

# NATURE CHILD

## 2022 Autumn Pilot:

Proving children are more motivated to learn, feel better and achieve more when they are being taught in our tailored wild space.



## Who we are

A local, not-for-profit organisation established in autumn 2021 to optimise the learning and wellbeing of young children.

## Our Mission

Our mission is to support schools in their journey to get kids learning outdoors.

## The new National Curriculum for Wales

“A school’s curriculum is everything a learner experiences... It is not simply what we teach, but how we teach and crucially, why we teach it.” – [hwb.gov.wales](http://hwb.gov.wales)

The vision set out in the new guidance is an exciting move forward in education. Providing hope for the next generation of learners that education standards will be raised, attainment gaps closed and life experiences broadened.

It promotes cross-curricular skills, wellbeing and authentic learning.



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## The need for Nature Child

Delivering this new curriculum is a challenge, we want to support schools by providing them with ideas, facilities, resources and training.

We know the majority of children are more motivated and feel better when they are learning in a wild space. We have also discovered that this motivation is maintained for a significant length of time once they are back at school.

Outside learning is recognised as being integral in the delivery of the new curriculum for Wales. As a sector we need to explore what that looks like. We propose that Nature Child is one part of the solution.

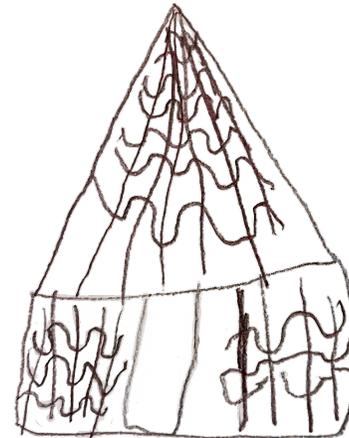
# A day at Nature Child

Today we explored the woodland and learnt about the animals that live there and how people who lived here in the past used the trees to build their homes. We learned about the features of different types of trees and worked with Hazel and Willow, using traditional techniques to weave them into wattle walls. Then we used our prediction and investigation skills to explore how to make daub, which would have been used to insulate a Celtic roundhouse. We worked together to measure our ingredients and to test and improve our recipes to find out which combination of materials was the most effective.

At lunch time, we sat around the fire and listened to traditional folk-law stories. We learned to identify the different trees by the shapes of leaves and to read and say their names in Welsh. We also made careful observational drawings and paintings of the leaves to help us remember them.

Subjects covered: Science, geography, history, language, literacy and communication (LLC)

- ✓ Cross-curricular skills
- ✓ Encourages wellbeing
- ✓ Authentic learning



# Our pilot aims

We aimed to prove:

Delivering activities for children in a free and wild environment will increase motivation, wellbeing and achievement.

Our pilot was designed to demonstrate how effective outdoor learning could be in delivering across the whole Curriculum as well as to:

- establish the need for Nature Child in different schools and year groups,
- identify the barriers to uptake,
- explore and build the most effective team,
- provide transport to and from the site.

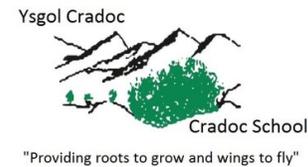


# What we did

- Held a skill sharing and curriculum development day which improved our practice.
- Upleveled our evaluation skills by undertaking training and developed a creative evaluation framework.
- Offered work experience to local students.
- Employed 4 staff to run activities.
- Organised and paid for transport to get the pupils to our site.

## We ran 7 on-site trial days for 5 local schools

- 192 children took part.
- 20 educational practitioners were able to join the children and therefore develop their understanding of outdoor learning.





Did you enjoy learning?					
Were there things you learned?					
Did you feel more or less keen to learn than usual?	More	Less			
Did you have enough time for each activity?	Yes	No			
Did you learn or experience something new?	Yes	No			
Did you enjoy learning by doing practical things?	Yes	No			
Would you like to go back to the outdoor classroom?	Yes	No			
Circle your favourite experiences?	Making daub	Weaving	Toy animal search		
	Animals activity	Nature Walk	Fire and Story	Leaf painting	River
How did being in the Nature Child classroom make you feel?	Excited happy				
What did you learn that was new?	The trees and leaves.				
What was your favourite moment or memory of the day?	Fire and story ☺				

# How we delivered it

## Preliminary work

Pre-session in school activities were provided for teachers to deliver in order to maximise the benefit of the practical experiences and broaden the depth of learning.

Initial surveys were conducted to understand staff and children's expectations and experiences.

## On-site days

Delivered in specific sessions, targeting a range of schools and year groups. These sessions were each held for a whole day and the children took part in a range of activities which teachers, head teachers and activity leaders observed and assessed, in line with the evaluation framework criteria.

## Post activity evaluations

Nature-child leaders went into the participating schools, on a post site-visit to carry out post-session surveys and interviews.



# Our Findings





# Children

During the 12 week pilot children took part in activities and experiences then filled in feedback forms with regard to ways in which they did or did not benefit.

Over 90% children reported benefitting in terms of both their learning, connection with nature and feelings of well-being.

A sample of children's feedback:

Insert text here Kate

# Teachers



100% of teaching staff recorded improvement in collaboration, resilience and engagement.

100% of schools have expressed interest in attending again

A sample of educator feedback:

“Thank you for a truly fantastic experience. It was fabulous to see the children enjoying their learning so much. It was teaching and learning in its finest form.”

“With wellbeing being at the heart of our new curriculum this beautiful diverse setting offers an amazing outdoor learning environment for pupils of all ages and allows pupils to develop themselves through healthy engagement with risk, problem-solving and self-discovery, in a hands-on and thoughtful manner. ”

“Behaviour was phenomenal, and children who usually present learning behaviours, showed a completely different personality in the outdoor environment.”

# Extended effects

Teachers were able to extend learning once back in the class room



# Unexpected outcomes

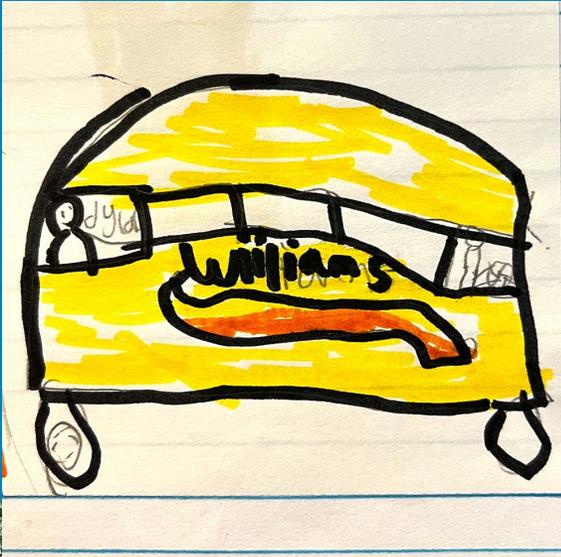
## Children

Things we considered to be incidental, such as travelling on a bus or sitting around an open fire turned out to be of significant importance to the children as they had never done them before.



## Teachers

We hadn't realised the value of Nature Child for teachers as a Continued Professional Development (CPD) opportunity. Teachers reported feeling inspired and more confident to teach the children outdoors.





# Thank you Powys Association of Voluntary Organisations (PAVO)

This pilot could only have been achieved with finance from the  
Localities Initiative Fund and the support of the PAVO team.

Thank you PAVO for helping us to enrich our community and  
develop our skills for the future.

We look forward to seeing how our collaboration will continue.

Thank you

thank you

Thank you

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