



### Overview:

Although most computer work is done indoors, there are many ways that ICT can be used outdoors as a natural part of play and discovery to develop children's awareness of how, why, when and where different forms of technology are used in everyday life. The outdoor environment provides opportunities for role play that would be difficult to organise indoors and the extra space encourages physical development and creates additional opportunities for learning about ICT in the world around us. The outdoors provides unique opportunities for role play such as, garden centres, science or jungle explorers, road traffic incidents, road works, the car wash, fire station, breakdown service, garage, etc. (*see role play document*).

The very nature of outdoor provision makes it difficult to create long term role play areas, therefore role play boxes are a flexible option and can act as a stimulus for imaginative play. The contents can be varied and should be designed to spark interest and encourage pupils to play and explore real and/or imaginary events by stimulating specific play situations. For example, a road traffic incident box could include: Road signs, traffic lights, police dressing up clothes, fluorescent jackets, walkie-talkies, notepads and pencils, measuring equipment, digital camera, incident tape, medical kit, mobile phones etc. Recycled materials can be used to enhance these temporary role play areas and should form part of a shared activity by adults and children working together to construct the scenarios. The inner cardboard rolls from carpets make great 'pipes' for water from a hose to flow through, a break in the roll could simulate a burst water main and lead to a major traffic incident as the pipe gets repaired and police have to direct traffic and so on.

A science explorer's den can be erected and could include real and/or made items such as: laptop, digital microscope, digital camera, video camera, sound recorder, Dictaphone, metal detectors, walkie-talkies and timers, etc. Nesting boxes with webcams can be set up outdoors for observations of birds over a period of time and weather recording equipment can be used to make simple recordings for example. Digital picture hunts can be created with pictures from a digital camera, where the children have to identify and locate outdoor items or areas by guessing what's in the pictures to locate a special object.

Inexpensive digital cameras can be used by the children to capture experiences outdoors. The world looks quite different through the eyes of a small person and even if the picture is only showing part of an object or person, this can form part of a guessing game on the computer or IWB once back indoors. They can photograph or film (inexpensive digital video cameras are also available) their favourite part of the garden or play area and talk about their choice, photograph a toy or a friend and talk about the picture. They can be shown how to display the picture they have taken on the camera and encouraged to talk about it. Staff can also use both digital still and video cameras to capture the children's experiences to display indoors on a computer or IWB to stimulate language development and aid recall.

Ephemeral art activities by the children undertaken outdoors with twigs, leaves, pebbles, petals etc. can be photographed as a permanent record and used in displays.

Robotic toys and Remote controlled vehicles can be used outdoors on a suitable surface. Children can chalk lines to follow over, have races, build their own obstacle course, make nests/homes for the robotic toys to return to and make shells to turn them into minibeasts or imaginary creatures etc.



### **Resources:**

There are many resources available for ICT in the Outdoor Environment, this list is not exhaustive and is simply suggestions of things to consider. Remember that not everything has to be bought; making replicas of ICT equipment in everyday life such as car park ticket machines, building a car wash or constructing a house will be beneficial to increase the children's knowledge and understanding of the world around them.

Various Role play boxes can be used as a stimulus for play scenarios, Digital Still and Video cameras to be used by both staff and pupils, head cameras to record 'journeys' of children or fastened to Robotic Toys, Robotic Toys and Remote control vehicles, timers, torches, mobile phones, Walkie Talkies, traffic lights, builders tool set, explorers headlamp and so on.

A laptop with digital microscope can be a good way for children to examine leaves, flowers, insects etc. that they might find outdoors. A science explorer's den can have a pretend laptop to extend play or Metal Detectors to explore the sand pit or flower pots filled with leaves to identify and find hidden metallic objects.

Sound can be explored and enjoyed by taking tape recorders, CD players and sound recording devices outdoors. Voice changers can be lots of fun and less likely to disturb others if used outside. Staff can record pupils' comments in 'Talking Tins' which can also be used for classifying and labelling found objects.

### **Some suggested Outdoor activities:**



**Car wash/Car park  
Train or Bus Station  
Garage  
Road works  
Emergency Services  
Builders Yard  
Scientist Hut  
Jungle Explorers**

**Ephemeral art with  
Digital camera  
Still/Video cameras  
Sound recordings  
Metal detectors  
Robotic Toys  
Garden Centre  
Treasure Hunt**

