

Play & Learn Outdoors

Fun Ideas to Expand a Safe Learning Environment for Your School

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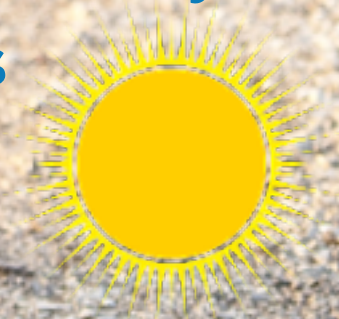
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£7 MILLION INVESTMENT INCLUDES FIVE TIMBER CANOPIES FOR NEW PRIMARY SCHOOL IN DEVON

*Head over to
pages 4 & 5 to
find out about the
investment that
enabled the build
of the all-new
Dartington
Church of
England
Primary
School*



able
canopies
& outdoor projects

If you're interested in a timber canopy for your school or nursery, head over to www.ablecanopies.co.uk/timber or give us a call on **0800 389 9072**. Alternatively you can email us: sales@ablecanopies.co.uk

HELLO AND WELCOME TO THE SEPTEMBER EDITION OF PLAY & LEARN OUTDOORS.

I hope you've all had a brilliant summer so far. We're sadly coming to the end of it now, which means it's time to make the most of the last of the warm weather and start preparing for the cooler months ahead.

So keep this edition of P&LO to one side and save it for your

break with a fresh brew. Once you've had a read, why not leave it in the staff room for your colleagues to flick through?

We have a bumper issue this month so there's plenty to read including everything to do with outdoor learning and play, as well as fundraising

ideas to kick start the new school year with positive vibes and enthusiasm.

Best Wishes
Tracy Meakins
Managing Director

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FREE GUIDES FOR OUTDOOR LEARNING

We have a wide range of FREE guides and packs which can be downloaded direct from our website.

Our guides will provide you with outdoor learning and play inspiration as well as help you build the perfect outdoor setting for your school or nursery.

They're perfect for printing and popping in your staff room for a little lunch time reading along with copies of P&LO.





£7 MILLION INVESTMENT INCLUDES FIVE TIMBER CANOPIES FOR NEW PRIMARY SCHOOL IN DEVON

Able Canopies Ltd. Deliver Covered Outdoor Spaces for Dartington C of E Primary School

As part of a £7 million construction of the new Dartington Church of England Primary School, Able Canopies Ltd. designed, supplied and installed a number of bespoke timber canopies to provide versatile outdoor spaces for pupils and teachers.

The new £7 million school in Totnes, Devon, replaced the previous eco-school which opened in 2010 but vacated in 2014 due to serious and persistent issues with the roof. The new development, which

consists of 12 classrooms and a range of modern facilities, will be used by 315 primary school pupils and 30 Early Years children.

An important aspect of the design of the school was to establish a free flow between the inside and the outside. The school canopies were an important part of creating a space that could be used throughout the school year. More than 130 metres of Able Canopies' wall mounted Tarnhow system was installed and wrapped around the building. This includes an internal and external corner at the entrance as well as

variations in ground height. The canopy projects four metres from the classrooms which allows plenty of space for the children to play outside in all weathers.



The canopy not only provides shelter from the rain, but the polycarbonate roof panels also offer shade and protection from the sun.

The Tarnhow Timber Canopy system which features Glulam timber beams was chosen to continue the natural look that was established by the design of the main school building. Jamie Knode from Atkins Global architects explained: *“The school is within a conservation area so the way it would integrate and complement its surroundings was a key consideration. Adding a canopy to the building can have a huge effect on the look of a structure and by using a timber frame canopy we were able to soften the look of the building and help give it a more natural appearance.”*

A bespoke approach was taken to allow the canopy to ‘lean into the structure’ to take some of the structural load allowing wider than standard spans between the posts. This minimised the total number of posts to create a clearer, more open space. The supports were also protected with colourful post pads to ensure the safety of the children.

The Tarnhow Wall Mounted Timber Canopy was also used to create covered areas at the entrance where parents can wait when collecting



their children from school and a Tarnhow Free Standing Timber Canopy was utilised as a covered bicycle storage area. The architects also designed large recesses within the building’s shape which were covered by the canopy. Astro turf and chalk boards have been added in these spaces to create external classrooms which teachers can use as outdoor teaching spaces.

Due to the specific, custom requirements of the project, specialised steelwork and brackets were required to achieve the installation. Able Canopies Ltd. worked closely with architects Atkins Global and main contractors Kier to integrate the canopy into the build of the school. The fixings and steelwork had to be installed during the construction of the main building ready for the canopy to be erected towards the end of the project. In total, the canopy installations took around 6 weeks to complete with multiple stages that required coordination with other trades and contractor teams on site.



The canopy was further integrated with the building as it formed part of the rainwater management system of the building. The roof was designed to overhang the canopy so that the water drained off the main roof and into the gutter system on the canopy. This was done to simplify the system and will make maintenance easier by bringing the gutter height down – reducing both the short term and long-term costs of the building.

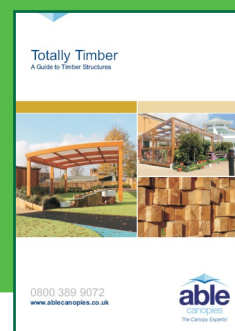
Jamie concluded: *“We have been very pleased with Able Canopies’ system. The team at Able Canopies have been very flexible and adaptable in helping us to achieve our vision for the project. There were a lot of technical details that needed to be worked through and they were there at every stage of the process.”*

FREE DOWNLOAD

Timber Canopy Guide

Download your free copy of **Totally Timber - a Guide to Timber Canopies** to help you choose the perfect timber canopy for your outdoor learning area.

Download your copy now >
www.ablecanopies.co.uk/guides



SUN SAFETY TIPS FOR YOUR SETTING



Hi! It's Shade Man here.

If you're looking for more sun safety tips and ways to incorporate sun safety into your lessons, download my **FREE Sun Safe Activity Pack**.

Head over to:

www.ablecanopies.co.uk/shademan



With summer nearly over, there may still be days with plenty of hot sunshine! Sunshine is a great stimulus for outside play and all summer long children enjoy playing their favourite games in your gardens, playgrounds and outside at home.

However, the hot summer sun also presents some dangers. UV damage is one of the biggest problems. Children can also struggle with getting too hot. So, here's our suggestions for sun safety in schools.

Use Shaded Areas Regularly

Ensure that children are playing in the shade regularly. Here

they can get all the benefits of playing outside, but without being in direct sunlight. School canopies are a great way to provide good shelter in your educational setting.

The worst time to be in direct sunlight is between noon and 3pm, so be sure to keep children under a canopy during this time period.

Keep Children Covered

When playing outside with direct exposure to the sun, ensure children are covered. Ensure they are wearing their hats while out in the sun.

Sun cream can also be applied to help keep children's skin



Keep your pupils protected from the sun with our top tips

from being damaged by the harmful UV rays of the sun.

Drink Plenty Of Water

Dehydration can cause lots of problems for children. So each child should have a regular supply of fresh water to ensure that they can stay hydrated. Take regular breaks and ensure children are drinking some water during those periods.

Educate Children About The Dangers Of The Sun

Another key aspect is education. Children should know about the dangers of playing in the sun for too long. However, there is a fine balancing act. Children shouldn't be scared about playing out in the sun, because there are many benefits. Instead, you need to teach them how to ensure they're safe while playing.

If you want to know more information about playing in the sun, then why not check out Shade Man for advice and tips to improve sun safety in schools. He has lots of free sun safety information and downloads for you and your children. visit www.ablecanopies.co.uk/shademan

SUN FACT:

You still need to gain protection from the sun on cloudy days because 80% of the sun's rays can pass through clouds and fog.

54%

of parents find too many cars around school gates the most annoying part of the school run



WALK TO SCHOOL MONTH

October is Walk to School Month. This is an international event that occurs every October. It's an opportunity for children to join hundreds of thousands of pupils across the globe celebrating walking to school.

Be sure to tell your pupils and parents so they can take part if they are able to, and make the most of this event that keeps participants healthy and encourages socialising not just for pupils, but for parents too.

Currently just 53% of children in England walk to school, and 42% in Wales and Scotland. This is down significantly from a generation ago, when 70% of children used to walk to school.

EMBRACE THE OUTSIDE!

Learning using everything that is outdoors

When it comes to learning, the outdoors can be a great classroom. There are numerous elements that can be incorporated into lessons that help children develop their mental well being, the natural world and physical abilities.

Here's how you can use the outdoors to enhance learning in your educational setting.

Sounds

The outdoors can be noisy. There's animals, traffic, people and other elements that can make for interesting learning points. Spend time outside and talk to children about what they can hear. You can even connect specific sounds to what they come from, like what different bird songs sound like or what the sound of wind going through a wind chime makes.

Physical Touch

There are so many different textures and sensations that can be experienced in any outdoor setting. Mud can be wet and sticky or dry and dusty. Allowing children to experience these differences are a great learning tool. If you show them dry mud, and then wet mud, they will see the difference and experience cause and effect.

Nature

Nature is all around us and it is important for children to learn about wildlife both in the UK and from other countries. Get children to recognise animals that are in your outdoor spaces and learn about life cycles. You'll find that many children will really enjoy these classes. You can also have a growing area next to your school canopy so children can learn about growing plants.

The outdoor areas of your setting are great places for creative play.

Children can pretend to be firemen rescuing people across the area and use the cover of the canopy as the fire base. This kind of play helps them to create identities, learn good social interactions, and get some great exercise that helps with motor skills.

A Sense Of Wonder

The outdoors is a great place for children because they see it all as a wondrous, almost magical place. Think of all the children who see knots in trees and think of them as fairy doors. When children are outside, they have fun and it is memorable.

Conclusion

The outside spaces for children in your educational settings are amazing places. They can help children learn across many different areas including their cognitive, physical and social skill sets. Therefore, don't waste the vast amount of learning opportunities that are outside. Even in hot, cold and rainy weather, these spaces can be enjoyed to their fullest.

The above activities can be enjoyed under a school canopy to enable them to go ahead all year round and to stop the rain putting a damper on your outside lesson plans.



EARN CASH FROM TRASH WITH TERRACYCLE

Recycling is a major focus for many communities up and down the country. Despite our best efforts however, there is 300,000 tonnes of non-recyclable waste produced in the UK every year. Much of this waste is taken to countries afar a field as Singapore, where it is burned or just dumped, causing more damage to the environment.

That is where companies like TerraCycle come in. They're offering businesses, schools and individuals the chance to recycle items that councils and authorities don't often take. For instance, stationary items, crisp packets, snack packaging and arts/craft items can be recycled through many of their schemes.

The items are then collected and recycled in many different ways. For instance, at the time of writing this, TerraCycle was offering one school the chance to win a playground that is made entirely from oral care products.

Schools Win With Recycling

There are many ways that schools can win with TerraCycle. Firstly, it can help educate your children about taking care of the environment and the importance of recycling which is very big at the moment. Secondly, schools participating in one of their schemes also receive rewards that can be turned into funds for the school.

This is one way that you can



WE RECYCLE WITH
TERRACYCLE !

invest in your school infrastructure like computing, school canopies or sports equipment. In addition, you can use TerraCycle to increase social responsibility, something that is really important in today's society.

Tips For Using TerraCycle

There are several tips for using TerraCycle. Firstly, choose schemes that are suitable for your school. If you do lots of arts and craft, this is an obvious scheme. So is the scheme for writing equipment. You should also look at whether there are enough crisps used within your school to participate in one of those schemes.

Next, promote the schemes to families and the local community. It's not just your school that can contribute to the schemes. Families can also

drop off rubbish to your schemes and so can members of the local community. For this, you can have your collection bins located under a canopy that is accessible to the public. The more you collect, the more funding you can claim back from TerraCycle.

You can download free posters and information sheets from the TerraCycle website to use around the school.

Finally, try to gamify the process by having targets for classes and the school. Promote these games and targets and see how children actively participate in order to win. The TerraCycle website also has a download for a 'Diploma of the Best Collector' which you can use.

To find out more and to sign up to TerraCycle visit: www.terracycle.com

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FUNDRAISING

Kick off the fundraising season with some cracking events

The start of the new school year is the perfect time to give your fundraising efforts a big freshen-up and bring some new ideas into the mix as well as recruiting more PTA/fundraising members.

There's lot's of fundraising opportunities just around the corner including Halloween, Guy Fawkes Night and Christmas so don't waste any time, get your fundraising team rearing to go with these fabulous ideas.

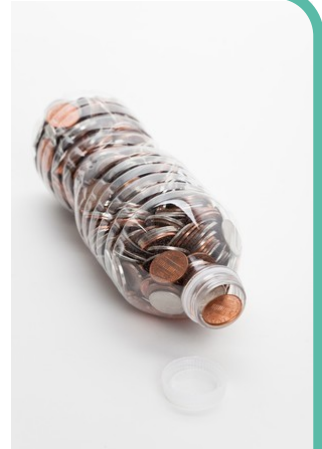
If you're looking for a little more fundraising inspiration, visit: www.ablecanopies.co.uk/guides to download your free A-Z fundraising pack.

A Penny Bottle

Now, here's something a little different... Before you pop your plastic bottles in the recycling, put them to good use first. Give each class within the school an empty plastic bottle and cut a hole in each of them near the top, big enough for a penny, making sure there are no sharp edges.

Ask parents and teachers from each class to spare their pennies and fill the bottles. It's best not to make it a competition against each class but more of an overall target to see how much the whole school can raise each month from the penny bottles. The average bottle can hold nearly £8 of change in it.

To keep it on the safe side, I advise only parents and teachers should fill the bottles to save any potential incidents with children raiding their brother's or sister's savings.



Nostalgic Games Night

Have you ever heard of a Nostalgic Games Night? You have now... Bring back all the memories of childhood and family games nights for parents and teachers.

Gathering around the table as a family to play games is something that doesn't seem to happen anymore, so why not give your community a feel of the 'good ol' days' and host your very own Nostalgic Games Night.

Search the charity shops and ask for donations of games such as Battleship, Blockbusters, Frustration, Trivial Pursuit, Cluedo, Connect Four, Mouse Trap, Scrabble, Boggle, Buckaroo, Operation, Guess Who and many more. Then simply charge an entry fee per person - tickets in advance only and offer refreshments to purchase on the night.

New Recruits

Bring some fresh ideas into the committee by sending out a request for new members to join, adding more people to the group means you have more hands to help at events as well as more contacts and more



ideas. It's a win-win situation. You will find that new parents to the school may be interested in signing up as well as existing parents that weren't able to commit before, but are now.



Left Over Holiday Cash

The start of the new term means that many families may have holidayed abroad recently, so why not put out a little request asking if parents have any left over foreign money that they no longer need and would like to donate to your PTA to put towards the school. All you need to do is convert it into UK pounds at the local Post Office or Travel Agents. A little effort that could end with big rewards.



International Food Night

Warm everyone up as the weather starts cooling down with an international food night. Create a pop-up restaurant within your school, either with your staff prepping food or ask international chefs to host and work out a percentage of profits each.

Fundraising Tip

Organise events that will appeal to not only parents, but the local community as well.

8 WAYS A SHADE SAIL CAN BENEFIT YOUR SCHOOL

Shade Sails do much more than provide shade and look pretty...

Shade Sails offer many benefits to schools and other educational environments. Below I have listed the top 8 benefits that shade sails offer, proving that shade sails really are the ideal sun canopy for schools.

1. High UV Protection

Shade Sails offer high UV protection from harmful UV rays produced by the sun. Fortunately children are now spending more and more time outdoors however, we need to protect them from the risk of skin damage such as skin cancers. Our shade sails protect from up to 98.8% of the sun's harmful UV rays, keeping children and teachers underneath safe.

2. Cooler Play Areas

In the height of summer, most children love playing outside & running around however, they may find themselves getting a little heated and need somewhere to cool down whilst still benefiting from fresh air. Shade Sails provide a cool, shaded area in the playground to which the children can sit under to keep cool and help avoid the risk of sunstroke and sunburn.

3. Ventilation

Our shade sails are use a knitted fabric which has tiny mesh holes allowing airflow through the fabric. This means that whilst gaining shade under the shade sail, pupils will also benefits from a pleasant breeze – this would be much more

comfortable than trying to cool down in a warm building.

4. Pleasant Eating Area

You can create a shaded outdoor dining or picnic area within your environment with the use of a shade sail. You can add benches and picnic tables or keep it purely for picnics seated on the grass which can be very enjoyable to children.

5. Brighten Up Your Outside Area

Shade Sails are available in a wide range of colours including vibrant, funky colours and calming pastel colours. The vibrant colours will brighten up your outdoor area whilst the pastel colours help to create a peaceful shaded area.





6. Style Options

Shade Sails offer an endless selection of design options making your shade sail choice completely bespoke to you. Our sails are available in triangular, rectangular and square shapes which are available in different sizes to suit your preference.

You can choose to have just the one sail to create a small shaded area or multiple sails in one area to create a large covered area which can be used for large events. Multiple shade sails can be arranged differently to create aesthetically pleasing contemporary designs. The design chosen can be enhanced to compliment your environment by ordering the sails in contrasting colours of your choice.

7. Create a Cool, Shaded Outdoor Learning Area

By investing in a shade sail, you will be offering your staff the chance to relocate their lessons outside when the sun is beaming in on the classrooms making them stuffy and uncomfortable. By learning outside underneath shade sails, children can enjoy fresh air and refreshing shade, enabling them to concentrate and focus on their school work, plus it makes lessons more fun.

8. Attractive Events Shelter

You can create an attractive events shelter from multiple shade sails which can be used for large events and displays keeping your visitors sheltered and shaded.

Carnfunnock Country Park in Larne, County Antrim created an events shelter with an array of 10 Able Shade Sails in two different colours; pink and light green. The park manager chose the specified colours as they tied in perfectly with the nearby garden floral displays and provided a dramatic backdrop for their summer band concerts.



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 shared some upcoming dates with you below from the big and obvious through to the smaller and less well-known, either way, there is plenty going on this time of year.



September

8th

International Literacy Day



13th

Roald Dahl Day

19th

International Talk Like a Pirate Day

27th

Macmillan Coffee Morning

29th

World Heart Day



October

1st - 31st

International Walk to School Month

4th

World Smile Day

4th - 10th

October World Space Week

5th

World Teachers Day

7th - 11th

National Pyjama Week



November

5th

Guy Fawkes Night



11th - 15th

Big School Swim Week

11th - 15th

Anti-Bullying Week

20th

Beep! Beep! Day



23rd

National Tree Week Begins



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

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 are a professional, patient and friendly organisation. We would definitely use them again and strongly recommend them to other schools/ organisations."

Malling Close Children's Centre
Croydon, London

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

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

