

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

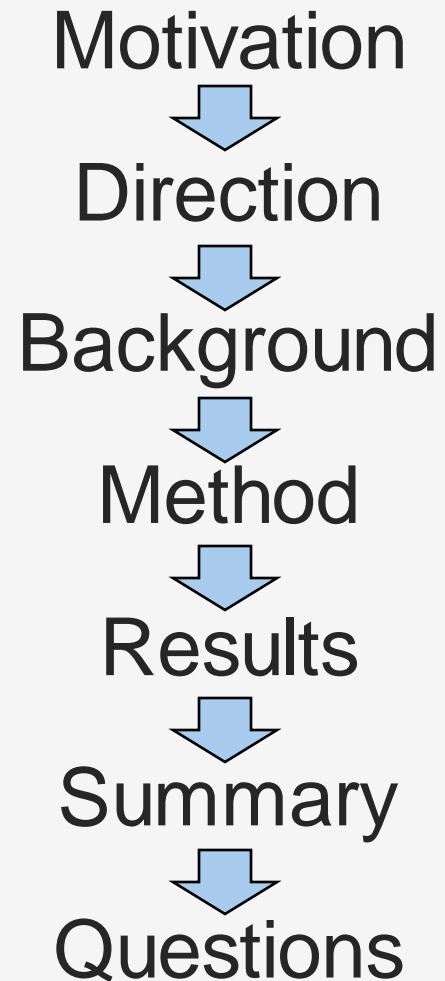


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# Recognition of outdoor learning in English primary schools



# 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
- 1<sup>st</sup> September 2019 – 29<sup>th</sup> 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

**O**utdoor learning mentioned in 42% of reports

**F**ocus was on the EYFS' use of the outdoors (ages 3-5)

**S**tatutory requirements drive provision

**T**he majority of comments are positive

**E**njoyment and learning recognised

**D**evelopment and further research needed

# Questions

