



The Country Trust is a charity which normally takes children out to the working countryside on farm visits and residentials, and runs Food Discovery in schools. We also offer teacher training.

During the pandemic we are not able to run our programmes as normal, so we are making some short videos to help teachers bring the countryside to life by using their school grounds. Each video will be themed around an aspect of the curriculum and also have suggestions on how the activities can be used to promote and talk about well-being.

The first video covers some **Key Principles and Ideas** to remember when you are taking your pupils outside:

BEFORE:

1. Have a clear **purpose**, that could be around the curriculum, wellbeing, socialisation or even play
2. Have a clear **risk assessment**:
 - i. Know the space you are taking children into and what the risks are and how you will mitigate them
 - ii. Ensure children are dressed appropriately for the activity and weather - including any likely changes - like a sudden shower (this is the UK after all)
 - iii. Make sure you have a clear signal to get everyone to stop and come back to you - a drum or a bell would work well at the moment
3. Build up your **confidence** gradually if you aren't used to taking your pupils out and be honest to yourself about your experience and how you feel about doing it.
4. Use **your school experts!** Reception teachers might be yours, or maybe you have a teacher responsible for LOTC
5. **Plan** when if you can: Make the most of the children already having their coats on and hands washed by going out before or after break

DURING:

1. Behaviour management can be different outside: together create some simple **shared rules**. The more children spend time learning outside, the easier the behaviour management. Remind them of the signal to get them to stop what they are doing and come back to you
2. Give clear, step by step **instructions**. These should be given in order and one at a time.
3. Give your pupils **space and time** to explore at their own pace. Allowing them to lead their own learning will result in more solid understanding of what you are teaching.
4. **Expect the unexpected!** Then if and when it happens, you can embrace it, (rather than try to ignore it) and then move on.
5. **Check in with how the children are feeling** - give them opportunities to easily tell you about their feelings. Some of our coordinators ask for 5 fingers if children are feeling really positive about things, and no fingers if they are hating it or unhappy. This is an easy way to gauge the children's feelings and can prompt conversations supporting emotional literacy.

As with any teaching, give yourself time to think about what went well and what could be better next time.

There is so much research showing the benefits of outdoor learning; if you want some further reading we direct you to the [Council for Learning Outside the Classroom website](#) and the [Learning through Landscapes website](#) for research articles.

Let us know how you get on! We are on [facebook](#) and [twitter](#). Our handle is @CountryTrust.