



The Early Years Team at Compass Point Primary School used the Physical Environment chapter of the Outdoor Play and Learning Framework to reflect on their outdoor provision.

We are really fortunate to have a variety of large outdoor spaces, an onsite forest school area, a large green space and a freely accessible Early Years garden attached to the nursery and reception classes. One of our strengths is that we offer outdoor opportunities in all of these areas, this is particularly important as many of our families do not have direct access to outdoor space in their homes. Over time we have created a space that reflects the children's needs.



We visit our onsite Forest area each week. We understand that high quality adult child interactions are important. Ensuring adults are available to be 'in the moment' with the children and that time is not over planned, allows for high quality conversations and moments where children and adults can wonder about what they observe together as children show fascinations about something while outside.

The EY team shared; Using the reflective questions to consider our outdoor environment has had a positive impact on the outdoor experiences we offer our children. In addition, staff feel valued as everyone has had the opportunity to voice their ideas, plan and implement these positive changes together. Together we considered the reflective question...

How do we enable children to plan and make decisions and independently access the resources they need?

Chapter 2; The Physical Environment



Our aim was to enable the children in nursery and reception classes to be able to access resources independently when playing in our immediate Early Years garden. We wanted all children to be able to select items that link to their interests, and schemas, extend their curiosity and develop their imaginative skills. Some resources were difficult to access as they were not clearly labelled or sorted.

We audited and labelled resources using visuals and simple text. This has made the resources accessible for all.



The children and staff have benefited from the reorganisation of the outdoor resources: This has enabled all children to have a wider choice of independent, interest lead experiences and access resources and make choices in a more meaningful way



Tidy up time has become a valued learning opportunity. A team member shared that they hear children talking about where the resources go when they were mixed up and that children confidently talk about what could be done about that showing problem solving and collaborative working.

Any adults supporting children can easily see what is available and where it is stored and this enables adults to give high quality support and model and extend ideas.

We are noticing that the overall engagement of children in our outside area has improved with children engaged in more child led, purposeful play. This has opened up opportunities for staff to identify interests and learning needs across the characteristics, prime and specific areas.

We are also noticing that children and adults are interacting in more of a dialogue about what children are choosing and the resources they might need to facilitate their ideas. One adult shared, "It is sparking their creativity and extending their imaginative play".



Using a Bristol Standard Outdoor Reflective Framework question like the one below could help you begin your reflective, quality improvement journey...

In what ways do you foster children's imagination and current fascinations?
Chapter 2; The Physical Environment