ECEFS PEDAGOGICAL TOOLKIT – ACTIVITY RESOURCE PACK



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Early Years Eco Guide - Foreword

In this guide you will find a wealth of information and resources to help your setting commence or develop its sustainability journey.

We are all too aware of the difficulties and challenges settings face when trying to integrate sustainable practices and learning opportunities into your setting.

In order to fulfil the three pillars of sustainability, we would strongly encourage you to involve families, the local and wider community, colleagues, local similar provision and most importantly, the children in your settings.

As you progress with your sustainability journey, we would appreciate your help and co-operation by completing the activity reflections so that we may continue to develop and grow the available resources.

Any comments and suggestions are most welcome!

Diane Boyd, Nicky Hirst and Catherine McNeill

LIVERPOOL JOHN MOORES UNIVERSITY

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Early Childhood Education for Sustainable Development Framework. (ECEfS)

Introduction to the framework

Within Early Childhood we believe in a more environmentally sustainable and socially just world where people live healthy, enjoyable lives in thriving environments. What young children experience and learn today can influence how future generations live. This framework hopes to promote the growing global movement that seeks to nurture knowledge, creativity, kindness, wisdom, critical thinking, empathy and many more of the skills and values that will allow sustainable development to flourish and a better world to emerge.

Humanity will continue to be challenged by numerous inter-connected environmental, social and economic issues. Globally issues such as climate change, biodiversity loss, natural resource pressure, extreme weather events, water stress and deforestation are all already impacting on communities economically, environmentally and culturally.

Some progress has been made to address these challenges with one example being the introduction of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals 2015-2030. (See appendix 1a) Internationally, countries across the world signed an agreement recognising the value of these goals to work towards a more sustainable future. Despite this, the problems are largely getting worse with implications for social and economic equality both within and between countries. If societies fail to overcome these problems evidence suggests that we will destroy the ability of the planet to sustain the natural biological, physical and atmospheric systems that support life on Earth. Our current ways of living are environmentally unsustainable and, therefore, ultimately socially and economically unsustainable too.

This is the problem we in early childhood are trying to solve. The responsibility for solving this problem, or at least attempting to, lies with many stakeholders across many sectors. The early childhood care and education sector have a vital role to play. We believe that this framework will support providers to develop an education for sustainability lens and encourage young children to become agentic. This framework encompasses many supporting elements that will help and support all practitioners and providers regardless of which setting or organisation they belong to. The framework and accompanying poster highlight **the three interconnecting and supporting pillars from the Brundtland Report (1987) of the Social/Cultural dimension, the economic and environmental.**

UNCRC Article 12 states "children have a right to give their opinions on all decisions that affect them." Practitioners need to develop strong listening skills in order to allow young children to have their opinion heard. This is discussed in more detail in the **"Rights of the Child"** section.

Underpinning the whole framework is the recognition of the importance of **reflective practitioners,** the values they hold and place upon the characteristics of effective learning – *how* children learn. As stated within the statutory EYFS (DfE, 2017:10)-

1.9. In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners must reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice.

Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

- ***Playing and exploring - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'***

- ***Active learning - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements***

- ***Creating and thinking critically - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.***

These **characteristics of effective learning** compliment the **prime areas** (Personal, emotional and social development; Communication and Language and Physical development) which are recognised as universal in early childhood, as well as the **four interconnecting specific areas**. (Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding the World and Expressive Arts and Design.)

In the revised Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory framework (DfE, 2017: 17) there is now a clear, explicit expectation that all providers recognise the **Fundamental British Values.** This ECEfS compliments these values as they are an intrinsic part of the Social/Cultural dimension. Core values of equity, justice, rights and inclusion are clearly embedded throughout and will offer examples to support practitioners fulfil this duty.

Additionally, the framework recognises **the nine themes of the Eco School** England programme to help practitioners plan activities. Eco-Schools was developed in 1992 by the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE) in response to the UN Conference on Environment and Development. FEE's aim for Eco-Schools is to "empower students to be the change our sustainable world needs by engaging them in fun, action- orientated learning". The belief that children of all ages should have the opportunity to learn about their natural environment and develop the knowledge, skills and values that will help them thrive in a more environmentally sustainable world is crucial. The Eco-Schools programme has been successful because it helps passionate children and adults channel their enthusiasm for the environment into a strategic and organised plan of action and learning for sustainability.

Place based experiential learning offers further opportunities to engage with the natural world, with communities and culturally specific places within different geographically contexts throughout England. Suggestions for place based experiences are clearly highlighted through both the poster and the pedagogical tool kit. Examples are beach, museum, parks and allotments. Nurseries, Preschools, Reception classes and childminders all have an important role to play and this framework should support the delivery of effective and inspiring education for sustainability.

Why is this important and who benefits?

We all benefit from education for sustainability. When children, young people and adults develop sustainability knowledge, skills and values they become better equipped and more motivated to create a fairer, greener society. It has the power to be transformative for all. Research shows that embedding an education for sustainability perspective in England has positive impacts on wellbeing, behaviour, motivation and cognitive skills that also benefit the whole school community. These learning benefits were in addition to the sustainability performance benefits that were also confirmed. Settings will benefit holistically from engagement with this ECEfS framework as well remembering that people, animals, plants, insects, rivers, oceans and skies now and in the future benefit hugely too.

We hope that you enjoy this resource and have fun engaging with the opportunities if offers.

Thank You

Diane Boyd (Project Lead)

With Catherine McNeill and Nicky Hirst

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EARLY YEARS ECEFS GUIDANCE

The EYFS (DfE 2014:9) notes that in planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners must reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice. Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

- **Playing and exploring** - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go';
- **Active learning** - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements; and
- **Creating and thinking critically—** children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational programmes in early year's settings. All areas of learning and development are important and are inter-connected.

There are three Prime Areas –

Communication and Language

Physical Development

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Communication and language development involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations

Listening and attention: Opportunities can be created in both indoors and outdoors with a mixture of activities, discussions and texts. By provide a wide and diverse range of information and text for stories, rhyming games and songs it can challenge and offer alternative thinking around ESD. For example, children/babies in the settings can create their own Eco songs or raps giving them a sense of ownership and participation.

Understanding: Use a range of questions, instructions and debates, whilst discussing key environmental issues both local and global. Ensure opportunities for how and why questions generated by the children themselves.

Speaking: Recognise the diverse and cultural perspectives of the setting/community and offer opportunities for talking and developing ESD narratives.

Physical Development involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their co-ordination, control, and movement. Children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food.

Moving and handling: Whilst indoors and outdoors the children/babies have opportunities to be physically active on a range of sensorial surfaces and textures. They will also utilise a range of equipment and develop confidence in handling tools, animals and plants, whilst understanding how to care for them and protect their environment.

Health and self-care: They understand why it is important to develop independent healthy lifestyles both through physical activity and nutrition. They have opportunities to grow and sell their own food and understand about hygienic practices.

Personal, social and emotional development involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.

Self-confidence and self-awareness: Children have opportunities to develop their confidence through their own initiatives and entrepreneurial thinking, whilst trying new activities and participating in a democratic process.

Managing feelings and behaviour: Children develop an awareness of equitable practice through dialogue, listening and participatory practice. They embrace and value cultural and social justice, sharing ideas, knowledge and recognising the rights of all within the setting.

Making relationships: Children have opportunities to develop relationships within the setting, the community and globally. Through activities or stories children understand about social and cultural interdependence and intergenerational contexts.

ECEFS GUIDANCE

Literacy development involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children must be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest.

Reading: Having opportunities to read environmental print and texts, design posters and make setting big books, both inside and out. Utilise a selection of texts that embrace indigenous and cultural narratives.

Writing: Utilise a range of materials both inside and outside. They gain confidence designing resources, posters, text to support ESD activities within the setting and community. Develop sensorial experiences with a range of open ended materials and water, mud, sand and foliage.

Mathematics involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; and to describe shapes, spaces, and measures.

Numbers: Children have opportunities to use numbers and money in real life contexts, for example cake sales/children in need. They understand issues concerning fair trade and why they should shop locally to support their community. Use numbers to solve ESD problems or gather data.

Shape, space and measures: Children understand patterns and shapes in the environment (Plants, wildlife, animals). They understand about developing spaces for ESD and how they would be responsible for them. Use positional language in real life situations.

Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.

People and communities: Children need to be aware of universal rights of all throughout the world and develop confidence to discuss and challenge. To be able to understand and recognise cultural differences through stories, visits, community participation and global practice. To develop community based practice locally.

The world: To observe and understand their world, locally, nationally and as a global citizen. To recognise and develop a bio-centric view of their world and how they are part of its future.

Technology: To recognise that technology leaves a carbon footprint and consider different ways to conserve energy both in the setting, at home and within their community. (For example, turning off lights, using recycled paper, generating less printing and limiting use of the dryer.)

Expressive arts and design involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology.

Exploring and using media and materials: Using open ended natural materials than provide sensorial experiences for babies and children. Ensure a wide and diverse range of practical activities are offered – For example, making musical instruments from recycled materials, dancing to cultural songs , cooking and baking using local indigenous produce and using their local environment to inspire (e.g. Natural wildlife and beach materials) .

Being imaginative: Recognise the diverse ways that children can express themselves and encourage participatory co-construction practice.

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Courtesy of the United Nations, 2017



HOW DO WE VIEW CHILDREN?

"Children have been taken for granted for far too long. Adults are happy with their power over children and childhood" Mayall (1996 as cited in Thompson, 2005 pg.25)

How you view children and the purpose of childhood will influence your expectations of them.

Ask yourself - How do you see children? Vulnerable and in need? Or active and competent?

Luff and Martin (2005) suggest babies and infants are entirely dependent upon others but, are not passive recipients of care, direction and guidance. They are active social agents.

EYFS (DfE, 2017) makes no explicit reference to child's rights, voice or participation; however, strong emphasis is placed upon positive relationships through the key person approach.

Part of the key person role is to be aware of a child's point of view and advocate for the rights of the child (Elfer, 2005).

Attachments such as key person are essential for survival and development skills.

Once we determine how we view a child we can begin to develop a more democratic, participatory approach to learning which is discussed in more detail on the Listening to Children guide.

A GUIDE TO A CHILD'S RIGHTS

Article 12 of the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNICEF, 1989) stipulates children and young people must be given the right to express their views in all matters affecting them, and requires those views to be given due weight in accordance with the child's age and maturity.

The UN Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNICEF, 1989) can inspire us to observe a child's rights. This in turn can lead to societal change that makes global issues we are facing now, less likely to occur. If we can raise a generation who have had their rights observed, the impact on global social justice will be boundless.

This introduction offers a number every day habits we can develop that will enable us to respect a child's rights.

REQUEST NOT DEMAND

If we want something a child has, we have a tendency to take it. Instead, ask for it. Explain why you would like it and after processing the request, it is highly likely the child will hand it over to you.

DO NOT TALK IN PRIVATE ABOUT A CHILD NOT IN FRONT OF THE CHILD

Include them in the conversation, just as you would an adult. We all know how it feels to hear someone talking about you, the child also has those feelings. Alternatively, seek a private area to discuss the child.

CONSIDER THINGS FROM THEIR POINT OF VIEW

Avoid laughing at a child in front of them. This behaviour can be modelled by children and we need to break this cycle of laughing at, rather than laughing with. We need to help children recognise other people's feelings and embarrassment and ridicule are not traits we should be passing on to children. Children can be very funny, but let us not laugh at them.

TRY TO RESIST THE URGE TO PICK CHILDREN UP

Babies and children should not be picked up unnecessarily. They are a person, with their own body and not possessions. You may think you are helping but picking children up does not help children to develop resilience. Babies love to be in arms, it is a fantastic way to develop connections, but ask them first, “I’m going to pick you up now” moving to “Can I give you a cuddle” for young children. The practice of consent from birth could change the world.

ASK PERMISSION

Develop a respectful relationship and give children the option to have their nose wiped or nappy changed for example. It is highly likely that after processing the request the child will agree.

GIVE CHILDREN THE OPPORTUNITY TO INFLUENCE PLANS

Having children as decision makers creates a harmonious setting. Prior to making play doh, ask children “Would you like to play with Play doh?” or “Would you like to visit the beach” rather than herding them on a bus and taking them. Giving children choices allows them to see the decision making process in action.

ASK CHILDREN BEFORE TAKING THEIR PHOTOGRAPH

We need to acknowledge a child’s rights to privacy, not just parents’ rights. Some children love to be in front of the camera others do not, respect their decision.

AVOID TIME OUT

Not letting a child move is an abuse of their human rights. It erodes their dignity and suppresses their right to have a say in things that are important to them. Instead, children should be offered time to think in the company of a practitioner with cuddles offered and attention given. Children need more connection not less when incidents occur.

DO NOT TELL THEM TO STOP CRYING

Children have a right to cry, feel things and express their feelings as they so wish. Practice validation “I hear you” “you are upset” “it sounds like you are feeling sad” is much better to hear than “stop crying”.

ALLOW THEM CHOICE AT MEALTIMES

Offer food in the centre of the table rather than serving food on a plate. Allow children to select the food they wish to eat from the food on offer and even the most fussiest of eaters will begin to eat a wider selection of food. Model good behaviour and eat with the children rather than separately.

HOW DO WE LISTEN TO CHILDREN?

In order to support young children's engagement and participation, recognising the value and contribution of listening, consultation and participation is a crucial skill practitioners need to develop.

WHY LISTEN?

When we listen to children, we are recognising the importance of young children's talk. Active listening can lead to participatory learning.

WHAT IS LISTENING?

Listening is an active rather than passive process, which involves children and adults discussing meanings and is a crucial factor in understanding children's experiences (Alison Clark, 2005).

Listening means the direct involvement of children in decision making about matters that affect their lives.

Article 12 of the UNCRC states "Children have a right to express their views freely in all matters affecting them and their views are to be given due weight".

WHEN CHILDREN ARE NOT LISTENED TO THEY FEEL:-

Invisible
Ignored
Sad
Angry
Frustrated
Hurt

WHEN CHILDREN ARE LISTENED TO THEY FEEL:-

Loved
Valued
Worthy
Happy
Heard
Wanted

FOUR RULES FOR ACTIVE LISTENING

Ask open questions
Don't assume/Be judgemental
Give your undivided attention
Don't interrupt
Stop talking

HOW? TIME, SPACE AND ORGANISATION

Planning needs to involve children's interests and ideas
Respect what children say
Respond to children's views appropriately
Provide more freedom around time allowance and children being able to choose whether they take part (McLeod, 2016)

CRITICAL REFLECTION

WHAT IS CRITICAL REFLECTION?

Critical reflection is an internal process which consists of exploring personal beliefs, emotions, assumptions, thoughts and actions (King and Kitchener, 2004; McLellan, 2004)

Critical reflection in relation to early years pracitioners means that teaching, as a whole becomes an examination through different 'lenses' (McLeod, 2015)

WHY REFLECT?

Whatever beliefs and assumptions we have will determine our practice with children.

We should be striving for a democratic approach, be open and engaging creating possibilities as participatory as possible.

We need to take responsibility for our actions and question whether what is happening is appropriate.

WHY IS REFLECTION IMPORTANT?

Developing a reflective approach will promote a desire to question

A reflective approach offers the potential to transform understanding and empower practitioners to see new perspectives and possibilities

Reflection is integral to continuous professional development

For a more in depth analysis of critical reflection Dr. Naomi McLeod writes extensively. We highly recommend the following article:-

McLeod, N. (2015) Reflecting on Reflection: improving teacher's readiness to facilitate participatory learning with young children. *Professional Development in Education*. Vol. 41.2, 254-272.

British Values

The Prevent Duty Guidance was published by the Department of Education in June 2015 as initially a non- statutory guidance. It stated the duty of early years settings and provision in regard to "the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 on specified authorities" was to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism."(2015:3) This was mirrored within the EYFS (DfE, 2014:17) with an implicit understanding that practitioners /leaders needed to have "regard to the Government's statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013'. " It required providers if they had any concerns about children's safety or welfare that they must notify the appropriate agencies with statutory responsibilities immediately. On March 3rd 2017 the EYFS was revised and this implicit recommendation became a more explicit requirement for all early years' providers (0-5 years). It now stated that not only must providers "have regard to the government's statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015 "but to now also recognise "the 'Prevent duty guidance for England and Wales 2015'16." (2017: 17). The Prevent Duty states that it should not be an additional burden for staff as it is entirely consistent with schools and other childcare providers "existing responsibilities". Within it there is an expectation that providers need to build children's "resilience to radicalisation by promoting fundamental British values and enabling them to challenge extremist views". (2015:5)

How does British Values link to education for Sustainable Development (ECESfE)?

In 1987(Brundtland) three pillars were identified as pivotal in ECEfS and crucial for the wellbeing of future citizens of the world. They are economic, environmental and social/ cultural. Economic recognises purchasing decisions, Fair Trade and resource conservation. The environment pillar focuses upon Environmental protection, Policies and efficiency and Resource availability. The Social / cultural highlights social justice, stereotypes, equality, diversity and human rights – which resonate with British values too. Informally these pillars are referred to as people, planet and profits, but they are all interconnecting. Education for sustainability in early childhood emphasises the potential of young children to make a positive contribution to the planets problems. Elliott and Davies (2009) reminds us that children will be on the earth the longest and therefore should take an active role in important decision making regarding its (and theirs) future .Taking a holistic approach , adults could utilise the statutory framework (2017) ,the Eco themes identified in this pedagogical tool and aspects of British values to embed an ethos of critical thinking and decision making , transparency and challenge . This holistic approach to learning also resonates with the characteristics of effective learning of motivation, engagement, creativity and criticality. Research offers hope that if practitioners embrace this ECEfS philosophy then both children and the adult can be the "learners" identified in sustainable development goal 4.7 , that need the" knowledge and skills " to be equipped to face the 21st century. The characteristics of effective learning stress the need for children to be able to explore and investigate critical issues but that should also must mean they can think of solutions to these problems and giving them a sense of agency. This pedagogical tool provides opportunities for providers to embed an ECEfS approach.

British Values should be embedded within practice and providers should find connections within both statutory and non –statutory guidance. So how does ECEfS look in practice?

There are four aspects of British Values – Rule of Law, Democracy, Individual liberty and Mutual Respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs.

<u>1 Rule of Law</u> – This ensures that children understand that there are rules and routines within the setting that they must adhere to and they are aware of consequences of their behaviour.

For Example - Personal, Social and Emotional Development: Managing feelings and behaviour

Early Learning Goal -Children talk about how they and others show feelings, talk about their own and others' behaviour, and its consequences, and know that some behaviour is unacceptable. They work as part of a group or class, and understand and follow the rules. They adjust their behaviour to different situations, and take changes of routine in their stride.

2 Democracy -This recognises that everyone is equal and that the setting embraces an inclusive policy. It highlights the importance of children's participation and rights as noted in the UN Article 21 (1989) and gives them opportunities for decision making within the setting thus aiming to empower children.

For example, Communication and Language: Listening and attention

They give their attention to what others say and respond appropriately.

EYFS (DfE, 2017:16) states "the safeguarding and welfare requirements, specified in this section, are designed to help providers create high quality settings which are welcoming, safe and stimulating, and where children are able to enjoy learning and grow in confidence."

Development Matters (2012) Children have a right, spelled out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, to provision which enables them to develop their personalities, talents and abilities irrespective of ethnicity, culture or religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities or gender.

3 Individual Liberty – This recognises that we live in a society that ensures freedom of speech and action. It ensures that children should understand that others may have different views and opinions and that they must respect this.

For Example, Personal, Social and Emotional Development: Self-confidence and self-awareness

Early Learning Goal -Children are confident to try new activities, and say why they like some activities more than others. They are confident to speak in a familiar group, will talk about their ideas, and will choose the resources they need for their chosen activities.

Communication and Language: Listening and attention

They give their attention to what others say and respond appropriately**.**

4 Mutual Respect and Tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs

For example, Personal, Social and Emotional Development: Making relationships

Early Learning Goal Children play co-operatively, taking turns with others. They take account of one another's ideas about how to organise their activity. They show sensitivity to others' needs and feelings, and form positive relationships with adults and other children.

Characteristics of effective learning

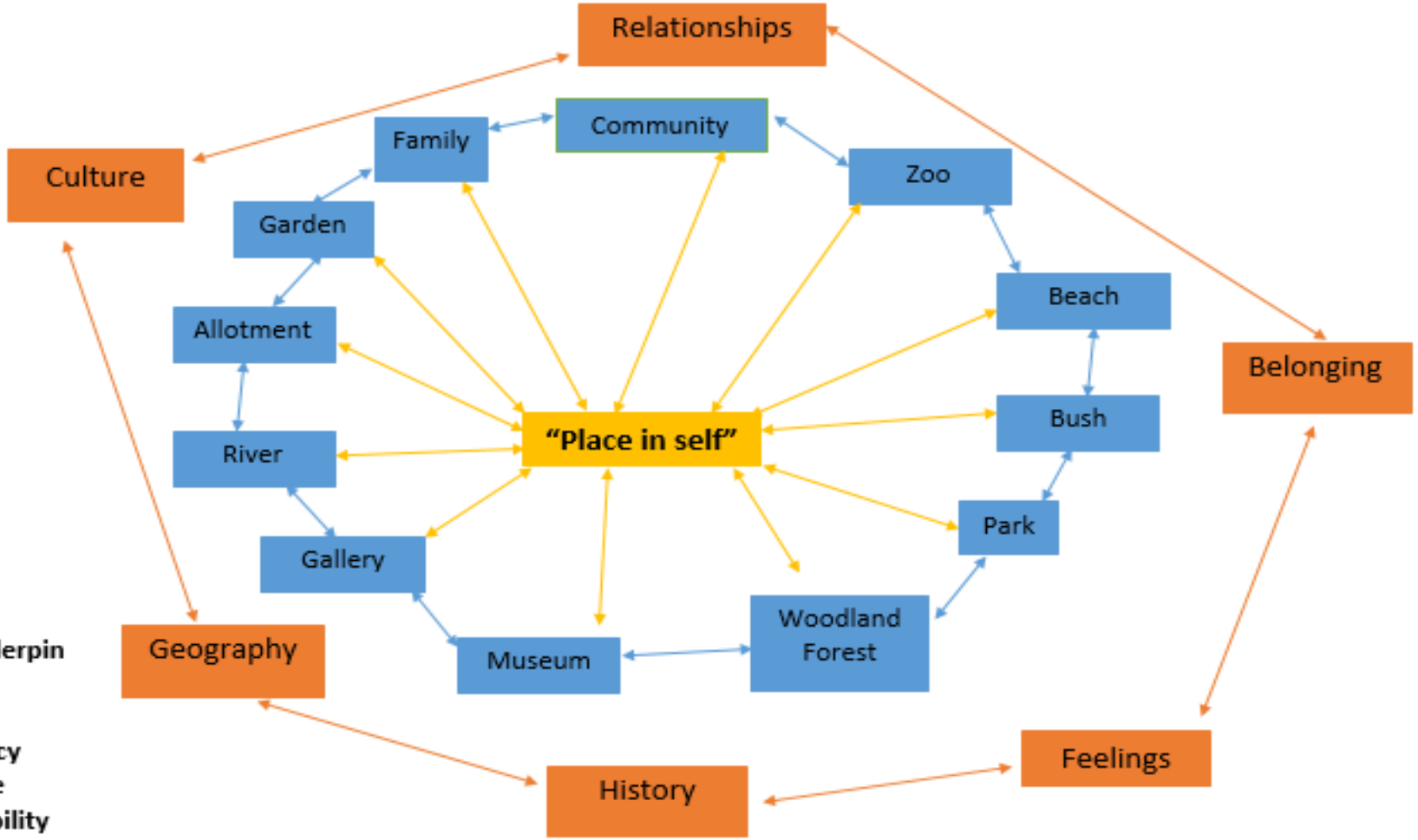
Creating and Thinking Critically thinking requires children to be able to express themselves, to question and to utilise strategies that promote sustained shared thinking. Complex and sensitive issues should be discussed openly with their key person, in well managed and safe environment, so that children can develop their opinions in a respectful situation.

How does this link to OFSTED inspections?

Within the revised common inspection framework for education, skills and early years, which came into effect from 1 September 2015, there was specific reference for providers to make safeguarding arrangements to promote children's " welfare and prevent radicalisation and extremism." (2015:5). The Act highlights that all staff within the setting should use their 'professional judgement' when in identifying any child who they perceive may be at risk of radicalisation and to act immediately in a sensitive manner .It acknowledges that very young children are vulnerable to extreme radicalisation within the home or community, and it is the providers responsibility to observe changes in behaviour. The Prevent Act suggests that the Designated Safeguarding Lead supports staff with Prevent awareness training and advice, and that policies should reflect an inclusive ethos.

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Boyd, 2017



Values that underpin the Web:-

- **Respect**
- **Democracy**
- **Tolerance**
- **Sustainability**

"Contextual Interconnected Web"

CONTEXTUAL INTERCONNECTED WEB - EXPLAINED

Place and Community

Sustainable Development Goal 4.7 notes “all learners “need to acquire the skills and knowledge.

•Global Monitoring Report 2016 highlights the need for “new approaches and new resources”.

•The ECEfS Framework offers an opportunity for developing a critical pedagogy of place (place within place-locality-community and culture).

Understanding one’s own values, the values of one’s community and society, and those of others around the world is a central part of educating for a sustainable future Global Monitoring Report (2016:5).

Consideration about where is ‘place’?

The kindergarten/nursery/preschool/ children’s centre.

The ‘place’ is located within a place-community-a locality –a history and culture.

The ‘place’ is a safe secure emotional place connected to family-community-history and culture.

A ‘place’ that sees the child with no rights –a deficit child or a strong protagonist -a ‘place’ that should promote critical pedagogy and ecological thinking.

“We place enormous value on the role of the environment as a motivating and animating force in creating spaces for relations, options and emotional and cognitive situations that produce a sense of well-being and security.

It has been said that the environment should act as a kind of aquarium which reflects the ideas, ethics, attitudes and culture of the people who live in it.”

- ***Lori Malaguzzi - 1996***

Introduction to Place based Learning

Place based learning is an experiential (action based) pedagogical opportunity which utilises the local area developing strong lies with the community. Article 31 UNCRC states that children have a right to relax and play. Environments that offer opportunities for exploration and enquiry, enables them to further their understanding of the world around them. Understanding the world is one of the four specific areas of learning within the revised EYFS (DfE, 2017). There are three aspects of this specific area-

1- **People and communities**
2- **The world**
3- **Technology.**

Practitioners need to utilise their local areas and communities to ensure that children develop a strong sense of place and culture. When considering people and communities it requires **"children to talk about past and present events in their lives and in the lives of family members" (2017:12)** By immersing children within their community and locality practitioners need to provide opportunities that allow children to celebrate and consider such questions as : Who am I ? What is my community?

To achieve this, ensure that you invite the children to go out into their locality to talk, to see, to touch and to smell to wonder at their reality. The **EYFS** only notes that **"providers must provide access to an outdoor play area or, if that is not possible, ensure that outdoor activities are planned and taken on a daily basis"** (2017: 30) which is minimal.

Example 1

Daily /weekly excursions visiting the library for singing, Craft sessions and storytelling with a variety of local people.

Example 2

Walking along the high street visiting the green grocer to buy the fruit for snack time and engaging in weekly conversations with the greengrocer about the different seasonal varieties. This not only ensures a relationship develops that extends beyond just buying fruit, but discussions about cost, produce and availability support the economic pillar.

Example 3

Inter-generational opportunities with Grandparents or Aunties or Uncles sharing stories culturally and historically about when they went to school, life during the war, food they grew and how they cooked it with cooking sessions) or even visiting the church yard . This can be facilitated through a series of stay and play sessions. Article 30 UNCRC states "children need to learn the customs of their own families". Practitioners need to respectfully acknowledge a child's culture.

These simple activities help children, families and communities to connect. It also supports the 'World' aspect of the specific area as children are then able **to "talk about features of their own local immediate environment "(EYFS DfE, 2017:12).**

Place based learning can happen anywhere within your own locality. It can be the park, woodland, river or beach, museum, library or castle. But it needs to be regular, consistent during the year. It is not a one off visit, but an opportunity for children to connect and wallow in the locality. By visiting consistently it ensures children and practitioners start to notice differences, changes, become familiar with details and know their area. For example, the sandstone walls that run along the front by the beach, the woodland area in the summer in contrast to the cold frost of winter. The seasonal changes not only support scientific questioning, but provide opportunities to notice and prompt causal thinking. For example, why are there lots of dead star fish on the beach today but not last week? Place based learning is an essential part of experiential action oriented pedagogy but it depends on an informed, knowledgeable practitioner. So practitioners must become immersed in their locality too, as Sustainable Development Goal 4 aspect 7 states it requires learners “to develop the knowledge and skills" and place based learning offers an opportunity to experience awe and wonder together.

Activity Reflection

Being 'Ready' To Improve Practice

When we ask 'why', we show that we are open to new and different points of view. Questioning develops our self-awareness and is the starting point for seeing differently and improving our professional practice. This can be both difficult and uncomfortable, because it involves exploring personal beliefs, emotions and assumptions. For many, this is enough to prevent us questioning. Failure to see is the biggest barrier in tackling the challenges and issues we face on a daily basis. What about you? Are you your biggest barrier? If you are 'ready' you can find out more about becoming reflective using 9 simple steps (See pedagogical Toolkit for further info on Reflective Practice)

Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child states that every child and young person has the right to a say in decisions that affect them.

Considering the above statement, please answer the following:-

Were the children consulted prior to activity commencing? Please explain

……

……

How were the children able to contribute to the activity? Please explain

……

……

Were the children able to implement their own ideas? Please explain

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Early years provision is dependent on reflective practice that allows for extending and developing, how did you extend and enhance this theme? Provide examples of other activities you did around this topic which will be used in the development of this pack

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Please give details of success/failure of activity, what was useful, what could be improved etc.

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GLOSSARY

Biodiversity The variability among living organisms from all sources, including terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are part. Biodiversity includes diversity within and between species and the diversity of ecosystems.	**Carbon Footprint** A carbon footprint is an estimate of how much carbon dioxide is produced to support your lifestyle. Essentially, it measures your impact on the climate based on how much carbon dioxide you produce. Factors that contribute to your carbon footprint include your travel methods and general home energy usage. Carbon footprints can also be applied on a larger scale, to companies, businesses, even countries.
Carbon Neutral Every time we travel or turn on our computers, we add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere. This is because most of the energy we use comes from fuels like oil, coal, and gas. Other types of energy, like solar and wind power, do not contribute to climate change. But they are often more expensive. Being "carbon neutral" means removing as much carbon dioxide from the atmosphere as we put in. How can we remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere? One way is to buy "carbon offsets". This supports projects like a wind farm or solar park. It helps make clean energy more affordable. It reduces future greenhouse gas emissions to make up for our travel and electricity use today.	**Climate Change** Climate change refers to any significant change in measures of climate (such as temperature, precipitation, or wind) lasting for an extended period (decades or longer). Climate change may result from: natural factors, such as changes in the sun's intensity or slow changes in the Earth's orbit around the sun; natural processes within the climate system (e.g. changes in ocean circulation); Human activities that change the atmosphere's composition (e.g. through burning fossil fuels) and the land surface (e.g. deforestation, reforestation, urbanization, desertification, etc.)
Compost A mixture of decaying organic matter, as from leaves and vegetable and fruit scraps, used to improve soil structure and provide nutrients. Well-balanced compost requires air, moisture, carbon and nitrogen materials, micro and macro-organisms.	**Conservation** The management of human use of nature so that it may yield the greatest sustainable benefit to current generations while maintaining its potential to meet the needs and aspirations of future generations.
Culture A collective noun for the symbolic and learned, non-biological aspects of human society, including language, custom and convention. The concept of culture is often used synonymously with 'civilisation'. However, it does have a range of meanings, including understandings of culture as norms and values; culture as meaning; and culture as human activity.	**Cultural diversity** Variety or multiformity of human social structures, belief systems, and strategies for adapting to situations in different parts of the world. Language is a good indicator of cultural diversity, with over 6,000 languages currently being spoken.

Deforestation Those practices or processes that result in the conversion of forested lands for non-forest uses. This is often cited as one of the major causes of the enhanced greenhouse effect for two reasons: 1) the burning or decomposition of the wood releases carbon dioxide; and 2) trees that once removed carbon dioxide from the atmosphere in the process of photosynthesis are no longer present.	**Early Childhood Education For Sustainability (ECEFS)** What young children experience and learn today can influence how future generations live. ECEfS hopes to promote the growing global movement that seeks to nurture knowledge, creativity, kindness, wisdom, critical thinking, empathy and many more of the skills and values that will allow sustainable development to flourish and a better world to emerge.
Education for Sustainability Education for sustainability includes many of the founding principles of environmental education but with a stronger human focus, recognising that fundamental human rights and social justice are just as essential to sustainable development as environmental sustainability.	**Environment** Environment includes ecosystems and their constituent parts, natural and physical resources, the qualities and characteristics of locations, places and areas, the heritage values of places, and the social, economic and cultural aspects of these things.
Fundamental British Values There are four aspects of British Values – Rule of Law, Democracy, Individual liberty and Mutual Respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs. See Fundamental British Values overview in Pedagogical Toolkit for a more detailed description.	**Global Warming** Global warming is an average increase in the temperature of the atmosphere near the Earth's surface and in the troposphere, which can contribute to changes in global climate patterns. Global warming can occur from a variety of causes, both natural and human induced. In common usage, "global warming" often refers to the warming that can occur as a result of increased emissions of greenhouse gases from human activities.
Global citizenship Global Citizenship is a way of living that recognises our world as an increasingly complex web of connections and interdependencies. One in which our choices and actions may have repercussions for people and communities locally, nationally or internationally. Global citizenship nurtures personal respect and respect for others, wherever they live. It encourages individuals to think deeply and critically about what is equitable and just, and what will minimise harm to our planet. Exploring global citizenship themes help learners grow more confident in standing up for their beliefs, and more skilled in evaluating the ethics and impact of their decisions.	**Green Procurement** Green Procurement considers the environmental aspects, potential impacts and costs, associated with the life cycle assessment of goods and services being acquired. It focuses on the practice of procuring products and services that are less harmful to the environment (land, air and water). Green products purchased should be those that are made with less harmful materials or which when produced or used or consumed would have a minimal impact on the environment. This includes buying local and reducing your carbon footprint.

Indigenous Indigenous people or things that are native to or exist naturally in a particular country, region or environment.	**Natural resources** Natural resources are often classified into renewable and non-renewable resources. Renewable resources are generally living resources (fish, coffee, and forests, for example), which can restock (renew) themselves if they are not overharvested. Renewable resources can restock themselves and be used indefinitely if they are used sustainably.
Project-Based Learning Students go through an extended process of inquiry in response to a complex question, problem, or challenge. Rigorous projects help students learn key academic content and practice 21st Century Skills (such as collaboration, communication & critical thinking).	**Renewable Energy** The term renewable energy generally refers to electricity supplied from renewable energy sources, such as wind and solar power, geothermal, hydropower, and various forms of biomass. These energy sources are considered renewable sources because they are continuously replenished on the Earth.
Sustainable Development Development that meets the needs and aspirations of the current generation without compromising the ability to meet those of future generations.	**Sustainability** There is no one agreed upon definition for sustainability. SSP defines it as "improving the quality of life for all – economically, socially, environmentally – now and for future generations.

Children's Books

- The Nature Corner - M.Van Leeuwen
- Where Does the Garbage Go? - P. Showers
- Why Should I Recycle? – J. Green
- The Three Rs – N. Roca
- I Can Save the Earth! – A. Inches
- The Adventures of a Plastic Bottle – A. Inches
- The Adventures of an Aluminium Can – A. Inches
- 10 Things I can do to Help My World – M. Walsh
- Yucky Worms – V. French
- The Night Iceberg – H. Stevens
- The Bee Tree – P. Polacco
- Juliana's Bananas – R. Walton

Practitioner's Resources

- *Research in Early Childhood Education for Sustainability* – J. Davis
- *Global Childhoods* – M. Edwards
- *Risk Challenge and Adventure in the Early Years* – K. Solly
- *Making A Mud Kitchen* – J. White
- *Encounters with Materials in Early Childhood Education* – V. Pacini – Ketchabow
- *Education in Times of Environmental Crises: Teaching Children to be Agents of Change* – K. WInograd

Websites

www.muddyfaces.co.uk

www.worldforumfoundation.org.uk

www.janwhitenaturalplay.wordpress.com

www.bumblebeeconservation.org

www.rspb.org.uk/youth/learn/earlyyears

www.naturedetectives.org.uk

www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/learn/children-and-families
www.eco-schools.org.uk

www.lotc.org.uk

www.outdoor-learning.org.uk

www.loveoutdoorplay.net

www.naee.org.uk

www.se-ed.co.uk

www.gardeningwithchildren.co.uk

www.foodforlife.org.uk

www.faceonline.org.uk

www.makeitandmendit.com

www.childrensscrapstore.co.uk

www.wrap.org.uk

www.ltl.org.uk

www.reepinfo.org.uk

USEFUL LINKS

http://www.worldomep.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/combined_ESD_book.pdf

http://www.327matters.org/Sustainability/index.html

http://www.worldomep.org/en/esd-scale-for-teachers/

http://www.gu.se/digitalAssets/1320/1320257_ijec-vol-41-no-2.pdf

JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH
Big Energy Saving Week National Bird Day National Story Telling Week World Religion Day	Fairtrade fortnight World Wetlands Day 	Earth Hour World Water Day Waste Week Vegetarian Week International Day of Forests
APRIL	**MAY**	**JUNE**
The Big Pedal World Book Day Earth Day 	National Walking Month Compost Awareness Week International Day for Biological Diversity	Volunteers Week World Environment Day Recycle Week Empty Classroom Day 
JULY	**AUGUST**	**SEPTEMBER**
Oxfam Water Week National Marine Week Love Parks Week Plastic Free July	National Honey Bee Day World Breastfeeding Week 	Waste Less, Live More Week Read a Book Day British Food Fortnight Ozone Day
OCTOBER	**NOVEMBER**	**DECEMBER**
Global Handwashing Day World Animal Day World Food Day 	World Toilet Day Universal Children's Day Energy Month Global Entrepreneurship Week	Human Rights Day International Volunteers Day 

Please see www.awarenessdays.co.uk for exact dates – varies year to year
Please see:- http://www.interfaith-calendar.org/ for multi faith festival dates

AWARENESS DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

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ECO PROJECT EXAMPLE – POULTON PENGUINS

We have promoted recycling through Michael recycle and to highlight equality we are in the process of making Margaret recycle.
Practitioners explained to the children about recycling clothes and these were used to produce Michael and Mary, the children shredded paper (that was no longer needed and held confidential information on it) This was used to stuff Michael Recycle.

A letter was sent home to parents explaining that we were promoting recycling and asking parents to work in partnership with us through sending junk materials into nursery.
The children brought in paper, cardboard, plastic pots and boxes.

Firstly the children created their own models, one child made a birthday cake with yoghurt pots for candles, another child created a house for his fairy, this activity extended the children's imagination and creativity.

To further develop this, the staff displayed books with pictures of flowers in on the creative table alongside junk materials.
The children started to create flowers out of the materials; some children extended this further by using cardboard tubes as vases.
This interest led to a child suggesting that we have the role play area as a flower shop. The flowers that the children had created out of junk material have been displayed in our flower shop.
Staff extended the children's interest and curiosity through displaying colourful pictures to explain the growing process of plants and flowers.

An activity has been produced using 3 small bins labelled recycle, compost and re use.
The children were challenged to place the correct laminated pictures into the correct bin.
Practitioners promoted sustained shared thinking through asking open ended questions whilst also teaching and explaining why items could or could not go into each bin.
This activity was then brought alive when all of the children went out of the room whilst a member of staff tipped a range of materials that the children had brought in from home all over the pre-school room floor.
Sue took the children back into the room explaining that they'd had a visit from Lenny the Litterbug and how he had made a mess in our room.
The children were surprised to discover that Lenny could make such a mess. When asked what we could do, the children suggested that Michael Recycle could help.
As an extension of the previous activity where the children had used laminated pictures, the children were then able to sort the junk materials into the relevant tubs.
This led to the discussion about how we need to look after our environment, both indoors and outdoors and how we should not drop litter as Lenny Litterbug had done.
Practitioners explained that if we all place our litter in the correct place as Michael Recycle does, our world would be a cleaner place to live in.

We extended the children's knowledge and reinforced recycling at snack time through sorting our waste. The children were encouraged to put fruit peelings and skins into our compost bin.
Practitioners explained how this breaks down to form soil that is full of goodness and how we can re-use this. We plan to use this soil to grow fruit and vegetables in our garden.
We are also encouraging the children to plant sunflower seeds in bio degradable pots, the

children are taking these home to care and nurture. Once again this strengthens links between home and nursery. One parent spoke to Sue to say that Jack had gone home so excited about recycling and has told her everything that we have been doing, she said this is a vast improvement on a child that when asked what he has done in nursery.... normally says "nothing".
Another little boy Alfie was very excited to tell all of his friends about his trip to the tip with Grandad to recycle wood and cardboard, he even drew a picture for his special book.

Practitioners asked how we need to care for the plants and one child suggested watering it; this led to us discussing how we could recycle rainwater.
The children went into the garden to search for rain water. Harry found a small watering can containing water; other children discovered puddles of rain water that had collected in our toys.
At the end of the day I overheard children telling parents that we need rain and sun to help their sun flowers to grow.

Our ECO project has also enabled us to work in partnership with our school too as they have provided us with a grey bin to collect paper and cardboard.
To further develop recycling and growing we are looking at "going green" next week through encouraging our children to experiment with new fruit and vegetables.

Children in our younger room are also engaging with the ECO project. They have been talking about recycling, and are in the process of making boxes so that children can sort their waste out after snack.
They will have 2 boxes, one for food waste and one for paper. The food waste will be added to our compost tub in the garden and the paper waste will be put into our nursery recycling bin. Practitioners will teach the children how and why we recycle, ensuring that the level of teaching is age and stage appropriate. Visual aids will be used to embed the learning, such as the pepper pig recycling story, Topsy and Tim go green and Mary and Michael recycle.

A letter will go home the week we break up for half term asking the children to recycle their Easter egg boxes/wrappings to bring in to nursery.
The children will be encouraged to create a model to put on display for parents to see at drop off and collection times.

On reflection the Eco project has also supported our healthy eating ethos, consolidated links with parents and school, and also enabled us to educate our children about recycling.
To embed the knowledge that the children have shown we have created our very own recycle book with photographs of our journey.

Jan Davies Poulton Penguins