

Setting Up Your Outdoor Space

The first thing to do is to audit your playground; what area are there? Are there any areas that could be designated as an outdoor class? Whilst this can be nice, it is not necessary.

If you only have a small outdoor area at your school, you will face some logistical challenges on how to timetable your outdoor space. If you have a larger outdoor area, this may be simpler.

We suggest you look at your playground and audit what is there. Is there a field or 2, a woodland, an infant playground and a playground for the rest of the school etc.? Make a note of all your outdoor sectors. Doing this allows you to have more than one class at a time but in clearly defined areas. It also allows classes to leave a note on their door as to where they can be found.

Having worked with children in mainstream schools and those with severe and complex needs, we are aware that some children, such as those with autism, can find open spaces a bit daunting. However, making outdoor learning part of a routine, heading to the same area, and reassurance goes a very long way.



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We also suggest not timetabling outdoor learning. Our experience is that when schools do that, staff start looking at it as it's own subject. In our approach, outdoor learning is a tool, not a subject. Outdoor learning should be used as a tool to compliment all curricular areas.

Remember, outdoor learning can be part of a lesson outdoors; it does not need to be a full lesson.

If you do need to plan it into a timetable, there are ways you can still use it to support the full curriculum. We suggest you plan your week as normal and then think about what lessons can benefit from being outdoors. Then, move those lessons to your outdoor slot.

You can also audit your children and monitor how their views on outdoor learning evolve. You can do this using our audit.

