

# Early Education

The British Association for Early Childhood Education

in partnership with:



Alfreton Nursery School  
Teaching School Alliance  
'Growing together'



## Early Years Teaching Newsletter January 2019

Welcome to our first newsletter of 2019. Wishing all our readers a happy new Spring term.

### Let it snow! Going outside in all weathers

Some of us have had snow already this year. Here is a list of some bloggers who inspire a love of being outside. Delve at your pleasure!

- [Creative star](#) (Juliet Robertson)
- [No such thing as bad weather](#) (Kiarna Corr)
- [Interaction Imagination](#) (Suzanne Axellson)
- [Child and nature alliance of Canada](#)
- [Technology rich Inquiry based research](#) (Diane Kashin)
- [Jan White natural play](#) (on this link Jan shares a list of bloggers she follows)

In a previous issue ([March 2018 teaching news](#)) I listed some useful snow blogs which share lots of ideas. There is more on outside and play this month in our Pedagogic Pointers further down.

### Play and new research

[Accessing the inaccessible: redefining play as a spectrum](#) is a fascinating read for us all working in early years. The concept of a spectrum of play is interesting - the paper argues for a "multidimensional definition" of play when looking at playful learning, referring to the newest research (and where free play is the "gold standard" at one end of the spectrum). The references section itself is extensive, and with online links.

Thanks to [Early Arts](#) for their free bulletin that linked me to this paper. You can receive their e-bulletin by signing up on their website (link above).

The recent TES podogogy podcast [Learning through play: what are the benefits](#) (a 33 minute listen) is a crucial share. David Whitebread discusses his research about play and talks about “learning through play” and how this concept is understood (or misunderstood). The TES has also published an article relating to the podcast called [Learning through play: what are the benefits](#) by Helen Amass (Jan 2019).

### **Physical development**

The Acorn project involved a dance artist in residence in Kay Rowe Nursery School in Newham. Here is a video of the dance artist [Louise Klarnett](#) during the project. When I watched this, I was moved to tears - struck powerfully by the realm of communication that goes beyond speech and language; involving touch, movement, proprioception, trust and relationship.

Many of you will use dance and movement, music and therapeutic work with young children, and you can find out more on websites such as [Jabadao](#) and [Sally Goddard-Blythe](#), by contacting your local nursery school teaching school, and reading [Early movement and play](#), the Spring 2017 issue of the Early Education journal.

[Musical development matters in the early years](#) by Nicola Burke (free download) can also support learning and development in this area and has a section on moving and dancing (pages 10-12).

### **Pedagogic pointers: outside in all weathers**

*Here is the second in our series of reflective questions to discuss in staff meetings, in team meetings, or for self-evaluation.*

**Maximising children’s experiences of playing and learning – how well do we use the outside in all weathers?** Start with an agreement about how you will respectfully consider other opinions. Be honest and open, share ideas and viewpoints, and take time to explore and find out about dilemmas or issues that might arise. Consider the following reflective questions

- In what ways do our children have opportunities to be outside, actively playing and learning every day?
- In what ways do you promote the EYFS areas of learning outside and use the space to offer enriching, gross motor activities for the children every day?
- What are our personal values and experiences of outdoor play – and in what ways do they impact how you teach and get involved in children’s play and learning?
- In what ways do you show to children, parents and other adults how you value using your outdoor spaces for all areas of learning?
- If you were to improve two things about your use of outside, what would it be? How could you move forward to develop this?

### **Supporting outside play and learning**

- [Early Education’s principles](#) show how valuing young children and the attention to the learning environment is fundamental to high quality child-centred learning.

- [Put the pencil down and go outside](#) Community Playthings blog by Kathryn Solly
- [5 dangerous things you should let your kids do](#) (9min watch) TED talk by Gever Tulley (2014)
- [The great outdoors](#) (£4) publication by Margaret Edgington (revised 2014)
- [Every child a mover](#) by Jan White (2015)
- [New report calls for action on EYFS children's entitlement to outdoor play](#) in Nursery World (2016)
- [The historical context of outdoor learning and the role of the practitioner](#) Early Years Foundation Stage Forum blog by Michaela Machan (2016)
- [Jan White natural play](#) blogs, including "Embracing life with enthusiasm" which is an invaluable read.
- Examine the Characteristics of effective learning (CoEL) and "audit" yourselves using the CoEL table on pages 7-8 in [Development matters in the early years foundation stage](#). There are 3 columns: the unique child, positive relationships (what the adult can do) and enabling environments (what adults could provide) which give you lots of ideas and suggestions.
- Young children need to be active. See the government's recommendations for at least 3 hours of physical activity a day for 0-5 year olds in their [Start active, stay active](#) infographics.
- The Froebel Trust pamphlet [Outdoor play](#) by Helen Tovey

## Useful websites for outside learning

- [Creative Star Learning](#) website and blog (as listed previously)
- [Learning through landscapes](#), UK

- [Grounds for learning](#), Scotland
- [Muddy faces](#)

Contact your local nursery school teaching school for more support in this area.

Huge thanks to our Early Education Associate and passionate "outside play" expert, [Kathryn Solly](#) for her recommended links, websites and additional information for this section. She has provided so much information that I have created a new [Outside play and learning pedagogic page](#) on our website and put some in a blog to be published very soon. Do have a look!

## Margaret and Rachel McMillan

Watch this superb video which captures the essence of early years education from Goldsmiths, University of London with Dr Betty Liebovich [How did Margaret McMillan change early years education?](#) (a 2 min 41 seconds watch).

## Recent news

[Parent-child reading to improve language development and school readiness: a systematic review and meta-analysis](#) snapshot and final report from Newcastle University and Queen Margaret University published in 2018.

The [Early years interventions](#) section from Education Endowment Foundation has other relevant research that can help you.

[By mollycoddling our children, we're fuelling mental illness in teenagers](#) is a fascinating article from the Guardian (Jan 19) with some food for thought. It cites this research article [Children's risky play from an evolutionary perspective: the anti-phobic effects of thrilling experiences](#) by Ellen Sandseter and Leif Kennair (2011).

## Other useful links supporting teaching and learning

[iPad apps for learners with dyslexia](#) is a very useful poster that you can access and download using the link from Call Scotland. They also have a link for [Android apps](#).

[Comprehension is essential to phonics lessons, and picture books are a great place to start](#) (August 2018) is an article in Teachwire by Jacqueline Harris which gives ideas about how to use picture books to develop comprehension across the phonics phases, a good way to bring meaning into reading.

## Longer listens

I have filed the longer listens and watches from December's teaching news in Early Education's [pedagogic pages](#) if you wish to find them again.

## Lastly: poetry with teenagers

Kate Clanchy is a writer and poet who also works as a teacher of poetry with teenagers. She is featured on [Radio 4's Front Row](#) (from 10 mins 14 seconds in: an 8-minute listen) and is the writer in residence at Oxford Spires Academy. We learn about how enriched many migrant children are (whom Kate works with) in the oral poetry tradition from backgrounds where there are strong, living poetry traditions. Such a powerful and interesting listen.

*Have a great month.*

*Best wishes, Cathy Gunning*

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Follow Cathy on Twitter [@earlyed\\_cathy](#)

This newsletter is designed to be read on screen so you can click through to the links (underlined in the text).

Don't forget we also upload lots of it into our member's pedagogic pages so that you can look it up there at a later date if you don't have time to read it all now.

**We welcome your feedback on the content and design of this newsletter.** Please email [cathy@early-education.org.uk](mailto:cathy@early-education.org.uk)

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