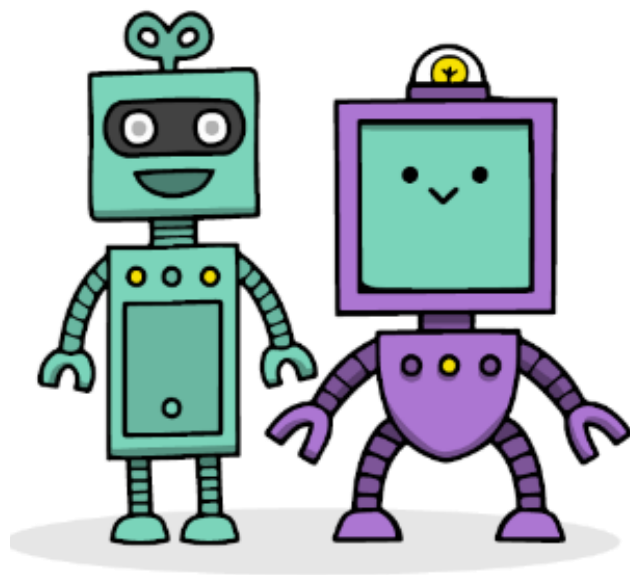


Learning Outside the Classroom



Rationale

Why learn outside the classroom?

“Outdoor activities provide 7 main benefits to children with autism, including promoting communication, emotion, cognition, interaction, physical activity, and decreasing autistic sensitivity.”

(Chang & Chang, 2018)

When teachers take learning outdoors they report some powerful impacts: children's **behaviour improves**, whole classes are excited to learn, and individuals who feel inhibited by the curriculum often **thrive in an outdoor environment**.

When adults think back to their own happiest memories of childhood, they frequently recall the joy of playing outdoors. Play is not only central to children's enjoyment of childhood, but **teaches critical life skills** such as **problem-solving, teamwork and creativity**.

Taking learning outdoors is very important for children with autism who, along with other groups, can struggle with classroom-based learning. It can help to make learning meaningful and enjoyable for the learner.

Learning outside the classroom is the use of places other than the school for teaching and learning. It is about getting children and young people out and about, providing them with challenging, exciting and different experiences to help them learn. Learning outside the classroom experiences differ from those that arise through conventional teaching methods as students may be encouraged to engage a broader range of soft skills such as teamwork, leadership and compromise in their learning environment.

At Prospect House, we believe it is imperative that our children experience learning outside the classroom to broaden their experiences and that these experiences should be utilised as a tool for teaching, learning and delivering the curriculum across all subject areas.

OFSTED

“Learning outside the classroom was most successful when it was an integral element of long-term curriculum planning and closely linked to classroom activities.”

“When planned and implemented well, learning outside the classroom contributed significantly to raising standards and improving pupils' personal, social and emotional development.”

“The first-hand experiences of learning outside the classroom can help to make subjects more vivid and interesting for pupils and enhance their understanding.”

Rationale

The benefits

There has not been a great deal of scientific research into the benefits of outdoor learning versus indoor learning for children with autism specifically, although extensive worldwide research points to the many benefits of outdoor play and learning for all children in terms of health, wellbeing and overall learning and development. One thing we do have to go by however, is the wealth of knowledge and first hand experiences and observations of teachers and support workers who work with children with autism every day. Many have commented on how they have seen real improvements when autistic children are engaged in learning in one form or another through outdoor activities.

It is through first hand experiences which capture a child's attention and gain their interest that they can build up their learning in layers. Building on observations and experiences outdoors, children are keener to record their experiences and literacy and attention can gradually improve.

Why do we have Outdoor Learning at Prospect House?

To ensure best outcomes for our students

To ensure that we offer the most challenging and interesting lessons

To prepare for adult/independent life.

To support emotional health.

To develop proprioception and sensory acuity.

DRICE

Deepening thinking – A change of environment and often change of materials, allows for deepening thinking – can students complete tasks in different environments

Role Modelling – As students learn in different ways, teachers have preferred styles. More kinaesthetic learning and teaching allows for role modelling in different ways.

Impact– Does your lesson impact and immediately interest the student? New environment equals different impact.

Challenge– Are you challenging the students? Outside offers new challenges to behaviour and learning.

Engagement– Does what you have put on in front of the students make them want to be there? Playing games or learning activities changes the style and may engage

Overview

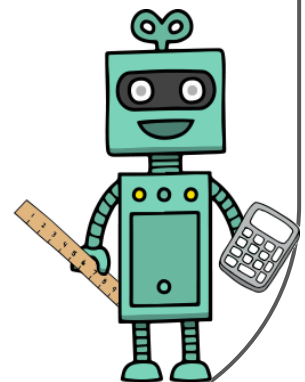
The NCETM actively promotes the learning of mathematics outside the classroom as it **facilitates authentic or experiential learning** (the engagement of learners with the world as they actually experience it) and gives better access to the main pathways to learning (Visual, Auditory and Kinaesthetic). Pupils not only experience mathematics in concrete and novel settings, but can be liberated from the expectations of the classroom. There is almost a **limitless amount of resources** that can be used to facilitate maths outside the classroom allowing wider scope or creative ideas that will drive investigations. It has been proven that learning outside the classroom leads to higher levels of motivation, greater independence and an improved attitude to learning. At Prospect House, we have a big focus on 'Using and Applying', that is ensuring that our pupils are able to **apply the knowledge** that they are learning and create a bridge between theory and reality. Learning outside the classroom provides an opportunity to see maths as cross-curricular, shows meaningful **application of problem solving strategies and thinking skills**.

As a result of taking Maths outside the classroom, we can expect to find the following benefits:

- higher levels of motivation
- almost limitless resources
- an opportunity to see maths as cross-curricular
- greater curiosity leading to more effective exploration
- creative ideas driving investigations
- meaningful application of problem solving strategies and thinking skills
- a heightened sense of purpose and relevance
- the all important bridge between theory and reality
- greater independence and an improved attitude to learning
- **greater enjoyment and achievement** (one of the five Every Child Matters outcomes)
- **a realisation that our environment offers opportunities for learning and enjoyment**

Learning mathematics outside the classroom is not enrichment, it is at the core of empowering an individual's understanding of the subject.

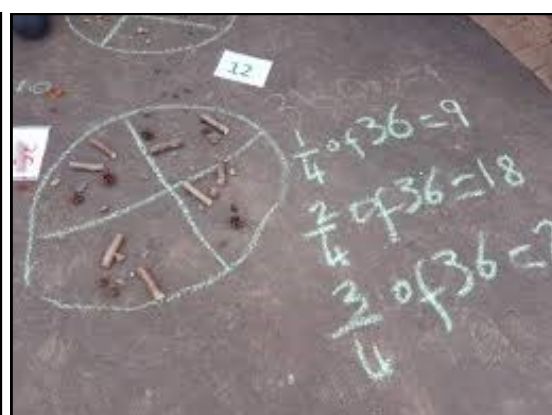
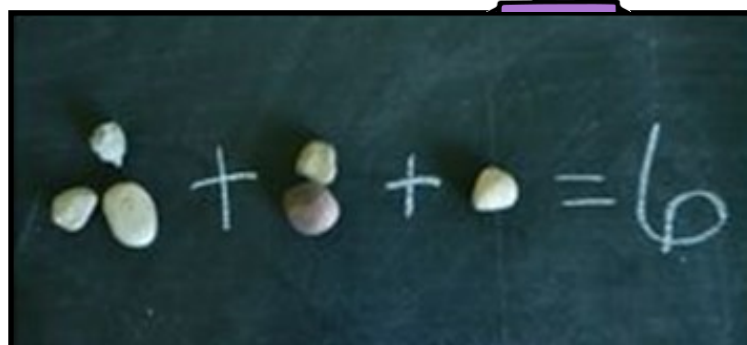
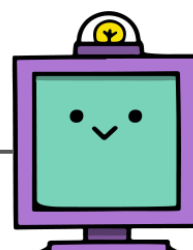
In summary, it is important for pupils at Prospect House to realise that our environment offers such a wealth of opportunities for learning and enjoyment.



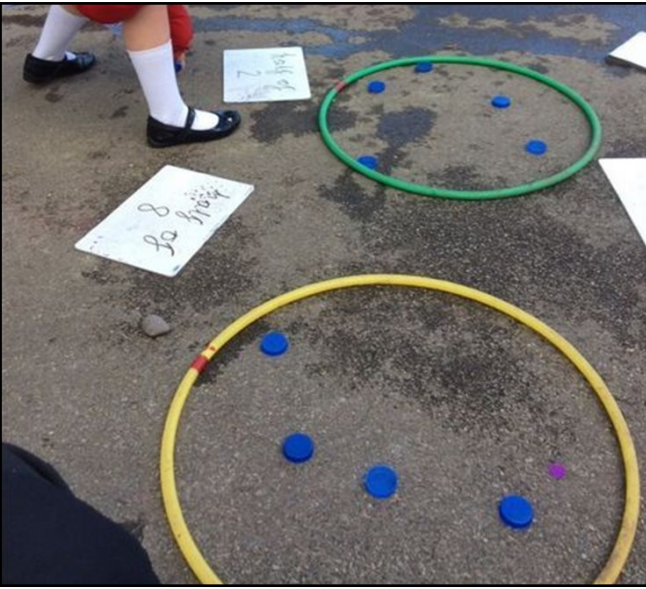
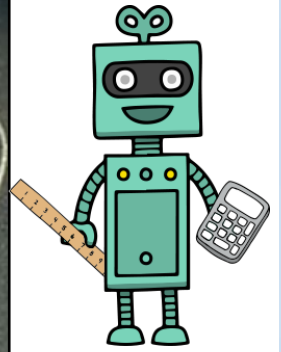
Suggested Activities and linked targets

- Pupils use outdoor objects to count independently using number names without using the correct order or 1:1 correspondence.
- Pupils pick up and put down single objects that they found, putting down one object to pick up another.
- Pupils show an interest in number activities and counting.
- Pupils count when playing with numbers, in any order.
- Pupils use numbers to three in familiar activities or games, for example touching one, two and three items as an adult counts; counting out sets of three, e.g. sticks, stones, leaves.
- Pupils match numerals up to five using outdoor objects.
- Pupils count reliably to three and make sets of up to three objects e.g. touching one, two three items as an adult counts, counting out sets of two sticks, three leaves etc.
- Pupils understand that each numeral 1 to 5 represents a constant number or amount, e.g. putting the correct number of outdoor objects (1- 5) into containers marked with the numeral.
- Water play exploring more or less in a container
- Identifying which group is bigger or smaller.
- Pupils can add one and take one away
- Pupils use chalk and outdoor paints to record numbers up to 10
- Pupil use outdoor objects to make groups then add and subtract.
- Making tally's and creating 100s, 10s and 1s using sticks
- Making tables and charts and Carroll and Venn diagrams
- Creating fractions and representing division
- Practising doubles, halves and multiplications.

$$1+1=2$$

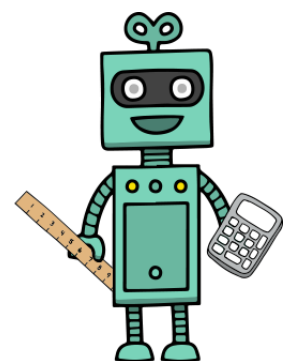


Maths-Number

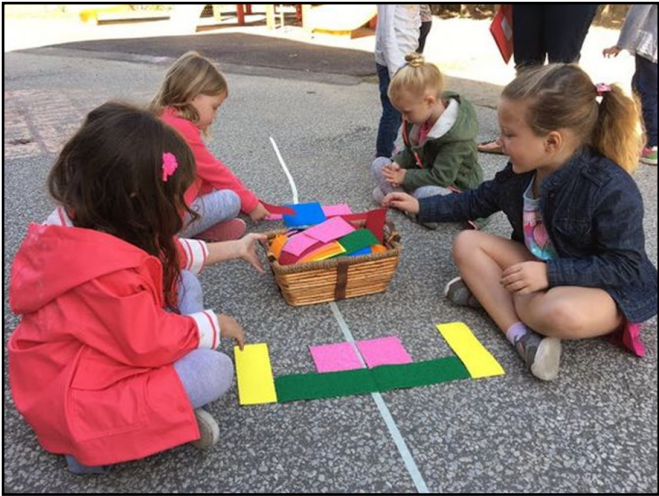
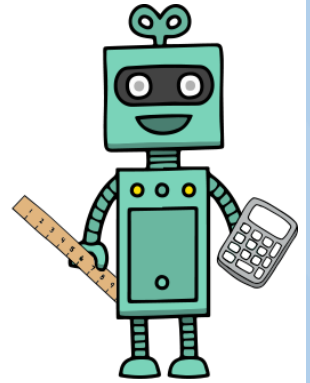


Maths— Shape, Space and Measure

- Find an object that is the same
- Making groups
- Joining in with hiding games
- Explore big and small
- Putting things in or outside of a hoop
- Finding 2D and 3D objects in real life objects
- Create 2D and 3D shapes out of sticks
- Finding outdoor objects with corners and straight sides
- Describing real life items using mathematical vocabulary
- Order objects largest to smallest
- Use outdoor scales to balance objects
- Using water to compare capacities
- Using not standard units of measure—string, sticks, bodies etc.
- Clocks using chalk
- Creating and measuring perimeters using chalk, string and sticks
- Hiding objects in the environment and using positional language to describe where they are
- Create a treasure hunt and instructions using directional language, arrows and the directions on a compass.
- Responding to moving forwards and backwards and using angles as part of a blindfolded obstacle course
- Finding symmetry in outdoor objects
- Finding right angles in real life objects

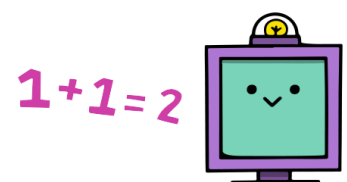


Maths-Shape, Space & Measure

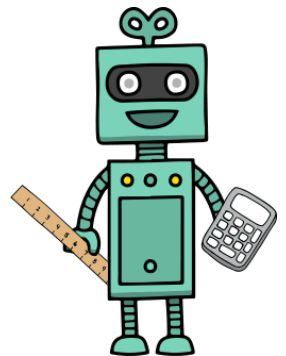


Suggested Activities

- Pupils have an outdoor tea party, putting cakes on plates and giving out objects.
- Making piles of leaves, twigs, stones and recognising increase in quantity
- Pupils recognise that items are still there or have been taken away.
- Pupils search for items that have gone or are out of sight
- Pupils exchange money in role play situations
- Coin scavenger hunt
- Pupils see how many objects they can put into containers against the clock or sand timer.
- Races against a clock
- Pupils will choose an object when given a criteria—size, colour, shape
- Pupils will distribute items into containers when given a container.
- Pupils match objects to numbers
- Pupils make simple patterns or sequences
- Pupils will add or take one to an from a group of items that they have collected from forest school
- Pupils estimate the length of trees, plants, leaves etc.
- Pupils set up their own garden centre shop
- Pupils go to a shop or supermarket and use money to buy items
- Pupils show that they can represent numbers in a variety of ways

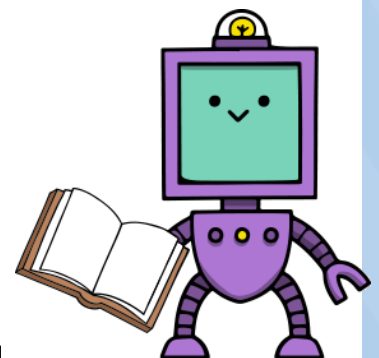


Maths - Using & Applying

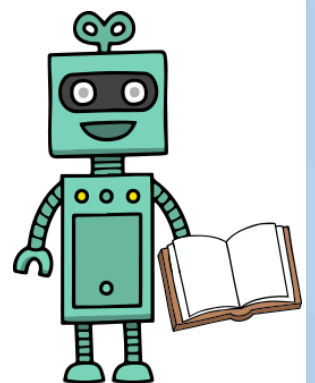
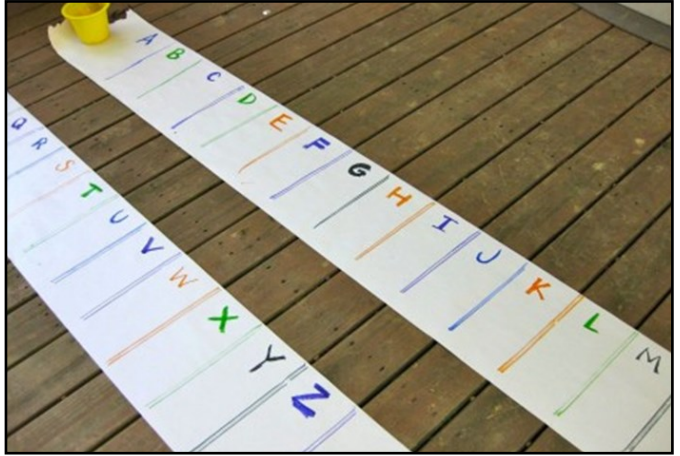


Suggested Activities

- Pupils can make marks on various surfaces
- Pupils participate in role play in the outdoor classroom
- Pupils take part in a sensory story, choosing relevant pictures or objects.
- Pupils find letters for their name in sensory trays and may attempt to write the letters.
- Pupils find words around school or outdoor area and copy them onto a clipboard or whiteboard
- Pupils copy underneath an adults writing
- Pupils find objects hidden around forest school and dictate a phrase or sentence about what they have found for an adult to scribe
- Pupils copy letter forms
- Pupils contribute to ideas in a shared writing sessions, using story stones to support
- Pupils write their own name in a number of settings
- Pupils use chalk to write the initial sound of spoken words
- Pupils produce recognisable letters and words in tuff trays, on outdoor surfaces etc.
- Pupils use phrases and simple statements to convey ideas, making some choices of appropriate vocabulary and some words are spelt correctly.
- Pupils find words hidden around their local environment and compose sentences with some independence.

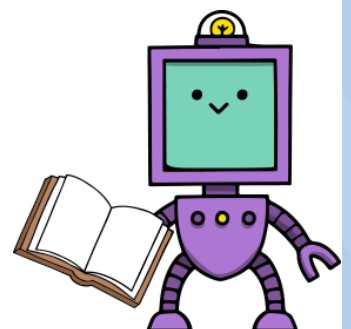
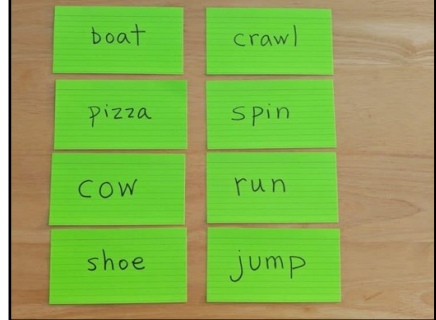


English-Writing



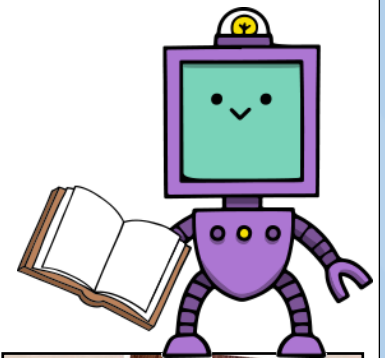
Suggested Activities

- Pupils go on an outdoor hunt and comment on the position of something they find, for example, “there”
- Pupils choose between objects or activities when given a choice of outdoor activities.
- Pupils make different sounds representative of those made by animals, vehicles etc.
- Pupils find objects around school or outdoor areas and use simple adjectives such as dirty and broken; and will participate in physical activities and use verbs such as jump and play.
- Pupils participate in role play activities or charade type games and shout to add emphasis or expression
- Pupils are shown objects which are then hidden. They will ask simple questions to obtain information about what has been hidden, for example, “Where’s cat?”.
- Pupils contribute appropriately one-to-one and in small group discussions and role play.
- Pupils take part in construction or building games outdoors, e.g. building towers, and use language to offer explanation and solutions, for example “it fell over ‘cos it was too big”.

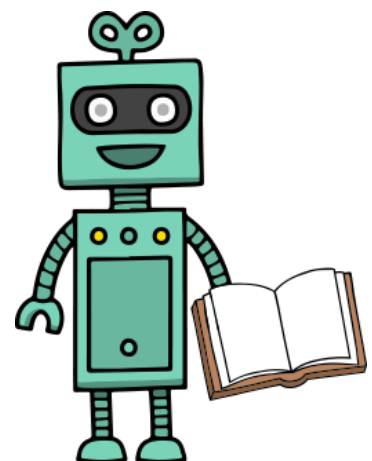
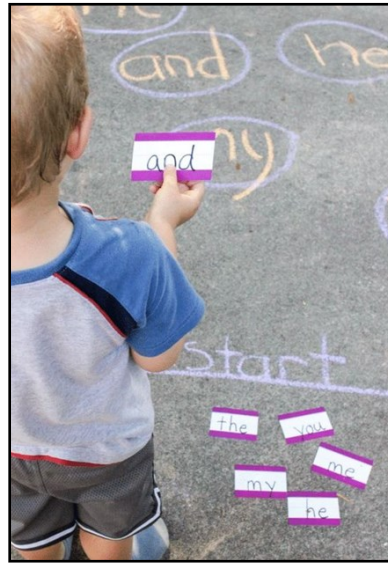


Suggested Activities

- Pupils will participate in activities where they have to follow instructions, e.g. making a mud pie or planting a seed.
- Pupils will hunt for graphemes hidden around the outdoor environment and will imitate the sounds (phonemes) of some letters and sometimes remember one or two, e.g. phoneme associated with the initial letter of own name.
- Pupils will hunt for photographs hidden around forest school and use nouns and adjectives to tell an adult how to label pictures or photographs, e.g. red cup, little bear.
- Pupils will hide objects around forest school and their peers will use prepositions to describe where they found the objects. E.g. 'under the tree', 'in the hut'.
- Pupils recognise that familiar words are the same wherever they are seen. The words may be written on the floor, printed onto the door etc.
- Pupils are given a letter e.g. 't' and find words hidden in sensory trays or in the outdoor areas that begin with that given letter.
- Pupils sound and name some letters of the alphabet in upper and lower case, or indicate recognition in some way. They may hunt for and race against the clock to find matching upper and lower case letters.
- Teacher will read out a sentence from the class book and pupils will hunt for the words and put the words of the sentence in the correct order.

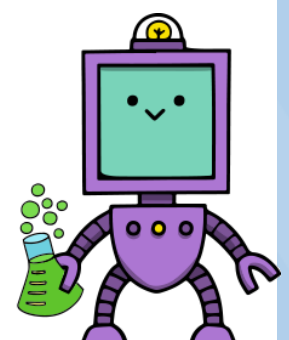


English-Reading

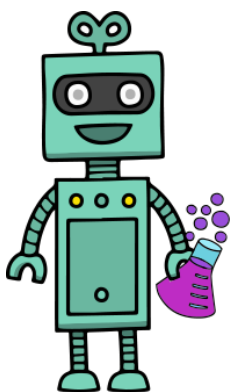
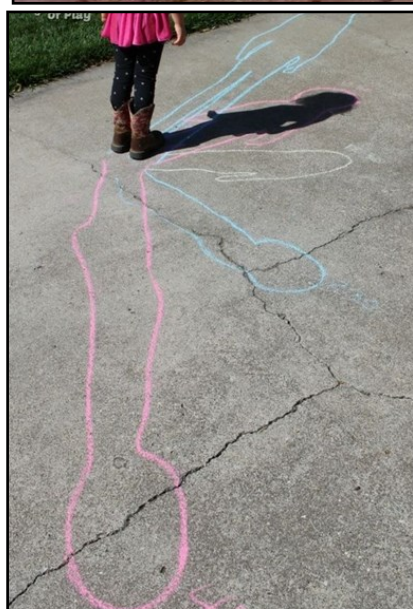
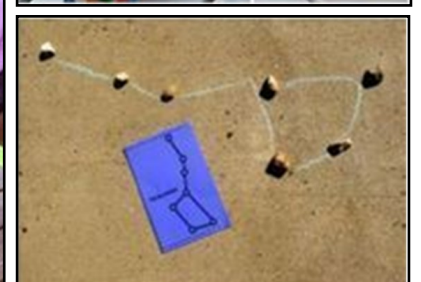
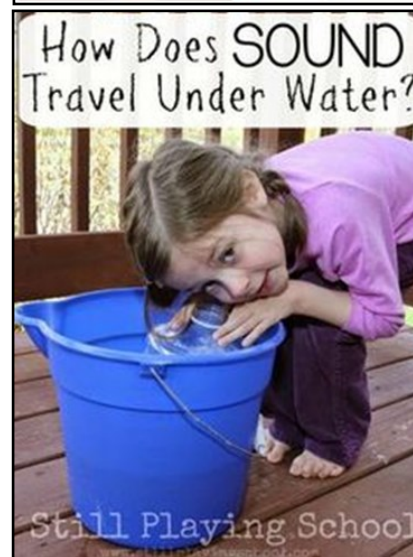
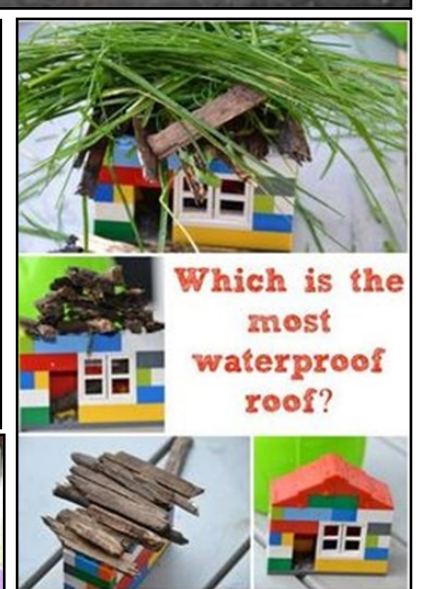


Suggested Activities

- Pupils engage in activities exploring different natural elements
- Pupils will participate in activities where they have to follow a schedule, e.g. making a mud pie
- Pupils choose the correct equipment for an activity e.g. planting a seed.
- Pupils explore push and pull objects in the playground e.g. swing, gate, roundabout
- Pupils shine torches through different outdoor materials.
- Pupils mix colours by drawing with chalk and spraying water.
- Pupils sort natural materials into groups
- Pupils respond to simple scientific questions 'e.g. is it wet or dry?' whilst exploring water, mud, sand etc.
- Pupils use a range of different surfaces around school to test for friction.
- Pupils make predictions, e.g. what will happen if we draw chalk pictures outside and it rains?
- Pupils label items outdoor with their properties, e.g. hard, waterproof, or label items with the material they are made from.
- Pupils demonstrate properties of light and sound. E.g. testing how far light or sound travels, which materials let the most light through etc.
- Pupils compare living things around their local environment
- Pupils create hypotheses and test. E.g. Making a parachute, dropping an egg without it smashing.



Science



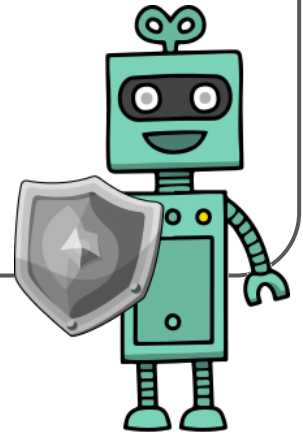
Suggested Activities

- Pupils explore their local area with their peers
- Pupils take part in outdoor activities in parallel with one another
- Pupils identify people who help us around school
- Pupils hunt for pieces of a jigsaw to create a photo of themselves
- Pupils take part in healthy activities
- Pupils express their likes and preferences by choosing which outdoor activity to play on.
- Pupils have snack time outside
- Pupils participate in turn taking with Prospect House pets
- Pupils can identify risks and unsafe situations
- Pupils demonstrate understanding of how to care for living things in the allotment.
- Creating a n outdoor art family tree



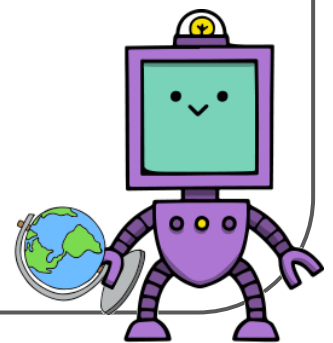
Suggested Activities

- Pupils create a beach role play
- Pupils create outdoor chalk paintings to represent bonfire night/Fire of London
- Pupil role play explorers around school or in Fantasy forest to hunt for different items
- Pupils recreate an archaeological dig (Ancient Egypt)
- Pupils create their own hieroglyphics
- Pupils match pictures of themselves from the recent past around school, e.g. photos of them playing PE (match to sports hall) and photos of them on the swing (playground), photos of them eating dinner (canteen) etc.
- Pupils create cave paintings using large sheets of paper on the inside of the know globes
- Pupils draw or take photos of buildings they can see in their local area
- Pupils re-enact famous events in history and film on iPads



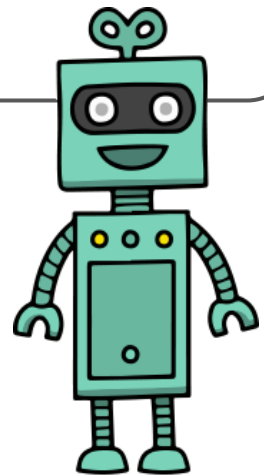
Suggested Activities

- Pupils explore their local environment
- Pupils identify different weathers
- Pupils explore their school buildings and match symbols on different areas to show their understanding
- Pupils explore artefacts that have been buried in make shift burial sites
- Pupils explore and follow familiar routes around school
- Pupils create symbols on a map for familiar places in school
- Pupils identify different rocks and soils around school
- Pupils classify objects by location, size or colour
- Pupils grow their own vegetables in the allotment
- Pupils follow instructions to help look after their environment



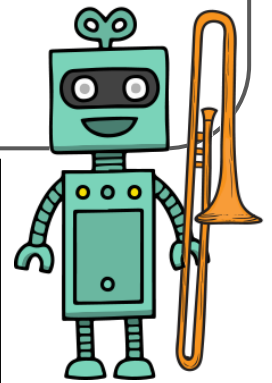
Suggested Activities

- Pupils participate in meditation or reflection time outdoors
- Pupils visit place of worship
- Pupils paint stones with things that are important to them
- Pupils observe nature and discuss creationism and other religious ideas about the world
- Pupils make religious symbols from natural material
- Pupils help their community by looking after the environment, litter picking etc.
- Pupils create a thankfulness tree— writing things on leaves that they are thankful for on leaf cut outs and attaching them with string
- Pupils participate in an Easter egg hunt



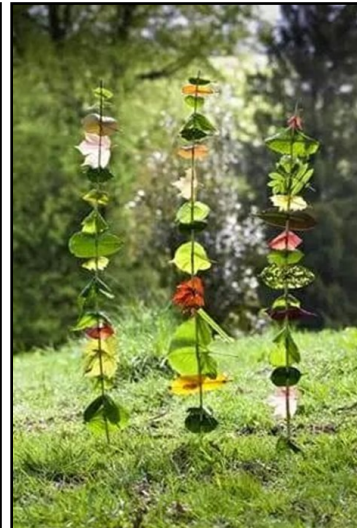
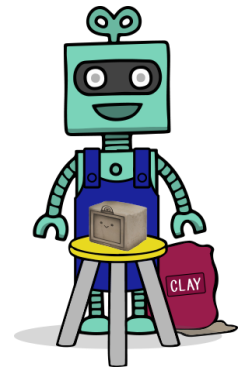
Suggested Activities

- Pupils make their own musical instrument wall
- Pupils record a range of environmental sounds and make a soundscape using iPads
- Pupils make body sound percussion—stamping on concrete, rustling hands in leaves etc.
- Pupils make sound chimes and hang them from a tree
- Pupils put on an outdoor musical performance
- Pupils copy patterns and beats of outdoor sounds
- Pupils fill balloons up with different objects/ingredients and shake to hear the different sounds
- Pupils recreate a festival: mud, wellies, raincoats, ponchos, hats, sunglasses



Suggested Activities

- Pupils make marks with different tools in mud and outdoor surfaces
- Pupils explore different textures and materials
- Pupils group materials and begin to use terms such as hard, rough, smooth etc.
- Pupils create art using natural materials
- Pupils collect materials of different colours
- Pupils create patterns using outdoor materials
- Pupils create 3D sculptures with outdoor materials
- Pupils recreate work of different artists



Art & Design

