

How to...

Get an outdoor education area for your school



Who is this guide for?

This is for teachers, parents, PTA members or anyone else looking to plant trees and/or create an outdoor education area at a school.

What will this guide help you to do?

This 'How to' guide will help you to identify the steps you need to take to make this happen, including the space required, where you might access funding, activity ideas for pupils as well as how to look after and maintain the area.

1 A suitable space

The first thing to do is see if you have the right outdoor space where you can plant trees. As long as you have some soft landscape (earth or grass) you can plant trees or create a hedge – even on a small verge! When planting within the school grounds it's best to check with the school's site manager as they should know about any underground services and how the land is likely to be managed after the planting has taken place. If the school management, teachers and site staff are happy with your ideas, you can start to plan your education area. If the land isn't within the school's grounds then you would need to get permission from the landowner, for example the local council.

2 Making it happen

The next step would be to access funding for the education area. There are a few options for this:

- **Primary school?** If you are in Greater Manchester, City of Trees has a programme called 'Trees for Learning' where we can support Primary schools to plant trees on school grounds or on a local greenspace. We have funding for the trees, our time to support planting activities as well as resources to deliver outdoor education sessions. Get in touch to discuss: Beth Kelsall | 0161 872 1660 | beth@cityoftrees.org.uk

- **Free trees** – The Woodland Trust offer free tree packs for schools every March and November (to coincide with tree planting season). For more information and to apply visit: [/woodlandtrust.org.uk/get-involved/schools/trees-for-schools/](http://woodlandtrust.org.uk/get-involved/schools/trees-for-schools/)

- **Other sources of funding** – For capital funding you could look at small community grants such as Tesco Bags of Help, as well as other local pots. A useful starting point is your local Council for Voluntary Service (CVS) if you have one, or you could try Manchester Community Central which has a portal where you can search for funding (you need to register as a member – it's free) [/manchestercommunitycentral.org/support-groups/search-funding](http://manchestercommunitycentral.org/support-groups/search-funding)

3 Resources and activities

There are a wealth of free, fun resources out there, aimed at different age groups and key stages which you can access. These will help engage pupils in nature related activities and make the best use of your outdoor education area!

- **Trees for Learning** – Through this programme City of Trees has created resources such as ‘Wattle & Daub’ and ‘Woodland Story Frames’ – all linked to the national curriculum [/cityoftrees.org.uk/resource-library](https://cityoftrees.org.uk/resource-library)
- **Woodland Trust** – Has a whole host of activities appropriate for ages 0-2, 3-5, 6+, curriculum-linked resources as well as an outdoor learning pack for primary school teachers. Find out more at [/woodlandtrust.org.uk/naturedetectives/schools-and-groups/](https://woodlandtrust.org.uk/naturedetectives/schools-and-groups/)
- **Forestry Commission** – The website hosts a number of different educational resources [/forestry.gov.uk/forestry/infd-7chcwe](https://forestry.gov.uk/forestry/infd-7chcwe) as well as lesson plans which link to the national curriculum [/forestry.gov.uk/forestry/infd-9qmg5h](https://forestry.gov.uk/forestry/infd-9qmg5h)

4 Don't forget... look after your trees

It's important that you ensure you care for your newly planted trees – and maintain them for future generations! You can download City of Trees' free 'School planting care guide' to help you ensure healthy growth – [/cityoftrees.org.uk/resource/schools](https://cityoftrees.org.uk/resource/schools)

CASE STUDY: sunny Bank Primary School, Bury



We worked with Sunny Bank to plant 240 trees in their grounds – creating a hedge to mark the Forest School boundary and a small coppice area.

The trees were planted by children from Year's 5 & 6 during their Forest School sessions with 57 children getting involved to help the new trees take root.

In addition as part of the sessions, City of Trees showed pupils how to use the equipment safely, how to plant trees so that they grow successfully and explored the importance of trees for local wildlife.

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Manchester
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