



Learning Without Walls Newsletter



October Edition 2018

Editorial

Welcome to the October edition of the Learning Without Walls Newsletter. This highlights what has been happening with the partnership between NIFSA and The Dufferin Foundation and the world of Forest Schools.

What is Learning Without Walls?

The Learning Without Walls initiative is the vision of Lady Dufferin and the collaboration of the Dufferin Foundation and the Northern Ireland Forest School Association (NIFSA).

Children are suffering from nature deficit disorder, a term used by Michael Louv in his book "Last Child in the Woods". Evidence is showing that children are suffering from serious mental and physical health issues because they are not spending time outside.

The Learning Without Walls initiative is a series of programmes designed to get children learning outside in the natural environment with their schools, youth groups and families – Clondeboye Nature Rangers, Forest School Awards and Forest School Families

Clandeboye Nature Rangers



Making scary ghosts from sycamore leaves at Clondeboye

The Clondeboye Nature Rangers is an after-school club for North Down. It is proving very popular and kids are really enjoying it.

We organised Clondeboo – the Halloween Holiday Programme between 29th Oct – 2 Nov. Places filled up quickly and we had lots of great activities – cooking on the fire, spooky crafts, nature walks, den building and lots more.



A spooky mask for Halloween!

Forest School Awards

The Forest School Awards is the outreach programme for the Learning Without Walls initiative.

[The Forest School Awards are open again for Belfast City Council and Mid and East Antrim Council areas.](#)

To apply for a Forest School Award please visit <https://www.forestschoolawards.org/cgi-bin/main.cgi?page=ApplicationForm;vat=1541362203>

Home of the
Forest School Awards



Supported by the
Dufferin Foundation



Please complete the application form and we will notify you if you have been successful.

Don't forget if you are not in you cannot win!



Pupils from St Joseph's Primary School in Crumlin visit Crumlin Glen thanks to the Forest School Awards supported by Antrim and Newtownabbey Council.

Autumn Gathering – joint Irish Forest School Association and NIFSA Conference

On the 6th October at Clondeboye Estate, eager Forest School Leaders attended the joint IFSA/NIFSA Autumn Gathering. This was a great success with over 60 delegates attending. Superb workshops were taken by Lucy O'Hagan on making light, George Lyttle showed us how to make paper and James Hunter made some potato bread with his clay oven. All the workshops were very well attended and feedback has been excellent.



Delegates attend the workshop on making light with Lucy O'Hagan

NIFSA – 10th Anniversary Celebrations

After the Autumn Gathering we celebrated NIFSA's 10th anniversary. What a fantastic journey and thank you to everyone that has helped us along the way. In the next 10 years lets make every school in Northern Ireland an active Forest School!



Brian Poots, NIFSA Founder and CEO cutting the birthday cake.

NIFSA Statistics 2018-19

Every month we will give you an update on the impact Learning Without Walls is making. This month 2 new schools became accredited Forest Schools.



Katrina Rule receiving her Forest School Leader Level 3 Award and Official Forest School plaque

Home of the Forest School Awards



Supported by the Dufferin Foundation



Since September we have 50 new schools and organisations registering to become a Forest School and we have actively worked with over 2,000 children outside.

Heart of the Glen Outdoor Learning Resource

This month we feature resources from the Heart of the Glen Landscape Partnership Scheme.

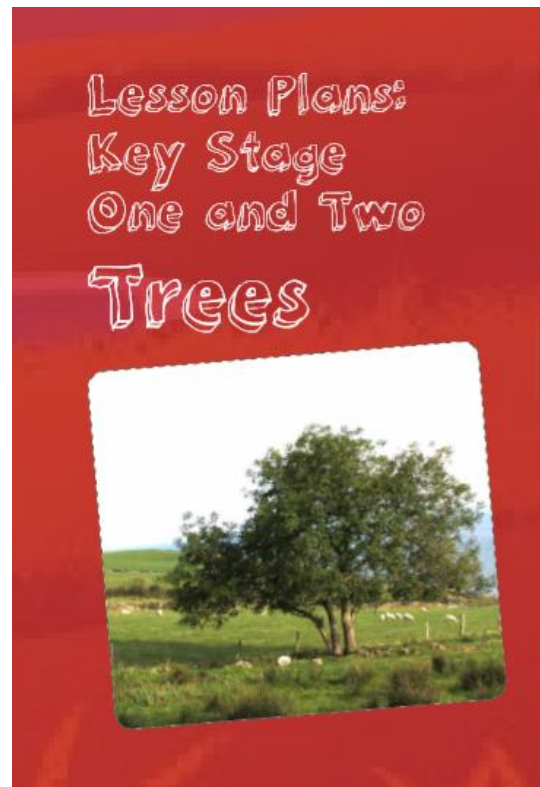


Please follow the link:

<http://www.heartoftheglens.org/cms/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Teachers-Outdoor-Learning-Resource.pdf>

About the Outdoor Learning project

The main aims of this project were to engage young people in understanding the range of important landscapes, habitats and species around them, and to encourage interaction with the natural environment within their own school grounds and further afield. It was also hoped that this project will help to overcome the perceived barriers for teachers with regards to outdoor learning.



Tree Rings

Curriculum Area: World Around Us
Numeracy
Length: 45 mins

LEARNING INTENTIONS
THE CHILDREN SHOULD BE ABLE TO:

- MEASURE AND RECORD DATA IN THE OUTDOORS

SUCCESS CRITERIA
CHILDREN WILL HAVE ACHIEVED THE LEARNING INTENTIONS IF THEY ARE ABLE TO:

- LABEL PARTS OF A TREE
- USE TREE RINGS TO CALCULATE THE AGE OF A TREE

MATERIALS
Tree cross sections, rope, clothes pegs, historical pictures and word cards, tree diagram, 3m tape measures and 30cm tape measures, tree identification charts, rulers, pencils, student guide sheets.

INTRODUCTION
Outdoor learning intention – Today we are going to learn how to measure and record data outdoors. Give students tree figures. In groups of three or four make figures and label parts of tree. At end of activity ask students what three things you can learn from trees. Give students pictures of different trees and hula hoops. Classify pictures into two groups (Deciduous and Coniferous). Go around grounds and classify trees as deciduous / coniferous.

DEVELOPMENT

- Give students log cross sections. Use tree rings to calculate age of trees by counting rings. What things have happened during the life of the trees? Use timeline activity to sequence events into chronological order.
- Ask question – How can they find age of trees without cutting them down? Think Pair Share.
- Give students measuring tapes. Model how to find age of tree. Measure 1 metre up tree and measure girth. Divide girth by 2.5 using a calculator to give the age of the tree. Each group goes to a tree and finds the age of the trees using the same technique. Complete as a carousel until all groups find age of all trees. Return to group and discuss results.

PLENARY
Complete data sheet and record type of tree and age of tree. Draw a picture of each tree. Discuss results – do they have any ancient trees? Is it deciduous or coniferous?

OTHER IDEAS

- Make a bark rubbing
- Ancient tree hunt resources are available from the Woodland Trust. Record fat, old trees or ones with an interesting history. www.ancient-tree-hunt.org.uk

Home of the Forest School Awards



Supported by the Dufferin Foundation





GDPR

To comply with Data Protection law (including the General Data Protection Regulation and associated legislation), we are required to obtain your consent so that we may take, use and store photographs and video recordings of your pupils/children.



We have now built the GDPR function in to your MIS.

Please can you visit your MIS and click on the GDPR button and complete all the relevant sections to ensure NIFSA is complying with GDPR Regulations.

Home of the
Forest School Awards



NIFSA Membership

As a small independent charity operating in Northern Ireland we rely enormously on your membership.

Annual membership is £100 and we believe offers good value for money.

What do you get for your membership?

- a) Access to Member's Section of the Forest School Awards website which gives information on outdoor lessons, research and much more.
- b) A section on the website exclusively for your own organisation.
- c) Area to record Forest School activities and produce Eco-Schools Reports.
- d) Free attendance for 2 members to the annual NIFSA conference.
- e) Monthly Learning Without Walls Newsletter.
- f) Entry into the Nature Rangers programme to encourage you to do 6 Forest School sessions every year.
- g) Opportunity to train and mentor other staff within your organisation as Forest School Leaders for only £30 Open College Network registration fee.
- h) We are constantly developing new initiatives and forming new partnerships. We are currently working on Shared Education resources and other exciting programmes. Watch this space.



Willow dome planted at the IFSA/NIFSA Autumn Gathering

Supported by the
Dufferin Foundation

