

Ager, Jennifer (2023) Outdoor learning for powerful experiential development within initial teacher education: where could it be used? In: Teacher Education Advancement Network (TEAN) Annual Conference, 11-12 May 2023, Manchester, UK. (Unpublished)

Downloaded from: <http://insight.cumbria.ac.uk/id/eprint/7115/>

Usage of any items from the University of Cumbria's institutional repository 'Insight' must conform to the following fair usage guidelines.

Any item and its associated metadata held in the University of Cumbria's institutional repository Insight (unless stated otherwise on the metadata record) may be copied, displayed or performed, and stored in line with the JISC fair dealing guidelines (available [here](#)) for educational and not-for-profit activities

provided that

- the authors, title and full bibliographic details of the item are cited clearly when any part of the work is referred to verbally or in the written form
 - a hyperlink/URL to the original Insight record of that item is included in any citations of the work
- the content is not changed in any way
- all files required for usage of the item are kept together with the main item file.

You may not

- sell any part of an item
- refer to any part of an item without citation
- amend any item or contextualise it in a way that will impugn the creator's reputation
- remove or alter the copyright statement on an item.

The full policy can be found [here](#).

Alternatively contact the University of Cumbria Repository Editor by emailing insight@cumbria.ac.uk.

Outdoor learning for powerful experiential development within initial teacher education. Where could it be used?

This round table presentation is relevant to educators committed to developing teacher's self-efficacy and self-confidence in the delivery of outdoor learning (OL) in schools. The benefits of OL for children are well documented with increasing prevalence of need; inequality of access to nature could be recognised as a rising concern for children in post-pandemic observations. Schools have been described as 'gatekeepers' for OL experiences, being ideally placed to provide engagement with nature and outdoor experiences (Burt, 2016). Research shows that a key limitation in the delivery of OL in schools is teacher confidence (Barrable *et al*, 2020); there are implications for the role of initial teacher education (ITE) provision in preparing teachers to use OL to combat this lack of confidence (Haxwell, 2019).

Drawing upon the experiences of a successful school-based model to embrace OL as a whole school pedagogical approach (Ager, 2019), this presentation outlines comparable processes that can be transferred to an ITE context. Findings highlighted the importance of increasing teacher's agency through experiences to develop their understanding of how to include OL within their curriculum. As a teacher educator I am keen to explore the effect of creating a contextualised curricula that provides the personal, first-hand experience which could motivate a practitioner to use OL as a teaching approach. Teacher education programmes aim to cultivate expertise, competency, behaviours and deepen pedagogical knowledge. Teacher educator sessions are complex, however explicit modelling by a teacher educator can influence a trainees practice (Boyd, 2014). This presentation maintains that there is potential, by facilitating OL opportunities within teacher education programmes to increase self-confidence and self-efficacy. When learning, engaging with settings that have personal, educational, and cultural significance can be transformative.

Using evidence outlined in the in the Research and Development Project 'Enabling Outdoor-Based Teaching' (EOT) in Teacher Education in Switzerland (Wolf. *et al*, 2022), this round table presentation will invite participants to reflect upon their own professional setting and curriculum overviews, with a focus on what drives the underpinning learning and experiences of participants engaged within ITE. Discussion following the presentation will encourage reflection upon settings, curriculum and the affordance of explicit modelling of this approach across training programmes. The aim, for future teachers to confidently use this in their professional practice. If we include the *know-how* and *know-why* of OL within initial teaching programmes, surely this can lead to better understanding across the sector to *do more* throughout professional careers.

References:

Ager, J. (2018). *Transcending CIDIO (Can I Do It Outside?)*. An (auto)ethnographic case study of designing a progressive primary school curriculum that embraces outdoor learning as a pedagogical approach (Unpublished master's thesis). University of Cumbria, Ambleside, UK.

Boyd, Pete (2014) Using 'modelling' to improve the coherence of initial teacher education. In: Boyd, Pete, Szplit, Agnieszka and Zbrog, Zuzanna, (eds.) *Teacher educators and teachers as learners: international perspectives*. Wydawnictwo Libron, Kraków, Poland, pp. 51-73.

Barrable, A., Touloumakos, T and Lapere L. (2022) Exploring student teachers' motivations and sources of confidence: the case of outdoor learning, *European Journal of Teacher Education* 45 (3): 356-372

Burt, J., (2016) *Natural England*.

Available at: <https://naturalengland.blog.gov.uk/2016/09/29/are-we-at-the-turning-point-for-outdoor-learning/> (Accessed: 09/12/22)

Haxwell, L., (2019) You only need a potato peeler and tarpaulin –Perceptions of outdoor learning from Primary Education Trainees. *Teacher Education Advancement Network Journal* 11 (1): 106-115

Wolf, C., Kunz, P. and Robin, N. (2022) Research and Documentation of Outdoor-Based Teaching in Teacher Education—The EOT Project. In: *High-Quality Outdoor Learning: Evidence-based Education Outside the Classroom for Children, Teachers and Society*. Heidelberg, Germany: Springer: 257 – 269