Case study: From inspiration to implementation; taking the curriculum outdoors

Taking the Curriculum Outdoors | Accredited professional development | Morecambe (2026)

Giving teachers the confidence, knowledge and ideas to take learning outdoors

How can teachers make better use of their outdoor spaces to enrich learning across the primary curriculum? For participants on the *Taking the Curriculum Outdoors* accredited course in Morecambe, the answer combined practical experience, a clear educational rationale and a wealth of adaptable ideas.

Delivered by Deborah Lambert and accredited by the Institute for Outdoor Learning, the course explored how outdoor environments can support meaningful learning, how teachers can make effective use of their school grounds, and how practical outdoor approaches can be incorporated into everyday teaching.

The feedback reveals a strong response to both the practical activities and the educational thinking behind them. Participants left with fresh ideas, renewed enthusiasm and greater confidence in using the outdoors as a purposeful learning environment.

Understanding why outdoor learning matters

A particularly strong theme in the Morecambe feedback was the value of understanding the reasoning behind outdoor learning, rather than simply learning a collection of activities.

One participant explained that they wanted reassurance that learning outside the classroom could genuinely enhance learning; something they already believed in. They valued gaining evidence and examples that could help them persuade others across their school.

Another participant highlighted the value of using Sobel's principles to plan how to make better use of school grounds. This emphasis on educational rationale matters. When teachers understand why an approach can support learning, they are better placed to make informed decisions about when, where and how to use it.

The course helped participants connect practical outdoor activities with curriculum intentions and consider how their own environments could become more effective learning spaces.

Practical ideas, adaptable resources and inspiring demonstrations

The demonstrations were a particular highlight, with participants repeatedly praising the range of ideas and the opportunity to experience activities as both learners and teachers.

One participant reflected on discovering:

“How simple resources can be used in many ways.”

Others valued the use of natural materials and affordable resources that could be obtained easily, making outdoor learning feel achievable without requiring substantial additional expenditure.

The feedback also highlighted the value of ideas that could be adapted across different subjects and settings. Participants appreciated leaving with practical activities, recommended websites and resources, and information about potential funding opportunities.

This combination of inspiration and practical guidance helped teachers see how they could develop outdoor learning using resources already available to them.

Turning ideas into classroom practice

The feedback showed a clear intention to put the learning into practice.

Participants described gaining the knowledge, confidence and ideas needed to develop outdoor teaching in their own settings.

One participant said:

“It gave me real confidence in delivering activities outside.”

Another reflected:

“I have taken away some good ideas and the knowledge and confidence to adapt to my setting.”

Others spoke about looking forward to implementing their learning and sharing it with colleagues. One participant described leaving with a wealth of ideas to draw on to develop, initiate and enthuse children with outdoor learning.

These responses suggest that the course supported teachers not only to explore new approaches, but also to consider how they could make them work within their own school contexts.

The opportunity to talk with other participants and share ideas was another valued element, helping teachers learn from one another as well as from the course demonstrations and resources.

Developing a whole-school approach

An important feature of the Morecambe feedback was the potential for the learning to extend beyond individual classrooms.

Participants valued the evidence and examples they could use to explain the benefits of outdoor learning to colleagues. The intention to share ideas with staff suggests opportunities for the course to contribute to wider conversations about curriculum planning and the use of school grounds.

Some participants also identified areas they would like to explore further, including incorporating more bushcraft and den-building into the curriculum.

One participant would have welcomed additional preparation time for the micro-teaching section. These comments offer useful insights into how future training could be developed while preserving the practical, engaging approach that participants valued.

What did the feedback tell us?

All participants awarded the course five out of five in every category assessed.

Their written feedback highlighted several key outcomes:

- Greater confidence in delivering outdoor activities.
- A stronger understanding of the educational rationale for outdoor learning.
- A wider range of adaptable ideas for teaching across the curriculum.
- Increased awareness of how to use school grounds and natural materials effectively.
- Access to practical resources, websites and potential funding information.
- Enthusiasm for implementing activities and sharing learning with colleagues.
- Greater readiness to explain and advocate for outdoor learning within school communities.

The feedback provides encouraging evidence of participants' immediate experience of the course, their increased confidence and their intentions to apply and share what they learned. Further follow-up would help establish the extent to which these intentions led to sustained changes in teaching practice.

Looking ahead

The Morecambe course demonstrates the value of combining practical outdoor experiences with a strong understanding of why learning beyond the classroom matters.

The feedback reinforces the importance of helping teachers move from believing in the potential of outdoor learning to knowing how to plan, deliver and advocate for it.

The message from participants is clear: with the right ideas, knowledge and confidence, teachers can begin to see their outdoor spaces not simply as places to visit, but as valuable environments for teaching and learning.

Outdoor learning starts with inspiration, but its real potential lies in how teachers put it into practice.

This case study was generated by ai, using feedback from participants on the Morecombe course run in February 2026.