

Learning Through the Outside Classroom

We are going to move on; if you put any equipment you've got on the blue box.

We are painting pictures using mud and materials that we just found lying around and my colleague has to describe what she sees without me actually looking and I have to try and paint it using her description. Again, kind of made background as rubble, mixture of slate and brick and roof tiles. I think its teaching children, obviously, first of all communication skills and making sure that they sort of explain exactly what they see and try to get that across to somebody else who can't see but also sort of learning about the environment and getting that little bit closer to it not being confined to indoor space.

What are the special qualities of this place? Why are our school grounds special to us and maybe you pick that out when you are deciding what view to look at. You know you can really decide whether you want to hook it into a theme, you can leave it really open if you just

What we're trying to get teachers to do is to think about how they can take their educational experience into the outdoors and appreciate the landscapes around them. The John Muir award is working with the Limestone Landscapes to encourage young people of all ages to get out and connect with wild places. In the North East we are very fortunate that we've got such fantastic landscape features so the projects about really getting them stuck into conservation activities and actually to just recognise the special qualities of their local area.

Here at the quarry that we've talked about and learned about and once upon a time they would have used this area to take lots and lots of limestone, remember that limestone I said was way deep underground

We've come here today because we are a school that is local to the area and we've learnt about this space and that it is part of the limestone landscapes areas that they are trying to conserve so IM really keen to educate the children that live locally how to explore it and how to look after it. We're doing at the minute, find 10 objects where they need to bring them back to me and talk about them. They can be natural or unnatural objects to the area. Look at that shape, is it a natural. It's a slug, it's a natural object.

I think young people benefit because they are learning and they are not stuck in a classroom at a desk. You know there are some people who don't respond well to sitting at a desk with a pen and paper.

We get to catch stuff and we've never done it before.

So this is an ideal way for them to enjoy and achieve and be successful and I think for teachers its knowing that there's another generation who are going to pick up on your beliefs of conserving and looking after the world.