

Play & Learn Outdoors

The logo for 'able canopies & outdoor projects' features a stylized blue roof icon above the word 'able' in a bold, dark blue font. Below 'able', the words 'canopies' and '& outdoor projects' are written in a smaller, lighter blue font.

able
canopies
& outdoor projects

Issue 2.1
December 2020

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WELCOME TO THE DECEMBER EDITION OF PLAY & LEARN OUTDOORS

We've almost made it to the end of 2020, and I think I speak for almost everyone when I say its been a tough year! However, the kindness that has come from this year has proven that when times are hard, strangers really do rally round and do what they can to put a smile on others' faces.

The pandemic has shown whats important and what's not and one of those things is

still providing children with a safe place to learn and play, and schools have been doing a wonderful job. Children have struggled a lot because its hard for them to understand whats going on but teachers and other school staff have helped them through it and for that, we thank you.

This is the last edition of Play and Learn Outdoors of 2020 so please have a read

through, and hopefully you will be able to take some ideas back to the classroom. If you enjoy reading P&LO, have you considered leaving a copy in your staff room for your colleagues to enjoy too?

Have a wonderful festive season, stay safe and see you in 2021.

Best Wishes

Tracy Meakins

Managing Director

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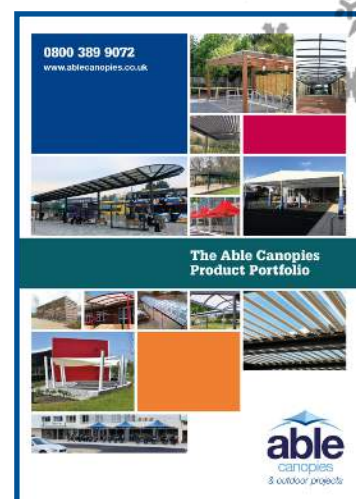
Page 11. A selection of our recent canopy installations

Download Our Product Brochure

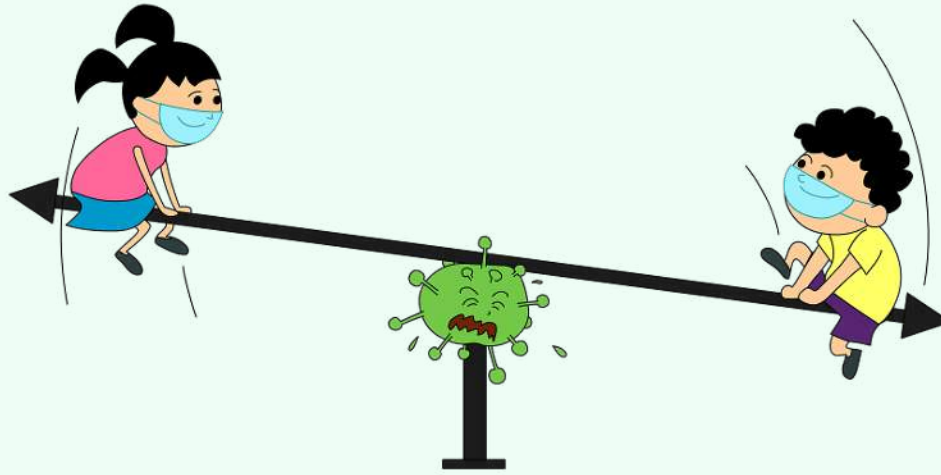
Full of Canopies & Shelters For Your School

Download your free copy of 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 winter.

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



WHY TIME OUTSIDE SHOULD NOT BE DISCOURAGED DURING A PANDEMIC



While there is much concern over the spread of the COVID-19 virus, there are reasons why outside time should not be discouraged this winter. In fact, time outside, whether for fun and games or lessons should be encouraged more than ever, here is why.

Why is the Outside a Worry?

For some, more time outside this time of year is a worry. Colder weather is linked to the spread of COVID-19 and many other viruses. However, there are many factors related to the outdoors that makes it harder for the virus to spread. For instance:

More Space

Indoor classrooms hold 20-30 children in a much smaller space. The virus can travel up to 18 feet away and that can mean nearly all the children in a classroom, as well as the teachers, can be affected. Yet outside, children are more spread out, therefore, there the risk of transmission is reduced.

If you're also able to divide classes into bubbles and have some

children learning outside while others remain indoors, you're effectively reducing the number of children together at any one time. Less children in one room, means that the spread of COVID-19 can be less.

Less Surfaces

Classrooms are full of surfaces that need to be cleaned regularly as they can hide viruses away for a long time. But outside, there is often fewer surfaces and less surface space. This makes it harder for the droplets of the virus to be transmitted.

UV Rays

Research has shown that the sun's UV rays can kill Coronavirus'. While UVA and UVB is significantly less effective than UVC, it still has some impact on Coronavirus and there are more of these rays outside than there are inside.

Health Benefits

Spending time outside is considered good for physical and mental health. Children who are outside are more likely to exercise, which is good for,

healthy bodies. In addition, outside time is really good for mental health, helping to reduce stress and anxiety that can lead to poor health.

Time Spent Outside is Useful Learning Space

In addition, the outside space is a useful area for learning. Children who regularly learn outside are able to retain more of their lessons, improve cognitive skills, and are more positive. They are therefore getting a rounded education that can help bring out the best in them.

Conclusion

Outside time, whether in the playground or under a school canopy should not be discouraged even as the weather gets colder and wetter. In fact, it can be a useful space to help reduce the spread of COVID-19 as well. Learning outside is also good for their education, mental health and social skills.

So, don't stop holding lessons outside, continue taking your pupils outdoors in the fresh air, adding variety to your learning.

Statistic sources:

www.healthline.com/health-news/covid-19-virus-wind-carry-6-feet
www.lotc.org.uk/outdoor-learning-has-huge-benefits-for-children-and-teachers-so-why-isnt-it-used-in-more-schools/
www.pentagonplay.co.uk/news-and-info/outdoor-play-improves-mental-health



KEEP PARENTS HAPPY & CHILDREN DRY, WHILST DINING OUTSIDE

You may have already read the article (title shown below from www.mirror.co.uk) regarding a school in Manchester that received backlash as their pupils were eating lunch outside in the rain. It's a shame that parents felt the need to go to the press instead of talking to the school directly. I, like many, am fully aware of the struggles teachers are experiencing whilst ensuring schools follow all social distancing guidelines, keeping all pupils confined to their own bubbles and teaching a school full of pupils all at the same time.

We should therefore be supporting schools and providing them solutions instead of criticising them, that's why I'm writing this article today. If you are in a similar situation and are struggling to keep pupils distanced during their lunch breaks, have you considered an outdoor dining canopy?

We understand that building an extension onto your

existing dining hall is not ideal as the result would be costly, and not to mention a lot of disruption. That's why a canopy is the perfect option, while they can be a big investment, they are a fraction of the price of an extension and can still extend your dining room whilst providing the shade and shelter required, particularly when paired with side panels and heaters, which we can supply and install.

So, what's stopping you? If you need the extra space, an outdoor dining canopy really is the perfect solution. The only obstruction may be your budget however, do you have enough money left in your budget for a canopy? Can you move your

budget around to include a canopy to ensure your pupils are kept dry throughout the winter? **Have you contacted your local authority to find out if any extra funding is available to your school to cover COVID-19 adjustments?** And have you applied for funding for your school? Options are listed on the Gov website here: www.gov.uk/topic/schools-colleges-childrens-services/school-college-funding-finance

Our high quality, robust range of outside dining canopies include free standing canopies, wall mounted canopies and timber canopies and we are sure to have a solution that fits your requirements.

M News • UK News • Secondary school

Angry parents say children 'treated like animals and made to eat in rain' at school

Students at Unsworth Academy in Bury were told as part of the safety measures for coronavirus they would be eating outside, despite the heavy winds and rain

SHARE    4 COMMENTS

By **Kelly-Ann Mills** & **Emma Gill**
16:01, 3 SEP 2020

NEWS

OUTSIDE TIME WITH VIRTUAL LESSONS

The government has said that all UK schools should be offering face-to-face virtual lessons for all children who are at home isolating due to COVID-19. This is a challenging prospect because of the lack of control on the resources you have with home schooling.

One important, yet challenging element is making sure children get to experience some lessons outside. The advantages of time spent outside are many. For one, it encourages physical activity. Secondly, it improves learning. And thirdly, it can help with confidence.

However, encouraging outdoor learning with virtual lessons is a big challenge. So, here's some ideas to help you.

1. Set Tasks They Can Complete in Their Garden

Isolating means that the children can't really leave their homes, but they can go into the garden. So, depending on their age, you can encourage your pupils to carry out activities in their gardens. For instance, you could ask them to go on bug hunts, build a bug house or count birds in the garden.

These activities can be enjoyed away from the face-to-face virtual lessons, and submitting work for this could be as simple as photos or written explanations of what they did.

You can always show them how to complete these tasks virtually while outside, under a school canopy.

2. Encourage PE in the Garden

PE in the garden can be an easy way to get children outside and playing. Children could be told to ride on their scooter, kick a ball about or jog round their garden. There are lots of options for your students.

You can also ask them to keep a diary. For instance, they can see how long they can keep a ball in the air without letting it hit the ground. Ask them how long they can do it each day and keep a record to see their improvement. This also allows you to add math skills to the lesson.

3. Creativity

Set your pupils the task of creating natural art using any objects that they can find and creating a picture

or item from it. For instance, can they make a stick picture, a mini landscape garden using stones or a chalk drawing on the patio area (with parents' permission)? Art doesn't have to be the focus here; you could set drama or music lessons in their gardens.

Creativity can be monitored through photos and videos.

Conclusion

The government's decision to ensure all children receive face-to-face lessons, whether they're conducted over the internet or not does create some problems. However, you don't have to make outside time a main concern, use some of the ideas above to ensure that you're giving children the outside time that they need for their education.



THE NEW SCHOOL MUST HAVE: MODULAR OUTDOOR CLASSROOMS



GIVE YOURSELF MORE SPACE TO TEACH YOUR PUPILS BY EXTENDING YOUR CLASSROOM INTO THE OUTDOORS

Your outdoor space can be used for so much more than just outdoor play and sports.

Have you spotted the new range we've added to our website? We've noticed a huge increase in demand for canopies with all the bells and whistles, so we have therefore added a whole new category for Modular Outdoor Classrooms to show the potential our canopies have when it comes to transforming your outside area and expanding your teaching space.

'Build' Your Modular Outdoor Classroom Your Way

Our modular outdoor classrooms consist of a selection of our most popular canopy systems with

upgrades which includes polycarbonate side and fronts fills, secure roller shutters, timber side screens, and a selection of doors including polycarbonate, timber, EA (DDA) compliant doors and fire exit doors.

We've given you a healthy choice so you can configure your own modular outdoor classroom yourself choosing from a wall mounted, free standing or timber canopy, and then you can add your upgrades to transform it into the perfect modular outdoor learning hub for your school. See page 8 to download your free copy of the

'Configure Your Modular Outdoor Classroom' guide.

Due to the need for social distancing and social bubbles within schools, canopies with side panels have been extremely popular in 2020 and are set to be just as popular in 2021. If you are looking to add more teaching space within your school whilst avoiding major building works that are associated with extensions, contact the canopy experts today to find out more:

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

WHAT ARE MY OPTIONS?

Step one is to choose the design of your base structure. Would you like a timber, aluminium or steel frame and would you like a wall mounted or free standing structure? Choose from the five options below. To follow steps 2 - 4, download your free worksheet to select your options - see overleaf for details.



THE CONISTON - WALL MOUNTED & FREE STANDING

Frame: Aluminium | **Guttering:** Integral, Aluminium

Available Length: Unlimited | **Available Width:** Up to 6 metres

Roof Panels: 35mm Structured Polycarbonate | **UV Protection:** Over 98%

Guarantee: 10 Years | **Life Expectancy:** 25 Years



THE WELFORD DOME JUNIOR - FREE STANDING

Frame: Steel | **Guttering:** External, uPVC

Available Length: Unlimited | **Available Width:** Up to 5 metres

Roof Panels: 5mm Solid or 16mm Structured Polycarbonate

UV Protection: Over 98% | **Life Expectancy:** 25 Years



THE TARNHOW DOME - FREE STANDING

Frame: Curved Glulam Timber | **Guttering:** External, uPVC

Available Length: Unlimited | **Available Width:** Up to 12 metres

Roof Panels: 5mm Solid or 16mm Structured Polycarbonate

UV Protection: Over 98% | **Life Expectancy:** 25 Years



THE TARNHOW CURVED - WALL MOUNTED & FREE STANDING

Frame: Curved Glulam Timber | **Guttering:** External, uPVC

Available Length: Unlimited | **Available Width:** Up to 6 metres

Roof Panels: 5mm Solid or 16mm Structured Polycarbonate

UV Protection: Over 98% | **Life Expectancy:** 25 Years



THE TARNHOW MONO - WALL MOUNTED & FREE STANDING

Frame: Glulam Timber | **Guttering:** External, uPVC

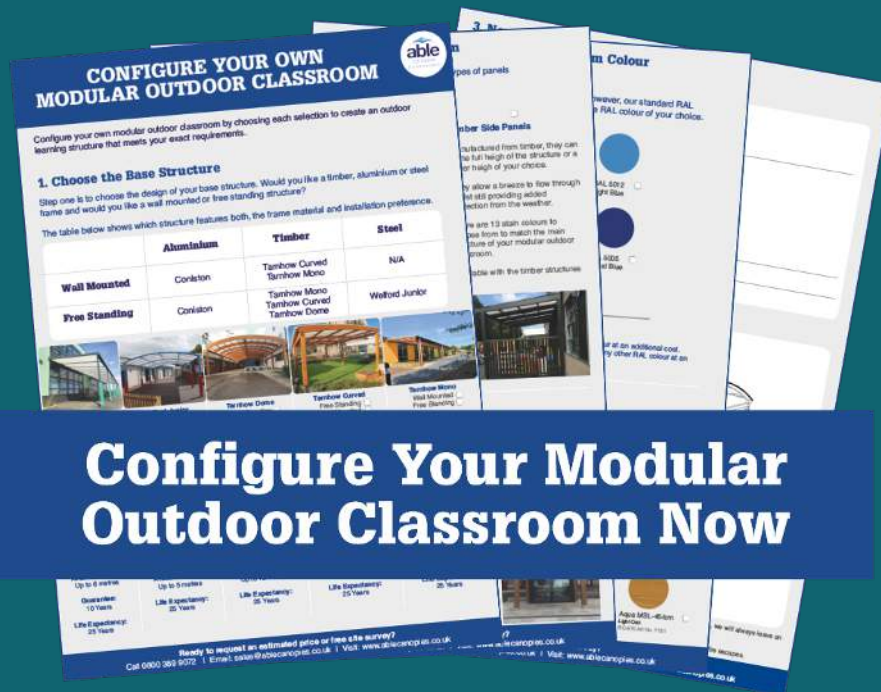
Available Length: Unlimited | **Available Width:** Up to 6 metres

Roof Panels: 5mm Solid or 16mm Structured Polycarbonate

UV Protection: Over 98% | **Life Expectancy:** 25 Years

FREE DOWNLOAD:

www.ablecanopies.co.uk/canopies/modular-outdoor-classrooms

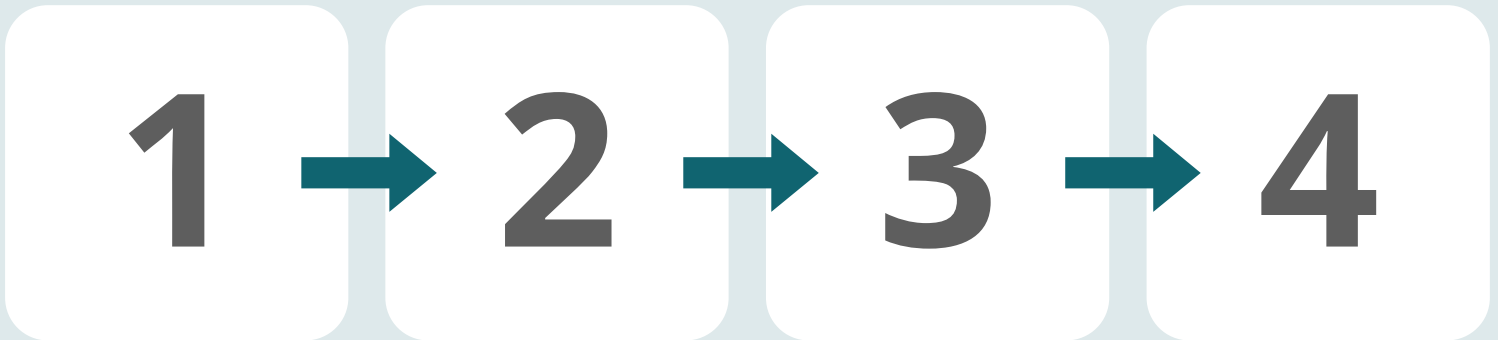


Configure Your Modular Outdoor Classroom Now

CONFIGURE YOUR OWN MODULAR OUTDOOR CLASSROOM

Configure your own modular outdoor classroom by choosing each selection to create an outdoor learning structure that meets your exact requirements

www.ablecanopies.co.uk/canopies/modular-outdoor-classrooms/



STEP 1:
Choose the base structure

STEP 2:
Choose your side panels and doors

STEP 3:
Choose the frame colour

STEP 4:
Choose the size of the structure



PROTECTING SCHOOL EQUIPMENT IN THE WINTRY WEATHER

As the cold, wet and windy weather comes to the UK, playgrounds will be drenched. Equipment that is left outside could end up damaged by the harsh winter weather and with several storms predicted for this year, it is important that steps are taken to protect it.

There are several ways that schools can protect equipment from the winter weather, here are a couple of suggestions.

1. School Canopies

The most obvious is by placing equipment underneath a school canopy. A school canopy will offer significant protection from cold, wet weather that prevents rusting and equipment from becoming damaged.

It also means that school equipment can stay dry, allowing it to be used by staff and children when they want to conduct learning activities. At the same

time a school canopy can keep equipment and materials cleaner by not having dirty water or debris on the equipment.

Another advantage of canopies for schools is that they offer a safe learning environment or play space for children while it is raining. Children love playing outside, in all sorts of weather and this investment makes it a safer place.

2. Coverings

Another option is to place coverings over equipment. Large rain covers can be bought very cheaply and can act as a second layer of protection to equipment to keep it all dry and safe from the weather. Coverings are very inexpensive too, making them a great investment.

Coverings can also be placed over equipment at the end of the day and taken off just before classes start.

3. Storage Area

Designating a storage area for equipment, whether it is a lean to in the corner under a school canopy or a bike shelter, allows for you to have good protection. Most areas have a prevalent direction for wind and rain, therefore you can plan a storage area which offers the best protection for your environment.

Conclusion

Protecting your equipment from the wet weather is essential for keeping it clean and safe to use for children. School canopies are one of the best options and the biggest advantage of them is that they will also help to protect your equipment in the summer from damage by UV rays.

View our canopy range at: www.ablecanopies.co.uk

CONTINUE FUNDRAISING DURING A LOCKDOWN

Raising those much needed funds for your school has been much harder and may continue to be in the coming year. The second lockdown in England meant events were either canceled or rescheduled. And although we've just re-entered the tiered lockdowns, the future of events that bring in big crowds are still uncertain.

So, what are the top options for fundraising during these tough times?

I would say while its tempting to hold an in person event like the 'good old days', I would advise putting most of your fundraising efforts into online events. I can only imagine how frustrating it must be when you have spent time and money organising an event, only for it to get canceled at the last minute. 2020 has definitely been about playing it safe!

1. Raffles

Raffles can be run via emails, websites and social media to help you generate more interest. Tickets

can be bought online via your school's website and the winners can then be announced across social media and in the school newsletter. You can still approach local businesses for donated prizes and gifts for your raffle, but be considerate and only approach those that have been able to continue trading throughout the pandemic.

This can be a great way for local businesses to market during these tough times. It is also a great way to receive free prizes and save funds.

2. Online Quizzes

Test families by offering online quizzes that families can partake in and enjoy at home. Quiz entries should cost a certain amount, which act as part of your new funds. Local businesses can donate prizes or you can offer cash prizes.

Quizzes can be run on a weekly or monthly basis and can have the subjects themed. It's a bit late to organise a Christmas quiz in December however, you could

organise a New Year's quiz in January. There's generally not much to look forward to in January, so a fun quiz may help take away the 'January Blues' for many.

3. Sponsored Walks Around The Garden

If you're looking to raise some funds while children are at home, you can offer a sponsored event where children are invited to walk around their garden a certain number of times. Sponsorship can be a set amount, or for the number of circuits.

Conclusion

As we continue the 2020/2021 school year, there's going to be a lot of disruption. Students will be isolating at times, lockdowns will make it harder for social gatherings and events and this is without the typical British weather. Therefore, you're going to have to be more creative with your fundraising. Maybe use one of the three ideas listed here for online fundraising to help you this year.



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

"Very easy company to work with. The installation team installed the canopy seamlessly. Neat & Tidy. I would recommend Able to others."

King Edward VI School,
Stratford-Upon-Avon, Warwickshire

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

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

