



Melbourne
Primary School



Outdoor and Canal Curriculum

Grow – Explore – Achieve



Wonder
Learning Partnership
Educate | Empower | Engage | Enrich

Outdoor and Canal Curriculum

Our Outdoor Curriculum makes full use of the spaces that make our school grounds unique — the canal towpath, our forest school area and the wider outdoor environment — and draws on the local community around them, from the volunteers who care for the canal to the neighbours and families who join us for events throughout the year. It is designed to nurture curiosity, confidence and care for the natural world through hands-on, memorable experiences outside the classroom.



cultivate plants and food from seed to harvest through gardening, understand where food comes from, and grow in confidence and independence along the way.



investigate the canal, the outdoor environment and the wider local area with curiosity and confidence, building knowledge of the natural world and the community around them.



create, make and present something to be proud of, drawing on skills from right across the curriculum — art, design and technology, music, computing and more — and share their learning with the wider community.

Where a clear link exists, activities are matched to a National Curriculum objective or, in the Early Years, an Early Learning Goal.

The Outdoor Curriculum is more than a set of activities — it is a chance for every child to grow, explore and achieve alongside the canal, our forest school area and the wider outdoor environment that make our school grounds unique, and alongside the community that helps bring it to life.

Autumn Term

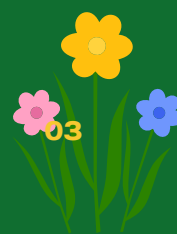
Early years



Activity	Early Learning Goal link
Grow	
Plant daffodil and tulip bulbs around the school grounds	Understanding the World (The Natural World): explore the natural world, making observations and drawings
Explore	
Make clay hedgehogs, foraging for sticks and natural decorations around the school grounds to enhance the models	Expressive Arts and Design (Creating with Materials): use and explore materials, tools and techniques
Explore sunflower heads and collect the seeds, ready for planting in the spring term	Understanding the World (The Natural World): explore the natural world, making observations and drawings
Nature walk around the school grounds, observing plant life and minibeasts	Understanding the World (The Natural World): explore the natural world, making observations and drawings
Leaf art – wreaths, printing and nature hats	Expressive Arts and Design (Creating with Materials): use and explore materials, tools and techniques
Make nature wands	Expressive Arts and Design (Creating with Materials): use and explore materials, tools and techniques
Achieve	
Sound walk around the school grounds, identifying and recording the different sounds and wildlife heard	Communication and Language (Listening, Attention and Understanding): listen attentively and respond with relevant comments
Nature face pictures using natural resources, linked to the topic	Expressive Arts and Design (Creating with Materials): use and explore materials, tools and techniques

Spring Term

Activity	Early Learning Goal link
Grow	
Beans in a Bag – linking with the story and topic of Jack and the Beanstalk	Understanding the World (The Natural World): explore the natural world, making observations and drawings
Sunflower planting competition – whose sunflower will grow the tallest?	Understanding the World (The Natural World): explore the natural world, making observations and drawings
Buy strawberry plants in preparation for jam making in the summer term	Understanding the World (The Natural World): explore the natural world, making observations and drawings
Act out The Three Billy Goats Gruff using props, logs and the grass bank	Expressive Arts and Design (Being Imaginative and Expressive): use props and materials in imaginative role play
Explore	
Visit the Chapel to learn about Easter	Understanding the World (People, Culture and Communities): know about different religious and cultural communities
Explore how to cross the road safely	Personal, Social and Emotional Development (Managing Self): understand rules and know right from wrong
Observational drawings of plant life in our outside areas – daffodils and tulips	Understanding the World (The Natural World): explore the natural world, making observations and drawings
Achieve	
Make a bug house/hotel	Expressive Arts and Design (Creating with Materials): use and explore materials, tools and techniques
Obstacle course making and team games – gross motor development	Physical Development (Gross Motor Skills): negotiate space and obstacles safely





Activity	Early Learning Goal link
Grow	
Grow cress in the polytunnel for sandwich and picnic making	Understanding the World (The Natural World): explore the natural world, making observations and drawings
Act out Going on a Bear Hunt, sequencing the story through gross motor movement	Physical Development (Gross Motor Skills): move energetically in a variety of ways
Explore	
Den building	Expressive Arts and Design (Creating with Materials): use and explore materials, tools and techniques
Mud painting	Expressive Arts and Design (Creating with Materials): use and explore materials, tools and techniques
Explore our local canal environment – plant and animal life	Understanding the World (The Natural World): explore the natural world, making observations and drawings
Go on a shape hunt around the school grounds, looking for 2D and 3D shapes in nature	
Whole-school assembly – meet a Canal & River Trust volunteer or ranger to hear about looking after the canal	
Achieve	
Scarecrow contest – send out info to the village to join in.	Expressive Arts and Design (Creating with Materials): use and explore materials, tools and techniques
Harvest strawberries and make jam sandwiches for a class picnic, inviting parents and bringing teddies	Physical Development (Fine Motor Skills): use a range of small tools with control
Handa's Surprise Journey and fruit kebab/smoothie making – comparing environments	Literacy (Comprehension): retell stories and narratives in their own words



Autumn Term



Year
one

Activity	National Curriculum link
Grow	
Plant donated bulbs around the school grounds	
Explore	
Go on a nature walk around the school grounds, looking for signs of autumn	Science (Year 1, Seasonal changes): notice how the weather and seasons change throughout the year
Achieve	
Draw an autumn picture of the school grounds and take photographs to compare	Art and Design (KS1): develop a range of art techniques using colour, pattern and texture

Spring Term

Activity	National Curriculum link
Grow	
Observe and draw plant growth over time	
Plant seeds for a summer harvest	
Explore	
Sound walk along the canal, identifying and recording the different wildlife heard	Science (Working Scientifically, Y1): make close observations using simple equipment
Achieve	
Draw a spring picture of the school grounds and take photographs to compare	Art and Design (KS1): develop a range of art techniques using colour, pattern and texture





Activity	National Curriculum link
Grow	
Harvest and taste vegetables grown in the polytunnel (peas/carrots)	DT (Cooking and Nutrition, KS1): understand where food comes from
Explore	
Scavenger hunt around the school grounds, searching for and identifying minibeasts	Science (Working Scientifically, Y1): identify and classify what they find
Go on a canal boat trip	
Tree survey on the school field, identifying and counting trees using a picture key	Science (Year 1, Plants): identify and name common plants and trees
Whole-school assembly – meet a Canal & River Trust volunteer or ranger to hear about looking after the canal	
Achieve	
Draw a summer picture of the school grounds to generate a seasonal montage	Art and Design (KS1): develop a range of art techniques using colour, pattern and texture
Scarecrow contest – send out info to the village to join in.	DT (Design and Make, KS1): design and make a purposeful product using a range of materials



Autumn Term



Year
TWO

Activity	National Curriculum link
Grow	
Plant seeds and bulbs, including donated flowers	Science (Year 2, Plants): observe how seeds and bulbs grow into mature plants
Explore	
Bonfire night theme – learn how to safely light a fire, taught by Year 6	
Achieve	
Call and response canal sounds using musical instruments	Music (KS1): play tuned and untuned instruments musically
Design 'keep our towpath tidy' posters for the school noticeboard	Art and Design (KS1): develop a range of art techniques using colour, pattern and texture

Spring Term

Activity	National Curriculum link
Grow	
Observe and record the growth of plants and seeds in a diary	Science (Year 2, Plants): observe how seeds and bulbs grow into mature plants
Explore	
Plan a route for a canal walk, using a simple map	Geography (KS1, Fieldwork): use fieldwork skills to study the local area
Meet a Canal & River Trust volunteer or ranger to find out how the canal is looked after	
Achieve	
Talk with canal boat volunteers about life on the water	





Activity	National Curriculum link
Grow	
Plan and make a picnic using food grown in the polytunnel, to enjoy by the canal	DT (Cooking and Nutrition, KS1): understand where food comes from
Explore	
Draw a labelled diagram of the canal, showing the living things that can be found there	Science (Year 2, Living things and their habitats): identify plants and animals in their habitats
Whole-school assembly – meet a Canal & River Trust volunteer or ranger to hear about looking after the canal	
Achieve	
Seasonal canal photos taken across the year	Computing (KS1): use technology to create and organise digital content
Scarecrow contest – send out info to the village to join in.	DT (Design and Make, KS1): design and make a purposeful product using a range of materials



Autumn Term



Year
three

Activity	National Curriculum link
Grow	
Plant bulbs around the school grounds	Science (Year 3, Plants): explore what plants need to grow
Sow salad leaves in the polytunnel and use them in a class lunch	DT (Cooking and Nutrition, KS2): understand seasonality and where ingredients come from
Explore	
Meet a Tree - a blindfolded sensory challenge	
Make toast on the fire	
Achieve	
Draw the plants and animals found around the canal	Art and Design (KS2): develop mastery of drawing, painting and sculpture techniques

Spring Term

Activity	National Curriculum link
Grow	
Grow a potato and observe how it develops	Science (Year 3, Plants): explore what plants need to grow
Explore	
Colour hunt and story sticks activity along the canal loop, using found materials to build a story	Art and Design (KS2): develop mastery of drawing, painting and sculpture techniques
Complete an orienteering course on the school field, designed by Year 5	PE (KS2, Outdoor and Adventurous): take part in outdoor and adventurous activity challenges
Achieve	
Art Attack - make outdoor art using natural, foraged materials	Art and Design (KS2): develop mastery of drawing, painting and sculpture techniques





Activity	National Curriculum link
Grow	
Canal walk and scavenger hunt	
Harvest and cook the potato grown in the spring term, as part of a simple class meal	DT (Cooking and Nutrition, KS2): prepare and cook savoury dishes using a range of techniques
Explore	
Make scarecrows for the community trail	DT (Design, KS2): research and design a purposeful, functional product
Whole-school assembly – meet a Canal & River Trust volunteer or ranger to hear about looking after the canal	
Achieve	
Scarecrow contest – send out info to the village to join in.	



Autumn Term



Year
four

Activity	National Curriculum link
Grow	
Planting seeds and bulbs	
Make popcorn in the fire pit, or have hot soup	DT (Cooking and Nutrition, KS2): prepare and cook savoury dishes using a range of techniques
Explore	
Go foraging for brambles along the fields/canal walk to make small fruit pies	
Achieve	
Sketch canal boat motifs and designs to collate ideas to make their own	Art and Design (KS2, Sketchbooks): use a sketchbook to record and review ideas

Spring Term

Activity	National Curriculum link
Grow	
Build a small raft using natural materials from the canal bank, then race the rafts to see which is fastest	DT (Make, KS2): select and use materials for their functional properties
Grow tomatoes or cucumbers in the polytunnel and use them in a class salad	DT (Cooking and Nutrition, KS2): understand seasonality and where ingredients come from
KS2 Potato Growing Contest	
Explore	
Create a food chain of animals that live near the canal	Science (Year 4, Animals, including humans): construct and interpret food chains
Take part in the RSPB Bird Watch, using maths skills to count and record the birds seen and present the results as a bar chart	Maths (Year 4, Statistics): present data using bar charts and time graphs
Complete an orienteering course on the school field, designed by Year 6	PE (KS2, Outdoor and Adventurous): take part in outdoor and adventurous activity challenges
Achieve	
Make a 3D willow sculpture	Art and Design (KS2): develop mastery of drawing, painting and sculpture techniques





Activity	National Curriculum link
Grow	
Carry out a survey of the plants and trees that grow along the canal	Geography (KS2, Fieldwork): use fieldwork to observe, measure and record local features
Harvest the potatoes grown for the KS2 competition and cook and eat them as a class, e.g. jacket potatoes	DT (Cooking and Nutrition, KS2): prepare and cook savoury dishes using a range of techniques
Explore	
Make scarecrows for the community trail	DT (Design, KS2): research and design a purposeful, functional product
Whole-school assembly – meet a Canal & River Trust volunteer or ranger to hear about looking after the canal	
Achieve	
Scarecrow contest – send out info to the village to join in.	



Autumn Term

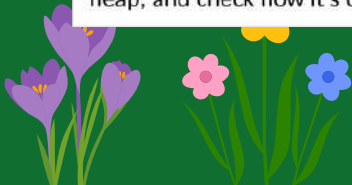


Year
five

Activity	National Curriculum link
Grow	
Ask for donations of bulbs to plant in the UKS2 tyre planters	
Grow herbs or salad leaves in the polytunnel to use in a class recipe	DT (Cooking and Nutrition, KS2): understand seasonality and where ingredients come from
Explore	
Forage brambles to make jam on the campfire	
Measure and record the canal's water temperature each month, ready to plot as a line graph in the summer term	Science (Working Scientifically, Y5/6): take accurate measurements using scientific equipment
Achieve	
Collect fallen leaves from around the canal path to start a leaf compost heap	

Spring Term

Activity	National Curriculum link
Grow	
Build a shelter and test how well it holds up in bad weather	DT (Make, KS2): select and use materials for their functional properties
KS2 Potato Growing Contest	
Explore	
Create a map of a section of the canal, highlighting key features	Geography (KS2, Fieldwork): use fieldwork to observe, measure and record local features
Measure and record the canal's water temperature each month, ready to plot as a line graph in the summer term	Science (Working Scientifically, Y5/6): take accurate measurements using scientific equipment
Design an orienteering course on the school field for Year 3, and complete the course Year 6 has designed	PE (KS2, Outdoor and Adventurous): take part in outdoor and adventurous activity challenges
Achieve	
Collect and add any remaining fallen leaves to the compost heap, and check how it's decomposing	



Summer Term



Year
five

Activity	National Curriculum link
Grow	
Create a food chain of canal life: algae → water flea → fish → heron	Science (Year 4, Animals, including humans): construct and interpret food chains
Harvest the potatoes grown for the KS2 competition and cook and eat them as a class, e.g. potato salad or mash	DT (Cooking and Nutrition, KS2): prepare and cook savoury dishes using a range of techniques
Explore	
Make natural paints using foraged berries	Art and Design (KS2): develop mastery of drawing, painting and sculpture techniques
Measure and record the canal's water temperature each month, ready to plot as a line graph in the summer term	Maths (Year 5, Statistics): solve problems using information from a line graph
Whole-school assembly – meet a Canal & River Trust volunteer or ranger to hear about looking after the canal	
Achieve	
Scarecrow contest – send out info to the village to join in.	DT (Design, KS2): research and design a purposeful, functional product



Autumn Term



Year
Six

Activity	National Curriculum link
Grow	
Research seasonal seeds to plant and how to care for them, calculating the space in the planter and how far apart seeds need to be	
Bonfire night theme - teach Year 2 how to safely light a fire	
Explore	
Plot an air temperature line graph over a two-week period, taking an average from three points in the day	Maths (Year 6, Statistics): construct line graphs and calculate the mean average
Litter pick along the school field and canal towpath, sorting and counting what's collected	
Achieve	
Visit the canal to identify risks and make canal safety posters, sharing awareness of canal safety	
Make wreaths in groups by weaving willow, and/or sell the frames/wreaths at the Christmas fair	Art and Design (KS2): develop mastery of drawing, painting and sculpture techniques

Spring Term

Activity	National Curriculum link
Grow	
Make clay faces on trees, using resources found around forest school	Art and Design (KS2): develop mastery of drawing, painting and sculpture techniques
Grow and harvest something from the polytunnel, e.g. strawberries or salad, to share as a class	DT (Cooking and Nutrition, KS2): understand seasonality and where ingredients come from
KS2 Potato Growing Contest	
Explore	
Visit the canal to identify animals, then make lifecycle posters of them	Science (Year 5, Living things and their habitats): describe the life cycles of different animals
Design an orienteering course on the school field for Year 4, and complete the course Year 5 has designed	PE (KS2, Outdoor and Adventurous): take part in outdoor and adventurous activity challenges
Achieve	
Collect and press flowers and leaves from the school field, then use them to make Easter cards or bunting	Art and Design (KS2): develop mastery of drawing, painting and sculpture techniques



Summer Term



Year
Six

Activity	National Curriculum link
Grow	
Harvest the potatoes grown for the KS2 competition and cook them on the fire to share as a class, e.g. potato and vegetable soup	DT (Cooking and Nutrition, KS2): prepare and cook savoury dishes using a range of techniques
Visit the canal and sketch the boats in the marina, using a range of skills and own personal style	Art and Design (KS2, Sketchbooks): use a sketchbook to record and review ideas
Explore	
Whole-school assembly – meet a Canal & River Trust volunteer or ranger to hear about looking after the canal	
Achieve	
Scarecrow contest – send out info to the village to join in.	DT (Design, KS2): research and design a purposeful, functional product

