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Child, place, and others: interactions that support outdoor learning

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The field of outdoor learning is complex and diverse, with many forms residing under this broad umbrella. This special issue seeks to drill down to the nature of interactions between children and their social and physical environment, encouraging greater detail of features and facilitation by others. Deliberately choosing the term 'others' to signal our interest in relationships with the non-human world as well as people, articles in the special issue will consider the material and cultural spaces in which activities take place and *how* they impact on particular outcomes.

The outdoor sector sometimes struggles to describe the processes and places that underpin different forms of outdoor learning. Much literature uses broad brush terms such as 'the outdoors' without clear indication of what that comprises or how it might be instrumental in co-producing outcomes with the pedagogies and others involved within that space. Some programmes e.g. Forest School have names that do not reflect the nature of the pedagogy or places in which they are enacted. This special issue is looking for greater clarity about different forms of outdoor learning, building theory about pathways to impact.

Human separation from the more-than-human world and anthropocentric interpretations of relationships between them are rejected by some schools of thought, such as new materialism. A range of theoretical perspectives (Beames, Higgins and Nicol, 2012; Cutter-Mackenzie, Malone and Barratt Hacking, 2018; Roberts, 2013) can offer a productive route to deeper understanding of how the field can best contribute to not only educational but also health and environmental outcomes for young people. All demand precision about the context of children, places, and others so that meaningful comparisons and conclusions can be made (Waite, Bølling and Bentsen, 2016). Aims, details of location and processes are examples of helpful contextualisation. Theorisation further supports modelling how these may interact or coalesce (Quay, 2013).

Closer alignment of models of 'child, place and others' interactions with specific intentions enable better design of implementation programmes and the capacity to target these appropriately (Malone and Waite, 2016). This is particularly critical for contracted economies post-COVID-19, where the huge potential impact of outdoor learning in meeting children's, societal and environmental needs may not be realised unless it is clear how and for what, different interventions might be useful.

We therefore invite papers that illuminate interactions between child, place and others and the outcomes that they co-produce. Research articles that listen to children's voices and/or report on interventions with 'hard to reach' young people are particularly encouraged. Different theoretical perspectives and methodologies are welcomed as we believe this will stimulate debate and help reach consensus on some of the key contributors to children's education, understanding of and care for the world, and their health and happiness.

Please submit your proposed contribution **before 30 September 2021**. Articles should be submitted to the *Journal of Adventure Education and Outdoor Learning* for peer review but **please clearly indicate that the submission is for this special issue by entering 'Child, place and others' as the header**. We hope to publish the special issue during 2022. Any submitted high quality articles that are not included in this themed edition will be published in general issues of the journal subject to the authors' consent.

References

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Guest editors:

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