

RESOURCES

Resources include:

- *School grounds – a guide to good practice* (available from the Architects and Building Branch, DfES, ISBN 0 11 270990 7)
- *Greener school grounds – helping schools to create sustainable external educational environments* (published by Learning through Landscapes, ISBN 184185 1442)

Many groups and organisations produce online resources that are relevant to citizenship. QCA has not printed these website addresses as it recognises that they can and do change, often at short notice. So that we can monitor and maintain a reliable and useful resource, the website addresses of the following organisations can be accessed through the key stage 1 and 2 citizenship scheme of work site at www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/schemes

- www.nc.uk.net/esd (QCA's education for sustainable development site)
- Learning through Landscapes
- Landscape Institute
- Regional Arts Board
- Centre for Alternative Technology
- Personal Finance Education Group
- RSPCA (for details of how to make a wildlife garden)

EXPECTATIONS

At the end of this unit

<i>most children:</i>	contribute ideas and listen to the views of others. They express their own views to one other person and to the whole class. They know how decisions are made in school, and how they can contribute to the school decision-making process. They work in a group and recognise the importance of working with others. They agree and set targets, using a timeline. They appreciate the importance of asking different people for their views about the school grounds. They understand that there are limitations in any project relating to costs, time and resources.
<i>some children have not made so much progress and:</i>	have developed the confidence to make suggestions about the project. They recognise that decision-making involves different members of the school community, and that they can contribute to this. They understand that the project is run according to a timescale and that some things take longer than others to action.
<i>some children have progressed further and:</i>	contribute ideas and make suggestions about the project. They work in groups with other children and listen to their views. They talk to a range of adults about what they think, and recognise that democracy means everybody has the right to have a say. They understand that decision-making can be complex, and that sometimes a representative group makes decisions on behalf of others. They appreciate the importance of targets and a timeline when planning a project. They recognise that there are limitations in any project relating to costs, time and resources, and that compromises are sometimes necessary.

Unit 6 Developing our school grounds

ABOUT THE UNIT

In this unit, children help to plan, consult on and implement ways of improving their school grounds. The unit could be used to initiate small-scale projects to improve one aspect of the school site, eg *putting in new plants and containers*, or larger-scale projects, eg *redevelopment of the school playground*. The focus is on the children reviewing their play facilities and the features of their existing playground, and examining how these are used by different members of the school and local community. The children develop ideas and discuss and consult on them with different members of the school community. They work in groups, democratically agreeing priorities for change, and come up with a plan for their implementation. They investigate the costs and limitations of different plans and begin to learn about the importance of project planning. Throughout the project, they communicate their ideas to others in the school and reflect on their participation.

The activities in this unit could be used by the whole school, with different groups/classes of children exploring different aspects of developing the school grounds, eg *improving the quality of play facilities and access to them, developing a cultivated garden, making an area for wildlife, creating an outdoor arts space or an outside classroom, investigating health and safety issues associated with the playground and reviewing the school policy accordingly*.

This unit could be linked with education for sustainable development, geography, science and PE. Some of the links are indicated in the 'Points to note' section. It also links with unit 1 'Taking part – developing skills of communication and participation'.

WHERE THE UNIT FITS IN

This unit addresses the following aspects of the non-statutory framework for PSHE and citizenship at key stages 1 and 2:

Key stage 1

1a, 1b, 1e

Preparing to play an active role as citizens

Pupils should be taught:

- 2a to take part in discussions with one other person and the whole class
- 2d to agree and follow rules for their group and classroom, and understand how rules help them
- 2e to realise that people and other living things have needs, and that they have responsibilities to meet them
- 2h to contribute to the life of the class and school
- 2i to realise that money comes from different sources and can be used for different purposes

4a, 4b

5a, 5c, 5d, 5e, 5h

Key stage 2

1a

Preparing to play an active role as citizens

Pupils should be taught:

- 2a to research, discuss and debate topical issues, problems and events
- 2f to resolve differences by looking at alternatives, making decisions and explaining choices
- 2j that resources can be allocated in different ways and that these economic choices affect individuals, communities and the sustainability of the environment

3g

4a

5a, 5c, 5d, 5e, 5h

VOCABULARY

Through the activities in this unit, children will be able to understand, use and spell correctly words relating to:

- the school grounds, eg *environment, features, facilities, playground, locality, place*
- decision-making, eg *planning, discussion, democracy, consultation, negotiation, communication*

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

POSSIBLE TEACHING ACTIVITIES

LEARNING OUTCOMES

POINTS TO NOTE

CHILDREN SHOULD LEARN

CHILDREN

HOW CAN WE GET INVOLVED IN DEVELOPING OUR SCHOOL GROUNDS?

- to develop their role as members of the school and the wider community
- to discuss issues with their class
- about how democratically elected individuals can represent the views of many people
- Show the children a video about how other schools and their community members embarked on school grounds projects. Follow the video with a whole-class discussion, perhaps focusing on the following questions:
 - What do you remember about the video?
 - What sort of changes could make our school grounds better, *eg do we need better play facilities, a quiet play area, an outdoor classroom, more greenery around the school site (such as containers or hanging baskets), a sensory garden, a wildlife area, new decoration?*
- A school grounds committee could be established, with representatives from existing groups across the school community. The children learn about the process of electing representatives to such a group, and also participate in some aspects of the election. The roles of those not involved in the elected group are discussed and agreed with the children.

- identify their own views about the existing playground and playtimes
- take part in suggesting improvements to the playground
- recognise that their views can be represented on the school grounds committee
- show understanding that individuals can be democratically elected to representative groups, committees and organisations in order to represent the views of others
- contribute to class discussions, sharing their ideas and opinions and listening to the views of others

- The Learning through Landscapes website provides information about school grounds projects and details of how to obtain a range of resource packs, videos and CDs to support these projects.
- There may be campaigns or projects in your local area concerned with the use of public space or improving land use. The local authority or local media may have information about such campaigns and other community schemes. The school may wish to get involved in one of these schemes to give children the opportunity to develop their understanding of local government, and of how to get involved in decision-making.
- The school grounds committee might include: the senior management team; the Governors' Premises Sub-Committee; the PTA; class/year/school council members; representatives of key stage forums; after-school club play leaders; the school's LEA-appointed surveyor and/or risk assessor; parents with relevant skills; members of the art club, etc. This elected group would be responsible for planning and coordinating the whole project, *eg working out the overall budget, breaking down costs, creating a works timetable, identifying the personnel needed to undertake the project (landscape architects, designers, artists, surveyors)*. They could also incorporate their findings into the school's improvement plan.
- The committee or other children could visit local leisure facilities or local schools with particularly good facilities as part of their research, to experience new ideas first hand.
- Link with geography: 5b in the key stage 1 programme of study; 1d, 5a in the key stage 2 programme of study; unit 8 'Improving the environment' in the scheme of work.

WHAT DO WE THINK OF OUR SCHOOL GROUNDS?

- to reflect on and talk about what they like and dislike
- to record key geographical features on an outline map
- to consult with the school community, working in groups
- about the importance of consultation and listening to other people's views
- The children think about the playground, and what they like and dislike about it. Younger children could do a 'draw and write' activity: 'things that make me feel happy in the playground and things that make me feel unhappy'. Older children could record on an outline map of the school grounds the key existing physical features, *eg play equipment, trees, benches, hard playing surface, school garden*. They mark on the map where and how they play. They could add green to record areas of the playground that make them feel happy, and red to show areas that make them feel sad. They also consider whether/how their play changes in the summer, winter, morning, afternoon and on different days of the week. The children should give reasons for their changed play activities.
- Use circle time or class discussion to talk about the issues raised, *eg What do you like doing at playtime? What makes you happy at playtime? What makes you sad? What sort of problems do you or others have to deal with at playtime? How is our playground used throughout the year, both during and after school? What are the positive/negative features of the playground? How can we make sure that everyone who uses the playground is well catered for?* List and record the points made.
- In addition, the class could devise a simple questionnaire about existing play provision to use with a range of groups in the school community, *eg children in other classes, teaching staff, meal supervisors, parents*. The children conduct the survey in small groups and collect views in a variety of ways.
- The children could display their findings publicly, comparing them with the results of other classes/year groups/key stages if they have also been involved in the survey. As a class, reflect on the need to consult with different members of the school community on issues that affect them.
- The views expressed could also be presented to the school grounds committee. This could be done during a special assembly, to help support inclusion of these wider viewpoints into the project's overall strategy.

- assess the suitability of current outdoor and play facilities through observing and recording
- recognise how the playground is used differently at different times by different users
- communicate their views on issues they investigate
- devise questions to be used in a questionnaire for members of the school community
- recognise the importance of consulting with different members of the school community
- offer reasons for some of their observations and judgements
- use skills and evidence when responding to a range of questions

- This section could be linked with unit 1 'Taking part – developing skills of communication and participation'.
- Link with geography: 1c, 2b, 2c, 2e in the key stage 1 programme of study; 1b, 1c, 1d, 1e, 2c, 2e, 3a, 3d in the key stage 2 programme of study; unit 1 'Around our school – the local area', unit 8 'Improving the environment', unit 21 'How can we improve the area we can see from our window?' in the scheme of work.
- If a questionnaire is developed, questions could include:
 - What are the most popular games/activities, and what facilities are available for them?
 - What playground markings are there, and are these suitable/effective/well used?
 - How could the toilet facilities in the playground be improved?
 - Are the drinking water fountains adequate?
 - Are parts of the playground dominated by certain year groups?
 - How safe do you feel in the playground?
 - Who looks after the playground, and should children be involved in this?
 - Can everyone use the playground?
 - What rules do we have for using the playground, and should these be changed/improved?

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

POSSIBLE TEACHING ACTIVITIES

LEARNING OUTCOMES

POINTS TO NOTE

CHILDREN SHOULD LEARN

WHAT ARE OUR PRIORITIES FOR IMPROVING THE SCHOOL GROUNDS?

- to generate and explore ideas
 - to communicate their ideas to others
 - about the costs and limitations of different plans
- Following a class or group discussion about the playground project, the children could be asked to represent their thoughts and ideas about change and development through a range of activities. Encourage the children to think about all users, including those with special needs, and remind them of any limitations of the school site. This could involve the children sketching, drawing or painting images of things they would like to see in the new playground. Older children could make a presentation about their ideas.
 - The ideas generated in the discussion are narrowed down and focused on. The children agree a strategy for improving the school grounds, with priorities to take forward to the school grounds committee. Drawings or models (eg *papier-mâché*, *clay*) of the plan could be made for display purposes, with labels to show particular design features. These could be discussed with a visiting professional landscaper, surveyor or builder, who talks with the children about the cost of different ideas.
 - The children could help organise and take part in different fundraising activities to pay for new equipment.

CHILDREN

- communicate and explain their views and the choices they make
 - contribute to the decision-making process about the way forward for the playground
 - understand that there are costs involved, and that sometimes compromises are needed
 - reflect on ideas and suggest improvements
- It is important for all children, staff and visitors to know the school's health and safety policy. The policy may need to be reviewed in the light of developments in the school grounds, and children should be involved with this review and in exploring health and safety in relation to playground equipment.
 - A relevant professional, eg a *landscape architect*, *surveyor* or *builder*, could be invited to judge the drawings and models (following individual or group presentations by the children) to help the children consider how suitable/practical/realistic/safe their ideas are, and the subsequent modifications that may be necessary. Clear criteria could be established to enable children to begin to understand the complexities of planning permission and buildings regulations; these, in turn, should give them the opportunity to re-evaluate and redesign their initial ideas if necessary.
 - It will be important for the children to realise that sometimes things we plan cannot be realised, and that this can be disappointing for those involved.
 - Link with geography: 1d, 3a in the key stage 1 programme of study; 1e, 2g, 3e in the key stage 2 programme of study; unit 8 'Improving the environment' in the scheme of work.

MAKING CHANGES

- about their expectations for change, and the complexities of the project
 - to compare and contrast their original ideas and expectations with the eventual outcome(s)
 - to engage in group discussions for a wide range of purposes
 - to reflect on how they contributed to and participated in the project
- The children should receive regular updates on the progress and decisions made by members of the school grounds committee. They should also be involved in reviewing, negotiating on and revising ideas if, for some reason, it is not possible to take them forward.
 - The children could produce a project timeline, which is regularly updated, indicating key goals and highlighting achievements to date. If relevant resources/archives are available, the timeline could also include images/documents from the past, showing how the playground has changed over time or how it has been used in the past.
 - Once the plans have been agreed, the children could be involved in different aspects of their implementation, eg *clearing land*; *gardening activities (such as choosing and growing plants)*; *designing and making new signs for a quiet area*; *drawing up a rota for the use of new playground equipment*.
 - The children could prepare and present a report to the school governors on how they have been involved in making changes to the school grounds, and what they have learnt from their participation in the project.

- show understanding of the time it will take for the project to be completed
 - recognise some of the complexities involved in the project, and why there may be a need for compromise
 - contribute to discussions about ideas and progress
 - take part in the implementation of plans
 - reflect on and describe their participation in the project
- The progress updates could contain information about: how decisions and choices have been made by the committee; the setting up of displays (eg *photographs*, *blueprints*, *draft plans*, *models*, *reports*, *a comments box/book*) to generate discussion; fundraising reports, including a breakdown of costs for each section of the playground being improved; contingency and safety plans for the use of the grounds while the work is being undertaken, eg *revised playtimes*, *areas with restricted access*, *areas that are out of bounds*; presentations by key individuals, eg *the surveyor*, *builder*, *landscape architect*, *chair of the school grounds committee*, about their respective roles and involvement in the project. These talks could also include an outline of any problems, delays or difficulties that were encountered, and how they were overcome.
 - Link with science: 1c, 3a, 3b, 3c, 5a, 5b, 5c in the key stage 1 programme of study; 1b, 3a, 3b, 3c, 3d, 5a, 5b in the key stage 2 programme of study; unit 2b 'Plants and animals in the local environment' in the scheme of work.
 - Link with geography: 1c, 1e, 2g, 5b in the key stage 2 programme of study.
 - Link with English: En1 S&L 10a, 10b, 10c in the key stage 1 programme of study and En1 S&L 10a, 10b, 10c in the key stage 2 programme of study.