences/walls  
• Handle equipment with increasing control  
• Use buckets/plastic bags to transport water from one paddling pool to another  
• Fit harbour sets together to allow for large-scale work  
• Melt giant ice cubes (coloured) in water tray and mix the colours  
• Use squirts to hit targets  
• Explore water flowing down pieces of guttering or through plastic pipes | • Discuss how the water evaporates  
• Use comparative language and the language of measure – full, empty, heavier etc.  
• Involve a larger number of children working together  
• Develop concepts of how colours are mixed  
• Increase distance and complexity of game | • Covered builders trays  
• Paddling pools  
• Buckets  
• Tubes  
• Guttering  
• Squirts & targets  
• Hoses  
• Harbour sets  
• Outdoor – water barrel or hose pipe  
• Large paint brushes  
• Buckets  
• Decorators brushes (big and small)  
• Rollers  
• Watering can/mister  
• Sponges  
• Hand pump  
• Frozen coloured ice cubes |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POSSIBLE EXPERIENCES</th>
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<th>ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>PROGRESSION</th>
<th>PROVISION</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| WATER CONT.           |                            | • Wash dolls and clothes. Wash cups/beakers after snack time in a large bowl of soapy water.  
• Set up laundrette outside – add props – wash baskets, iron, ironing board, pegs, clothes airer | | | |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POSSIBLE EXPERIENCES</th>
<th>INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES</th>
<th>ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>PROGRESSION</th>
<th>PROVISION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Be confident to try out new activities&lt;br&gt;• Take turns and share fairly&lt;br&gt;• Handle tools with increasing control&lt;br&gt;• Become aware of water in nature and the environment</td>
<td>• Wash bikes and other toys with big sponges&lt;br&gt;• Use a bicycle wheel as a water wheel substitute&lt;br&gt;• Explore rainy days with umbrellas and wellingtons&lt;br&gt;• Make a snowman&lt;br&gt;• Create angels on ground&lt;br&gt;• Melting frost with handprint on safety surface&lt;br&gt;• On a rainy day stomp in a puddle. When rain stops look for rainbows and sweep the puddles</td>
<td>• Try to increase / decrease speed of the water wheel&lt;br&gt;• Watch/observe thermometer for temperature change&lt;br&gt;• Try drawing around a puddle as the sun dries the ground. Where does the water go?</td>
<td>• Wheeled toys&lt;br&gt;• Buckets&lt;br&gt;• Sponges&lt;br&gt;• Bicycle wheel on a bracket&lt;br&gt;• Plastic cups&lt;br&gt;• Umbrellas&lt;br&gt;• Wellington boots&lt;br&gt;• Refer to pages 68–80 in the Learning Through Play resource file</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Water play outdoors can be an extension of indoor activities on a larger scale.
QUIET AREA
## QUIET AREA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POSSIBLE EXPERIENCES</th>
<th>INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES</th>
<th>ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>PROGRESSION</th>
<th>PROVISION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• To develop confidence, self-esteem and a sense of security</td>
<td>• A “Quiet Reading” time</td>
<td>• Board games, threading activities</td>
<td>• Table, deck and patio chairs, picnic bench, blanket, piece of carpet, cushions, wooden seat, pergola</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• To provide opportunities for personal “think time”</td>
<td>• Mark making on boards, books, clipboards</td>
<td>• Books on a particular topic</td>
<td>• Large pieces of cloth, travelling rugs over an A-frame, a play house, tent or shed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Explore and experiment with sounds, words, and texts</td>
<td>• Bring a favourite item to the Quiet Area and enjoy</td>
<td>• Children will enjoy the calming effect of the quiet area after experiencing an upset</td>
<td>• Box with books, tape recorder, Dictaphones, tapes – songs, stories, rhymes, sound games</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Listen with enjoyment and respond to stories, songs, rhymes and poems</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Soft toys</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Use of mathematical language in practical activities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Writing and drawing materials</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Language and mathematical games</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Small-motor-skill games</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SECTION 5 – SUGGESTED GUIDANCE FOR PLANNING

LARGE MOVEMENT
### LARGE-MOVEMENT AREA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POSSIBLE EXPERIENCES</th>
<th>INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES</th>
<th>ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>PROGRESSION</th>
<th>PROVISION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| SPACE TO BAT          | • Explore and enjoy resources  
• Be aware of safety rules/routines  
• Become able to strike an object with the hand  
• Develop skills needed to use short and long handled bats  
• Step and swing  
• Keep eyes on the ball  
• Shake hands with a bat  
• Develop swinging arm action | • Use balloons and beach balls to develop skills of batting with the hand  
• Play swing ball or suspend a ball by string or in a stocking from a netball ring or monkey bar. Encourage child to strike as hard as they can | • Time and space to develop batting skills on own, or in pairs  
• Provide markings on the ground to show correct placement of feet  
• Move to using short and long handled bats and small balls | • Short handled bats  
• Long handled bats  
• Balloons  
• Beach balls  
• Swing ball |
### LARGE-MOVEMENT AREA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POSSIBLE EXPERIENCES</th>
<th>INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES</th>
<th>ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>PROGRESSION</th>
<th>PROVISION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| SPACE TO RUN          | • Enjoy the freedom of an open space  
• Begin to understand changing direction  
• Develop ability to run in pathways  
• Develop ability to focus the eyes forward, bending of the elbows, using forward and backward arm movements | • Weave in and out of cones  
• Create pathways using ropes and chalk  
• Use a large egg timer to time races  
• Use windy day box resources to enjoy running with streamers on a windy day  
• Running on the spot | • Develop obstacle courses using a range of equipment  
• Number obstacle courses with dice formats and numerals  
• Practise the arm action by walking or running on the spot and pumping the arms. Pretend to be a train  
• Emphasise high knee lift using marching songs or pretending to run upstairs | • Cones  
• Ropes  
• Chalk  
• Whistle  
• Egg timer  
• Windy day box containing – streamers, windsock, kite, plastic bags, string, lengths of ribbon |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPACE TO JUMP / HOP</th>
<th>POSSIBLE EXPERIENCES</th>
<th>INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES</th>
<th>ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>PROGRESSION</th>
<th>PROVISION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
|                     | • Share and co-operate using resources  
                     • Develop jumping  
                      **JUMP FOR HEIGHT**  
                     • Swing arms and spring upwards  
                     • Land quietly  
                     • Swing arms and reach skyward  
                      **JUMP FOR DISTANCE**  
                     • Swing arms and spring forward  
                     • Coil body and jump up  
                     • Jump with head up and eyes forward  
                     • Reach skyward while jumping forward  
                     • Land like fairies  
                     • Land like mice (quietly)  
                     • Develop hopping skills  
                     • Develop safe landing skills | • Draw jumping lines – see how far they can jump, hop, step. Which line do they reach?  
                     • Place large 2D shapes on the ground, children jump to the shape when they hear it's name  
                     • Suspend a balloon in the air, child jumps to tap it  
                     • Enjoy playing on stepping stones  
                     • Hold child’s hands and ask “How many hops can you do in a row?” | • Use memory mats, eg letters and numbers – can you jump from c to f?  
                     • Use imagery – “Pretend you are a rocket taking off”  
                     • Practise hopping on both right and left legs  
                     • Hop in various patterns RR, LL or RL, RL  
                     • Play hopscotch  
                     • Use of “Fundamental Movement Skills” Programme to assist with Progression | • Stepping stones made from tree trunk section, large 2D shapes for the floor, laminated coloured card  
                     • PE mats or safety surface to practise safe landing  
                     • Rhymes & songs to encourage jumping, eg “One Little Speckled Frog”. |
SMALL EQUIPMENT
### SMALL-EQUIPMENT AREA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POSSIBLE EXPERIENCES</th>
<th>INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES</th>
<th>ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>PROGRESSION</th>
<th>PROVISION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>GAMES</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Select and use activities and resources independently</td>
<td>• Move with control and coordination</td>
<td>• Use everyday words to describe position</td>
<td>• Use a range of small and large equipment</td>
<td>• Use a range of small and large equipment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Use a range of small and large equipment</td>
<td>• Show awareness of space, themselves and others</td>
<td>• Move with control and coordination</td>
<td>• Develop the language of movement and position with their actions</td>
<td>• Develop the language of movement and position with their actions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Develop motor skills to handle a wide range of small apparatus</td>
<td>• Aiming and throwing games. Throw to person. Throw into, through, at chalk target/bucket/bowl</td>
<td>• Aiming and throwing games. Throw to person. Throw into, through, at chalk target/bucket/bowl</td>
<td>• Develop the techniques of aiming, predicting and estimating with increasing accuracy</td>
<td>• Hoops.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Play “10 green bottles”</td>
<td>• Add/remove hoops for going through/bouncing a ball in, jumping in, using as a target (could also use a hole cut in a cardboard box)</td>
<td>• Create own challenges</td>
<td>• Balls large and small and of different shapes, colours, textures and sizes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Playground games:</td>
<td>• Playground games:</td>
<td>• Demonstrate better spatial awareness and a sense of balance</td>
<td>• Bean bags</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– Hopscotch</td>
<td>– Counting snake</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Skittles (bottles)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– Caterpillar</td>
<td>– Snail Trail</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Rope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– Hoopla</td>
<td>– Hook the duck</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Baskets, tubs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– Bowling / golf game</td>
<td>– Skipping games</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Basketball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– Stilts</td>
<td>– Stilts</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Hoops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• PE spots</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Stilts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Ribbons and streamers</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Top Start equipment bags and activity cards</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### SMALL EQUIPMENT AREA

#### INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POSSIBLE EXPERIENCES</th>
<th>ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>PROGRESSION</th>
<th>PROVISION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Co-operate and turn take</td>
<td>Large playground games, eg “Bad Tempered Ladybird” or “Connect 4”</td>
<td>Develop own means of score keeping:</td>
<td>Large-scale games/giant dice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Devise own rules</td>
<td>Children run to a shape, colour or number item named by an adult</td>
<td>Beat the score of friend</td>
<td>Sand timer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Say and use number names in order in familiar contexts</td>
<td>Draw a zigzag line on the ground, aim a ball into space</td>
<td>Beat the time</td>
<td>Magnetic board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use own methods to solve a problem</td>
<td>Roll a bag along the zigzag line</td>
<td>Extend rules of games to include shape and colour (include more than one criteria)</td>
<td>Score board and chalk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Show interest, involvement and perseverance</td>
<td>Move feet to place body in line with ball</td>
<td>Time and space to develop their own games with friends</td>
<td>Laminated scoreboard on rings to flick over</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop the skills for throwing and catching balls</td>
<td>Children keep their eyes focused on the ball</td>
<td>Adjust hands to path and size of ball</td>
<td>Giant abacus arm spinner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Children reach out hands to receive the ball</td>
<td>Keep fingers soft, slightly cupped</td>
<td>Large number tracks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Catch ball in hands with elbows bent to absorb impact</td>
<td>A large variety of large, and middle-sized balls</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CLIMBING
## SECTION 5 – SUGGESTED GUIDANCE FOR PLANNING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Possible Experiences</th>
<th>Intended Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Progression</th>
<th>Provision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **CLIMBING**         | • Develop skills and abilities – balance, co-ordination, climbing, swinging, strength, self confidence, negotiation  
                      • Be able to climb up and climb down  
                      • Develop upper-body strength | • Access to a range of climbing resources in a safe secure environment have. Use these in imaginative play, to develop specific climbing skills as part of a games session – enjoy taking a “safe risk”  
                      • Practise holding tightly to develop strong hand grip  
                      • Have a “bear walk” – walk along ground using alternate foot and hand pattern  
                      • Place a ladder on the ground for the child to climb along, alternatively draw a ladder pattern on the ground | • Integrate climbing as part of an obstacle course  
                      • Role play a firefighter rescue. Child climbs ladder and rings bell  
                      • Provide taller ladders or ladders with removable or adjustable rungs | • Planks  
                      • Slides  
                      • Ladders  
                      • A-frames  
                      • Crates  
                      • Barrels  
                      • Tunnels  
                      • Large fixed equipment, if available  
                      • Bars  
                      • Rope ladders  
                      • Tree trunk sections  
                      • Portable modular systems |
WHEELED VEHICLES
### WHEELED-VEHICLES AREA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POSSIBLE EXPERIENCES</th>
<th>INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES</th>
<th>ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>PROGRESSION</th>
<th>PROVISION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| EXPERIMENTAL PLAY – DEVELOPING CO-ORDINATION / SAFETY AWARENESS | • Develop skills of pushing, pedalling, steering, controlling  
• Develop co-ordination  
• Be able to steer safely around a course | • Discuss and plan a course together, mark out with chalk or cones | • Draw course | • Selections of wheeled vehicles  
• Items to mark out course |
| | • Starting  
• Stopping  
• Judging distance  
• Judging speed  
• Manoeuvring  
• Talk about the importance of safety on vehicles and relate this to road safety | • Introduce road safety signs – stop, slow – pedestrian, crossing, zebra crossings  
• Wear helmets and visibility tabards  
• Have a driving test centre – children go for driving lessons and pass a test | • Add more road signs – traffic lights, speed limits, no-entry signs, one way arrows.  
• Speed cameras  
• Police speed checks  
• Visit by DOE Road Safety Officer | • Road signs  
• Highway code books  
• Road safety posters  
• “L” plates and “R” plates |

![Image of children with wheels]

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**SECTION 5 – SUGGESTED GUIDANCE FOR PLANNING**

123
### WHEELED-VEHICLES AREA CONT.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POSSIBLE EXPERIENCES</th>
<th>INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES</th>
<th>ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>PROGRESSION</th>
<th>PROVISION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FOLLOWING DIRECTIONS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Follow directions and instructions</td>
<td>• Carry out the route directions</td>
<td>• Follow routes on simple map</td>
<td>• Simple maps</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Extend positional language</td>
<td>• Talk about the journey and include positional language</td>
<td>• Draw map for friend to follow</td>
<td>• Clip boards</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Begin to collaborate</td>
<td>– who is in front, behind, next, first, last etc.</td>
<td>• Take photographs of features of the play area that are on the route</td>
<td>• Digital camera</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Begin to communicate</td>
<td>• Children make their own course using chalk or paint rollers, follow tracks, paths or routes</td>
<td>• Add one way arrows, roundabout etc</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Begin to negotiate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Develop drawing and recording skills</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### WHEELED VEHICLES AREA CONT.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POSSIBLE EXPERIENCES</th>
<th>INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES</th>
<th>ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>PROGRESSION</th>
<th>PROVISION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MATHEMATICAL EXPERIENCES</td>
<td>• Develop skills related to judging speed and distance, matching, counting, ordering</td>
<td>• Attach windmills to explore speed</td>
<td>• Add speed signs</td>
<td>• Small plastic windmills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Extend comparative language – fast, faster, fastest, slow, slower, speeding</td>
<td>• Attach number plates</td>
<td>• Transport large or heavy objects using wheeled toys, wheelbarrows, trolleys or pulley systems</td>
<td>• Writing materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Develop number recognition</td>
<td>• Count/estimate how many children fit in the bus or chariot</td>
<td>• Match number plates to parking bays</td>
<td>• Homemade parking tickets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Develop language such as under, over, through</td>
<td>• Make an obstacle course around outside play area</td>
<td>• Introduce parking tickets, fines and points on driving licence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POSSIBLE EXPERIENCES</td>
<td>INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES</td>
<td>ACTIVITIES</td>
<td>PROGRESSION</td>
<td>PROVISION</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| TECHNOLOGY EXPERIENCES | • Recognise need for safe maintenance  
• Care for vehicles and equipment  
• Develop investigating, exploring, observing and predicting skills  
• Explore and investigate how things work | • Set up vehicle care centre or MOT centre  
• Take an old trike apart | • Vehicle service and repair sheets | • Non-fiction books about bikes, trikes etc  
• Car log books  
• Overalls  
• Tools  
• Oil cans  
• Rags  
• Polish  
• Vehicle washing area  
• Air pumps  
• Inspection ramps  
• Jacks  
• Car wash |
## WHEELED VEHICLES AREA CONT.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POSSIBLE EXPERIENCES</th>
<th>INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES</th>
<th>ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>PROGRESSION</th>
<th>PROVISION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| IMAGINING, THINKING AND COMMUNICATION                                                | • Develop imagining, listening, communication, observing, problem solving and predicting skills  
• Develop social interactions –  
  – Co-operating  
  – Taking turns  
  – Sharing  
  – Joining-in  
• Relate to the occupations of people in the community | • Create role play contexts for wheeled vehicles, eg  
  – Car wash  
  – Garage  
  – McDonald's drive through  
  – Car boot sale  
  – Postal service  
  – Building site  
  – Supermarket  
  – Driving test centre | • Opportunities for children to extend their own role play ideas | • See resource list on page 36 |

See resource list on page 36.
### WHEELED VEHICLES AREA CONT.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POSSIBLE EXPERIENCES</th>
<th>INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES</th>
<th>ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>PROGRESSION</th>
<th>PROVISION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| DEVELP IMAGINATION AND AWARENESS OF LOCAL ENVIRONMENT | • Develop skills of imagining, listening, predicting, communication, observation and recalling negotiation skills  
• Introduce a storyline or narrative into their play with wheeled vehicles  
• Extend and develop vocabulary of features of local environment  
• Recall own experiences | • Talk about journeys, read stories relating to journeys, eg “Mr Gumpy’s Motor Car”  
• Act out journeys adding features and props relating to the story  
• Recreate local high street by painting or having large photographs of town features – shops, churches, offices, car parks etc  
• Link indoors/outdoors by creating supermarket inside and wheeling trolley out to car park | • Map the journey either on paper or in the sand tray using props  
• Match photographs of outdoor play area with feature  
• Visit local town / village  
• Exchange coins to pay for shopping trolley | • See list of stories to support outdoor play  
• Boxes  
• Card  
• Paint  
• Shopping trolley  
• Supermarket items |
ROLE OF THE ADULT
in the early years

Audit
Playground Design
Safety & Risk Assessment
Planning for Learning
Adult Interaction
Developing an Outdoor Play Policy
ROLE OF THE ADULT

Before, during and after play

“The success of outdoor play rests with the staff. It is only when the whole staff support and enjoy outdoor play that it will work . . . When outdoor play is viewed as a peripheral activity it will only have a peripheral effect on children’s learning. If adults provide quality outdoor play, children will become confident, independent and learn a great deal. It is the adult’s role to ensure that all children can learn, enjoy and reach their potential. Practitioners need to enjoy being outside and be committed to developing the outdoor area”.

Outdoor Play in the Early Years – Helen Bilton
AUDIT OF THE OUTDOOR AREA

To develop children’s learning, you should have examples of the following:

A – Good, B – Adequate/Improve, C – No Provision

- Small and large equipment accessible to the children  
- Well-arranged storage system accessible to the children  
- Access to water  
- Places to hide and be quiet  
- Places to dig and plant  
- Places where animals, insects and birds will be found

Support for children learning through their senses

- A range of textures  
- A range of smells  
- A range of sounds and music  
- A range of sizes, shapes and colours  
- Gradients
### A – Good, B – Adequate/Improve, C – No Provision

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Equipment for practising skills</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jumping on and over and going through</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balancing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Kicking, throwing and aiming for</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Getting into and under</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Pushing, pulling and riding</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sliding</td>
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<tr>
<td>Swinging</td>
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<tr>
<td>Climbing</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Equipment for sand and water</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Equipment to trigger imaginative play</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Equipment for investigation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Equipment to build, haul and construct with</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Provision for drawing and painting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Provision for speaking and listening</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Provision for reading</td>
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*Checklist based on that found in Exercising Muscles and Minds – Marjorie Ourvy.*
PLAYGROUND DESIGN
Assessing the Outdoor Environment

Good design of a play environment involves the provision of a broad balanced curriculum, values, children’s needs and site conditions. As you view your site, think about the type of space you are working with and its:

- available resources;
- type and amount of natural materials;
- size – is it a very small or very large space;
- topographical elements such as a steep slope or a big tree stump in the middle of the space;
- uses – is it a shared space;
- safety requirements.
Sample Design 1
Sample Design 2
Sample Design 3
SAFETY & RISK ASSESSMENT

“If you make an environment hazard free it becomes challenge free, and then children have less experience in making decisions on their own, less opportunity to assess their own personal frontiers and less opportunity to gain confidence and self esteem through coping independently”

Physical risk taking; dangerous or endangered? – Stephenson A. 2003 Early Years 23; 1 35-43

Physically the area has to be safe but still allow risk and challenge. “Safeness is about enabling things to happen, not shutting down opportunities.”

Playing Outside – Helen Bilton

To make a safe environment consider the following.

• Be aware of dangers in the setting and get rid of these hazards, eg outside poles in the play area, poisonous plants, splinters in sheds and fences, loose or uneven paving slabs, unsecured gates etc.

• Make a risk assessment of the outdoor area and check this regularly.

• Make sure that there is a challenge.

• Decide what clothing and footwear you feel is suitable for outside.

• Discuss regularly with children safeness, risk and challenge.

• Write a safeness policy that can be passed on to the parents and carers.

• Make sure the area is safe for all children to have a go at any activity.

• Outside staff need to be ever watchful, even if they are engrossed in an activity with a particular group of children.

• Have a flexible adult rota so that one member of staff can swap and go outside when another member continues work with their group inside.
NEGOTIATED SAFETY RULES FOR OUTDOORS

Suggestions

• We take care with sand – sand hurts if it gets in our eyes.
• We take turns.
• We share.
• We put things back on the trolley where we found them when it is time to tidy up.
• We are kind to our friends.
“The successive steps by which children are led on to make new efforts and new achievements have to be planned by adults”
The Nursery School – Margaret McMillan

There are many ways to plan for outdoor learning and finding the way that suits the group and setting is one of the first tasks.

Planning – overview

- Ensure there is an appropriate learning environment.
- Ensure that outdoor learning potential/opportunities are maximised.
- The whole curriculum should be covered and discovered.
- Experiences and resources should be open ended enough to include most of the curriculum’s areas of learning.
- The outdoor layout and routine of the day needs to be predictable.

- Create long, medium and short term plans.
- Plans should be flexible enough to respond to surprise, enthusiasm and discovery.

Observation, Assessment and Recording

- Observation, assessment and recording of the childrens’ experiences and achievements will inform the planning.
- Staff need time to be allocated to share observations with each other and parents.

Planning can only act as a guide – the ongoing assessment and the evaluation at the end of each day gives the complete picture.
Medium Term Planning
In medium-term planning, staff should identify intended learning for each of the curriculum areas. Medium-term plans inform the day-to-day detail of the weekly (short-term) plans.

Suggested Short-term Planning
Short-term plans include:
- areas of play (should be integrated, eg encourage writing in the construction area);
- learning potential;
- experiences / activities;
- role of the adult / key language;
- resources;
- spontaneous responses to planned activities;
- action for specific children;
- evaluation linked to the spontaneous opportunities.

The weekly plan should focus on the play provision for the indoor and outdoor classroom. The following are sample planners.
# WEEKLY PLANNING (SHORT-TERM PLANS)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Learning Potential</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Resources</th>
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<th>Spontaneous response to planned activities</th>
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<td>Sand and Water</td>
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# WEEKLY PLANNING (SHORT-TERM PLANS)

## Relevant Previous Experiences

<table>
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<tr>
<th>INDOOR PLAY AREA</th>
<th>MAIN TEACHING AND LEARNING</th>
<th>RESOURCES</th>
<th>OUTDOOR PLAY AREA</th>
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<td>CHILDREN’S SPONTANEOUS RESPONSE TO PLANNED ACTIVITIES</td>
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### WEEKLY PLANNING (SHORT-TERM PLANS) Exemplar 3

**Main Teaching & Learning**

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<td>Quiet</td>
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<td>Sand and Water</td>
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<tr>
<td>Role of Adult</td>
<td>Spontaneous response to planned activities</td>
<td>Action for specific children</td>
<td>Evaluation</td>
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</table>
**Observation**

- Observation – what do we notice and what action do we take, if any? Do our observations suggest we should take action?
- Are adults giving more of their time and attention to some individual children or groups?
- How do adults decide what equipment and materials are needed?
- Does outdoor provision reflect and respond to children’s experiences outside school?
- Are there children who invariably play either alone or in very small groups?
- What do the children say about the outdoor area and how does this affect what we plan?
- Are the children making decisions?
- What preferences do the children have? Are there areas to develop?

**Assessment**

- Assess and record children’s experiences and achievements.
- Using assessments to inform future planning.
- Assessment should take place informally within the security and context of the children’s play.
- Use clipboards, dictaphones, cameras or a video camera.

**Observation & Assessments are implemented using the normal procedure in the setting.**

**The adults in the team need to be constantly observing the children to inform the next stage of planning.**
ADULT INTERACTION

“Through keen observation, sensitive interaction, timely guidance and careful evaluation, every adult can make a positive response to children’s movement, not just by setting up an environment and letting things happen, but by seeking opportunities to extend the experience of children.”

The Contribution of Physical Activity in the Early Years – Pauline Boorman

- **A positive attitude**
  - help staff to identify the potential and learning possibilities of the activities
  - the role of the staff is to model, provide, observe, interact, intervene and evaluate

- **Setting Up**
  - provide starting points for the children
  - have the storage arranged so that the children can access the equipment and set up some of the activities themselves

- **Playing with the children**
  - enhances learning
  - increases the quality of the play
  - raises the status of the play and activity
  - raises the self-esteem of those involved
  - allows staff to support unsure children
  - reduces stereotypical play
• **Providing opportunities, challenge, stimulation and progression**
  - provide the right environment, the right resources and the right ethos, which says “Have a Go”
  - by asking challenging questions or posing challenging situations, adults will enable children to really think
  - stimulation increases motivation, motivation increases perseverance and perseverance increases the likelihood of understanding; activities need to be fun and involve real life
  - you need to know where you are going with the children and what it is you are expecting by the time they leave your setting

• **Observation**
  - make observations of children and make judgements about the resources and the environment that has been provided

• **Adult Rota**
  - be flexible according to the number of staff available

• **Tidying Up**
  - children can tidy up, as long as they are shown how to and they are given the guidelines

Children need to know that when they need an adult that they can access one. Adults should also have opportunities to work with specific children, ie one-on-one, select groups, and those with special needs.
DEVELOPING AN OUTDOOR PLAY POLICY

- Involve all staff in discussion about what is in the policy so that they feel part of the final agreement.
- Evaluate the policy regularly so that it is kept relevant and completely up to date.
- Involve parents and ancillary staff (cleaners, kitchen staff), as everyone needs to be aware of the benefits of outdoor play. Children are very sensitive to all adults’ views and chance remarks.

A policy for outdoor play may be organised under these headings:
- PURPOSES
- PRINCIPLES
- PRACTICES

and needs to address the following issues:
- overall aims of outdoor play in our setting;
- planning and organisation of the outdoor environment (including addressing the areas of learning);
- rules for outside;
- the role of adults when outside; and
- equality of opportunity outside, promoting inclusion and including statements about:
  - children of all abilities being able to play and explore in the outdoor area;
  - gender issues;
  - how children will be monitored when using the outdoor area;
  - equal presentation, eg tidying after the morning session to make sure that the afternoon session is equally well presented as a fresh area to explore; and
  - respect for cultural issues, eg some children may need to remain fully clothed even when the paddling pool is available.
OUTDOOR PLAY BOXES/BAGS in the early years
OUTDOOR PLAY BOXES / BAGS

Play boxes/play bags/prop boxes contain exciting resources that support a particular theme/topic/story/event. They can be used alone or with equipment that you already have outdoors. Play boxes/bags need to be labelled and organised in a way that is accessible to the children.

The Rainy Day Box
- Raincoats
- Wellies
- Umbrellas
- Plastic bottle ‘rain gauges’, jugs
- Watering cans
- Waterwheels
- Photographs of rain
- Chalks to draw around puddles
- Guttering
- Objects to float
- Paint brushes
- Tin trays

The Windy Day Box
- Streamers
- Kites
- Windmills
- Plastic bags
- Yachts
- Windchimes

Sunny Day Box
- Sun hats
- Caps
- Sun cream (pretend)
- Sunglasses
- Sun Umbrella
- Chalk to draw around shadows

Frosty/Snowy Day Box
- Hats
- Scarves
- Gloves
- Thermometer
- Spades
- Tin Trays
The Beach Play Box
- Beach towel
- Beach mat
- Beach ball
- Beach bag
- Buckets and spades
- Paddling pools
- Sun cream bottle (empty)
- Sun glasses
- Sun hats
- Shells and pebbles
- Flip flop or ‘jelly’ shoes
- Fishing nets
- Sea creatures
- Boats
- Pretend ice-creams
- Punch and Judy puppets

The Painter and Decorator’s Play Box
- Assorted sizes of brushes and rollers
- Roller trays
- Rolls of wallpaper and border rolls
- Paint
- Buckets
- Tape measure
- Mobile phone
- White overalls or old shirts
- Sponges
- Clipboards
- Paint colour cards

Washday Play Box (use a wash basket)
- Bowl
- Washing powder/liquid
- Fabric conditioner
- Clothes of various sizes
- Washing line
- Wash basket
- Pegs
- Iron
- Ironing board
- Clothes horse
- Old fashioned wash board

Frosty/Snowy Day Box
- Hats
- Scarves
- Gloves
- Thermometer
- Spades
- Tin Trays
Noah’s Ark
- Large box in the shape of a boat
- Animals in pairs
- Animal masks
- Wood off cuts
- Hammers, nails
- Measuring tapes
- Calculators
- Hard hats
- Goggles
- Rain coats
- Clipboard/pencils

Prop Boxes for Imaginary Play
- The café restaurant
- The garage/service station
- Garden centre
- Camp site
- The airport
- Building site
- The desert island

Activity Prop Boxes
- Snails
- Colour treasure hunts
- Measuring
- Mini-beasts
- Rubbings
- Collage
# STORY PROP BOXES

## The Three Little Pigs
- Story book
- Masks of pigs/wolf
- Three cardboard boxes
- Box for chimney
- Straw
- Twigs
- Bricks – real/plastic/wooden
- Large pot
- Signs

## Cinderella
- Story book
- Ugly masks
- Shoes
- Dresses and jewellery
- Wigs
- Mirror
- Clock
- Pretend mice
- Pumpkin
- Scrubbing brushes
- Party invitations
- Tape of dancing music

## Goldilocks and the Three Bears
- Story book
- Masks
- Blonde wig
- Three bears
- Three bowls/cups/spoons etc.
- Porridge oats
- Three carpet squares
- Three blankets
- Map of woods

## We’re Going on a Bear Hunt
- Copy of story
- Large box
- Smaller flattened out boxes
- Blanket
- Blue material
- Teddy
- Long grasses or ribbons
OUTDOOR PLAY BAG

The idea is based on materials produced by ‘Mind Stretchers’ (Early Years, Clare Warden).

The notion of having a bag of materials arranged to suit topics or subject area fits in with developing an outdoor classroom. The bags are bought inexpensively and filled by staff who are aware of potential learning outcomes from the resources.

The following are samples of Early Maths bag which fit in with the language of size, quantity and measure – big/small, huge/tiny, full/empty, long/short.
SECTION 7 – OUTDOOR PLAY BOXES/BAGS

SIZE/QUANTITY

- Mini clipboard and writing implements, suitable story book and appropriate maths story
- Pebbles
- Glass shells
- Small, medium and large boxes
- Glass leaves
- Glass fish
- Carpet squares
- Mini clipboard and writing implements, suitable story book and appropriate maths story
MEASURES

Mini clipboard and writing implements, suitable story book and appropriate maths story

Wool, thread, string, cord and scissors

Rulers

Tape measures

Carpet squares

Sticks
SUGGESTED BOOKS, RHYMES & SONGS in the early years

SECTION 8

Suggested Books, Rhymes & Songs
Adults' Reading List
Websites
SUGGESTED CHILDREN’S BOOKS, RHYMES AND SONGS FOR USE OUTSIDE

**Books and Rhymes**

- Rock-a-bye Baby on the Tree Top
- The Wind Blew – Pat Hutchins
- Mrs Mopple’s Washing Line – A Hewett
- Percy the Park Keeper – Nick Butterworth
- We’re going on a Bear Hunt – Michael Rosen and Helen Oxenbury
- The Rainbow Fish – Marcus Pfister
- Mrs Wishy-Washy – Joy Cowley Elizabeth Fuller
- Postman Pat’s Breezy Day – John Cunliffe
- Postman Pat’s Rainy Day – John Cunliffe
- Postman Pat’s Snowy Day – John Cunliffe
- Tom and the Island of Dinosaurs – Ian Beck
- The Wind – Richard Harris
- Washing Up Day – John Agard
- Machines – June Mitchell
- The Sun and the Wind – Aesop’s fables
- Where’s Julius? – John Burningham

- The Green Ship – Quentin Blake
- Someone Bigger – Jonathan Emmett
- Harry and the Dinosaurs Romp in the Swamp – Ian Whybow
- Blue Rabbit and the Runaway Wheel – Chris Wormwell
- Going Shopping – Saran Garland
- The House that Jack Built – Liz Underhill
- Miss Brick the Builder’s Baby – Allan Ahlberg
Out and About – Shirley Hughes
Lucy and Tom at the Seaside – Shirley Hughes
My Granny was a Pirate – Margaret Mahy
One Eyed Jack – Penny Dale
The Owl and the Pussy Cat
Rosie’s Walk – Pat Hutchins
Where the Forest Meets the Sea – Jeannie Baker
Bob the Builder
Mr Gumpy’s Motor Car – John Burningham
The Green Ship – Quentin Blake
The Lighthouse Keeper’s Books – David Armitage
The Three Billy Goats Gruff
Little Red Riding Hood
The Three Bears
A Day at the Seaside – Penny Thomson
The Lighthouse Keeper’s Lunch – Rhonda and David Armitage
The Big Big Sea – Martin Waddell
The Deep Blue Sea – Jakki Wood
The Bad Tempered Ladybird – Eric Carle
The Very Hungry Caterpillar – Eric Carle
The Very Lively Firefly – Eric Carle

Traditional street games and songs, eg “Fair Rosa,” “The Big Ship Sails,” “Dusty Bluebells”
Action rhymes, eg “Ten in a Bed” or “Frogs Jumping into a Pond”
## Music

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>ISBN</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tom Thumb’s musical maths</td>
<td>Helen MacGregor</td>
<td>0713672951</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bingo Lingo</td>
<td>Helen MacGregor</td>
<td>0713673249</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bobby Shaftoe Clap Your Hands</td>
<td>Sue Nicholls</td>
<td>0713635568</td>
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<td>Count Me In (Music Edition)</td>
<td>Music Edition</td>
<td>0713626224</td>
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<td>Game-songs with Prof Dogg’s Troupe (Book and CD)</td>
<td>Harriet Powell</td>
<td>0713662077</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Handy Band</td>
<td>Sue Nicholls</td>
<td>0713668970</td>
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<tr>
<td>High Low Dolly Pepper (Book and CD performances)</td>
<td>Veronica Clark</td>
<td>0713663456</td>
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<tr>
<td>Let's Go Zudie-o: (Book and Enhanced CD)</td>
<td>Bobbie Gargrave, Helen MacGregor</td>
<td>0713654899</td>
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<tr>
<td>Michael Finnigin, Tap Your Chinigin</td>
<td>Sue Nicholls</td>
<td>0713647167</td>
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<tr>
<td>When I was Young</td>
<td>Len Graham and Padriagin Ni Uallachain</td>
<td>509 899029 0001</td>
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ADULTS’ READING LIST

Books
Building for Young Children  Mark Dudek, National Early Years Network
Singing Games & Rhymes for Early Years  National Youth Choir of Scotland  ISBN 0-9538261-0-4
Outdoor Play in the Early Years  Helen Bilton  ISBN 1-85346-952-1
Playing Outside  Helen Bilton  ISBN 1-84312-067-4
50 Exciting Things To Do Outside  Ros Bayley and Lynn Broadbent  ISBN 1-90367007-1
The Little Book of Outdoor Play  Sally Featherstone  ISBN 1-902233-743
Exercising Muscles and Minds  Marjorie Ouvry  ISBN 0-95-44883-4-2
Practical Pre-school Outdoor Play  Sue Durant  ISBN 1-90243894-9
A Place to Learn  Lewisham Early Years Advice and Resource Network  ISBN 0-90-1637106
Let’s Go Outside  Tracy Theemes  High/Scope UK  ISBN 0-340-65519-4
Mindstratchers  Clare Warden  ISBN 1-90367007-1
Learning Through Landscapes 2002 
Helping Young Children to Play  Tina Bruce  
A Process for Self-Evaluation
Curricular Guidance Pre-School Education  CCEA

Periodicals
Nursery World  April 2001
Practical Pre-school Update  April 2001
Early Years Educator  Vol. 6, No. 1, May 2004
                                           Vol. 6, No. 8, December 2004
                                           Vol. 6, No. 12, April 2005
Nursery Education  May 2004/Scholastic
Child Education (Great Outdoors)  June 2004
Early Education  Spring 2003
Improvement Through Self-Evaluation  Education, Training and Inspectorate
Together Towards Improvements  Education, Training and Inspectorate
Designing for 3 to 4 year olds  Architects and Building Branch Dfee 1999

Websites

www.ltl.org.uk  Learning Through Landscapes
www.mindstretchers.co.uk
www.ptotoday.com  (click on playgrounds)
www.edfacilities.org/rl/outdoor.cfm
www.rhs.org.uk/education/children.asp
www.early-education.org.uk
www.ncb.org.uk
www.eysofficers@lewisham.gov.uk
FOREST SCHOOL in the early years
FOREST SCHOOL

Forest Schools were initiated in Denmark to provide a way of incorporating regular outdoor learning experiences for young children.

Some guiding principles of a Forest School focus on:

• enjoying the outdoors;
• capitalising on the outdoors as an area for learning;
• utilising the outdoor environment as a rich source of natural materials and resources for learning;
• building on how young children learn, are active, and use all of their senses to enhance their natural curiosity and motivation;
• promoting and developing young children’s self esteem, independence, confidence, positive dispositions to learning, sound skills and team work; and
• developing partnership with parents.

Text contributed by Jenny Boyd Enniskillen Nursery School

Photograph Captions
- Castle Archdale Forest School
- Woodland School Partnership Roe Valley Country Park

with the help and support of Environment and Heritage Services. www.ehsni.gov.uk