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The recognition and reporting of outdoor learning in primary schools in England

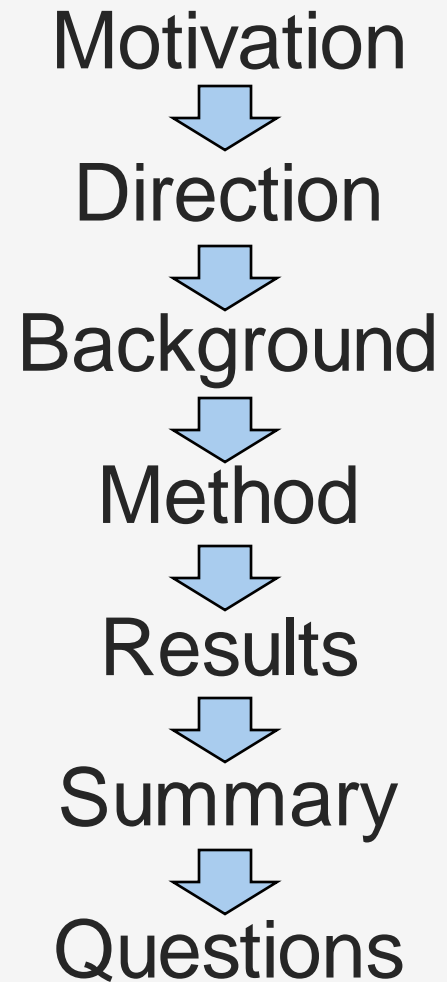


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Recognition of outdoor learning in English primary schools



Motivation

- Personal experience
- Filling a gap in research



Direction

Do inspection reports mention outdoor learning?

What aspects of outdoor learning feature in the reports and how are they represented?



Background

- England – Ofsted
- Ofsted as gatekeeper
- Reports and outdoor learning
- Inspections drive provision



Method – Sample selection



- England
- Primary
- 1st September 2019 – 29th February 2020
- State-funded
- Mainstream

Method – search words

Search word	Phrases identified from search word
Outdoor	Outdoor(s), outdoor learning, learning outdoors, outdoor provision, outdoor space
Outside	Outside, learning outside, outside space, learning outside the classroom
Residential	Residential(s), residential experience(s), adventure residential(s), residential programme(s)

Method - Limitations

- Specific words not used
- Forest school activities not necessarily identified



Results

- 42% mentioned one of the three search words in relation to outdoor learning



Results – ‘Residential’

Number of reports stating theme	Themes
39	Residentials are enjoyable experiences for pupils
33	Pupils learn skills and develop personal qualities on residentials
11	Residentials benefitted pupils with memorable, broad experiences
3	Residentials supported learning

Results – ‘outdoor’ and ‘outside’

71%

of comments related to the
Early Years Foundation
Stage (3-5) specifically.

29%

of comments related to the
primary school generally (up
to age 11).

Early Years Foundation Stage (3-5)

52%

of comments suggested that the outdoors supported learning and enjoyment in the EYFS.

37% of comments suggested development is needed and **10%** of comments stated that recent development had taken place.

Primary

54%

of comments suggested that the outdoors supported learning and enjoyment.

37% of comments stated that outdoor learning occurs and **9%** of comments made reference to visits to outdoor centres.

Summary

Outdoor learning mentioned in 42% of reports

Focus was on the EYFS' use of the outdoors (ages 3-5)

Statutory requirements drive provision

The majority of comments are positive

Enjoyment and learning recognised

Development and further research needed

Questions

