

Outdoor Play and Learning Provision Audit

Supporting the EYFS, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 curriculum



Why audit outdoor play and learning provision?

Enhancing educational value across stages

Outdoor learning supports key areas of development in EYFS and builds essential knowledge and skills across KS1 and KS2. Auditing outdoor spaces helps schools maximise opportunities for learning through exploration, physical activity, creative play, and enquiry-based experiences.

- **EYFS:** Encourages development across all seven areas, especially physical development, communication, and understanding the world.
- **KS1 & KS2:** Reinforces core subjects like science, geography, and PE, while fostering teamwork, independence, and problem-solving.

Fostering inclusion for all learners

A well-audited outdoor environment ensures all pupils, including those with SEND or EAL needs, can access and benefit from outdoor learning and play. This is essential to upholding the EYFS principles of equal opportunity and to meeting the inclusive requirements set out in the KS1/KS2 curriculum.

Ensuring safety and compliance

Maintaining safe outdoor environments is a statutory duty under EYFS safeguarding and health & safety requirements. For primary-aged pupils, ongoing checks support duty-of-care responsibilities and promote pupil confidence and independence in a secure environment.

Promoting physical and emotional well-being

Outdoor play supports self-regulation, resilience, and social development—priorities across all key stages. Auditing helps ensure outdoor spaces remain engaging and calming environments that nurture pupils' physical and mental health.

How to conduct an outdoor play and learning provision audit

2

Use a structured checklist

A consistent framework ensures nothing is missed. Our Outdoor Play and Learning Provision Audit Checklist is designed to be suitable across EYFS, KS1 and KS2 settings, supporting evaluation of both learning opportunities and safety standards.

1

Engage stakeholders

Involve teachers, teaching assistants, pupils, parents, and SEND coordinators to capture a well-rounded picture of how the space is used and experienced across different age groups.

3

Assess key elements

Tailor your audit to developmental priorities by stage:

- **EYFS:** Opportunities for sensory exploration, gross motor skill development, and imaginative play.
- **KS1:** Variety in play equipment, opportunities for cooperative play, and support for early scientific investigation.
- **KS2:** Challenging play options, environmental learning (e.g. gardening, habitats), and zones that support quiet reflection or group work.



4

Document and reflect

Record your findings clearly, noting particular strengths for each key stage and any areas that need differentiation or targeted improvements.

5

Plan for action

Use the audit outcomes to create a step-by-step plan that supports short- and long-term development goals. This should include actions to enhance curriculum alignment, address inclusivity gaps, and improve pupil outcomes.

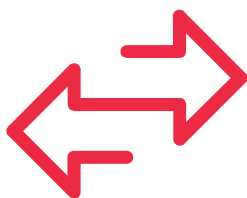


When to conduct the audit



Annually

A yearly review ensures outdoor provision continues to align with age-appropriate learning goals and responds to pupils' developmental needs.



After significant changes

Post-renovation, curriculum updates, or changes in cohort makeup (e.g. increased SEND needs), an audit ensures continued relevance and effectiveness.



Following safety incidents

Where concerns arise, an immediate audit helps address risks and reassure the school community that the environment remains safe and supportive.

Final thought

By auditing outdoor provision with all primary stages in mind, schools can ensure their outdoor environments evolve to meet learners' developmental, academic, and emotional needs—helping all pupils thrive beyond the classroom walls.