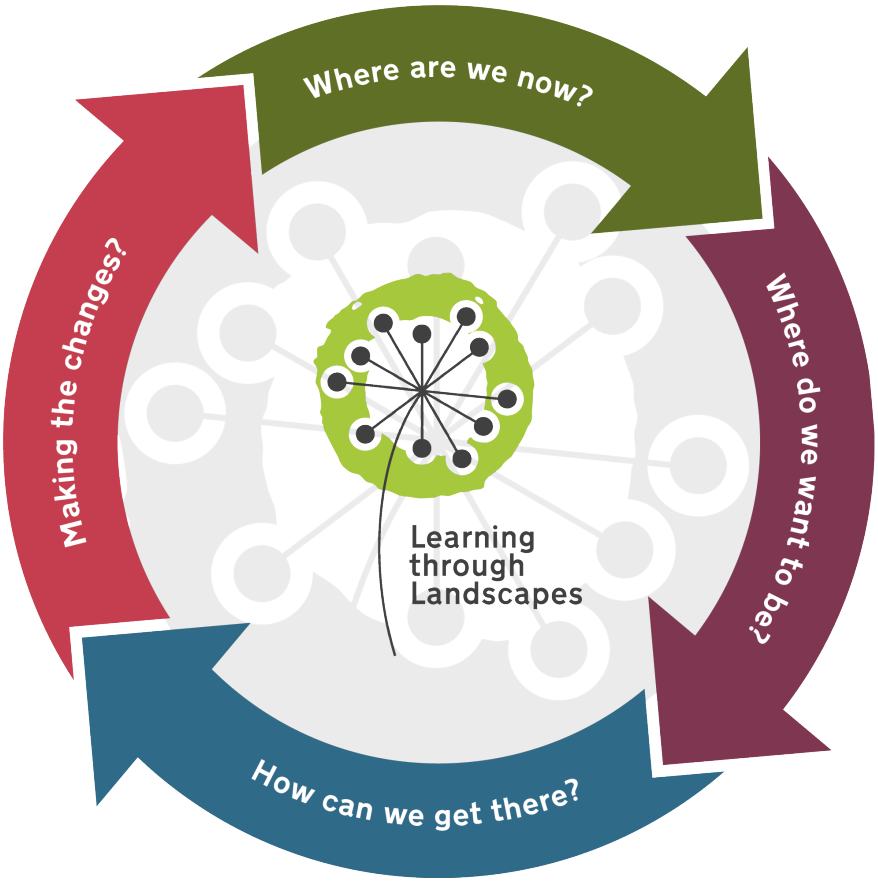
Climate School 180

Engaging your pupils from start to finish (Scotland, Wales & Northern Ireland)

At Learning through Landscapes (LtL) we encourage schools, and those who work with them, to use a process of change for any developments they might make to their grounds, policy or practice. We suggest that you use this simple process to ensure a logical progression to and to make sure you don't miss things out. It also helps you to see how you can truly engage your pupils and the wider school community throughout your project.

You will find links in this document to the National Education Nature Park which is currently an England-only project. However, most of these resources can be used throughout the UK such as the survey techniques and planning tools.

It is a cyclical process with four stages (see diagram below).



Before you start working through the process of change

It is really important to just let your pupils just spend time outside and engaging with nature. Research suggests that this is the best way to connect them with the natural world. In turn they will then be more likely to want to do something to protect the world around them. So do start your journey by taking your pupils outside; playing outdoors, having a campfire, climbing trees, smelling the flowers or just watching the bees fly by!









Stage 1: Where are we now?

(Nature Park stage – Getting to know your space)

At this stage you are finding out where you are, not only in terms of space but also how it is used and how people feel about your grounds. You will undertake a climate survey or audit of your grounds, backing this up with some hands-on learning experiences. You will also review policies and practice, including identifying what you are already doing well, as well as noting what might change.

Ways your pupils can get involved in the 'Where are we now?' stage include:

- Helping with the school grounds climate survey – this could lead onto further discussions about climate change as you review your own school grounds.
- Using the temperature, wind and permeability activities around your grounds to establish some base-line information.
- Undertaking habitat and biodiversity surveys – you can use LtL's Natural Nations surveys to help with this or use surveys found on the National Education Nature Park website (these will be building over the years) www.educationnaturepark.org.uk
- Finding out what everyone feels about their school grounds.
- Reviewing how much the grounds are used for teaching and learning, play and connecting your pupils with nature.
- Identifying any ways the local community use your grounds now.





Stage 2: Where do you want to be?

(Nature Park stage – Getting to know your space)

In this project this is the most straightforward stage as we already know your key focus is responding to climate change. However, you may also want to link this into the wider use of your school grounds including learning and play so that you create a vision that brigs all these different aspects together into your overall plan. Your pupils can help you form your overall vision and choose priorities that you want to work on first.



Ways your pupils can get involved in the 'Where do we want to be?' stage include:

- Creating a vision statement – you can find guidance on how to create a vision statement on the National Education Nature Park website or in our book 'Learn and Play Out'. It is a good idea for lots of different groups to work on a statement in this way, then see how you can bring all the best parts together and combine them into your final vision. www.educationnaturepark.org.uk
- You can then ask everyone to think about the issues they could be addressing in and through their grounds – these could be issues that have been highlighted as a need to be addressed in your school grounds climate survey. Remember you are not looking for solutions at this stage, just identifying what you want to focus on.

The method is:

- Put the different issues onto separate pieces of paper or post-it notes (e.g. there is flooding by the sports hall, the seating by the entrance gets very hot on sunny days, we don't have much wildlife in the school grounds).
- then create a series of concentric circles on the ground – you can do this in chalk outside or use string or rope to make the circles.
- spread each of the headings around the outside circle.
- then let everyone read the notes and if they agree with one or think it is a priority they move it one circle in.
- at the end you will have prioritised the issues that are most important for your school and therefore those you might want to address first.

Stage 3: How can we get there?

(Nature Park stage – Making decisions)

This is the problem-solving stage and where most of the thinking and planning happens before changes are made. Your pupils are key to this decision-making process and this is the stage they will have the greatest input and learn the most.

Each school will come up with a different set of solutions and changes and we have created resources that can help this part of the process in different ways. The guidance notes are designed to help you make the decisions that are right for your school and the how to guides will help you plan and make the changes. Each school is different so what is right for you may not be right for the school down the road.

Identify where pupil input links to the curriculum so that you help to make their learning relevant and linked to a real-life situation. If staff can work together to plan how this can fit in with existing lessons this will help pupils to understand how different information and processes link together in real-life situations and make that learning more meaningful.



Ways your pupils can get involved in the 'How do we get there?' stage include:

- Researching what changes there could be – using the Climate School 180 how to guides and other information from places like the National Education Nature Park (educationnaturepark.org.uk), the Wildlife Gardening Forum's own how to guides (wlgf.org) and Learning through Landscapes (ltl.org.uk).
- Undertaking surveys and questionnaires with other pupils, staff and wider school community.
- Planning where changes could be made in your grounds by using lots of different resources such as ropes, cones, and chairs to create 1:1 scale plans in the actual location of the change (see the image below).
- Creating designs for the changes in the grounds – from vision plans (an overview of the site or area for change) to the details such as planting plans or creating designs for new raised beds.
- Choosing what species to plant where, then ordering plants and other supplies, at the same time making sure you keep within budget.
- Reviewing how the grounds are maintained, including having conversations with your school's grounds maintenance staff.
- Helping to raise funds for the changes – from writing letters and parts of applications, to making and selling crafts or growing plants to sell.



Stage 4: Making the changes

(Nature Park stage – Making change happen)

We believe your pupils should be actively engaged throughout this process of change as much possible, but this is a stage where things happen in the ground. Even if you are making quite significant changes pupils should at least, if at all possible, be able to see what is going on. This is a significant learning experience about the changes, the experts visiting the school and careers that they might otherwise not have known about. Of course talking to these visitors this is even better than learning about them. There will be some situations where it will not be safe to undertake the work during term time but often the type of work being carried out here can be made safe for pupils to watch.
Sometimes you will get a contractor in to lead or undertake the work, sometimes it will be parents and carers or other members of the local community.

Please check the following:

- The person leading the work knows what they are doing.
- The work being done is covered by insurance and public indemnity, both for the work being undertaken and the changes made.
- Full risk assessments (ideally risk-benefit assessments) have been carried out – again both for the process and the changes made.
- You know if there is anything underground, over the area of change or nearby that may be affected by or indeed affect the changes e.g. underground or overhead services or proximity to buildings (if you are not sure seek professional advice).
- You have made sure you have permission to make the changes from whoever owns the site.



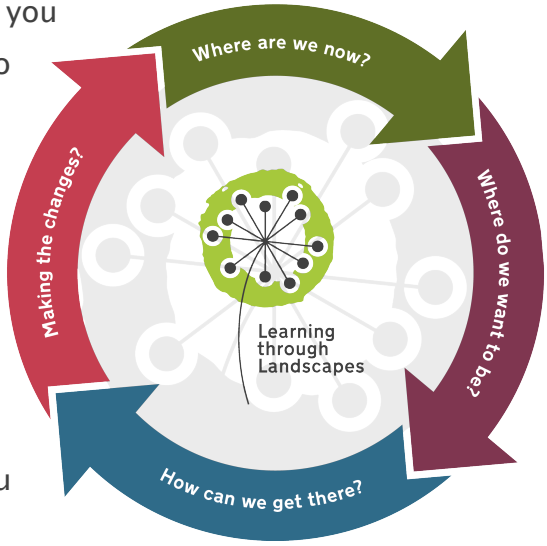
Ways your pupils can get involved in the 'Making the changes' stage include:

- helping to clear weeds from a space
- building or positioning a planter
- helping to dig a pond
- planting trees, hedges etc.
- growing flowers from seed
- painting raised beds or signs
- helping to maintain specific areas of features such as raised beds
- growing fruit and vegetables
- marking out areas to be maintained as meadows so that they do not get mown down too early in the season
- building bug hotels, bird or bat boxes



Then back to: Stage 1: Where are we now?

This is where you return to the start and review what you have achieved, what difference you have made. It also is the place where you start on the next phase of your work, and you will keep returning to this stage to celebrate your successes.



Other ways to involve your pupils

There are lots of different ways your pupils can engage with a change project and make different curriculum links. Below are just a few ideas which you can link to your own curriculum.

Your pupils might like to:

- Research the history of the site by talking to local people or looking at old maps.
- Write a blog or to local press about the project.
- Write to funders or local suppliers to ask for materials or plants (gifts in kind) or money for the project.
- Make videos of the work being done.
- Calculate the amount and cost of materials needed for the project.
- Collect data for citizen science projects – if you are in England see the National Education Nature Park for surveys that can help support national initiatives and record keeping.
- Create art works inspired by the project.
- Create interpretation signs providing information about the changes for the work you have carried out.
- Plan and run a celebration event to mark the work done.

Engaging other members of the school, and wider, community

The wider school community:

Members of the school staff can be activity involved in helping pupils engage with the project in different ways. This could include but is not limited to:

- Incorporating nature-based solutions work and planning changes to school grounds into lessons.
- Incorporating nature-based solutions work and planning changes to school grounds in out of lesson activities such as eco or gardening clubs.
- Grounds staff liaising with other members of the school community (which could include pupils) about changes being made to the grounds and why things are changing.

Parents, carers and governors or members of your school board:

Should be kept informed about what is happening to the school grounds through the Climate School 180 project. Be creative, there are plenty of opportunities to include the community in different ways, from blogs and newsletters, to exhibitions and calls for helpers.

The wider community can also be actively involve in the project. This could include but is not limited to:

- being part of a project steering group
- supporting survey work
- helping to raise funds for the project
- helping to raise awareness in the wider community
- local experts advising on specific changes to the grounds
- local suppliers being contracted to undertake work in the grounds
- joining in practical working days
- attending project events and celebrations
- helping with on-going maintenance