



Manifesto

Our vision for the future 2020

The need

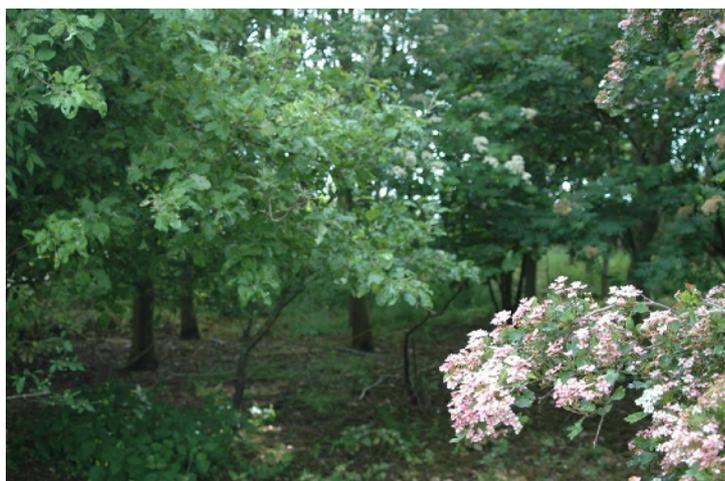
According to recent statistics published by the National Trust:

- On average, Britain's children watch more than 17 hours of television a week and spend more than 20 hours a week online
- Fewer than a quarter of children regularly use their local 'patch of nature', compared to over half of all adults when they were children
- Children spend so little time outdoors that they are unfamiliar with some of our commonest wild creatures. According to a 2008 National Trust survey, one in three could not identify a magpie; half could not tell the difference between a bee and a wasp; yet nine out of ten could recognise a Dalek.

Research has proven that there are innumerable benefits of spending time outdoors. Country Days gives children in Bedfordshire the opportunity to explore the wonders of nature, reconnect with the wild and discover the world around them — it's time to find out what we can learn from a worm!

The gain

1. Health
2. Education
3. Environment



1

health benefits

***Spending time outdoors promotes physical, mental and emotional well-being.
What are the consequences for children who don't spend enough time
outside?***

- Physical

NHS Digital states that 1 in 3 children are overweight or obese by the time they leave primary school. Poor diet and low levels of physical activity are the primary causal factors to excess weight, exacerbated by increased sedentary behaviours. Data shows only 18% of children and young people reported taking part in physical activity for at least an hour a day.

- Mental

Over the last 50 years, there has been a significant increase in the number of children suffering from conduct, behavioural and emotional problems; today one in ten children aged between five and 16 have a clinically diagnosed mental health disorder.

- Emotional

Emotional problems include declining resilience and ability to assess risk, both of which are vital life-skills. If children spend less time playing outdoors, they will have less opportunity to try new things in a safe space and are unprepared to cope with the challenges of adult life.

resilience

self-awareness

focus

self-esteem



motor skills

adaptability

confidence

fitness

2

educational development

Learning to learn in new ways

We believe that not everything can be taught from a textbook, in a classroom - some ideas are better absorbed outside in the natural environment. There are many educational benefits to learning outdoors: it supports cognitive development, promotes independent thought and encourages creativity.

problem-solving

teamwork

communication

inquisitive thinking

leadership

The curriculum

Our curriculum is carefully planned and designed to incorporate a range of activities to support learning including:

- * pond-dipping
- * bushcraft and campfire cooking
- * art, creative recycling and poetry
- * botany
- * sport and orienteering



3 environmental impacts

Time for change

Scientists now say that 1 million species are at risk of extinction; that's 25% of all plants and animals. The need is urgent: it is fundamental that young people feel empowered to take ownership of their environment and its future by battling against climate change. Through a diverse range of activities, we hope to foster an understanding of why our world matters, what it can provide and what role we can each individually play in protecting it.



- * 6 acres
- * 1/3rd woodland with 33 native varieties of trees
- * a pond with great crested newts
- * science shed
- * open field play area
- * compost toilets
- * a rain shelter with natural sedum roof
- * hedges and plants specifically designed to attract bees, birds and insects and let nature flourish.