



Warwickshire
Wildlife Trust



Wilder Schools Programme 2026/7

warwickshirewildlifetrust.org.uk/wilderschools

education@wkwt.org.uk

We want to inspire a love of nature in the next generation!

Our interactive Wilder Schools programme is delivered by Warwickshire Wildlife Trust's (WWT) Education Team, in partnership with your school.

The programme aims to boost biodiversity and nature's recovery, whilst inspiring and empowering the next generation of nature advocates, greatly increasing the chances of them taking positive action for wildlife and the environment as they grow.

Wilder Schools delivers a learning journey which supports a **whole school approach** – working with students and staff to deepen their connection to nature and equip them with tools to lead a happier, more sustainable life; facilitating the school to be more confident and skilled in outdoor learning; supporting improvements to school grounds for people and wildlife.

- **For students**, the programme fosters a closer connection to nature and increased knowledge and skills, as well as a boost to wellbeing and adoption of pro-environmental behaviours. Although the programme directly works with one class or group of student representatives, there is ample opportunity for the whole school and wider community to get involved through school wide initiatives.
- **For teachers**, we look at the individual opportunities and challenges unique to your school. The programme increases confidence and competency to integrate more outdoor learning across the curriculum, boosts wellbeing, and provides access to ongoing support and resources.
- **Finally for school grounds**, the programme boosts biodiversity through habitat creation whilst at the same time creating new opportunities for learning.

Our aim is help students, staff and families to spend more time together, in nature and encourage action for nature at school, home and in the wider community. With school grounds across the UK covering an area bigger than Birmingham, schools have a huge opportunity to make a real difference – small actions leading to big change. Be a part of #TeamWilder, a growing movement of people taking action for nature, to make Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull even wilder!



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HELEN WALSH

FAQ's

How long does the programme run for?

The programme supports schools over 3 years, intensively in the first year and then with a lighter touch in years 2 & 3. The programme has been broken down below to show how we work with the lead students, teaching staff and wider community. The time commitment for the lead cohort of students and teacher is approximately 4.5 days over the school year.

How much does it cost?

The programme is valued at around £10K per school, over 3 years. However, thanks to funding from a corporate sponsor, participating schools will receive the programme free of charge. A Memorandum of Understanding will be set up between Warwickshire Wildlife Trust and each participating school to reflect the commitment of both organisations to ensuring delivery of a successful programme.

Who will take part in the programme?

The Wilder Schools Programme works directly with up to 30 students (one class, or representatives from across a year group in KS2, or above). We require at least two members of staff per school to form a 'core team' to facilitate and champion the programme, and to cascade their additional learning and skills to colleagues across their school.

What are the benefits of the programme?

The programme is focused on these key outcomes:

For students:

- Improved wellbeing and mental/physical health.
- Increased academic attainment.
- Improved behaviour and attitudes to learning.
- Increased cognitive skills.
- Increased resilience, confidence, self-esteem, social skills, personal skills and pro-environmental behaviour.
- Increased connection to nature through learning.

For teachers:

- Greater understanding of the benefits of outdoor learning leading to increased capacity to integrate across the curriculum.
- Increased confidence to deliver outdoor learning over time.

For school grounds:

- Greater understanding of existing habitats leading to increased space for nature on school grounds as a result of habitat creation and enhancements.



Term 1 – Discovery and planning

(1.5 days)

Activities for lead students in selected year group

Day 1: Nature connection, habitat exploration & baseline assessment

(September/October – 1 full day)

A full day exploring habitats within the school grounds and understanding the features that help wildlife thrive, providing the groundwork for school grounds improvements. This session will be linked to the curriculum to support the group's learning at school but will also focus on fun, hands on experiences that help them on their journey to nature connection. We will help the students explore and map habitats within the school and look for areas that could be enhanced for nature.

Curriculum links: Science, Geography, PHSE, Maths.

Day 2: Project preparation

(November/December – ½ day)

WWT staff will use this time to develop a grounds improvement project, researching feasibility and costs before submitting a proposal to the Head Teacher and grounds team for approval.

Meanwhile students will use this time to independently complete the following:

- Design a campaign – write to SLT, create posters around school and prepare a video or newsletter article for parents.
- Prepare to present the project to their school in January.
- Brainstorm fundraising ideas to purchase materials for improvements.

Class Teacher: We ask that the lead teacher sets a date for January when WWT can return for Day 3. The Trust are happy to provide nature images if needed.

Curriculum links: Literacy, Art, Science.



PETER CARNS/
2020VISION

Fun, hands on experiences that help them on their journey to nature connection.

Term 2 – Creating space for nature

(1.5 days)

Day 3: Raising awareness

(January – ½ day)

- Lead students present their chosen grounds improvement project through a school wide assembly and kick-start fundraising efforts.
- Planning and promoting a community action day through school newsletters, videos, and invitations.

Following the assembly the students will continue on their journey of nature connection, getting outside to explore and notice nature in winter (for example, taking part in the RSPB's Big Schools Birdwatch).

Curriculum links: Literacy, PHSE, Science.

Day 4: Community action day

(February/March – 1 day)

This could be scheduled during the school week, a weekend or half-term holiday, with support from corporate sponsors, parents, and the school community to undertake tasks such as:

- Installing bird feeders to encourage more wildlife into the grounds.
- Building raised beds for pollinator-friendly plants.
- Clearing turf for meadows.
- Planting hedgerows or orchard trees.
- Digging small ponds or installing water butts.
- Engaging in habitat management activities.

Alternatively, if no large-scale works are planned, the day can be dedicated to outdoor learning and nature connection with the lead students.

Curriculum links: Science, DT, PHSE.



LEE PARSONS

Students will continue on their journey of nature connection, getting outside to explore and notice nature in winter.

Term 3 – Recording and monitoring

(1.5 days)

Day 5: Recording actions and nature connection

(April/May – ½ day)

We will spend more time outside connecting with nature (noticing changes in spring) through a series of simple games and activities. Students learn how to record their actions for nature and understand how we can form landscape scale connections for nature – how small actions can have a big impact and help form green corridors across the county. After recording actions at school they will be encouraged to share and record actions they may have taken at home or in their community. The cohort of students can spread their knowledge and skills to the wider school, encouraging others to take and record actions e.g. No Mow May, bucket ponds, tree planting, bird feeders, hedgehog holes, or writing to the local council/campaigning.

Curriculum links: Science, Geography, PHSE.

Day 6: Monitoring success

(May/June – ½ day)

- Conducting interactive games and investigations to assess improvements in plant and invertebrate diversity within the school grounds.
- Documenting project success through species counts, videos, and photos for a final assembly.

Curriculum links: Maths, Science, Literacy, Art.

Day 7: Celebration assembly, student celebration & evaluation of students knowledge

(June/July – ½ day)

- Conducting a celebration assembly (WWT staff & student led).
- Survey of participants to evaluate project successes (WWT staff led).
- Outdoor nature connection event – noticing nature in summer (WWT staff led in partnership with lead teacher).

Curriculum links: Maths, Science, Literacy, Art.



LINDSEY YOUNG

Students learn
...how small
actions can have
a big impact and
help form green
corridors across
the county.

Teacher programme



Year 1

Aim: To enhance confidence among school staff in conducting outdoor learning activities. Signing up for the free Nature Network will grant access to newsletters and expert advice. We ask that all staff attend the staff meetings in terms 1 and 3 as a minimum requirement, but staff are encouraged to attend all sessions.

Pre-Programme Site Visit (late summer/early autumn): One of the WWT team will visit the school to introduce the programme further, have a look around the grounds and meet with the school's core staff team.

Staff Meetings:

- **Term 1:** Listening exercise with entire staff to consider the vision for (and potential barriers to), an outdoor learning programme and grounds improvements, specific to your school.
- **Term 2:** Introduction to the benefits of outdoor learning and nature connection.
- **Term 3:** Confidence, curriculum links and planning to incorporate regular outdoor learning into the school timetable.

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LYNDESE YOUNG

Year 2

Staff Meetings:

- **Term 1:** Problem solving and plan to move forward.
- **Term 3:** Review: How has it gone – benefits and issues.

Year 3

Staff Meetings:

- Allocate sessions to share progress, ideas, best practice and problem solving.

Activities for the whole school community

Year 1

Assemblies:

- **Term 1:** Introduction to the Wilder Schools programme and initiatives for Action for Nature by WWT staff (typically part of Day 1).
- **Term 2:** Presentation on the school grounds project by lead students (see Day 3).
- **Term 3:** Celebration of project achievements presented by WWT staff and lead students (see Day 7).

Fundraising:

- **Term 2:** Organising a whole-school event with a fundraising target of £300. WWT staff to provide support but crucially we want to engage the students and build a sense of ownership.

Action:

- **Term 1:** Regular communication from WWT to provide ideas and inspiration to be shared with parents and families via newsletters, events and school activities. Encouraging all students to pledge to take action for nature at home.
- **Term 2:** Regular communication from WWT and launch of Action for Nature challenge at home/ local community.
- **Term 3:** Recording actions for monitoring and evaluation.



About us

Warwickshire Wildlife Trust is the leading local independent conservation organisation, one of 46 Wildlife Trusts working across the UK. Our mission is to bring people closer to nature and create a land rich in wildlife.

Supported by our passionate members and dedicated volunteers we are working to bring about nature's recovery across Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull through practical action, education and influencing behaviour change.

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Cover image: Emma Bradshaw. Above: Ross Hoddinott/2020VISION

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