

Outdoor Learning

We have reached the end of a fantastic summer term of outdoor learning at Connor Downs Academy. Our children have been truly inspired by getting closer to nature. The children have experienced the diverse opportunities that Cultivating Futures offers, which can't be replicated indoors. Over the past year, outdoor learning has engaged our children in practical sciences. It has given them experiences in exploring, discovering, observing, analysing and recording real-life data. We have certainly seen the positive impact that Cultivating Futures and learning outdoors has had on our children.

Children in EYFS have continued their weekly outdoor lessons with Mr Costello, exploring Cultivating Futures, observing the changes in the seasons, discovering what lives around them and getting close to nature. They have also participated in team



games, memory games and animal scavenger hunts.

The children have thoroughly enjoyed learning about the variety of insects that live around us and the different habitats they live in. They conquered their fears by getting close to our stick insects. They have observed them growing from a tiny egg to adult, over the

last ten months.

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Children in the EYFS have been using magnifying equipment to observe a variety of creatures and natural objects. They have been learning about the importance of insects and seeing how they pollinate flowers by observing them in action.



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Children in the EYFS have been learning about the parts of a flower and finding out whether all flowers have the same number of petals.

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The children have been discovering the parts of a plant that we eat.



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The children have been using their senses to compare the vegetables and fruit that we eat regularly. They also identified common herbs including mint, rosemary, thyme, oregano and basil. They have also been learning about the parts of plants and the jobs they do. In our polytunnel, they

have learned how to care for our plants and how to use a garden hose.

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They have also been amazed at the variety of creatures that live in and around our pond. They have seen the changes throughout the seasons, observing the development of tadpoles to froglets, dragonfly nymphs to dragonflies and beetle larvae to diving beetle. All of this, while learning how to pond dip safely from the bridge.



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The children have enjoyed learning how to use a microscope to view petals, leaves and things that were once alive. They also managed to view a newt closely using a variety of magnifying equipment.



Children in Year 1 have been exploring the unique space that Cultivating Futures offers to learn about living things. They have particularly enjoyed taking part in team games.

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They have been participating in animal scavenger hunts and working in teams to discover the animals, while completing the spelling grid correctly.



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The children have been identifying the variety of plants that grow around us and learning about the different seed dispersal techniques. They have observed a variety of insects and discovered the process of pollination.



They have also been caring for our tomatoes.

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Our children have been learning how to care for the rabbits, identifying the correct food they need and the responsibilities of a pet owner. They also described the features of Zinc, our new, rescue lop-eared rabbit.



All our year children have shown great care and respect for our rabbits.

They collected dandelions, mint and carrot tops for the rabbits and guinea pigs.



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The children in Year 1 have enjoyed some memorable experiences learning about the variety of animals and the habitats they live in. They have explored our pond area, taken part in pond dipping sessions and observed the creatures closely using a variety of magnifying equipment. They



were fascinated by what they saw when they compared different things under the microscope.

The children discovered dragonfly nymphs, diving beetle larvae, pond skaters, ramshorn snails, leeches and many



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other tiny creatures that they were eager to identify from the chart.

Year 2 children have enjoyed learning about the importance of plants, the parts of a plant that we eat and the nutrition we get from eating them. They have been sowing seeds, transplanting seedlings, weeding, digging, removing waste with the wheelbarrow and harvesting produce.



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Year 2 have thoroughly enjoyed looking after Cultivating Futures and I can't wait to see how they progress in Year 3.

All children in Year 2 have been learning about the compass points and directions. They were introduced to orienteering, observing a map of our school grounds and locating different features. They worked in teams

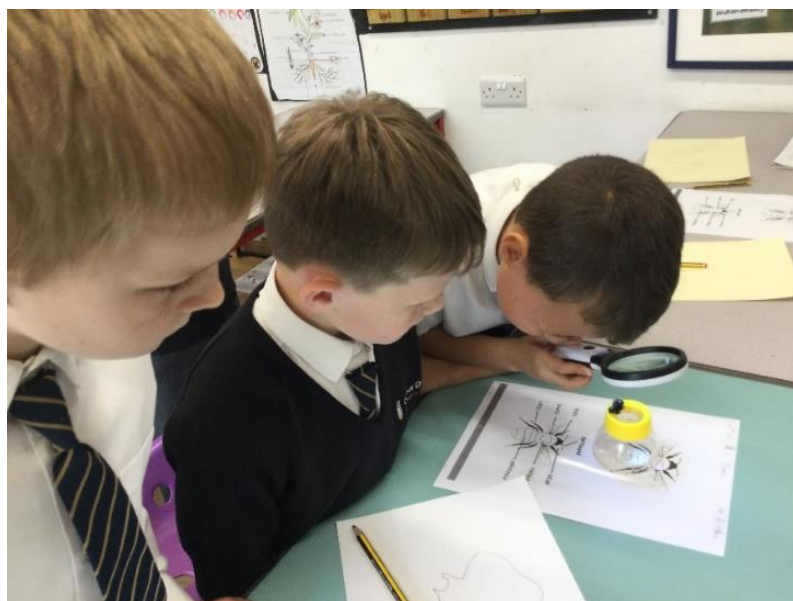


exploring
Cultivating
Futures with
the aim to
discover the
10 control
points in

order. They also identified the compass points using a compass. Year 2 worked very well as a team to complete this challenge.



With Miss Pedley, Year 2 children have been learning about food chains in different



habitats. They have also been learning about the five basic needs of an animal.

Children in Year 2 have been learning about the importance of bees and the different species that live around us. We compared three species of bees, the bumblebee, the honeybee and the solitary bee. A bumble bee was observed closely using magnifying

glasses of different strengths. They



also learned about pollination by observing the bees and other insects pollinating the wildflowers.



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The children have enjoyed comparing different insects using different magnifying equipment.

The pond habitat has been explored by Year 2.



They have particularly enjoyed learning about the variety of vertebrates and invertebrates that live around us, exploring different habitats and observing the different creatures that live in our pond. They have learned how to pond dip safely, observe and identify a vast array of pond creatures including newts, caddisflies, damselflies, dragonfly nymphs, ramshorn snails, pond skaters and water boatmen.

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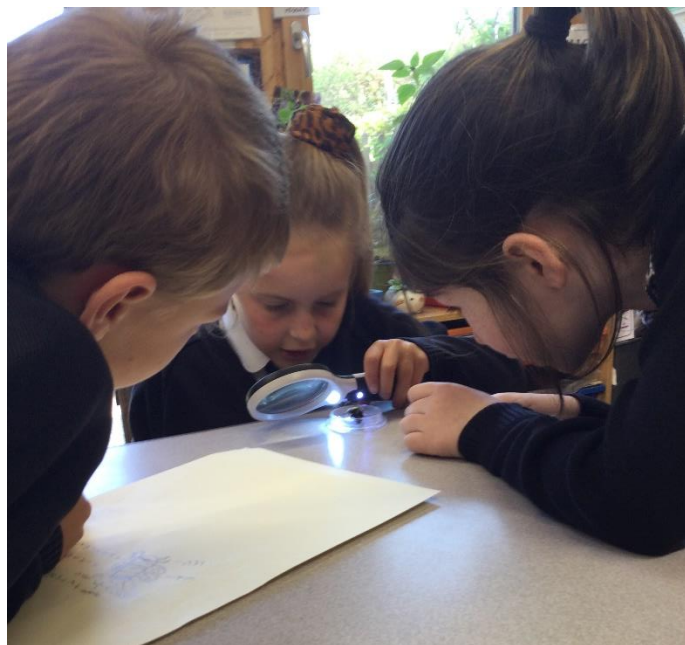
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They have also been learning about seed dispersal techniques and how to use natural materials to create a piece of artwork.

In Year 3, our children have been learning about the importance of insects and how pollination occurs. They have learned about three different varieties of bees and their habitats. They observed them closely using magnifying glasses.

The children have enjoyed learning how to use a microscope to observe a variety of creatures that were once alive some living creatures and other



natural materials. They were in awe

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and wonder at the detail they could see the creatures, especially the bumblebee and the wasp.

Our Year 3 children have continued to compare the animals that live in the pond habitat. They have been identifying and observing a variety of pond creatures including, pond skaters,



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water boatmen, damselfly and dragonfly nymphs. They were amazed at the different



diving beetle larvae. They compared the sizes of these in real life and used fact files to create their own posters.

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Year 3 have been using the microscopes to help identify some of the pond creatures.

They collected the creatures from the pond using nets before counting them and recording them on a chart. They created their own fact file about the creatures they had discovered.



Children in year 3 have also been noticing the changes in the seasons, identifying the weather and recording the temperature, air pressure and rainfall. They have been learning about the learning about the different weather types and how the weather is formed.

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All children have been creative with their drawing and writing outside. They have spent time sketching several aspects of the school grounds and then describing the environment using adjectives, verbs and adverbs.



The children have enjoyed learning about compass points and directions. They participated in an orienteering session, beginning by getting familiar with the scaled map of the school grounds, and using the compass. Their task was to locate the ten control points around the grounds in the correct order.



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Children in Year 4 have continued learning about the animal kingdom, this term focusing on invertebrates (animals without a



backbone). They explored our pond area, identifying and observing a vast array of creatures including dragonfly nymphs, diving beetle larvae, leeches, snails and water boatmen.



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Children in Year 4 have been learning how to use the microscopes correctly. They observed a variety of creatures using the microscope and compared this to other magnifying equipment. They also



compared the leaves and petals of different plants.



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Children in Year 4 also went on a mini beast hunt to discover invertebrates. They recorded their findings on a tally chart and compared the results to the previous hunt during the spring.

With Miss Pedley, they have been learning about the difference between a fledging and a nestling, and what to do if either of these were found. They have also been learning about the different species of snakes that live in the United Kingdom. They discussed what to do if someone, or their pet, was bitten by a snake.

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As part of their invertebrate topic, the children in Year 4 learned about the importance



of bees. They identified three different types of bee, the honeybee, bumblebee and the solitary bee. The scabious seedlings were carefully transplanted into their own pots ready to be planted out in the autumn. These plants are extremely important for the survival of the scabious bee. This activity helped the children enhance their fine motor skills.

The children also compared the smell of many different herbs that are growing in our herb garden. Rosemary,



oregano, sage, mint, peppermint, thyme and the curry plant were all identified and explored. The children then went onto to propagate the curry plant. They have also gained new gardening skills and have been helping to care for our plants around Cultivating Futures.

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As part of a team building afternoon, Year 4 children participated in a variety of team



games. They particularly enjoyed the tyre balancing game.

They also had lots of fun creating dens and playing memory games and animal top trumps inside the dens.

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Children in Year 4 have been learning about directions, map scales and the use of a compass. They compared an orienteering map of the school grounds to a map of west Cornwall. In pairs, they identified key points on the map and worked out the distance between them in kilometres.

Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the challenge of navigating the map to discover the ten control points located around the school grounds. Once they discovered the control point, they had to punch the control card with the tool.



At the end of the task, they had extra challenges to complete around compass points.

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Our Year 5 children have had an exciting summer term of outdoor learning. They have been learning about the animal kingdom, invertebrates and their life cycles. They explored the school grounds, discovering a wide variety of soil invertebrates, which they identified and recorded for a citizen science project.



While exploring they came across this very distinctive dragonfly, a broad-bodied chaser, that had just emerged from its nymph stage leaving the exoskeleton behind. The children were fascinated by this discovery, which became the perfect starter for comparing their life cycle with that of other insects and vertebrates.

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All our Year 5 children have enjoyed exploring the pond habitat, observing many creatures using magnifying glasses and microscopes. They discovered a vast array of



creatures, identifying them using the charts, including newts, diving beetle larvae, leeches, ramshorn snails, dragonfly nymphs, caddisflies and water boatmen.



While learning about invertebrates we discussed camouflage and how effective it is for their survival.

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Year 5 children have been working scientifically, using a variety of equipment to observe objects and living things closely while taking accurate measurements. They particularly enjoyed using the microscopes to



compare creatures that were living or were



once alive.



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The children have been learning about map scales, compass points and directions. They became familiar with the use of a compass and use it to navigate the school grounds during an orienteering session. They compared an orienteering map scale to a less detailed map of Cornwall. During the orienteering session they had to answer questions at each point, while using the key to identify the main feature at each point.



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The

children had so much fun working as a team to complete the challenge in the quickest time.

Our Year 5 gardening team have been looking after Cultivating Futures on a regular basis, completing essential gardening tasks including, weeding, sowing seeds, harvesting and caring for our tomatoes.



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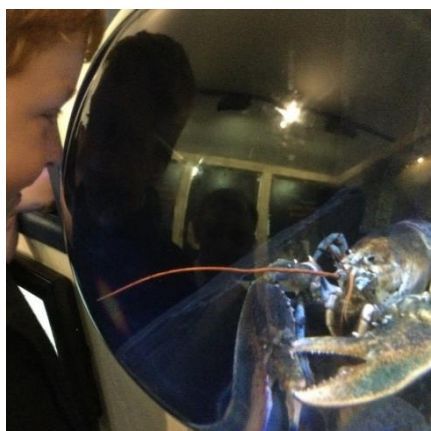
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All our Year 5 children enjoyed an educational visit to the National Lobster Hatchery



in Padstow, which is one of the only marine biology laboratories in the world that is open to visitors. They received a tour of the facilities and a talk from a microbiologist, discussing the life cycles of these fascinating creatures. As well as seeing first hand the progression from lobster egg to adult, they learned about the conservation, the wider research work and why we should protect the wider marine environment.



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Our Year 6 children have had a busy, final half term of outdoor learning. They have been caring for our animals, using their previous skills to health check our animals and record the information.



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Year 6 have been learning to use microscopes while taking part in the Royal Microscopical Societies investigation lessons. They observed living, non-living and things that were once alive. They particularly enjoyed discovering organisms from different habitats, including the pond so that they could see them more clearly.



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Pond dipping and discovering the world of invertebrates, comparing life cycles of a diving beetle and dragonfly.



Year 6 have also been brushing up on their gardening skills, sowing trays of seeds and transplanting the seedlings in the planters. They sowed three varieties of lettuce, rocket, and turnip.

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Year 6 have been participating in orienteering around our school grounds. They learned about map scales, how to measure distance and how to use a compass. They compared three different scale maps to help them understand why they are important. They thoroughly enjoyed working in teams to



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the
they



navigate
controls,
punch
control
cards
work out
direction
were
facing.

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Over the past year, all our Year 6 children have been receiving first aid training as part of our 'Mini Medics' course. It comes as no surprise that they all completed their 'mini medics' course and passed their assessments, during July. They were all thrilled to receive their certificates confirming they are joining a nation of lifesavers. Mr Matthews, a paramedic, and Miss Pedley, a first responder



from Southwest

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Ambulance Service, carried out the assessments. The children demonstrated their ability to perform CPR on a resuscitation dummy device, how to use a defibrillator and



place the patient in the recovery position. They were also assessed on their ability to respond to a patient who is choking. This was demonstrated using a choking vest to show the effectiveness of an abdominal thrust. Mr Matthews was extremely impressed with their knowledge and capabilities.

Working as a team to achieve more! The children have helped to assemble our new rabbit enclosures. They have used a variety of tools.

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Year 6 have also enjoyed team building exercises and sport relays. They particularly enjoyed the water activities.



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