### **Media briefing: Outdoor Classroom Day**

#### Useful stats/research

More than XXX, XXX children taking part in thousands of schools across UK and ROI.

**The** [**Muddy Hands**](https://outdoorclassroomday.org.uk/resource/muddy-hands-report/) **report (Outdoor Classroom Day, 2018) found that children who spend time outdoors:**

* Have better mental health
* Are more physically active
* Have better eyesight
* Develop social and emotional skills
* Are more resilient and have better self-worth
* Are ready to learn when they go back in the classroom
* Are more creative
* Will connect with other children of all ages
* Are more connected to place and the planet – and so are more likely to protect it

And…

* Teachers report it makes them happier too!

**The** [**Playtime Matters**](https://outdoorclassroomday.org.uk/resource/playtime-matters-report/) **report (Outdoor Classroom Day, 2019) found that**:

* Outdoor play creates healthier kids, who come to school more often, can

concentrate better, can physically sit at their desks for longer, can see better and can learn more.

* Active free play is critical in helping children develop balance, coordination and

improved motor fitness.

* The fun that comes from play is a crucial part of childhood, and is essential to health, wellbeing and learning – as well as a foundation for a good adulthood.

**Overarching messages**

* **Outdoor Classroom Day is a global movement to celebrate and inspire outdoor learning and play.**
* NAME AND LOCATION OF YOUR SCHOOL is getting involved because… ADD YOUR REASONS HERE
* There’s still time to join the movement. Other schools can register to go outdoors on Thursday at: [www.outdoorclassroomday.org.uk](http://www.outdoorclassroomday.org.uk)

#### Key media responses

If you just say 3 things, these should be (in order of priority):

1. Outdoor Classroom Day is a global movement to celebrate and inspire outdoor learning and play. On the day, thousands of schools around the world – including ours – will get outdoors for at least one lesson and celebrate their playtime. There’s still time for other schools to join us – they can register at:

[www.outdoorclassroomday.org.uk](http://www.outdoorclassroomday.org.uk)

1. Teachers, parents and experts agree that time outdoors is integral to a happy and healthy childhood. At our school, we have found that outdoor learning improves children’s health, engages them with learning and leads to a greater connection with nature. Play teaches critical life skills such as problem-solving, teamwork and creativity.
2. Outdoor Classroom Day is about more than just the day. It is an opportunity for schools to try outdoor learning for the first time, to experiment with how they can make their playtimes better, to celebrate what they are doing already, and to take the first steps towards making outdoor play and learning part of every day.

# And don’t forget the website!

1. As far as possible, try and read out the Outdoor Classroom Day website: [www.outdoorclassroomday.org.uk](http://www.outdoorclassroomday.org.uk)

Audience calls to action:

# Teachers – register your class – or whole school

* Parents – ask your child’s school to get involved and sign up your household
* Everyone who cares about childhood – join in the conversation on social media using the hashtag #OutdoorClassroomDay

## Possible difficult Q&As

**Some children aren’t in school because of coronavirus outbreaks. What can they do?**

Outdoor Classroom Day looks a bit different in 2020, but children can still take part whatever the circumstances where they live. For children who are at home, there are lots of activities on the website that can be done inside or outside. It doesn’t matter how people get involved, what’s important is that we show why time outdoors is more important now than ever and that it should be part of every day whenever possible.

**What about the weather? What can teachers do if it rains?**

The old saying goes, ‘There is no such thing as bad weather, only the wrong clothing!’ Children aren’t put off from going outside of it’s raining or cold, in fact they often have a lot more fun! Some nurseries are run completely outdoors all year round, the key is a bit of preparation and a lot of enthusiasm. Check the forecast, make sure children have a change of clothes and check out the website for some ideas of how to make the most of wet weather.

# Experts are calling on Government to put guidelines in place for the time children spend in front of screens. Do you think screen time should be limited?

The way childhood is experienced has changed a lot over recent years (and decades), and there is still some debate as to the need for regulatory intervention and further research. In the meantime, there is still much we can do to increase the time children have to play, learn and simply be outdoors — and there is abundant evidence to show it’s good for them. So today, I’m not calling on government to do anything, but am asking your listeners/readers to do *something* to make sure children in this country have a brilliant time growing up.

**A child was killed on a school trip last week – are we putting children at risk by taking them out of the classroom?**

Teachers and parents understandably worry about children’s safety, but keeping children indoors is not the answer. We promote a balanced approach to risk (using Risk Benefit Analysis) and there is advice and guidance from experts, including Learning through Landscapes on the Outdoor Classroom Day website for teachers who need a bit of support to take their classes outdoors.