

Play & Learn Outdoors

able
canopies
& outdoor projects

Issue 2.7
June 2022

Fun Ideas to Expand a Safe Learning Environment for Your School

£500

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WELCOME TO THE JUNE EDITION OF PLAY & LEARN OUTDOORS

It feels like we've been thrown head first into summer, where exactly did the first half of 2022 go? Maybe it's because it's been a busy year at Able Canopies HQ and it's not slowing down, with an even busier summer ahead.

We're therefore sending out the last edition of P&LO before the new school year in September, so be sure to have a good read. It's full of inspiration for outside lessons, fundraising and fun

dates you can incorporate into your lessons.

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.

Enjoy the warm, sunny days ahead with your pupils by taking lessons outside and holding fundraising events to raise funds. We'll be back in the summer for more ideas and inspiration.

Best Wishes

Tracy Meakins

Managing Director

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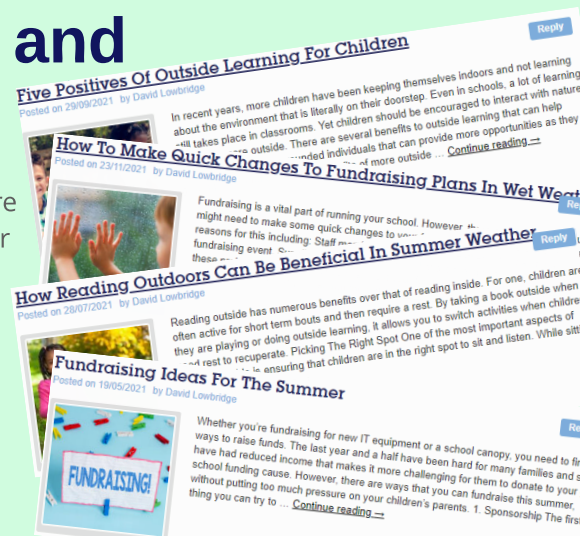
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Visit Our Blog For New Lesson and Fundraising Ideas Every Week

If gathering ideas for your lessons or fundraising events is your thing, be sure to pop over to our blog which is updated weekly with new ideas to keep your school day fresh and inspiring for both you and your pupils.

visit: www.ablecanopies.co.uk/blog/

If you're not currently signed up to receive our newsletter, send an email to marketing@ablecanopies.co.uk and we'll add you to the list.



FREE OUTDOOR EQUIPMENT OF UP TO £500 FOR SCHOOLS

Not only is the cost of living increasing dramatically, but overheads are also increasing for schools and it seems that everywhere you go, you are met with price increases. Luckily for you, we're always on the lookout for grants that you may be entitled to, and we've found one that we knew you'd want to know about.

Would You Like Free Outdoor Equipment up to the Value of £500?

Of course you do! With the **Local School Nature Grants Scheme**, you can mix and match items from a product catalogue of hundreds of items,

up to the value of £500.

The packages available offer a wide mix of products to appeal to a broad range of ages and are customisable. There's plenty available that are ideal for Infant, Primary and Secondary schools.

We thought this grant would be perfect for you as you can gain even more use out of your existing canopy by using the outdoor equipment under your canopy.

You'll Also Receive Outdoor Learning Training for your Staff.

As an added bonus, the grant

has two elements, the second is fully funded outdoor learning training for your staff. Regular training is important for continual development and to ensure your pupils are receiving the best possible education. So, the chance to receive free training for your staff as part of the grant is a great reason to apply.

If you don't have a canopy yet, and are looking to provide a covered outdoor area that you can use all year round for outdoor lessons, visit our website to view our full product range or download our brochure below. Alternatively, give us a call on 0800 389 9072

**Don't miss out,
apply now**

To find out more and apply for the grant, please visit:

www.ltl.org.uk/projects/local-school-nature-grants/

Please note: Able Canopies Ltd. are not associated with Learning Through Landscapes in anyway. We are always on the lookout for grants that may be useful to schools and therefore share them, because we know that every little helps.



PLANTING LESSONS

Whether you're teaching children about plant life cycles or food groups, a school planting area is a great learning tool. Here are some tips to make your school planting area successful for learning and fun.

Why Plan Growing Lessons at School?

There are numerous reasons why you should plant a growing area for your school or even for each classroom. Growing plants like flowers or vegetables have a wide range of lessons that encompass the primary curriculum including life cycles, nutrition, soil, science and more.

A garden area can also teach children and make them more aware of seasonal changes in nature and food production. And there are benefits of making large school gardens with staff, pupils, parents and even local residents being involved in your projects.

Where to Start your Vegetable Garden

There are many locations where you can start your school or class garden. It can be in a large area that is dedicated to growing or it can be in a couple of containers under a school canopy. Ideally, you want a



location that provides warmth, sunlight, shelter and has good fertile soil that is well-drained.

Plan the Planting

You need to plan the planting of flowers and any vegetables that you would like. Vegetables are highly suited for planting in spaced rows across a single plot. These should not be broken up by paths. However, this isn't always easy in a school setting.

You might need to go to a bed system. Schools with gardens have often found that those with special educational needs students work better with a bed system.

You should make access really simple and you will want to regularly weed the area.

Choose the Plants

You will want to carefully plan the

plants that you're going to grow. You don't want plants that are going to be hard to flourish. You should also choose plants that children will love. A flower bed, for instance, can include daffodils and tulips which are always popular. Vegetable plots can include peas and beans or carrots.

If in doubt, choose varieties of vegetables that have been awarded the RHS Award of Garden Merit. These are plants that have been deemed suitable for garden cultivation by the RHS.

Conclusion

An outside area for gardening is a great learning opportunity for children. Not only are you going to teach children about gardening, but you can also teach them about other things like life cycles, food groups and more.

Would You Like More Inspiration?

If you have been enjoying what you've read so far and would like more, sign up to our newsletter to receive a copy direct to your inbox every month, or in your letterbox every 3 months.

Visit:

www.ablecanopies.co.uk/lp/newsletter.html



HOW TO EXTEND A SCHOOL DINING ROOM ON A BUDGET



When it comes to upgrading your school facilities, you have to be mindful not to spend too much of your budget on just one upgrade. So, if you're in need of more room, whether that be for teaching space or dining space, it's best to look at all the options available before committing.

One of the most cost-effective ways you can extend your school dining room, without blowing your budget on a building extension is to invest in a canopy. Whilst canopies may seem to be a big outlay, they are a fraction of the cost of an extension and will leave you with lots of leftover cash to spend on all the other much needed school supplies.

Our canopies can be supplied as standard canopies with open sides, or you can add side panels and doors to enclose the structure*, blocking driving wind and rain. This creates an enclosed structure which is almost perfectly protected by the weather, whilst ensuring the longevity and durability of the canopy.

Our most popular canopies that our customers use as alfresco dining canopies are the Coniston Wall Mounted Canopy, the Welford Dome Free Standing Canopy and the Tarnhow Dome Free Standing Timber Canopy as shown below.

In 2020, we supplied and installed a 33.1m x 7m Tarnhow Dome Free

Standing Timber Canopy at Eastbrook School in Dagenham (top left image). The canopy enabled them to extend their dining space by an extra 270 seats which is a dramatic increase in the useable space for their pupils.

Contact us to request a free copy of our brochure or to find out how we can extend your dining room within your budget.

**Please note: Although our canopies can be enclosed with side panels, they are not entirely enclosed because due to wind uplift. It is a safety requirement that a small 200mm gap is left at the bottom of the panels to allow a small amount of air to flow through. This ensures you have the most rigid and safe structure that will withstand strong winds throughout the years.*



EASY, FUN STALLS FOR YOUR NEXT FUNDRAISING EVENT



Fundraising is an exciting time. Whether you're raising funds for your school canopy or a new computer suite, a fair is a great option.

At each fair there are several traditional stalls which spectators will expect to see because they love to take part in them not just for fun, but for nostalgia too. So, here are the stalls you should always consider holding.

Raffles

The first stall that you need is a raffle stall. This should offer people the chance to buy tickets for a draw later in the day. Prizes can be donated by local businesses or gifts from parents/staff.

Tombola

A tombola is very similar to the raffle, but there are instant prizes. Prizes can again be provided by local businesses.

Duck Fishing

This simple game is fun and children can play for a small fee in order to instantly win some sweet treats or soft toys. Because this is easy to set up and quick to reset after players have had a go, this is a great, easy option.

Food Stalls

Food is a must at all fairs. You can have multiple food and drink stalls at your fair and these can be manned by local catering companies. In return, the stall owners can pay you a percentage of the daily takings or a pitch fee.

Second Hand Stall

Another way that you can earn more money from the fair is to sell products. You can take donations from parents and locals to create a second hand stall. This is quick to set up and can earn lots of money on the day.

Ball Toss Game

A ball toss game is really simple and there are lots of varieties that can help you make yours unique. Players can get a chance to win some sweets if they succeed.

Fundraising Stall

This is an important stall. This is where you can detail exactly what you're raising funds for. Provide images of current progress and concept art of what it will look like.

SNACKS TO COOK OUTSIDE IN FOREST SCHOOL

Teaching children to cook outside has numerous benefits. For one, eating outside has been linked to several health benefits and improving moods. There are also numerous skills that cooking outside can provide children.

So whether you're looking to cook outside in the forest school and then enjoy the food under your canopy, here are some meals that you can prepare with your students.

Eggy Bread

Eggy bread is such a simple meal to prepare. All you need is the campfire, a frying pan and the ingredients. Soak some bread in some beaten eggs and then place on the heated frying pan with some vegetable oil. Turn the bread over every couple of minutes until cooked.

Smores

Smores are an American favourite that involve cooking marshmallows with chocolate between two crackers. It is a simple, exciting recipe that children will love.

Apples

Pan fry some apple slices into your frying pan with some oil and add some sugar and cinnamon, if you want to, to create a sweet treat. Really

simple to do. To add a little extra to this dish, you can add some ice cream to the cooked apple.

Popcorn

Popcorn is a really tasty and healthy snack that can be done quickly and is very exciting. All you need to do is add some popcorn kernels to a pan with a lid and some vegetable oil. You can add flavourings if you want.

Why Teach Cooking Outside?

There are numerous lessons that young children can learn from

outdoor cooking lessons. Safety around campfires, safety in cooking and even information about different food groups can all be taught in the forest school environment.

At the same time, forest school and cooking is a great way to add some mental stimulation in addition to some time for reducing stress levels. This can help when children are doing other tasks as happy students are going to be more productive.



CASE STUDY: NURSERY IN HULL

Product :
The Coniston Wall Mounted Canopy

Size :
22.9m x 5m

Frame Colour :
Anthracite Grey - RAL 7016

Installation Date :
February 2022



The Brief

The Director of Tiptoes Day Nurseries required weather protection structures at a number of their locations in Hull, East Yorkshire and one of those locations was Tiptoes Nursery in Willerby.

We were originally approached by them in January 2019, when they requested a quotation for a 23.4m x 5m Coniston Wall Mounted Canopy to cover the whole length of the building. We arranged for a full site survey to

be carried out and then sent a quotation to them for their chosen shade and shelter structure.

The Solution

Upon completion of the site survey we could see that the Coniston, which they originally chose, was the perfect solution for the area they were looking to cover. Usually, the Coniston canopy's downpipes will filter the rain water into an existing drain by the canopy post however, this particular canopy required a

return to existing downpipe and we therefore added aluminium infill panels as shown in the above photos to conceal the drainage pipe and keep the appearance of the canopy neat and streamlined.

The Coniston is a popular canopy within educational settings as it provides protection from all weathers including the rain, the sun's UV rays and the heat from the sun, providing a cooler area underneath, and cooler classrooms that have



Above: Before the Canopy installation



Above: After the Canopy installation



windows where the canopy is situated.

To save on costs, we suggested that the projection could be reduced slightly without causing a big impact on the size of cover required. However, a 5-metre projection was a must have for the nursery because they had existing softplay flooring in place and wanted the canopy to cover the width of the softplay for a seamless finish. Although this impacted the cost, it was worthwhile as you can see in the photos it looks like the flooring

and canopy were a part of the same design.

They chose to put the canopy project on hold and then in August 2021, they were ready to proceed and requested a re-price for the canopies previously quoted. This wasn't a problem and because the building and the specification hadn't change at all, we were able to complete this without an additional site survey.

The Installation

The canopy was installed within 4 days as scheduled and went

ahead with no issues along the way. The staff at the nursery were pleased with their canopy which covers 114.5 square metres and can now make use of outdoor play and learning all year round, benefits both the staff and children in their care.

We also installed a 14.5m a 4m Coniston Wall Mounted Canopy at another Tiptoes nursery in Bricknell Avenue, Hull a couple of days prior to the above canopy and installed another canopy for Tiptoes Nursery in Sutton, Hull in April.

SCIENCE

SUMMER SCIENCE ACTIVITIES TO INSPIRE STUDENTS

Science experiments outside are a great way to inspire students to learn. Outside learning is very beneficial. It is known to improve confidence, increase attention and be more fun for students.

So, what are the best summer science activities that you can conduct at your school? Here are some of the options for you.

Water Evaporation Levels

One easy experiment is to have water evaporation tests across the school. You can place cups of water in various areas like in the middle of the playground, under a school canopy, under a bush, on the field, etc.

Ask the children to measure the cups before and then ask them to measure them after a few hours. They can then explore the reasons why water evaporates in some areas more than others.

Nature Survey

Take the children out and get them to count the number of animals and plants they can see around the school. This can be a

great way for them to know more about their local environment and biodiversity.

You might also want to think about having a virtual trip to see some of the other native animals that the children are unlikely to see while conducting their survey.

Weather Station

A weather station is a great way for children to learn about weather patterns. You can measure rainfall, wind direction and speed as well as light. Having a weather station can also teach the children lots of soft skills.

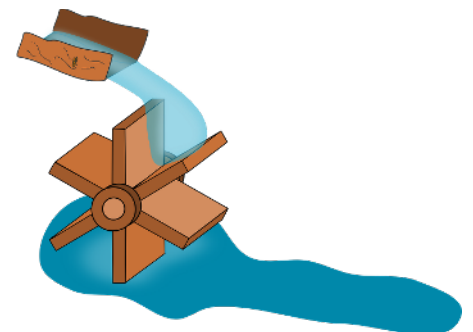
You can also have weather stations across the school and get children to notice the difference between the stations.

Build a Water Wheel

Another option is to build a water wheel outside and test them using a jug of water. You can get children to build the water wheel out of numerous materials including wood, paper,

cardboard and Lego.

Children can experiment with which one makes the best building material.



Making a Solar Oven

A solar oven is a great way to teach children about solar power, cooking and have fun at the same time. This can be a great afternoon activity that can be included with lots of other outdoor lessons as well.



Get Cycle Ready this Summer with the Easydale

Are you fed up of untidy bikes causing a hazard in your school grounds?

Maybe you're looking to provide a sheltered area to keep your pupil and staff bikes dry?

Invest in the Easydale Cycle Shelter to keep bikes within your school grounds tidy, safe and dry

To find out more...
Call: 0800 389 9072
visit: www.ablecanopies.co.uk/shelters
Email: sales@ablecanopies.co.uk

This will be a thing of the past



THE BENEFITS OF A TERM TIME CANOPY INSTALLATION

"Great product, service and installation. The canopy looks amazing."

**- Cansfield High School,
Lancashire**

Our highly skilled installation teams have completed hundreds of term time installations at nurseries, pre-schools, primary, secondary, SEN and independent schools across the UK. They have been trained in health and safety, and are very experienced in working during school hours. All of our onsite operatives are also DBS checked.

We always do our utmost to ensure noise is kept to a minimum and we can also stagger noisier operations around your school timetable.

Installing canopies during term time allows you to see the progress of your school canopy. You

can even use the occasion as a teaching tool – pupils can watch the progress and you may be able to plan the lesson around it. A term time installation also means if any issues arise, we can quickly liaise with you, and come to a quick and agreed solution.

Installation doesn't need to be delayed – if you aren't constrained by holiday times then you don't have to wait for the next school holiday, and as term time installations aren't so popular, we can normally book your installation in very soon after you've ordered – meaning you can have your installation completed

quicker!

Here's some schools and pre-schools that we have installed at during term time. Read their testimonials to find out how pleased they were with how we worked around their regular schedule and around their pupils.

Communication has been good throughout the construction. Work has all been kept to time and all school site and equipment has been respected throughout. Team has been flexible when working around our children and their needs. We are very happy with the project.

- Saint Marys Church of England Primary School, Birmingham



Able Canopies have created a perfect outdoor space. The canopy has been put together from design to building in partnership with what our specific needs are. Nothing has been too much trouble. The builders have been very sensitive to the need of our children, working quickly and with the least disruption as possible.

- Church Eaton Endowed Primary School, Staffordshire





FOREST SCHOOLS GEOGRAPHY LESSONS

There are numerous ways that forest schools can enhance learning within classes. Geography can have lots of classes taught within the forest school setting within your area. Here are some classic ideas for you.

Teaching About Changes to Environment

The first thing to do is to teach about the different environments that forests offer. You can talk about how forests contribute to the local environment, including how they can help with drainage, provide cover from the rain and homes for lots of different animals.

You can also show how forests have grown and declined over the year using models created in the forest school using debris from the area.

Cloud Watching

Use the space outside to look up to the skies and cloud watch. Talk about the different types of clouds

that are present, what they mean and how the local weather is connected to them.

You can also make this a little more fun by getting children to spot familiar symbols within the clouds. This activity can create plenty of fun and laughter!

Weather Patterns

Why not set up a weather station within the forest school? You can collect rainfall, wind speed, temperatures and more. You can also run experiments by locating the weather monitoring devices in different areas around the forest school to observe differences in rainfall or wind speed near trees or out in the open.

Weather patterns can also be linked to science lessons.

Reading Maps

Children can create their maps of the forest school and then produce

some instructions using the maps to plan routes for others to follow. These can be fun, creative lessons that are interesting and allow the children to have some fun.

However, it can also be useful for important life skills that are just as important as STEM subjects.



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

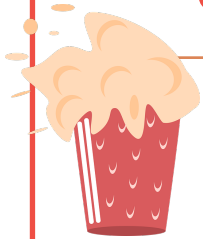
Don't miss out, make a note of these dates in your diary pronto!

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 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.



JUNE 2022

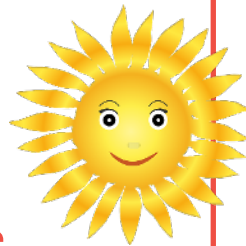


20th

National Vanilla Milkshake Day

21st

Summer Solstice



21st

National Daylight Appreciation Day

30th

National Meteor Watch Day



JULY 2022

All month

Plastic Free July



1st

National Creative Ice Cream Flavours Day



5th

National Hawaii Day



7th

World Chocolate Day



15th

National Give Something Away Day



FUNDRAISING

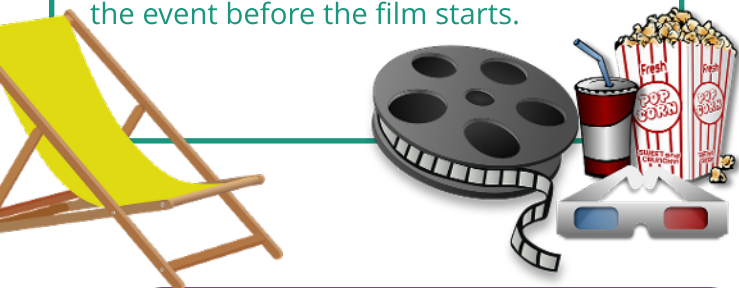
Now we've entered summer, there are plenty of ways that you can raise funds for your school. Whether you want to add a new school canopy or refresh the sporting equipment at your school, here are some fun summer fundraising events that will get your creative juices flowing.

Visit more for hundreds of ideas that we add to on a weekly basis: www.ablecanopies.co.uk/blog/

Outdoor Cinema

Outdoor cinemas are a great option for those looking to host a single event. You can select a good film that is appropriate for your students and then sell tickets to them and their families to attend the event.

You can boost funds raised at the event by selling concessions like drinks and food. You can also raise the awareness of current projects at the beginning of the event before the film starts.



Sponsored Walks

The summertime is the main time when people like to walk and hosting a sponsored walk is a great way to raise funds. You can walk around the school field, or you can choose a local nature spot to get the students out for the day.

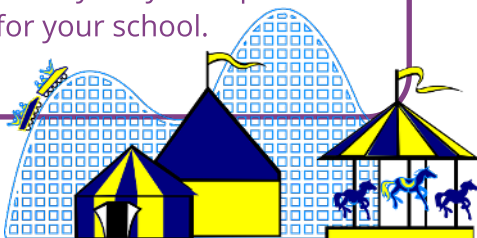
Sponsored walks can be a way to collect sponsorships from firms as well. You can get them to pay for travel to the sponsored walk, food and drink for the day or even just to sponsor the children walking.



Event Days

A summer fete is a very popular activity during the final two terms of the academic year. Summer fetes can have lots of stalls and events put on that are hosted by the students themselves and have family, friends and others attend to buy or participate.

It is also a good way for you to promote good causes for your school.



National Give Something Away Day

The 15th of July is National Give Something Away Day so be sure to add this into your fundraising plans and ask for all children, their families and friends to take part by giving something away to your school, which you can sell and raffle off in your fundraising events.



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

“From the very start of our enquiry and the finished installation, the service was impeccable. A very professional company.”

- Elm Road Primary School,
Cambridgeshire
(pictured above)

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

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

