LEARNING PROGRAMME

Outdoor and Experiential Learning for Environmental Education (Learning with, in and from Nature)

10-DAY COURSE

50 learning hours | Course programme

Outdoor and Experiential Learning for Environmental Education (Learning with, in and from Nature) – 10-Day Course

Introduction and Description

This is an advanced professional development programme designed to support early years and primary educators, as well as school staff working in inclusion-focused educational contexts, in the systematic integration of outdoor pedagogy and experiential learning into formal educational practice. In response to increasing environmental challenges, climate-related uncertainties and concerns regarding learner well-being and engagement, the course positions natural environments as essential pedagogical spaces that extend and enrich traditional classroom learning.

The course is grounded in interdisciplinary theoretical frameworks, including experiential learning theory, place-based education, environmental education and inclusive pedagogy. It critically examines how learning *with* nature, through sensory and relational engagement; learning *in* nature, by utilising outdoor environments as structured learning spaces; and learning *from* nature, through systems thinking and sustainability perspectives, can contribute to deeper understanding, learner agency and environmental responsibility. Emphasis is placed on the educational potential of local environments—such as schoolyards, parks, forests and coastal areas—as accessible, meaningful and contextually relevant learning settings.

Participants engage in a carefully sequenced learning process that combines theoretical exploration with hands-on outdoor practice. Through guided field activities, collaborative planning, reflective dialogue and project-based work, educators develop the competence to design, facilitate and evaluate outdoor learning experiences that are safe, inclusive and pedagogically purposeful. The course addresses key practical considerations, including risk–benefit assessment, safeguarding, group management in outdoor settings and adaptation to diverse learner needs, ensuring that outdoor learning is both ethically responsible and educationally robust.

A strong focus is placed on inclusion and well-being, recognising the role of nature-based learning in supporting social-emotional development, self-regulation and positive learner relationships. Participants explore how outdoor and experiential approaches can reduce barriers to participation, foster cooperation and enhance engagement for learners with diverse abilities, backgrounds and learning profiles. Environmental awareness and sustainability education are integrated throughout the programme, enabling educators to connect everyday learning activities with broader ecological systems, climate resilience and nature-based solutions.

By the end of the course, participants are equipped not only with practical tools and strategies but also with a critical and reflective understanding of outdoor and experiential learning as drivers of long-term educational change. The programme supports educators in translating learning into their own institutional contexts, strengthening schools' capacity to embed sustainable, inclusive and environmentally responsible practices in line with European educational priorities and lifelong learning objectives.

Methodology and Assessment

The course applies an experiential, learner-centred methodology grounded in outdoor pedagogy and place-based education. Learning activities include guided outdoor explorations, sensory engagement, collaborative tasks, reflective practice, project design and peer learning. Participants engage directly with natural environments, using observation, inquiry and creative expression to connect theory with practice. Reflection is embedded through learning journals, group dialogue and facilitated feedback.

Assessment is formative and continuous, focusing on participation, reflection and application of learning. Participants develop and present an outdoor learning project tailored to their professional context, demonstrating pedagogical understanding and practical transfer. Peer feedback, self-assessment and facilitator guidance support professional growth and reflective competence.

Learning Objectives

By the end of the course, participants will be able to:

1. Pedagogical Understanding

- Develop a comprehensive understanding of outdoor, experiential and place-based learning theories
- Analyse the role of natural environments in environmental and sustainability education

2. Practical Outdoor Pedagogy

- Design and facilitate meaningful outdoor learning activities aligned with curriculum goals
- Apply risk–benefit approaches to ensure safe and inclusive outdoor learning experiences

3. Inclusion, Well-Being and Learner Engagement

- Implement inclusive outdoor strategies supporting diverse learning needs
- Use nature-based approaches to enhance well-being, social learning and emotional regulation

4. Environmental Awareness and Sustainability

- Integrate nature-based solutions and systems thinking into educational practice
- Foster learners' environmental responsibility and connection to place

5. Professional Transfer and Impact

- Adapt outdoor learning approaches to participants' institutional and cultural contexts
- Develop actionable plans for sustainable implementation in schools and organisations

Preparation

After registration participants will receive a pre-course questionnaire which will be used by the trainer to learn about participants' teaching backgrounds and to assess their exact needs. Before the beginning of the course a basic reading list will be suggested to participants to prepare for the training. Participants will also be asked to prepare a presentation about themselves, their professional context and their culture. The presentation will be presented on the first day of the course to facilitate networking opportunities. Participants will receive information about the country they are going to visit in order to prepare them for their cultural experience.

Follow up

After the course participants will be asked to share what they have learned with the rest of the staff in their schools. Further books and articles to deepen the topic and contacts with some other practitioners all over Europe and in the world will be suggested by the trainer. The methods shared and explored and the bibliography given will allow the participants to complete and improve their educational path.

Certificate

Certificate complies with the guidelines of the Erasmus+ programme and includes the topic, number of didactic hours, dates and location of the course. We can list the record of learning outcomes on the Europass Mobility Document on request of participants. In

case a participant requires a specific format of certificate we can accommodate that if requested at least one week before the start of the course. It is necessary to attend at least 80% of the hours in order to receive the certificate.

Accommodation

We do not directly offer accommodation and subsistence and participants are responsible for organizing it by themselves.

Paperwork

We also provide all the support with paperwork you might need for your Erasmus+ project documentation such as mobility agreement and registration letter.

Fee: 800 €

Cancelation policy

We have a flexible cancellation policy in force at the moment and you can cancel your registration up to 30 days before the course and receive a full refund. In case you don't cancel the registration more than 30 days before you will not receive any refunds, but you will be able to choose to attend any other confirmed course session later (within 6 months) without any additional costs. In case you are not able to travel, your school can send someone else to take instead of you and you can change the details of the participant any time before the start of the course at no additional cost.

TENTATIVE PROGRAMME (50 didactic hours - 5*45min per day) Monday to Friday	
Day 1	Foundations of Outdoor & Experiential Learning
09.00 - 09.45	Introductions & Icebreakers
09.45 - 10.30	Course Overview & Learning Agreement
10.30 - 11.15	Core concepts of outdoor & experiential learning
11.15 - 11.30	Break

11.30 - 12.15	Environmental education today: challenges and opportunities
12.15 - 13.00	Reflection circle: personal experiences of learning in nature
Day 2	Pedagogical Theories Supporting Learning in Nature
09.00 - 09.45	Experiential learning cycles and embodied learning
09.45 - 10.30	Place-based learning: connecting curriculum to local environments
10.30 - 11.15	Observation, exploration and dialogue in situ
11.15 - 11.30	Break
11.30 - 12.15	Inclusion and accessibility in outdoor learning contexts
12.15 - 13.00	Group reflection using natural symbols and mapping
Day 3	Learning *With* Nature: Sensory & Inquiry-Based Approaches
09.00 - 09.45	Sensory immersion activities
09.45 - 10.30	Inquiry walks and micro-explorations
10.30 - 11.15	Nature as a co-teacher: learning affordances
11.15 - 11.30	Break
11.30 - 12.15	Differentiation through open-ended outdoor tasks
12.15 - 13.00	Outdoor documentation (journals, sketches, photos)
Day 4	Learning *In* Nature: Outdoor Learning Design & Safety
09.00 - 09.45	Mapping and evaluating outdoor learning spaces
09.45 - 10.30	Creating temporary outdoor classrooms
10.30 - 11.15	Risk–benefit assessment in real contexts
11.15 - 11.30	Break
11.30 - 12.15	Group management and routines outdoors
12.15 - 13.00	Collaborative planning of outdoor sessions
Day 5	Nature-Based Solutions & Environmental Awareness
09.00 - 09.45	Introduction to nature-based solutions (NBS)
09.45 - 10.30	Biodiversity and ecosystems field exploration
10.30 - 11.15	Hands-on investigations (soil, water, plants)
11.15 - 11.30	Break

11.30 - 12.15	Local environmental issues and responsibility
12.15 - 13.00	Mid-course reflection and peer exchange
Day 6	Learning *From* Nature: Sustainability & Systems Thinking
09.00 - 09.45	Observing cycles, patterns and interdependence
09.45 - 10.30	Systems thinking through landscape observation
10.30 - 11.15	Climate change and resilience through place
11.15 - 11.30	Break
11.30 - 12.15	Designing sustainability activities for children
12.15 - 13.00	Storytelling and metaphor-based reflection
Day 7	Place-Based & Cross-Curricular Outdoor Learning
09.00 - 09.45	Outdoor literacy: storytelling and language
09.45 - 10.30	Outdoor numeracy and science investigations
10.30 - 11.15	Creative arts and environmental expression
11.15 - 11.30	Break
11.30 - 12.15	Collaborative place-based project work
12.15 - 13.00	Peer feedback and refinement
Day 8	Inclusion, Well-being & Social Learning Outdoors
09.00 - 09.45	Nature and well-being: regulation and calm
09.45 - 10.30	Inclusive outdoor practices for diverse learners
10.30 - 11.15	Cooperative games and social learning
11.15 - 11.30	Break
11.30 - 12.15	Emotional literacy in natural spaces
12.15 - 13.00	Guided reflection and sharing
Day 9	Outdoor Assessment, Transfer & Implementation
09.00 - 09.45	Bridging outdoor learning and classroom practice
09.45 - 10.30	Assessment for learning outdoors
10.30 - 11.15	Learner voice and documentation methods (part 1)
11.15 - 11.30	Break

11.30 - 12.15	Learner voice and documentation methods (part 2)
12.15 - 13.00	Individual support and contextual adaptation
Day 10	Individual support, presentations & Closing
09.00 - 09.45	Preparing the final presentations and individual support (part 1)
09.45 - 10.30	Preparing the final presentations and individual support (part 2)
10.30 - 11.15	Final presentations and feedback
11.15 - 11.30	Break
11.30 - 12.15	Evaluation & Reflection
12.15 - 13.00	Validation of learning outcomes and certification

*This is only a tentative timetable. The exact hours or the course might differ and will be announced for each session 2 weeks before the start. However, there will always be a total of 5 didactic hours per day and all will be in line with the Erasmus+ quality standards. The trainer might slightly modify the content in response to the needs of the group.
**Cultural and social programmes will be organized in addition to the academic programme. The exact cultural and social programme depends on the location, season, weather, etc.