



'Impact of Outdoor Learning in KS1+2'



My School

My school is a small rural village school with 82 children currently on roll between the ages of 2yrs 9months to 9 years of age. Four pupils are eligible for free school meals and pupil premium (FSM/PP). Three pupils are SEND Stage 1 and one pupil is SEND Stage 2. Twelve pupils are on the WATCH list and receiving intervention on provision maps. The school has a shared Head-teacher and is part of an Academy Trust.

Rationale

Many pupils, especially the boys, struggled to meet the necessary 'good levels of development' for reading, writing and maths in the previous academic year. We wanted to improve behaviour in Y4, raise pupil's emotional well-being, raise standards across the school, especially boy's writing and create a stimulating outdoor environment for learning. These areas were identified on the SDP for 2017-2018. We were successful in bidding and gaining funds from The Lottery Grant for an outdoor classroom. It was imperative to ensure it was going to be used to it's full potential to impact

My Role

As the Deputy Head-teacher responsible for curriculum, PSHE/Values subject leader, SENDCo, Y3+4 class teacher it was my responsibility to ensure these pupils achieved 'good' levels of progress whilst improving their mental health and emotional well-being for this academic year 2017-2018.

Initial Actions

- A member of staff had commenced Forest School training the previous year to become an accredited practitioner - achieved Oct 2017.
- Research and pedagogy.
- I discussed my action plan with colleagues at a staff meeting in the autumn term.
- I gave each member of staff a questionnaire to ascertain their personal feelings and viewpoint regarding the value of outdoor learning in KS1+2.
- I liaised with the Forest School lead and we purchased basic resources to begin outdoor activities.
- I planned a timetable of outdoor sessions with the Forest School practitioner for each class throughout the year to enable other members of staff to be upskilled and experience outdoor learning.

So what!
What next?

Future of Outdoor Learning

- Five year plan to develop Forest School.
- Changing educational culture.
- Embedding outdoor learning throughout the curriculum across KS1+2.
- All teachers to lead outdoor learning sessions.

Impact/Observations

Staff Comments:

- 'During outdoor learning the boys were calm. Their relationships, co-operation skills and behaviour were outstanding.'
- 'It's great to see children's confidence grow and have the opportunity to challenge themselves.'

Pupil's Comments:

- 'It's brilliant! I really love making the shelters'.
- 'Learning outside is great fun and I can move around while I'm learning.'
- 'I feel free learning outside.'
- 'I like learning outside with my friends'.

Parent's Comments:

- 'Forest School sessions are great. The children love it, we love it. Please can we have more'.
- 'It's wonderful for the children to be learning outside'.

Action Plan

- Staff meetings/training - ideas for lessons and learning outdoors in Maths, English and Science. Regular reviews of action plans and updates.
- Andy Goldsworthy project in Y3+4.
- Monitoring - Learning Walks/Book Looks/Photos - each term, feedback to staff, honest conversations linked back to SDP and teachers standards.
- Support for part-time KS2 teacher - modelling, coaching, outdoor classroom support - me and Forest School Practitioner, to change mind-set and give value.
- Attainment - boys writing freely outside. Observations indicate improved behaviour, calm and focus on learning tasks.
- Pupils and Parent View - interview with Y2 and Y4 pupils and parent questionnaire