

Play & Learn Outdoors

able
canopies
& outdoor projects

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Fun Ideas to Expand a Safe Learning Environment for Your School

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WELCOME TO THE JUNE EDITION OF PLAY & LEARN OUTDOORS



Summer is finally in full swing and time spent outside has never been more enjoyable, whether that be for recreation or taking lessons outside in schools.

This edition of Play & Learn Outdoors is packed full with all the inspiration and ideas you need for teaching your pupils outside in the fresh air and raising those much needed

funds for your school.

So take a break, sit back, relax with a cuppa and have a read. 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.

Have a wonderful summer, enjoy the warmer weather, spend more time outside and we'll be back in the autumn for more inspiration and ideas.

Best Wishes

Tracy Meakins

Managing Director

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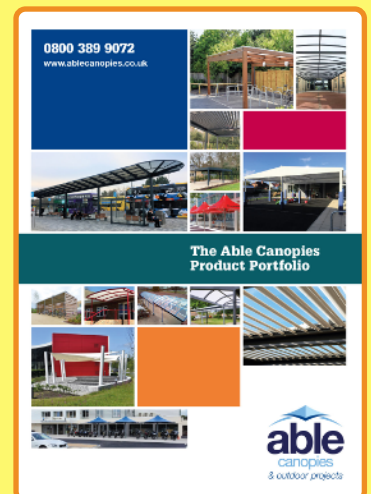
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Download Our Product Brochure *Full of Canopies & Shelters For Your School*

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



PLANT POWER: PLANTING FLOWERS AND VEGETABLES IN SCHOOLS



Schools have been doing it for years; sending their pupils home with a sunflower plant that they've grown from seed however, have you ever thought about growing flowers or vegetables with your pupils on a larger scale?

There's lots of ways you can go about it depending on the usable outdoor space you and your pupils have access to, and it's important to ensure that whatever way you do decide to go about it, that every pupil can take part.

Growing vegetables and flowers with your pupils can be an education task which is fun and

engaging and has many benefits such as having calming effects on the children and encourages teamwork.

What Can You Grow at School?

Vegetables

Anything that you can germinate from seed! The most obvious choice is vegetables as they offer the most educational value to your pupils such as learning where their food comes from. Not only that, children can be picky eaters and vegetables tend to be their least favourite snack. However, by growing food from tiny seeds, they are bound to

want to try what they've grown, helping them to make healthier choices now and in the future too.

Some vegetables that are easy to grow include:

- Tomatoes – there's lots of varieties in different colours, shapes and sizes
- Salad leaves
- Bell Peppers
- Carrots
- Radishes
- Peas
- Spring Onions
- Runner Beans
- Beetroot
- Herbs



Flowers

It's also worthwhile to consider adding flowers to your school garden. Even though your pupils won't be able to watch food grow, they will notice all the birds, bees, butterflies and other insects that their flowers attract, not to mention that they will look beautiful too! You could also incorporate it into a lesson by asking them to document the wildlife they discover and draw them.

Birds love to feed on the seeds from old sunflower heads and bees need the nectar from flowers to survive. Many other insects will feed and make a home within the flowers planted and the children can learn how to look after wildlife whilst also feeling good about doing so at the same time.

The most cost-effective way to grow a variety of flowers would be to buy a wildflower mix and this will contain seeds for lots of different flowers for an array of colours and heights. Of course, you can always ask parents and grandparents if they have any seeds they can spare, and many companies run schemes where they

give out free wildflower seeds so keep an eye out.

Overall, it will be ideal to plant a mixture of both vegetable plants and flowers to offer a good selection for educational purposes and for wildlife.

Aside from a wildflower mix, easy to grow flowers include:

- Sunflowers
- Sweet Peas (not edible)
- Love in a Mist
- Poppies
- Marigolds
- Geraniums
- Fuchsias
- Pansies



Planting at School

Depending on the space that is available to you within your school, you could take up a fairly small space that you and your pupils could use to plant vegetables and flowers.

Seeds can be started off in the classroom on a sunny windowsill and then transplanted outside once they're big enough and the weather is adequate.

If you have a school canopy, it's an ideal place to grow lots of flowers and vegetables in pots. It's also an ideal area to plant your seeds, reducing mess inside the classroom and enabling you to still tend to the plants even when it's raining.

If you don't have the space at school, do you have a community garden/open space near to your school that your local authority may allow your school to grow vegetables or plants with the children? It's always worth enquiring. Local companies may like to get involved by providing funding and residents may volunteer to help with the upkeep.

Planting at Home

You may be put off the idea of giving children homework of planting seeds at home as many do not have access to gardens however, if you give them a small amount to grow which can be grown on a sunny windowsill, all children should be able to participate.

There're many plants can be grown indoors on a windowsill including salad leaves, cress, herbs, kale, baby beetroot and radishes.

FREE TREES FOR YOUR SCHOOL

To mark Her Majesty the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in 2022, a tree planting initiative named 'The Queens Green Canopy' has been created which invites people from across the United Kingdom to plant a tree for the Jubilee.

The initiative welcomes everyone including schools to take part in enhancing our environment by planting trees from October when the tree planting season begins, until the end of the Jubilee Year in 2022.

When Can You Apply?

You can apply for free tree saplings

via the Woodland Trust from June 2021. The trees are available on a first come, first serve basis so make sure you apply as soon as you can to secure trees for your school.

The Queens Green Canopy will be contacting as many UK state schools as possible to arrange the delivery of free trees.

How Many Trees are Available?

The number of trees available depends on the number of donations that the initiative receives so again, be sure to apply as soon as possible to secure your trees.

How Do I Know What Tree to Plant and Where?

The Queens Green Canopy website has a fantastic guide to help you choose the best tree to plant as well as where and when to plant it to ensure the trees is healthy for years to come.

They also offer information that guides you through planting your trees.

Find out more about the initiative on the official website:

www.queensgreencanopy.org



NEW FRESH AND FABULOUS SHADE SAIL FABRIC

Our commercial shade sails have always been popular products, particularly within educational and play settings due to the bright and cheerful fabric colours available. We're an innovative company and we're always looking at ways to 'keep up with the times' to ensure our products meet all the requirements our customers require whilst still offering the very best in quality and customer service. That's why when our supplier contacted us regarding their new shade sail fabric range, we couldn't contain our excitement!

All we heard was 'one fabric two colours' (mind blown)! ... "How does that work?" I hear you wonder; we thought the same. No, it's not a fabric that is blended with two different colours, we already offer that with our standard shade sail fabric. This fresh, fun and fabulous fabric features one colour on one side, and another colour on the other - genius!

Yes, that correct, so instead of installing two shade sails to create the effect of two colours, you can opt for just the one shade sail.



Because we install our shade sails with high points and hypar points (some posts are higher and some posts are lower), you can see both colours on the fabric from almost wherever you stand.

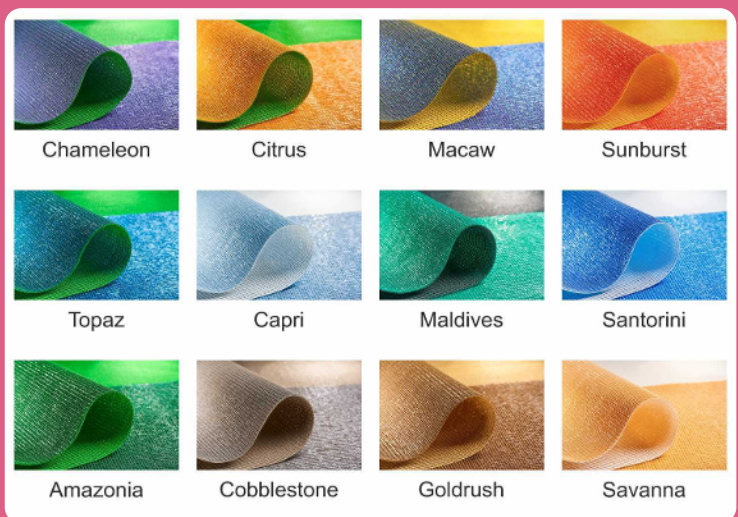
So, if the only reason you were thinking of choosing a shade sail array was for the variety of colour, think again, you can save lot of £££'s by opting for one shade sail with our fantastic new dual shade sail fabric.

However, cost aside, the dual fabric

looks fantastic and with 12 colour combinations to choose from including vibrant shades and more neutral hues, are you sure to find the perfect combination for your outdoor setting.

Please note: We do not supply our shade sail fabric as a standalone product, it is as supplied as a full product with our shade sail posts with full installation only.

To find out more visit: www.ablecanopies.co.uk/shade-sails/



USING THE OUTSIDE TO CATCH UP ON EDUCATION

Now children have settled back into school, you may be looking at how they can catch up with their studies. There are many thoughts on this, with longer terms, shorter holidays and longer school hours all being suggested. But more time in education isn't necessarily the answer. The quality of education is probably the best answer.

There are many ways that you can continue to offer quality education and time spent outside might be a good way to help students catch up.

The Benefits Of Outdoor Learning

There are many benefits to outdoor learning. Children respond favourably with the learning, resulting with them feeling more confident and learning to interact with the world much better. One of

the major benefits noticed is that they develop a strong inquisitive and reflective thinking strategy that allows them to improve their ability to solve problems.

Children could also learn to how to better support their own mental health. They're often more resilient and adaptable when learning outdoors and they'll gain more confidence and have higher levels of self-esteem.

Many also find that children become more active, therefore their physical health improves which can have long-term benefits.

Lessons can also be more inclusive and interactive. This can help children to remember the learning objectives of the class and your subject matter. When you're looking

to help children catch up, retention is important as the quicker the information is retained, the less time you need to spend on it.

How Long For Outdoor Learning?

There is no set rule of how long you should spend outside for learning. If you can work in at least half an hour a day, that can be beneficial. But perhaps a couple of half-hour sessions per day can be a great start for children.

Conclusion

Outdoor learning can be the first step towards catching up without having to extend the school day or school week. This will significantly benefit children and help teachers to maintain a healthy workload as we recover from the recent disruption to your students' education.



WYVERN PUPILS ENJOY THE OUTDOORS WHATEVER THE WEATHER



Pupils at The Wyvern School in Ashford, Kent are now enjoying spending time outside all year round thanks to the 153 sqm of canopies they had installed in April by Able Canopies Ltd.

The Wyvern School is a special school for children with profound, severe and complex needs from the age of 3 through to 19. To provide their pupils with the best possible outdoor setting, they contacted Able Canopies with the hope to install two canopies within their school grounds; one along the length of a south facing building and another to cover an outside seating area for their sixth form students.

The canopies that reach a combined length of 38 metres was installed in five days over the Easter holidays in April. It seems the canopies were installed just in time and have come in particularly handy with the April showers that the

South-East experienced during a very rainy May, last month.

"That's one of the many fantastic benefits of our canopies; you can plan lessons and events outside without worrying about the weather. If a sudden downpour occurs, your plans can continue without a fuss." – Tracy Meakins, Managing Director at Able Canopies Ltd.

The wall mounted canopy along their south facing building measures 36 metres in length and not only provides shade and shelter outdoors, it also creates shade to the buildings' windows, keeping the rooms inside much cooler on those hot, summer days.

The free standing canopy was installed for their sixth form students and features outdoor seating so they can study, socialise and dine outside whatever the

weather. This is perfect for giving their older students a little more freedom and independence as they prepare for life beyond The Wyvern School.

Upon completion of the installation, School Business Manager Tina Button was delighted with the canopies stating that they were *"Fantastic structures designed and completed by a friendly team. Would recommend!"*

If you are looking to cover an outside space in your school grounds, call the canopy experts on 0800 389 9072 or visit www.ablecanopies.co.uk



TENSILE CANOPIES: FUN, BRIGHT, SAFE AND STRONG

It's no secret that the last year has highlighted the importance of time spent outdoors; it's safer compared to time spent indoors when it comes to avoiding viruses, it has a positive impact on our mental health and it keeps our physical bodies healthy too. So, what better time is there than now to improve your outdoor area and transform it into a pleasant

space that can be enjoyed all year round, no matter what the weather has to offer.

With the brighter, warmer weather on its way, adults and children alike will be looking for cooler areas to gain shade from the beating hot sun. And on the other end of the spectrum, when the weather turns rainy, a canopy will ensure your outdoor

plans are not ruined and you can continue to make the most of your outside space all year round.

It's All About the Fabric

Today, we're featuring our fabric canopies because they're fun, bright, safe and strong and we all need a little of that after the year we've had!



Free Standing Waterproof Fabric Canopies

With six structures to choose from within our waterproof fabric canopy range, you are sure to find a design that fits perfectly in your outside area. These canopies are all permanent structures that have been designed to withstand the British weather all year round and provide protection from both the rain and the sun's harmful UV rays.

Commercial Umbrellas

Our Commercial Umbrellas are perfect for smaller areas, particularly for outside dining; they are permanent structures however, the Richmond, Drayton and Blenheim Umbrellas can all be collapsed when shade and shelter are not required. Depending on the product chosen, our umbrellas are all waterproof or water resistant and provide high UV protection from the sun.



Waterproof Shade Sails

Waterproof Shade Sails offer the best of both worlds, if you'd like a shade sail yet, require cover from the rain and the sun, you've found your ideal product here. There's two products to choose from including the Banbury which has more of a traditional shade sail design with a frame that follows the shape of the sails and the other is the Evershade which has a full frame and the sails appear to float within the frame.

To view the full range visit: www.ablecanopies.co.uk

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FUNDRAISING

Whether you're looking to invest in a new computer room or a school canopy, you're going to need funds and this will probably require you to do some fundraising at some point. That's why we've include some 'COVID safe' fundraising ideas below.

Affiliate Marketing

One idea is to create affiliate marketing on your website/email newsletters. You can promote things like books that the children are studying at school or learning materials that parents might find useful for homework.

Affiliate marketing can be connected to many different brands including Amazon and others. It isn't regular income and not predictable. However, you can have control over what you promote and tie that in with specific learning objectives you have.

Adding A Little Competition



Gamification is taking a normal activity and then making it into a little competition. You could get classrooms to do a sponsored read and challenge them to read the most in a day. Those that read the most get a prize. This can be something that can create laughs as well as a fundraising idea.

Sponsorship

The first thing you can try to do is to have sponsors for your school. This can be as simple as having a board at the entrance of your school where those local companies that sponsor you are listed. Or you could have the sponsors listed on letters or on your website.

This is the simplest option to get fundraising going. It also guarantees income because you can charge a set amount for the sponsorship.

Merchandise

Another option is to sell merchandise on your website. This can include mugs, clothing and more items that are branded with your school logo and other images. These can be sold directly on your website and using a print on demand service to help you service orders without having to do anything.

This will require you to have someone manage this area of your business, but it can be a good way to earn extra money.

Games

Sponsorship events don't have to be things like sponsored reads and walks. Instead, you can dig out the board games and use these as part of your fundraising ideas. Get parents to donate a set amount that gives their child a set number of tickets. These tickets can be used to play in rounds of games, like Monopoly, Mouse Trap and more. You can also include a points system and the child with the best points at the end of the day wins.



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

"Able Canopies made the whole process easy from start to finish."

Great support every step of the way. "

- The Brier School, West Midlands

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

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

