

Play & Learn Outdoors

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

Issue 2.2
March 2021

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WELCOME TO THE MARCH EDITION OF PLAY & LEARN OUTDOORS



March welcomes the start of Spring, which means we are leaving the colder weather and dark nights behind. Its the perfect time to start planning outdoor lessons, your fundraising plans and dates that you can partake in to make lessons even more fun and engaging for your pupils.

The last 3 months since the previous edition of P&LO have

been busy here at Able Canopies HQ, we've installed lots of canopies which you can see on pages 14 & 15. We've also worked really hard to make sure this edition of P&LO is packed full of everything you've been asking for.

So take a break, sit back and relax with a cuppa and 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?

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

Best Wishes

Tracy Meakins

Managing Director

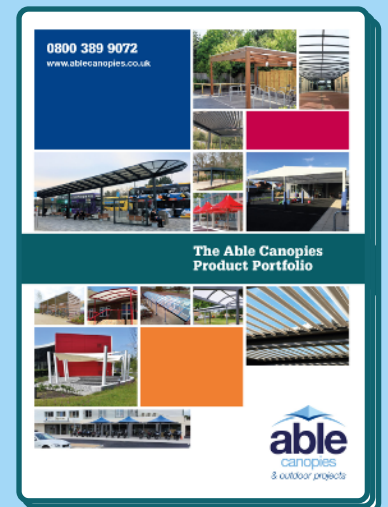
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Download Our Product Brochure *Full of Canopies & Shelters For Your School*

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



CAN CHILDREN BENEFIT FROM OUTDOOR READING?



Outdoor reading, in numerous places from forest schools to school canopies, can be a great way for your children to engage with their books. There are many advantages of taking your school reading outside, here are some of those reasons.

1. More Imaginative Engagement

Reading can sometimes be enhanced by having other activities that run alongside them to tell more about the story. For instance, students can act some of the key scenes from the book or try out some of the activities mentioned within their books. This can get the children to experience the book further and remember more of the story, characters and lessons to be learned.

2. Environmental Impact

Some stories, particularly those that are set outside can be enhanced by

the surroundings of outside. The wind blowing might add a little extra to the storytelling that children will remember and like. It can also be good for keeping attention levels high. Children who are learning outside of the classroom can experience higher recall levels. However, that doesn't mean that all environments are good for reading.

3. You Can Run Smaller Reading Groups

Reading outside can be a great reason to reduce reading class sizes down. This can help you in several ways, it allows for more engagement from children and can increase confidence. Some children don't like to speak in large groups and reading in smaller groups allows them to talk about their ideas and have fun within a smaller group. In addition, it allows you to check the understanding and the knowledge of all the children present.

4. It Can Relax Children

When children relax, they will start to learn more about the book they're reading and the stories it tells. This allows them to have enhanced reading while also benefiting from strong improvements within mental health. This can improve not just the reading learning, but also enhance learning throughout the school day.

Conclusion

Films, television and literature often have a character who enjoys reading outside. For instance, characters are shown to read in gardens, on the beach, in the woodlands, at a picnic. Outside reading is shown to be fun and in reality, can help with learning. So why not create that experience in your school with ease? Children will not only benefit from better reading sessions but also improved learning across their school day.

LAST MINUTE



CRAFTS

Easy Easter Wreath

You'll need:

- Paper plate
- Coloured or patterned paper
- Glue or glue dots
- Ribbon
- Scissors
- Egg shaped cookie cutter

Directions:

1. Cut a circle out of the middle of the paper plate, so you're left with an outer circle intact - the wreath.
2. If your paper has a design on it, turn it over and trace the egg cookie cutter onto the paper as a template.
3. Cut the egg shapes from the paper and glue them onto the back of the wreath.
4. Cut a piece of ribbon, make a bow and use a glue dot to attach it to the top of the wreath.
5. Cut another piece of ribbon, form a loop and glue it to the back of the wreath.
6. Pupils can then take these home to hang in the kitchen or they can be kept at school to decorate the classrooms.

(Source and image credit: <https://www.theresourcefulmama.com/easy-paper-easter-wreath/>)



Peek-a-Boo Peg Chicks

You'll need:

- Pegs
- Card
- Choice of paint, pencils or crayons to decorate
- Scissors
- Glue or glue dots

Directions:

1. Draw and cut an egg shape that is broken along the middle on cardboard
2. Also draw and cut out a chick's head, again on card
3. Allow the children to decorate with their paints, pencils and crayons
4. Glue the chick to one side of the peg
5. Glue the top and bottom of the egg to the other side of the peg





Easter Bunny Mask

You'll need:

- Paper plates
- White card
- Light pink felt
- Jumbo craft sticks
- White pipe cleaners
- Glue dots
- Scissors

Directions:

1. Cut a paper plate in half.
2. Using a pencil, draw two half oval eyes onto the plate and carefully cut out with scissors.
3. Cut out two long oval ears and a heart about 4" wide by 3" tall from your white card stock. (depending on the age of children in your class, you can cut the shapes in advance for them)
4. Glue the bottom of your heart to the bottom middle of your paper plate.
5. Cut out smaller heart from your felt and glue the bottom of it to the bottom of the big heart.
6. Then cut out (6) 3" pieces of pipe cleaner and glue 3 to each side of the white heart.
7. Cut out 2 long ovals from your pink felt slightly smaller than the white paper ones, glue the pink ovals onto the white ovals, and cut the bottoms flat for the ears.
8. Glue the ears to the back top of the plate.
9. Then glue a jumbo craft stick onto one side of the plate to use as a handle.

(Source and image credit: <https://www.shesaved.com/2017/04/easter-bunny-paper-plate.html/>)

Disclaimer: We are in no way associated with the links mentioned on this and the previous page.

A CANOPY SO BIG YOU CAN SEE IT FROM SPACE (KIND OFF)

Okay, so maybe you can't see it from space, but it is visible from Google Earth and there's no wonder, the canopy is a whopper!

In 2016 we supplied and installed a 112 metre Coniston Wall Mounted Canopy at Mead Primary School in Romford and it has just come to our attention that it is visible from Google Earth even when zoomed out substantially.

As shown in the photo below, the white line that you can see is the canopy we installed.

The school required an extra-large canopy so they could provide shade and shelter to a

number of their classrooms which run along the whole length of the building. The Coniston Wall Mounted Canopy was the perfect shade and shelter structure as it has an unlimited length, enabling us to install it no matter the length required, and because it is wall mounted, it required less posts which saves on costs and installation time, resulting in a cost effective canopy that is installed with minimal disruption to the staff and pupils at the school.

The staff at the school were over the moon with their new structure that provides the shade and shelter required to

allow outdoor lessons and outdoor play to go ahead all year round. It also provides shade for the classrooms to reduce heat in the summer months.

Are you looking to provide a free-flow learning and play area from the classroom to the outdoors? The Coniston Wall Mounted Canopy is the perfect solution for most of our school and nursery customers, and I'm sure you will find it to be just as perfect for your educational setting. Alternatively, you can view our full range of wall mounted and free standing canopies on our website: www.ablecanopies.co.uk



INVITE AUTHORS FOR REMOTE STORY TIME SESSIONS



Do you remember those days, when your pupils would be so excited that they'd be on their best behaviour because you'd organised someone to visit the school and talk to them? Those days are not a complete thing of the past. Whilst your pupils have been returning to the classrooms, the rest of us are still working from home. We're all stuck at home and looking for ways to keep ourselves busy and promote our business, or in an author's case, their books.

Which brings me to my suggestion, have you considered approaching authors who have recently released children's books, or even better local authors who have recently released children's books? It could be held via an online video chat provider such as Zoom. This could be a really exciting prospect for your pupils and will not only switch up their home

learning programme which they may be finding tiring, it will also give them something to look forward to. I think we could all do with something to look forward to, couldn't we?

To get your pupils involved and even more excited, maybe you could ask them which authors they'd like to see or what they're favourite books are. Realistically, you're not going to get J. K. Rowling on board as you won't be able to get passed her gatekeepers, however, upcoming and local authors will likely jump at the chance.

Include a Follow up Lesson

This is the authors chance to sell their book and to see how their target audience react, so ask them to read the story to your pupils and then allow the children to ask questions afterwards. Not only will your pupils love this engagement, but

the author will be grateful for the feedback too.

In the coming weeks/days before the story time session, it's a good idea to read the book yourself and set some questions or activities for your pupils to complete once the virtual session has finished. Or, to add more encouragement to complete the work, you could ask the author to set the tasks before they sign off.

Have you ever held a story time session with an author? How did it go? How did the children interact? How do you feel about holding a remote story time session? We'd love to know, email:

marketing@ablecanopies.co.uk

To maintain social distancing and to make authors feel safe, you could hold author story time sessions outside under your school canopy.

2020'S POPULAR CANOPIES

Showcasing the most popular canopies from last year

It's officially here, we have the finalised list of the most popular canopies based on our canopy sales from 2020.

If you are looking to invest in a shade and shelter structure and are unsure of what type of structure to choose, this article may help by showing the canopies that other schools and companies are big fans of.

In 2020, we supplied and installed many different products from our range, with each of them installed multiple times at different locations across the UK, for schools and many other sectors. So, let's look at the five most popular canopies from 2020.

5



Beck Wall Mounted Entrance Canopy

The Beck is a slimline wall mounted entrance canopy that is cantilevered and therefore features no front posts. This makes it perfect for small entrances where front canopy posts are not ideal and could well be the reason it is the 5th most popular canopy. The canopy frame is manufactured from strong aluminium sections so you know it will last for many years due to aluminium's natural resistance against rust; and it is covered with 4mm solid polycarbonate panels.

Find out more about the Beck Entrance Canopy on our website: www.ablecanopies.co.uk



4

Ulverston Umbrella

It's not surprising that a tensile fabric canopy has made it into the top five, in particularly the Ulverston Umbrella. We have been installing the Ulverston for over 10 years and it still looks just as modern and striking as the first one we installed all those years ago. Brady Primary School in Romford, London loved the Ulverston Umbrella so much, they had four 5m x 5m umbrellas installed in June 2020.

Find out more about the Ulverston Umbrella on our website: www.ablecanopies.co.uk

3 Tarnhow Mono Wall Mounted Timber Canopy

Our range of timber canopies are a big hit with our customers as the Tarnhow Mono Wall Mounted Timber Canopy comes in at number three. It's easy to see why, our timber canopies are constructed from Glulam Timber which is supplied by FSC Accredited Timber Merchants. There are five structures in our range with some featuring straight timber beams and some featuring striking curved timber beams.

You can download our guide to timber canopy structures which will provide you with more information and help you make an informed decision. To download the guide and find out more about the Tarnhow Mono Wall Mounted Timber Canopy visit our website: www.ablecanopies.co.uk



2 Tarnhow Dome Free Standing Timber Canopy

The second most popular canopy is another one that has proven popular year after year and has kept a secure spot at number 2; The Tarnhow Dome Free Standing Timber Canopy.

This striking canopy can achieve an impressive span of 12 metres and an unlimited length.

I particularly love this 33.1m x 7m Tarnhow Dome that we installed at Eastbrook Primary School in Dagenham back in June 2020.

Find out more about the Tarnhow Dome Free Standing Timber Canopy on our website: www.ablecanopies.co.uk

1

The Coniston Wall Mounted Canopy

The Coniston Wall Mounted Canopy really is the 'King of Canopies', statistics show that it is our most popular product year after year, topping our canopy sales. It's no wonder as it is so versatile, looks fantastic in any environment and provides the weather protection required including shelter from the rain and over 98% UV protection from the sun. What's more, it is supplied with a 10 year guarantee and a 25 year life expectancy.

In 2020, we installed over 90 Coniston Wall Mounted Canopies, with a total length of 1271 metres. So, if you have a suitable wall for fixing a canopy to, it is sure to be the canopy for you.

Find out more about the Coniston on our website: www.ablecanopies.co.uk



HOW TO ENCOURAGE CHILDREN TO EXERCISE OUTSIDE

Once again, we are starting to come out of lockdown, and children are gradually going back to their classrooms. However, the time spent at home is a potential risk to children's health. Remote learning is often associated with staying inside and sitting in front of the computer or with worksheets. Very few physical tasks are given during this time.

With children back in the classroom, it's the perfect time to get them more active again to increase their energy levels, concentration levels and enthusiasm. Numerous studies have also proven that being active also helps increase happiness and makes us feel better in general.

1. Incorporate Your Lessons into the Outside Time

Teach children about map drawing

and then ask them to draw a map of their street, or an outdoor area of the school. Whilst the lockdown may restrict your ability to take them outside of the school grounds, there should be plenty for them to draw from within gates, even if looking through the fence.

2. Ask Them to Collect Items

Kids love to find and collect things from outside. So have that as part of your work. Ask them to go out into their garden and find five man-made items, five things made from wood, five things that are natural, etc... These small tasks will have the children running around the school grounds in no time.

3. Outside Time

Your pupils have been working from home for a long time so consider giving them breaks and ask them to go outside for small

periods of time. This will break up the day that can help them to refocus and be more productive in their learning.

4. Sport Challenges

Sport challenges are a great way to get the children active. Give them a challenge every week to improve a particular skill. For instance, keeping a ball in the air using only their feet. Tell them to try on Monday and then practice throughout the week, keeping track of their progress.

Conclusion

Lockdown doesn't mean that children shouldn't spend time outside. It just means that you have to be creative to work it into your lesson plans. Try some of the ideas above to help you out now.



HOW WELL WILL MY CANOPY AGE?



So, you're about to invest in a commercial canopy, but you'd like to know how well the structure will age? That's a very good question, canopies are big investments and if you choose a robust structure from a trusted supplier, your canopy will not only live up to, it will also exceed your expectations.

To give you an idea, back in March 2020, we installed a large 12m x 7.5m Double Grange Free Standing Canopy at a primary school in Manchester, Lancashire. They love their canopy so much, that they contacted us again almost one year later (February 2021) for another two canopies. This is the third time the school has ordered from us; we also installed a 11.2m

x 9.2m Double Grange Free Standing Canopy in June 2015.

Coming back to the present, just a couple of weeks ago, we visited the school again to carry out a pre-site survey. Simon, who was their designated surveyor in 2020, attended the site yet again and whilst he was there, he took some fantastic photos of the canopy we installed the previous year (shown above and below).

As a Marketer, I absolutely love to see photos of our canopies with equipment underneath that makes them look 'lived in' and well loved. So when Simon sent these photos to me, I knew I had to show them off! Not just because it helps you to see what a canopy looks like once

it's in use, what kind of use you can gain from it and how invaluable it will be for your outdoor settings, in this case a an outdoor classroom and play area. It also shows you how the canopy looks exactly the same one year later. Look after your canopy, and your canopy will look after you and your pupils and protect you from the weather for many, many years to come.

Even though our canopies look great years after the installations it's not just about the appearance, its about the structural performance too. Our canopies are supplied with up to a 25 year life expectancy. Yes, that's correct, 25 years. You really can't go wrong with a canopy from Able Canopies.





FUNDRAISING



Virtual Zoo

Lots of families have pets and some have more unusual pets like reptiles, birds and amphibians. While you can't welcome them into your school for visits and exhibition, you can ask parents to do short presentations with their pets and show them online. Businesses can sponsor a video or you could charge for a tour of the virtual zoo.

If you want some ideas about how this can work, you can view many YouTube channels that have pet room tours or Chester Zoo who held virtual Zoo tours throughout 2020.

Online Quiz

Hold an online quiz where a question sheet can be placed and families can submit their answers online. Charge for an entry and offer a prize for the family with the most correct answers. There are some great options when it comes to hosting a quiz online, however it may take time for you to set this up.

Businesses can get involved by donating prizes and advertising your quiz to their customers. The more teams that take part, the more money you can make.



Selling Merchandise

Easter is a great time for small token gifts like t-shirts, mugs, hats and more. So why not use one of the many print on demand services and sell to your students' families? You can create a design or use the school logo and design almost anything for your pupils and their families to order on your website.

The printer will then create and deliver the products direct to those who've bought them.

Sponsorship

Encourage your teachers to do something for sponsorship. Whether it is a sponsored run or something more unique, like dressing up for the day, or two teachers playing a sponsored tennis match, there are plenty of ways that you can turn this into an event to raise money. You can show the sponsored event live on YouTube or Facebook and have other mini-events being held at the same time.

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. So here's some 'different' dates for your diary to mix things up a little.

11th April

National Pet Day

Whilst the national lockdown may have put bringing pets into class on hold, you can ask parents to put on virtual pet shows as mentioned on page 12 (fundraising ideas). You can set pupils the task to draw their pets, or the pets they wish they had and write what they love about them.



27th April

Tell a Story Day

You can get really inventive with this one, you could read stories to your pupils, ask an author to hold a virtual story time session (see page 7). Or maybe ask children to bring in their favorite stories and talk or write about why they love them.

3rd - 9th May

National Wildflower Week

What better way could there be to get children outside and interested in nature than with National Wildflower Week? There's so much you could do with a lot of activities throughout the week such as: painting or drawing wildflowers, planting wildflower seeds at school, playing wildflower bingo, go wildflower spotting around the school, and so much more. May is the perfect time to take lessons outside as the weather is really beginning to warm up and children will love the change of scenery.



7th May

National Space Day

Children seem to love anything to do with space, there's a whole world of ideas out there than you can incorporate into your lessons such as making a solar system and building a rocket from cardboard boxes that the children can sit in. You could also make model planets from clay or Play-dough, make an exploding bottle rocket and so much more.

3rd - 9th May

Sun Awareness Week

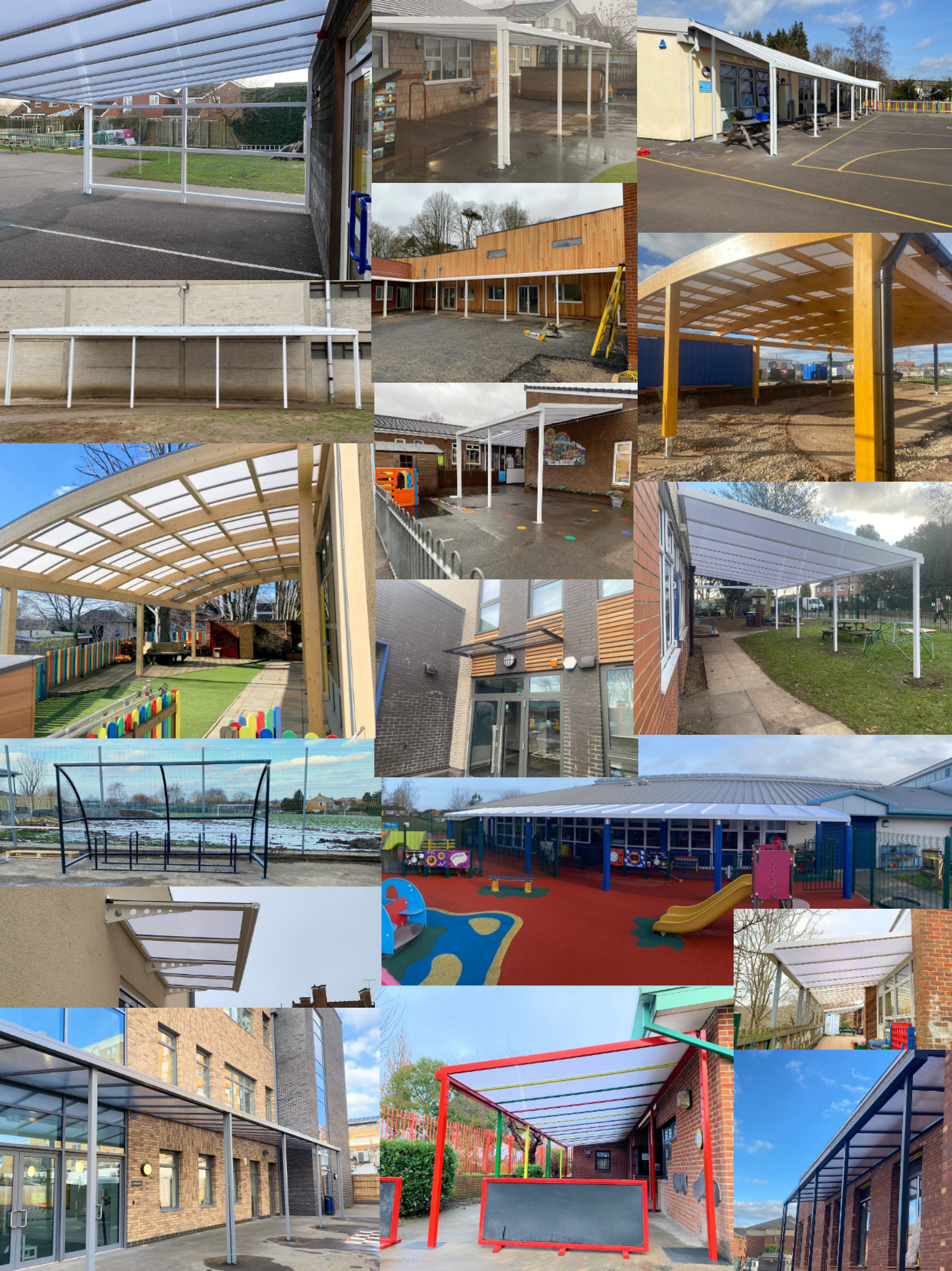
With the summer beginning in May, it's the perfect time to bring awareness to the sun's benefits as well as the safety measures we need to take. Visit: www.ablecanopies.co.uk/shademan for free downloads including a sun safety activity pack, posters and a paper sun hat template.



Disclaimer: We are not associated with any of the events listed on this page.

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

"The service received was impeccable throughout the whole company. We felt valued as a customer and not just another number on the order list."

- Kites Nursery,
Newport, Gwent

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

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

