



SOUTH WEST PEAK LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIP

Beyond the Classroom: Wild About Your School! Staff Guidance

The following guide has been developed to lead you through the process of running a project to improve your school grounds as a habitat for wildlife in the surrounding area. The Beyond the Classroom project is part of the South West Peak Landscape Partnership Scheme which has received grant funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund, the project aims to give pupils more opportunities to connect with the South West Peak landscape.

Following this guidance it is possible for those school pupils involved to receive the John Muir Award at the Discovery level.

Benefits of the programme

- Chance for pupils involved to receive the John Muir Award to Discovery level
- Development of a useful outdoor learning resource within your school grounds
- During internal and external visits pupils involved will learn wildlife survey skills and an increased appreciation for the wildlife that can be found on their doorsteps in the South West Peak
- Pupils working on the project can leave a lasting legacy and take ownership of the project results
- Pupils involved are gaining invaluable experience in working in groups; along with planning the project and budgeting funds
- The positive impacts on wildlife species on the school grounds can be monitored for years to come

Staff Involvement

As extra-curricular projects such as these place additional demand on staff timetables they can be spread out in order to reduce the strain on staffing. Some involvement from members of staff in school is beneficial; however, depending on group size there may be occasions when your Beyond the Classroom coordinator will be able to lead the group when working on school premises.

Funding

When it comes to sourcing money for any required investment in the project you will have the support of the project officer in applying for funding from a range of sources. Once your pupils have decided how much money they need we will connect you to sources for securing those funds. It may also be a valuable experience for the pupils to do some fundraising within school by designing an activity. This will depend on your individual preferences as a school and the level of support the pupils have through the project.

A list of possible funding sources can be found on the useful links document on the South West Peak website.

Wild About Your School – The Programme

Due to the specific requirements of each school the following programme is meant as a guide on how the project could progress to ensure that the requirements of the John Muir Award can be met. This can be tailored to suit your timescale and requirements.

<p>1) Project Officer (PO) visit – this is the initial chat that will allow you to go through the project and ask any questions you may have. This is an opportunity for the PO to get some ideas about the school site and we would also aim to address and resolve any constraints you may be facing.</p>	<p>Notes:</p>
<p>2) <u>Putting together your pupil group</u> – Upon visiting the school the PO will have provided a presentation to show to pupils in order to get the pupil group started. It could also be possible for the PO to come in and speak to the pupils in assembly to tell them about the project and the opportunities they have to get involved. <u>It is important to note that only pupils that have been involved at every stage of the process will be eligible to receive the John Muir Award.</u></p>	<p>Notes:</p>
<p>3) <u>School Environment Survey</u> – with your group set up it will be time to conduct a survey of your school environment. Resources will be provided to do this with an aim of highlighting possible areas for improvement/habitat creation.</p>	<p>Notes:</p>
<p>4) <u>Visit a local habitat in the South West Peak</u> – This activity will be led by the PO but will require school staff involvement, the level of which would be determined by the number of pupils involved. We would aim for this visit to be a visit within walking distance from the school site.</p> <p><u>At this stage pupils who were not actively involved in the Wild About Your School programme could still come along to visit and survey a local habitat.</u></p>	<p>Notes:</p>
<p>5) <u>Visit a habitat further afield</u> – the destination will be determined by the school location and availability but Macclesfield Forest Learning Centre is a great location to visit and see examples of habitat creation and management.</p> <p>This is another opportunity for pupils who are not actively taking part in the Wild About Your School programme to come along and learn some survey skills and get outdoors!</p>	<p>Notes:</p>

<p>6) <u>Planning</u> – it is now time for the pupil group involved to take ideas from their visits and start to plan how they would like to improve their school grounds as a habitat for wildlife. It is important to let them take ownership at this stage but also to ensure that their plans are realistic and feasible. Support will be provided for this process and the pupils will need to decide at this stage what they want to spend money on to make this project possible.</p> <p><u>Help will be provided on applying for funding for spending needed at this stage</u></p>	<p>Notes:</p>
<p>7) <u>Action</u> – Pupils can then follow the plan they have put in place with the help of the PO and any additional support from staff. Some activities will be time sensitive such as sowing wildflower seeds (this is best done at specific times of the year depending on the plant species). This section will be highly specific depending on the plan your pupils produce.</p> <p><u>Following the journey</u> – Pictures and videos of the project developing are a useful way of documenting your progress and form an important part of the “<i>Share your experiences</i>” stage of the John Muir Award. It is important to document your experience in some format. Don’t miss out on a chance to share the successes and experiences of your pupils!</p>	<p>Notes:</p>
<p>8) <u>Present</u> – When actions have been taken and the work is ongoing it would be lovely to find the time for your pupils to share their story with other pupils from your school or even pupils in another school. This will be a perfect opportunity to present the John Muir Award to those who have received it.</p>	<p>Notes:</p>

There will be a range of resources available on our website to help you along your journey including applying for the John Muir Award.

More information on the John Muir Award can be found here: www.johnmuiraward.org



During the course of the programme any questions or updates should be sent to Jackie Wragg the Beyond the Classroom project officer at Jackie.Wragg@peakdistrict.gov.uk Tel: 07585903679

Visit our website: <http://www.southwestpeak.co.uk/>
 Keep in touch! Stay up to date with what’s going on....



@swpeak



@SouthWestPeak