



Using Outdoor Learning to deliver

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# *'HEALTHY MIND, HAPPY ME'*

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## *Resilience & Coping*



Available to all schools, 'Healthy Mind, Happy Me' is a curriculum designed to support the Sandwell Well-being Charter Mark. Developed by Sandwell Council's Inclusion Support Educational Psychologists in partnership with the council's Public Health team, the Charter Mark is an opportunity to commit to improving the mental health and well-being of everyone connected with a school. The curriculum uses characters to highlight the key themes: All About Me, Friendships, Resilience and Coping, Belonging, My Wider World and Being the Best I Can Be.



Using themes, language and learning objectives outlined in the 'Healthy Mind, Happy Me' curriculum, here are some outdoor activities compiled by Sandwell Residential Education Service that can be delivered at school and that underpin the purpose of the curriculum.

## Resilience & Coping

Mapped in the curriculum for Reception, Y2, Y4 & Y6.

- Promoting resilience
- Normalising change
- Building up strategies to help self and others

### ENJOYING THE MOMENT

Noticing the world around us and our thoughts; being relaxed and calm in that moment

### INTRODUCING RESILIENCE

Being able to find a way to help yourself means you are a resilient person

### UNDERSTANDING CHANGE

Change happens, it can be difficult and that is normal

### MAKING CHOICES

Making the right choice is sometimes difficult. It is OK to change your mind



# Enjoying the Moment

*Noticing the world around us and our thoughts*



LOb Reception	LOb Y2	LOb Y4	LOb Y6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To be calm and quiet in the moment</li> <li>Explore senses</li> <li>Express how they feel</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Define mindfulness as:- feeling relaxed, noticing one thing, being in the moment</li> <li>Describe sense experiences</li> <li>Describe feelings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Define mindfulness</li> <li>Consciously engage in a mindfulness activity (safe place, visualisation)</li> <li>Using a mindfulness activity as a strategy for calming thoughts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Define mindfulness</li> <li>Consciously engage in mindfulness activities</li> <li>Notice what thoughts and feeling you have during mindfulness activity</li> <li>Consider times to use mindfulness activity to calm thoughts</li> </ul>

## NATURE WALK / SITTING OUTSIDE

At key points stop and be still, exploring the senses. What can children see, hear, smell, touch?

## FEELING FACES

Make faces out of natural objects / clay / to show how 'being in the moment' makes them feel.

## JOURNEY STICK

Journey/Story Stick; children collect items from nature and attach them to the stick to remember what they saw, felt and heard along the way. Reception can use a piece of card or paper with double-sided sticky tape to attach items. Recount the nature walk using the stick to help them recall where they went. What sense does each item stimulate? **Year 6:** find things for their stick that represent how they felt at different points on the journey as they stopped and enjoyed a moment. Create a story or poem from the items.

## NATURE SCAVENGE

Collecting and sorting can be used as a calming strategy. Scavenger Hunt: how many different things / materials can they find, how does this activity make them feel?

## HAPPY SAFE PLACE

Finding and exploring their own calm, happy safe space. Trees are good for this but it could be anywhere in the grounds. Sit quietly at a special place and move through the senses to see how they feel. Explore the special place; textures, colours. **Y4 - 6:** Describe the special place to others. Why it is special, how does it makes them feel? Draw a picture, write & share a poem or story about it. This can then be used to visualise the safe, special place later on.

## NATURE GARLAND

Collect things from nature and thread onto a string to hang up; what stage of the seasons are the different natural things at 'right now'? This can link with a nature garland for all seasons and the sub-theme of understanding change.

# Introducing Resilience

*Being able to find a way to help yourself*



Lob Reception	Lob Y2	Lob Y4	Lob Y6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How to help self when upset or unhappy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Having ways to help yourself in times of need</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finding positive ways to support peers and help self during times of need promoting resilience</li> <li>Creating a "kind mind"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finding positive ways to support peers and help self during times of need promoting resilience</li> <li>Creating a "kind mind"</li> </ul>

## PINE CONE HIDING / EGG HUNTING

Hide their cone in a special place for safe keeping (like squirrels), then do another activity (e.g. nest building), and then go back to try and find it. Talk about hiding feelings away when upset; it's much better to talk about it. Put cones / eggs in a 'nest' or from nest to bag, and talk about who they could talk to if upset. "If I was upset I could..." **Rec/Y2**

## NEST BUILDING / ANIMAL HOMES

Independently build a nest or animal home using resources children find, or materials they are given. What can they do if they are stuck? Have a help zone (hoop?) to stand in when they need assistance; who can help? Can they help themselves with prompts, and other children with ideas? Share creations explaining features, & review ways of helping. Knowing where to access help from an adult at this age is an important way of helping self. If enjoying egg hunt / nest building activity, discuss happy feelings; "I am always happy when..." **Rec/Y2**

## PROBLEM SOLVING CHALLENGES

Difficult team or individual problem solving challenges that are unlikely to work first time:- How can they help themselves, rather than giving up, or seeking answers from someone that might know how to solve it? Progressive tasks which get harder will develop resilience, or some tasks will need resilience more than others. Problem solving challenges are available online and at the end of this document **Y4/Y6**

## NATURE PEOPLE

Use the Personal Paper Chain activity from the curriculum, but use nature. Have an outline of a person on paper or card (A6 or A5). Collect and stick on small natural materials to fill in the background around the person which represents their partner. Small pieces of different colours gives a mosaic effect. Children could think about colours etc that their partner would like. In the middle of the person they write as many qualities and positive comments as they can about their partner. Feedback / present to each other. Explain how this can remind individuals about the positive things people might say to them if they were feeling upset or angry.

Connect the Nature People together on a display or in a chain to hang up. This is to show that, with support of those around us, we can develop resilience.

Developing a Kind Mind:- On a new small outline person write 3 positive comments about themselves. Explain that it's often easier to think kind things about others than it is ourselves. To help ourselves we have to have kind and positive thoughts about ourselves too. **Y4/Y6**



# Understanding Change

*Change happens, it can be difficult and that is normal*



LOb Reception	LOb Y2	LOb Y4	LOb Y6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Know examples of change</li> <li>• Know examples big and little changes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Know examples of change</li> <li>• Understand the difference between big and little changes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore examples of change</li> <li>• Change can be difficult, and we can respond in positive or negative ways</li> <li>• Recognising having a cloud over our head when change is happening</li> <li>• Recognising having a cloud is ok as long as it moves away in time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transition stages in life are a normal part of life</li> <li>• Change happens it can be uncomfortable but that is normal</li> <li>• Negative and positive responses to change</li> <li>• Recognising how to support someone if they have a cloud over their head</li> </ul>

## NATURE THROUGH THE SEASONS

Go on a nature walk and find things that change through the seasons, or are at different stages of their life cycle. Try it as a scavenger hunt; sit in a circle and have 2 or 3 children finding at a time, so they are going out and returning. Use the items for a garland or picture of the season.

## JOURNEY STICK

Create a journey stick (see "Enjoying the Moment") using items that change through the seasons or are at different stages of their life cycle. e.g leaves from different seasons, or seed / nut shells. Recount the nature walk using the stick to aid recall of where they went & what they found. **Year 6:** Use it to create a story or poem about how things change, such as seasonal changes or changes noticed on the walk.

## SOWING & GROWING

Sowing seeds is a practical way of looking at plants, growth and life cycles. Use a jam jar, water and kitchen roll to germinate a runner bean. Carrot tops will sprout in a saucer of water. Try a sunflower growing competition! Links with science curriculum - e.g. review parts of a plant, how plants grow, water cycles. More tips available at [www.sandwellresidential.co.uk/blog-news/get-growing](http://www.sandwellresidential.co.uk/blog-news/get-growing)

## MAGICAL MINIBEASTS

Habitats, Life-cycles, Bug Hunting, Pond Dipping:- what creatures can be found in the school grounds? Check under logs, bricks, trees, & in long grass. Put a white sheet under a tree and shake it; take turns to see what bugs appear. Can they find out the names of the creatures using an ID sheet? There are lots of wildlife spotting sheets available online. TIP: don't touch the creatures; turn logs back over and gently shake the sheet under the tree when finished. Can they create their own creature using natural objects or by drawing it? **Y2, Y4, Y6 linking with science curriculum.**

## CHANGE THE GAME

Positive and Negative Responses to Change: team / individual problem-solving challenges where the rules / target / outcome are changed. Consider how different people respond to this enforced change. Review and discuss how success / failure influenced responses. What strategies did different people use in their responses? **Y4 / Y6**



# Making Choices



*Making the right choice can be difficult. It's OK to change your mind.*

LOb Reception	LOb Y2	LOb Y4	LOb Y6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Begin to think about making choices</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Think about choices made when responding to change</li><li>• Healthy (rainbow road) and Negative Choices (cloudy road)</li><li>• Making the right choice is sometimes difficult</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Think about choices made in different situations</li><li>• Healthy and negative choices</li><li>• It is sometimes ok to change your mind</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Making choices can be difficult</li><li>• Healthy and negative choices</li><li>• It is ok to change your mind</li></ul>

## MAGIC ISLANDS

Create an island by choosing from objects & items available. Provide objects, laminated pictures and use natural materials. What shapes, homes, objects represent things on the island? Discuss and explain choices when presenting the island to others. Year 2 extend to discuss what happened when someone chose the house they wanted to use for their island? (rainbow road / cloudy road) **Rec/Y2/Y4**

## NATURE POSTCARD

Use card (postcard size) with outlines of different animals, and decorate the animal using natural items. Double sided sticky tape makes it easy for the children to stick things on. Colour the card if they want to. Share creatures made in circle time. Discuss choices made. e.g. why choose that animal? Why select those natural items? If they did it again would they change their mind? **Rec/Y2/Y4**

## CHALLENGE BY CHOICE

Team / Individual Challenges:- Teams choose whether to make the challenge harder (goal setting) or keep the same goal & change or improve how they approach the challenge. (see examples below)

## BIG MAP STAR ORIENTEERING

**SETUP:** Draw a map of the playground / field on an old sheet or plastic. It could be a birdseye view or show features to help younger students identify areas more easily. Place laminated pictures onto pegs / PE marker cones. Create an answer sheet with each picture next to a number. Number the marker locations on the map. Place the map centrally and set it so they can match a main feature on the map easily in real life. This helps them get orientated. **RUNNING THE ACTIVITY:** Give the children a number to find. They use the map to decide where to go, then run to the marker and bring the answer back. Tell them if they are correct, and either try again or give them a new number. Have waiting zones or hoops for the children to check the answers and help space them out when finding pictures at different locations. **Y2/Y4**

## ORIENTEERING

As above but children can have their own birds-eye map of the grounds which they need to have 'set' the right way. They can write answers down but still come back and go out each time to get the next number - this stops too many children being at one marker at the same time. **Y4/Y6**

## PELMANISM

A shape matching / choice making game worth looking into. Needs special kit. **Y4/Y6**



# Problem Solving Activities

*Experiential learning; developing resilience & communication skills.*

These challenges can be completed in groups of 5 or 6 and require minimal setup and resources. To get the most out of them, help the children to understand the challenge and then use a simple experiential learning cycle - plan, do, review - and then repeat the activity to measure improvement in teamwork, communication and listening skills. Were they successful? What worked and what could they do differently? Draw in examples of working together and supporting others, and always end with a review!

## ZIG ZAG PATH

Mark out a 5 x 5 grid - chalked out on playground is fine. Can students find the magic path from one side to the other? Only one route is possible; no diagonals. The adult or team member stands on the other side and tells them if they are right or wrong when they step on a square. If they are wrong it is the next child's go. The team must help each other remember the way for everyone to get across. **Year 3+**

## GIANT PUZZLE

Create a square from shapes that fit together (could use laminated pieces; available online - 5 square puzzle challenge) take turns in putting pieces together or have one child who places pieces.

## RING ON A STRING

Using a quoit or cone on string / rope / washing line tied at each end, how quickly can the team get the ring around the rope from start to finish? They must not touch the ring, older students must not let the rope touch the floor. Start with 40 seconds to 1 min target time, then set own targets for getting faster.

## ROPE SHAPES

Using a long rope or washing line tied at each end, can the children hold the rope and create different shapes? Circle, Square, Triangle, Star! Hands must stay on the rope; they can slide if they like.

## MEMORY LANE

Have a barrier dividing 2 teams and give each a set of coloured blocks / Lego. Ask one group to build a simple structure that the other team can't see. The second team have to ask questions to re-create the structure on their side. Keep the number of blocks low so the structures aren't too tricky! **Year 4+**

## HOOP DASH

How quickly can you get all of your team through a hoop – You must keep 2m apart from each other.

## KIM'S GAME

12 – 15 items on a tray, 1 or 2 mins to look at them. How many can they recall when items are covered?

## CONE COLOUR SWAP

7 squares in a line - 3 cones of one colour & 3 of another with a space in the middle to begin. Can they get the coloured cones to swap places by moving one space, or jumping over into a space. How many moves do they take? **Year 3+**

# Amazing Ways to Learn

*About this guide*



This guide was produced by Sue Ray, Senior Tutor and former Head of PE based at Edgmond Hall Centre for Outdoor Learning. If you are keen to try some of the activities but are unsure how to 'take the learning outside' or cannot picture how it might work in your specific school setting, please feel free to contact Sue who can talk through the sessions with you. Several of the activities add an 'outdoor twist' to ideas in the curriculum lesson plans, so don't feel daunted.

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## **ABOUT HEALTHY MIND, HAPPY ME**

Available to all schools, it is a spiral curriculum developed by Sandwell's Well-Being Charter Mark team, delivered throughout primary school and addressing 6 key themes - "All About Me", "Friendships", "Resilience and Coping", "Belonging", "My Wider World" and "Being the Best I Can Be" - using a developmental approach. Secondary schools have used the curriculum to support Y7 transition.

To find out more about the curriculum or Charter Mark:  
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## **SANDWELL RESIDENTIAL EDUCATION SERVICE**

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