

Play & Learn Outdoors

Fun Ideas to Expand a Safe Learning Environment for Your School

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WELCOME TO THE SEPTEMBER EDITION OF PLAY & LEARN OUTDOORS

With the new school year having just begun, I can imagine you're extremely busy yet, grateful for any ideas and tips thrown your way.

So, I'll keep it brief; this edition of P&LO is jam-packed with outdoor learning ideas, fundraising inspiration and advice for purchasing a canopy.

When you get a chance, take a break, sit back, relax with your

favorite drink and have a flick through. Hopefully you'll be able to take some ideas back to the classroom.

If you enjoy reading P&LO, why not leave a copy in your staff room for your colleagues to enjoy too? If they would like to receive their own copies, drop us an email:

marketing@ablecanopies.co.uk and we'll add them to the list.

Be sure to make the most of the autumnal weather, by taking lessons outside and utilising nature's offerings such as acorns, sticks and colourful leaves for your pupils projects'. We'll be back in the winter for more ideas and inspiration.

Best Wishes

Tracy Meakins

Managing Director

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Download Our Product Brochure Full of Canopies & Shelters For Your School

Download our latest product brochure to view our full range of canopies, shelters, shade sails and accessories to enhance your school's outside space and enable outdoor play and learning to go ahead all through the year.

Visit: www.ablecanopies.co.uk/brochures.html



HOW TIME OUTSIDE CAN HELP WITH BAD BEHAVIOR



Looking for outdoor lesson ideas?

Visit our blog where we have over 60 blog posts that feature lots of outdoor lesson ideas which you can incorporate into your curriculum throughout the year.

www.ablecanopies.co.uk/blog/category/outdoor-learning/



Since the full return of schools after the UK lockdowns, there have been several reports of worsening pupil behaviour in school. In October last year, two-thirds of teachers made this report and after the second lockdown, that number seems to have risen. While some have disputed this, there does seem to be some anecdotal evidence for this.

Poor behaviour, if left unchecked, can have consequences. The first thing is that attainment levels can drop. This can affect school performance in general and even those students who are behaving can suffer as a result.

Another problem is that bullying can rise. This can cause anxiety, depression and even loneliness in victims.

Yet there are some helpful actions that teachers and other school support staff can make to manage the worsening behavior and improve the general school

environment. One of these is by taking more time outside, whether on a playing field or under a school canopy. There are several reasons for this.

1. More Space

While in lockdown, children were confined to smaller spaces, such as their houses and bedrooms for longer periods than they were used to. Therefore, many are just looking to escape the confines and feel more space and any time learning outside can help with that.

2. More Social

Again children suffered greatly with lockdown as it was harder for them to socialise. Even now, some parents are continuing to avoid social situations and children might feel frustrated at not being able to socialise with friends. Outside learning allows for a more relaxed and social environment that can give them this sense.

3. Let Off Some Energy

Children have lots of energy and sometimes they just need to burn this off. Finding learning activities outside that require them to be outside on a field, under a school canopy or in a garden where they have to move about can help them use that energy.

4. Mental Health

There are several benefits of being outside that can help someone with their mental health. Bad behaviour can be a symptom of stress, anxiety or another mental health problems or disorders. Outside time has been shown to alleviate these problems and can help in recovery.

Conclusion

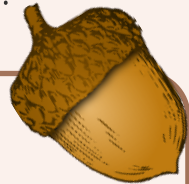
If you're experiencing bad behaviour in your pupils, some time outside can be one of the best cures. It can help relax students and improve learning and behaviour to make a school environment more enjoyable.

NATURAL ITEMS THAT ARE GREAT FOR OUTDOOR LEARNING

Not every learning resource has to be expensive or cost money in the classroom. There are so many small items that can come from the great outdoors which can help children learn more about their environment, nature, maths and English than you would expect.

Here are five small parts which are great for learning that you can find under the school canopy, school playground or school field.

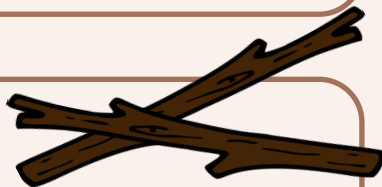
Seeds



Whether they're conkers, acorns, or something else, these seeds are great for teaching children about life-cycles. They're also great for counting. They can be found near trees, especially in wooded areas of forest schools and more.

Seeds can also be used in outside artwork with murals used.

Sticks



Sticks are a fundamental part of the learning objects in outside play. Children can use these sticks in artwork and construction of make-believe towns and cities. Sticks can also be used to teach children about different plants and how they've adapted to live in the area you're in.

Sticks can also be used for games like poo sticks.



Leaves

Autumn is a great season for collecting leaves as they fall to the ground. Leaves can be many different colours and can be used in science lessons and also art. Children can also be encouraged to collect them from the school grounds and this can be a fun activity to keep them active.

Stones

Stones can be a great activity for children as they can use them to create artwork outside. Or you could use them as counting tools or use them in games like hopscotch. Stones can also be used to explore and discuss sensory things like how a stone feels, looks, sounds when dropped and more.



Conclusion

Not all learning tools have to be costly. Above are some excellent small learning tools that can be collected from your school premises for use in your daily lessons. Have a look around outside to see what other natural items you can integrate into your lessons.

BEAT THE RAIN AND SAFEGUARD YOUR PLANS

Make sure your outdoor lesson or event goes ahead whatever the weather.

The climate this summer has been a varied mix of just about everything with a little sunshine thrown in here and there. However, it's the time of year when we're squeezing in a few more plans outside, and yet it seems most plans are being rained off last minute due to the unpredictability of rain showers.

There is a way that you can safeguard your plans and make sure

your event goes ahead whatever the weather: invest in a canopy!

Lots of time and effort can be spent organising events such as outdoor lessons and fundraising events and investing in a commercial grade canopy can ensure your time doesn't go to waste.

Our wall mounted canopies and free-standing canopies are permanent structures that provide substantial weather protection, even more so when you add side fills for added protection from driving wind

and rain.

Because they are permanent structures, they are designed to stay outside all year round and withstand whatever the British weather has to offer. That means that there's no need to rush around erecting a temporary structure at the last minute in poor weather conditions. Our canopies have been wind and snow load tested and are supplied with life expectancies of up to 25 years so you can rest assured they are built to last.



A 100% RECOMMENDED CANOPY SUPPLIER

With every canopy or shelter installation we complete, we pass a project completion form to the client which includes a feedback section. Within that feedback section we ask questions regarding the satisfaction of our product, the service received and the installation process. We also ask if they would recommend us.

Because the project completion

forms pass through my department, I am aware that our recommendation rate is extremely high however, I decided to run a report from the last 12 months and the results were extremely pleasing.

100% Recommendation Rate

Over the last 12 months, everyone that completed the feedback

questionnaire, said they would recommend us. That's a 100% recommendation rate. So, if you are looking for a commercial canopy or shelter for your premises, that is highly recommended by their customers, you're in luck. Visit www.ablecanopies.co.uk to view our full product range or call us on 0800 389 9072.

100%
OF OUR CUSTOMERS
WOULD RECOMMEND US*

*100% of our customers that provided us with feedback in the last 12 months said they would recommend us.

SHOULD COST AFFECT YOUR CANOPY CHOICE?

As with a lot of purchases, it's very tempting to simply choose the cheapest option however, that often turns out to be the wrong choice.

When making a big purchase such as a canopy or shelter, although you want to be thrifty with your cash, it's

important that you spend the money wisely, even if it means spending a little more initially to save a lot more in the long run. While cost is an important factor, be sure to take into consideration the quality of the construction materials, the benefits

these materials offer and the professionalism and experience of the company you're buying from.

Here's some top tips for what to research when choosing your perfect shade and shelter solution:

The Product:

Ask for technical specifications of the products you've finalised, this will make it much easier to compare the products. The main features to compare are:

Durability – Is it a permanent structure that is designed to be left outside all year round?

The frame material – What is the canopy frame made from and what is it coated with?

The roof material – What is the canopy roof made from and what are the properties of that material?

The fixings – The quality of the fixings is just as important as the main frame, you don't want anything that will rust.

Guttering – Does it come with guttering, if so what type, is it integrated, external or would it be

an additional cost.

Colour – If you'd like a coloured canopy, check to see if the canopy is available in the colour you'd like as some can be limited. Again, this could be an additional cost.

UV protection – Does the roof covering offer high UV protection? This should be something you consider particularly if the canopy is being installed in an education or healthcare setting.

Fire performance – What fire performance properties does the canopy materials feature? Certain settings such as education and healthcare may require a specific rating so be sure to find out.

Size – Is the canopy available in the size of your choice? Some canopies are 'off the shelf' and therefore are only available in a selection of sizes however, some canopies are made

to order and can be manufactured to your exact sizes requirements. Some made to order canopies can still be limited on length and projection, while others can be unlimited.

Flexibility in design – Can the canopy be manufactured to fit around obstacles, or to follow the shapes of your building including internal and external corners if this is something that you may require?

Guarantee – Does the canopy feature a guarantee and/or life expectancy?

Upgrades and Accessories – Are there any canopy upgrades and accessories available that you may require and can they be fitted at a later date if required? Upgrades and accessories can include side panels, roller shutters, post protection pads and signage.

The Price:

Whilst it's best not to automatically go for the cheapest option, that doesn't mean you should go for the most expensive option either. Consider all the above factors then compare the products you've finalised based on the quality and cost ratio.

The Company:

Look into the company too:

How long have they been running?

Do they have photos of previous installations?

Do they have customer testimonials? Ask if you can talk to one of their previous customers to find out what they thought of the product and service provided.

Do they offer additional benefits such as free help with planning permission if your local authority requires it and free site visits?

You can find out more about our canopies along with our company information, recent installation and testimonials on our website: www.ablecanopies.co.uk

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Don't miss out, make a note of these dates in your diary pronto!

There seems to be an awareness day or week for most things these days and it's easy to miss the ones that might be useful for schools and provide the opportunity for a different teaching and learning experience.

We have collected some of the upcoming dates here from the big and obvious through to the smaller and less well known, there is plenty going on this time of year.



SEPTEMBER 2021

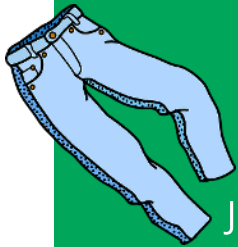
13th

Road Dahl Day



13th - 19th

Jeans for Genes Week



21st

International Day of Peace



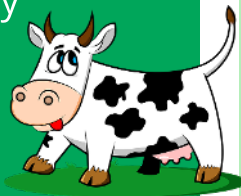
22nd

National Fitness Day



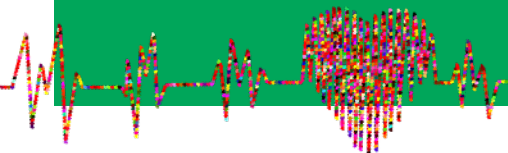
29th

World School Milk Day



29th

World Heart Day



OCTOBER 2021

All Month

Walk to School Month



1st

World Smile Day



4th

World Animal Day

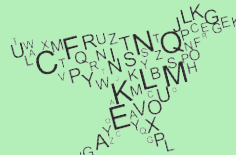
5th

World Teachers Day



7th

National Poetry Day



IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO PLAN FOR YOUR 2021-2022 FUNDRAISING

As the 2021-2022 school year begins, it's the perfect time to start planning your fundraising events for the year. There are many things that you could be raising funds for. For instance, you may want to install a new canopy, improve computer equipment throughout the schools, or perhaps general maintenance of the buildings.

Whatever the cause, planning ahead is key, so here's some tips to make them a success.

1. Choose A Cause

Unifying everyone behind a single cause can really help you to raise funds. If you can show parents/local communities what they're contributing towards whether that is an image, illustration or a speech, then you will get more donations or spending at the event. Be specific and show the costs, update them with the target progress and end results and don't forget to sell the benefits for the students.

2. Speak To Sponsors

It doesn't matter what event you're hosting or the goal of the event, sponsors can really help. They can supply gifts, prizes and even advertise your event across the local area. The more time you've got, the more sponsors that you can get and in exchange, they can gain some goodwill from the community.

3. Get Marketing Materials Ready

Create your marketing materials and get them out there as soon as you can. The more awareness that you can build ahead of time, the better the turnout there will be for your event. Include flyers, posters and advance tickets and start posting on social media and forums, asking parents to share and retweet for maximum exposure.

4. Start Fundraising

It's a good idea to begin fundraising before the event starts, so when people come to donate, they know they aren't the first ones. The first donation is always the hardest, but if they see others have already donated, then it can often encourage others to join in. You can ask sponsors to donate to the cause or ask their staff members.

5. Be Prepared

Whatever event you're planning, ensure that you're prepared for every possible set back. That way, when something goes

wrong, and it often does, then you know what you're doing to make it work. You might have for example, changes in the weather that make holding an event outdoors impossible, so do you have space to take it inside? Or are you prepared with outdoor weather protection?

Recruit New Volunteers

With the new school year, comes new parents and carers, making now a perfect time to ask for volunteers for your parent teacher associations or for general volunteers for your events.

Conclusion

Fundraising is a great way to secure funds for a new school canopy, computers, or general maintenance of the school. However, if you want the best results from fundraising, it is best if you plan ahead. So go out now and plan for your fundraising events.



FUNDRAISING

With the start of the new school year in full swing, and with October on its way, we are sharing a selection of spooky fundraisers you can hold. If this reaches you too late for this year, keep this page somewhere safe for next years Halloween fundraising plans.

Haunted House

Those that have access to a spacious building that can be safely used for hosting a fundraiser, could convert it into a haunted house for just one night.

Have activities around the room/s such as a spooky sensation station, ghostly tales, and a maze, and charge participants to enter.

You could go all out and create an even more eerie atmosphere by playing spooky music and using a fog machine!

Treasure Hunt

Hide clues across your school with a scary theme and get teams of students, parents and teachers racing around to find them. Teams pay for participation and winners can get prizes. This is a great fundraiser as you can also sell other items during the event to help increase income.

Spooky Film Night

Children love films and enjoying them together is great fun. Capture that excitement at your school with a one-night film showing that could include classic spooky films such as Scooby-Doo or Hocus Pocus that are ideal for the younger audiences.



Pumpkin Smashing

Are you looking for something that will excite the crowd and get their blood pumping? Why not try pumpkin smashing?

There are two ways you can do this, either offer people a chance to smash their own pumpkin or run a competition where the person who smashes a pumpkin in the quickest time wins.

You can charge each individual for their attempt either way.



TRICK OR TREAT

Here's a selection of the canopies we have installed since the last edition of P&LO





Able Canopies: The Canopy Experts



Canopies & Covered Walkways

Cycle & Waiting Shelters

Shade Sails & Tensile Structures

Awnings & Playground Accessories

External Works: Surfacing, Fencing etc.

Able Canopies are the canopy experts. We provide safe and stylish weather protection that transforms outside spaces.

- Every year we complete hundreds of successful school canopy installations across the UK
- These canopies provide schools with effective shelter & areas for outdoor learning and dining
- We also work with universities and the retail, leisure & hospitality sectors to effectively transform outside space
- Our team of canopy experts work with schools, architects & contractors to ensure on time, on budget, project completion
- To ensure consistent high quality we control the design, manufacture & installation process of our canopies

"I can confirm that we are delighted with our new canopy. It looks super and is exactly as per your plans!"

The team that installed it were great. Our Site Manager found them very easy to deal with, helpful and very hardworking.

We are delighted with the end result and are looking forward to making good use of it!"

- St Dominic Savio Catholic Primary School, Berkshire

If you would like a canopy, shelter or shade sail quotation, contact us today:

Call: 0800 389 9072 | Email: sales@ablecanopies.co.uk

