

AUTUMN 1 2021 NEWSLETTER

A new academic year stretches before us! Let's hope that this year is a bit more 'normal' and that there are plenty of opportunities for outdoor learning and educational visits. And with mental health issues amongst young people on the rise, it is even more important that we promote regular connection to nature and the outdoors and participation in outdoor activities for our young people, as this has been shown to have a positive effect on mental wellbeing.

*We are here at Hampshire Outdoors to support you with this. Take a look at our new **Service Booklet** which gives information on everything we can offer you as part of your SLA* with us. We don't just do **EVOLVE!***

If you are planning any visits that are adventurous, residential or overseas, then we would ask you to get them onto [Evolve](#) as soon as possible, even if you don't yet have all the information required. Evolve is also where you will find the latest advice on school visits.

The theme of this newsletter is **Mud and Soil**.

Children usually love to find a dirt patch and make some mud and dig or play in it. Have you considered setting up a dedicated mud play space for your children? Muddy Faces have a [free guide](#) to setting up a mud kitchen and opening up the wonderful world of mud play! There's also lots of other ideas and advice for exploring mud on the [Muddy Faces Hub](#).



Whilst they might find playing in the mud fun, more structured soil exploration activities will help children understand that soil is the basis for life and growth! This particularly links into Year 3 Science (recognise that soils are made from rocks and organic matter) and geography - as children can explore different kinds of rocks and soils, including those in the local environment. Through living things and their habitats and working scientifically, children could also investigate the relationships between earthworm species, habitats and soil types.

Check out our Trailblazer **[Mud and Soil Activities Sheet](#)** for investigation and inquiry ideas.

Using an auger (hand drill) or soil sample probe, children can extract a sample of the soil in different parts of the school grounds. They can handle the soil sample to explore its appearance and simple properties such as colour, texture and feeling.



They can also use Litmus paper to test its pH. Children can then classify the results and record the types of soil on a map of the school grounds.

Why not turn it into an inquiry and identify where the best soil is for a school garden?

GET GARDENING

Soil and gardening go hand in hand (literally!). Children get so much from growing things! Here are some great gardening resources as well as one school's gardening experience.

Garden Organic's online resources are packed with expert and engaging gardening information specially created for schools. It includes teaching materials, growing cards, handy guides to gardening, educational games and activities. These have been developed as part of the Soil Association Food for Life Programme and include a food growing manual, practical advice and activities for all ages on how to start and maintain an organic food growing garden.



Project Learning Garden provides starter kits to schools with everything they need to start or refresh a food growing garden and use it as an outdoor classroom. Project Learning Garden provides schools with hands-on training, curriculum linked resources, raised beds and gardening tools, a fully equipped cooking kit and ongoing support and guidance.

Hampshire schools can purchase **reduced price compost bins** and wormeries. A range of different bins, accessories and water butts are also available.



Oliver's Battery Primary School – Amazing Edible Playground!

The children at Oliver's Battery Primary School in Winchester have been lucky enough to work with Hampshire Gardens Trust on their new Edible Playground project. The project aims to inspire young people to take a closer interest in their surroundings and has given the children an opportunity to become directly involved with growing vegetables, fruit and flowers.

Project leader, Ruth Farley started the project on what was a bare and unused part of the school grounds and with the help of volunteers has transformed the space into a beautiful garden full of wonderful produce, including a vibrant pollination bed for insects.

All children have been involved in planting seeds, watching them grow and sampling the results and the garden has been used across the curriculum. A highlight was the Potato in a Bucket Challenge where each class competed to see how many potatoes they could grow in a bucket. Competition was fierce and points were awarded for the weight and size of potatoes too! Plans for next term include growing war time rations for the Year 5/6 World War II topic.

For how to get involved in Hampshire Gardens Trusts 'Garden Plans for Schools' initiative please contact admin@hgt.org.uk. They are also looking for volunteers!





Supporting you to get outside...

At [Hampshire Outdoors](#), we are here to support you in integrating outdoor learning seamlessly into your curriculum or using your school grounds and local area more effectively. We also have a number of curriculum based activity sheets on our [Trailblazer website](#), as well as signposting to other great resources.

See [here](#) for more information and dates on all the other outdoor learning and PE courses we are running, including Outdoor Leader. Many of our courses can be offered as bespoke events for your school and can be held on-site at a convenient time for you. Just let us know!

Email: outdoor.education@hants.gov.uk or
call 01962 876218. www.hants.gov.uk/Hampshireoutdoors

Our next **Outdoor Learning Course (including Trailblazer) Tuesday 5 October 2021** at Stubbington Study Centre, PO14 2ND. See the Hampshire Learning Zone for more details.

Alternative Residentials at School!

The school site can be used as an opportunity to provide children with a low cost first residential experiences and a chance of adventure. Teachers tend to have less to organise (there's no transport required!), children are in familiar surroundings (and yet experience it differently at night), so their first residential is less daunting. Furthermore, parents have the comfort of knowing that their child is safe and sound and just down the road.

Many schools often start with a sleepover in KS1 with children bringing pyjamas, sleeping bag and of course teddy, to sleep at school with their friends. Gym mats can be used as comfy base to sleep on.

As children move into KS2, camping in the school grounds can be used as the next progression. Tents can often be sourced from friends and family, other schools or even local groups such as the Scouts or Guides. For many children this may be their first experience of waking up under canvas. Extending the number of nights of a sleepover helps prepare more anxious children (and parents!) for a longer residential when children reach Year 5 or 6.

Hampshire Outdoors run a bespoke Camping in the School Grounds course, carried out on your school grounds, which will enable you to lead an on-site camp. The course covers risk management and gives practical advice on running a camp, which is targeted to your staff experience and confidence levels. Cost is £150 for schools with HCC SLA, for whole staff training and lasts 2 hours. Complete [this form](#) for more information.



Free Resources ...



As schools start to celebrate Harvest Festival, **Why Farming Matters - Primary Education Pack** has activities that explore the vital role of farming in our lives. It's linked to many areas of the curriculum and with extension tasks for more able learners. There is a downloadable resource pack, plus an accompanying website with further activities and guidance and a range of videos and image cards to support pupil learning.



The **Countryside Classroom Passport** has three exciting sections with a range of challenges asking children to find out, write, make, draw, do and visit; all themed around food, farming and the natural environment. All successfully completed Countryside Classroom Passport entries sent to LEAF Head Office by Friday 22nd October 2021, will receive a certificate and a surprise craft activity (subject to availability).

If you are lucky enough to have a mud kitchen in your setting, you might like to download the free **Marvellous Mud Kitchen Recipe Cards** from **Love Outdoor Learning**. These 6 recipe cards use simple to find ingredients that are easily found and promote maths, literacy and more.



The **Institute of Outdoor Learning** has launched the **National Outdoor Learning Award** scheme (NOLA).

The aim of the award is to capture and celebrate the learning that happens on an outdoor learning experience.

This free Award can be used with any age group, any outdoor activity in any outdoor environment over any length of time. There are six areas: Safe, Learn, Respect, Self, Others and Environment.

Email institute@outdoor-learning.org for more information.



The **School Flutter Flowers** programme aims to re-flower an area within school grounds. Children plant wildflowers that are all native and according to local conditions; creating a small wildflower meadow, which will support the return of native species of insects and invertebrates to the area. This includes important species like butterflies and bees, which are indicator species of an overall healthy environment.

Free Resources ...



The **Dirt Is Good Project** is a newly launched programme that can be run by teachers or youth leaders with groups of young people to enable them to take action on the environmental and social causes they care about. The programme will run from the 21st October 2021 (World Values' Day) to the 22nd April 2022 (Earth Day). The programme could be completed by young people of any age, but the supporting resources have been designed for those aged 7-11 and 11-14. Teachers can sign up [here](#), to receive links to the handbook and resources.

Earthwatch Education have launched a new collection of lessons, teachers guides, videos and worksheets surrounding climate literacy, learning and action for Key stage 1, 2 and 3.

Sign up for access to a variety of resources to support you and your pupils in exploring the natural world, and taking the classroom outdoors.



myForest for Education is an easy-to-use and free online application that enables any educator or young person, to generate straightforward woodland maps, management plans and ecological impact assessments for woodland sites and school grounds.

Simply register as an educator and begin mapping and recording the features of your woodland site.

SEEd have launched the next phase of their 5-year **Youth Listening Project**, to find out what young people already understand and feel about sustainability.

The age appropriate surveys are free to use and not only can you use them to audit your school or class, but they're also a fabulous tool for getting young people thinking about how they feel, what they are learning, and what they would like to learn. They could be completed before, during, and after any learning activities to measure changes. The surveys will be available until summer 2022. The results are completely anonymous, but if participants fill in the name of their school or organisation, the overall results can be fed back.

SEEd also have a dedicated **resources page** featuring two collated lists for schools: Climate Change Resources, and Nature and Biodiversity Resources. These lists feature a range of activities for different age groups and tackle Sustainability and Climate Change topics, Sustainable Development Goals, and Systems Thinking.



National Geographic Kids have useful educational content about the environment linked to **November's COP26** climate change conference in Glasgow.



Other News...



Hampshire & Isle of
Wight Wildlife Trust

If you are interested in **Outdoor Learning and Nature Connection**, then do read HIWWT's [blog](#) on their [website](#).

They also offer a range of Forest School Training and Outdoor Learning [courses](#), including their new LASER Level 3 Award of Outdoor Curriculum Leader.

HIWWT will be hosting their **H&IOW Young People's Nature Assembly** on the **27th September** at 6:30–8pm via Zoom. Its aim is to gather young people's thoughts from around Hampshire and the Isle of Wight on COP26, what they think needs to happen to tackle the climate and ecological emergencies, what we can ask COP leaders to commit to and how we can hold them accountable. This will be feeding into a National Youth Manifesto which will be presented by Scottish Wildlife Trust at COP26 and also to create a H&IOW manifesto in time for COP26 (Nov 1-12 2021). Please share this with any young people you work with, and ask them to sign up via the link [here](#). This event is open to anyone under 30yrs with an interest in climate or nature. Anyone under the age of 18 will need a signed permission form from their parent / carer. If you have an U18 who wants to be involved, or require any further information please get in touch with Sienna Somers, Policy and Advocacy Manager Sienna.Somers@hiwwt.org.uk

New Forest National Park Travel Grant

The [New Forest Travel Grant](#) scheme supports learning outside the classroom for schools in the New Forest and surrounding area. Schools that are either based within the New Forest National Park or within a 20-mile journey of Lyndhurst can claim up to £150 towards the cost of transport to any venue that is a member of the New Forest National Park Educators' Forum.

Contact Helen Robinson education@newforestnpa.gov.uk for more information.



Forestry England

A reminder from [Forestry England](#), that if you wish to use one or more of their woodlands (including in the [New Forest National Park](#)), to host a sport or educational event or activity, or for scientific research, you must first apply for a **permit**.

If you are interested in holding an event or organised activity in the Forestry England woodland (involving more than 10 people), please download an [application form](#) and send to the Permissions Team: southern.permissions@forestryengland.uk



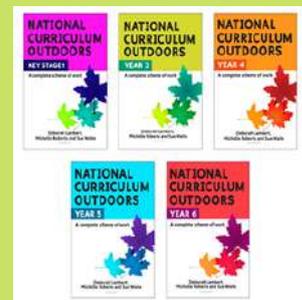
If you are planning a **Duke of Edinburgh Award expedition in the New Forest**, the leader of the visit must complete a [notification form](#) and send it to dofe.newforest@forestryengland.uk, at least 6 weeks in advance of the planned visit. All planned walks must follow the tracks set out on the [robust tracks map](#).

Other News...



National Curriculum Outdoors - A Complete Scheme of Work' are a series of books for KS1, Y3, Y4, Y5, Y6 and offer research based objective led schemes of work for each year group, with a series of lesson plans for English, maths, science, history, geography, art and design, design and technology, music, French language (at KS2) and RE. The books aim to support schools and teachers who wish to take the curriculum and learning outdoors in a structured and progressive manner across the school.

To celebrate the first year since publication, the publishers, Bloomsbury, are offering a **30% discount** on each book.



The John Muir Trust have launched **Wild and Well** their online hub for articles, research, books, films and more exploring the link between wild places and wellbeing.



Several recent studies have shown that increased screen time and time spent indoors and during the COVID-19 pandemic may have caused a significant rise in childhood short-sightedness (known as myopia). Spending time outdoors, encourages children to focus on distant objects like trees, basketball hoops, a ball flying through the air— anything that's more than an arm's length away. Sun exposure with Vitamin D production (Vitamin D is produced by the skin with the aid of sunlight) has also been shown to be beneficial. Vitamin D helps smooth muscle tissue around the eye's crystalline lens allowing it to function properly.



Looking for **Plant ID apps** to help children identify trees and plants? This article reviews some of the best apps for identifying plants and using with children.



OEAP National Guidance Updates

OEAP frequently review and update their guidance documents. They now have a link to an update table showing brief summaries of each amendment. The table also includes links to each of the new or newly-amended documents.



Free Trees For Schools...



The UK needs millions more trees to reach its 2050 carbon net-zero target. With people across the UK being urged to plant 6 million trees in an initiative to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in 2022, why not do some tree planting within your school grounds? There are several organisations providing tree and hedgerow plants FREE to schools. Sign up now to receive your trees this winter, so you can get planting!

This year's **National Tree Week** occurs from **27 November to 5 December 2021** and the planting season for trees is November to March.



The **Woodland Trust** are giving away hundreds of thousands of trees to schools and communities. They are currently taking applications for trees to be delivered in November 2021.

Tree Appeal plants trees to promote biodiversity, create habitats and improve the environment for people. They provide trees to schools and colleges throughout the UK.



Carbon Footprint runs a popular UK Tree Planting Project in schools where commercial partners sponsor trees to be planted in schools around the UK to support biodiversity, enhance the UK's natural landscape and to offset the sponsor's carbon emissions.

The **Tree Council** are offering schools fruiting tree and hedgerow packs. You can register your interest for the December 2021 – March 2022 planting season. They also provide all the resources and information you need to help your orchard thrive.



The **School Tree Nursery Programme**, run by the Earth Restoration Service, is where you plant tree saplings in your school grounds together with pupils, staff, teachers and parents (any anyone else who wants to get involved). Your school will act as a nursery for these young trees for typically 2 years. When your trees are ready, they can be planted on your school grounds, or relocated into the local community, to be planted out at, for example, an environmentally degraded or vulnerable site such as an inner city park, derelict land, floodplains, local woodlands and so on. The children can help decide where the trees finally will be planted and make them part of the grand event!



Physical Education



Walktober



Walktober, run annually since 2016 by the Travel Planning Team at Hampshire County Council, is a challenge held each October to celebrate and focus the mind on International Walk to School Month. A fantastic **163 schools** signed up in total in 2020. That's a staggering **61,225 pupils** and **7,466 staff** who got involved last year. Click [here](#) to check if your school was among them.

We are all more aware than ever that exercising and spending time outside enjoying your surroundings is great, if not essential, for your wellbeing. That is what the Walktober challenge is all about: **walking to improve your wellbeing**. Walktober supports Hampshire and the NHS's Five Steps to Wellbeing, as evidence suggests that these are the five steps that we can all take to improve our mental wellbeing: Connect, Be Active, Keep Learning, Give to Others and Be Mindful.

Walktober is open to all primary and secondary schools in Hampshire and registration and all resources are free of charge. We just ask that schools commit to showing the launch assembly PowerPoint to pupils on Friday 1st October (or before) and sharing the focus week resources with all teaching staff and pupils.

Schools and pupils are invited to enter our Walktober competitions too - see below for details. We would also like to encourage you to take the opportunity to "give to others" during the month, either through fundraising activities or by reaching out to those in need in your local community. Again, ideas to inspire will be included in the Walktober materials.

Four focus weeks for Walktober 2021

- Friday 1st October: Walktober **Launch Day**

Short PowerPoint presentation to be provided for sharing during school assemblies or tutor time.

- Week 1 (4-10 October): **Get Active - Stay Safe**

Activities will focus on safety for pedestrians, those on scooters and bikes during Hampshire's Walk to School Week

- Week 2 (11-18 October): **Moving Mindfully**

Seven days worth of mindful challenges to focus on your inner self

- Week 3 (18-24 October): **Exercise your Creativity**

A selection of outdoor art and photography activities

- Week 4 (25-31 October - Half Term): **Family Fun across the Finish Line**

Outside activities to do with family and friends during the half-term holidays

What does your school need to do during Walktober?

Walktober means encouraging your school community to walk as much as possible during the month: to and from school or work, but also trying to find other opportunities to enjoy spending time outside. Registrants for the event will receive a link to an age-appropriate on-line pack of information containing lots of ideas for use in school and at home throughout the month to make time spent outdoors more interesting and fulfilling. This should be shared with your school community.



Registration

Registration is now open for **Walktober 2021** and **closes on Friday 24 September 2021**.

Hampshire school can sign up for free, using the following link:

[Register here for Walktober 2021](#)

All resources will be emailed out to registered schools by Tuesday 28 September. These will include:

- For schools, a short PowerPoint for staff to launch the initiative in school on Friday 1st October
- For schools and families, lots of ideas to use during each of the focus weeks to encourage pupils to spend more time enjoying the great outdoors.

See myjourneyhampshire.com/walktober and

myjourneyhampshire.com/walktoberforsecondary for full details.

The PE Subject Leader Network for 21/22 are now available to book on the Learning Zone.

Primary PE Subject Leader Network £75 for schools with SLA, or £95.

This year they will be a mixture of online and face-to-face.

- Thursday 23rd September 2021 - online
- Thursday 18th November 2021 – Places Leisure, Eastleigh
- Thursday 27th January 2022 – online
- Thursday 10th March 2022 – face to face - venue TBC
- Thursday 5th May 2022 – online
- Thursday 7th July 2022 – face to face - venue TBC

Secondary PE PE Subject Leader Network Cost £75 for schools with SLA, or £95.

These will all be online.

- Tuesday 16th November 2021 – SEND and PE
- Thursday 25th November 2021 – PE and PHSE joint workshop
- Tuesday 11th January 2022
- Tuesday 15th March 2022
- Thursday 28th April 2022
- Thursday 23rd June 2022

Hampshire PE Conference Tuesday 5 April 2022: A hybrid event taking place in person at St Swithun's School and virtually online. [Book now](#).

Details on other PE and Hampshire Outdoor Courses for the new academic year are available [here](#).

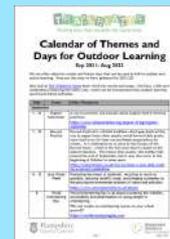
In April, we issued our updated **Hampshire Safety in PESSPA** (PE, School Sport and Physical Activity) guidance. This is updated every four years and it is really important that anyone teaching PESSPA in your school abides by the guidance. There is a 30 minute video to explain how to use it most effectively to support your PESSPA programmes. Both the guidance and the video can be found on [Evolve](#) under Resources – Safety in PE and Sport.



Dates for Your Diary

Here are lots of events and activities coming up that can be used to support getting children active and learning outdoors!

We are often asked for events and theme days that can be used to link to outdoor and active learning. We have updated our **Trailblazer Calendar of Themes and Days for Outdoor Learning** for the academic year 2021/22 so you can see what's coming up and plan accordingly!



1-30 September Organic September A way to promote and educate about organic food & farming practices.



8 September World Orienteering Day is all about increasing the visibility, accessibility and participation of young people in orienteering. Why not create an orienteering course on your school grounds?

17-26 September The Great British Beach Clean is a week-long citizen science event run by the Marine Conservation Society. See how your school can take part.



STEP IT UP THIS RECYCLE WEEK!

20th - 26th September

Climate

20-26 September Recycle Week. This year's theme: Step It Up this Recycle Week.

22 September Autumn Equinox In the northern hemisphere, the date marks the end of summer and beginning of autumn.

23 September – 23 October Seed Gathering Season

Gather seeds, fruits and nuts to grow local trees.



1 - 31 October Walktober An HCC challenge held each October to celebrate walking to school as part of International Walk to School Month.

2 October UK Fungus Day

Life on Earth would not exist without fungi! Why not go on a fungi foray!



7 October National Poetry Day

This year's theme is 'Choice'. Read, write and share poems outside. See our **Trailblazer Poetry Outdoors** activity sheet for ideas.

1-3 October Forest Schools Association National Conference

The theme is 'Climate of Hope – Sustainable Forest School.'



8 October Forest School Day An annual celebration day to connect, share and celebrate everything that is great and wonderful about forest school.

21 October World Earthworm Day. This year's theme is Worms of the World.

24 - 31 October Bat Week International celebration of bats.

Why not play Trailblazer's **Bat and Moth Game** to understand how bats locate their prey.

