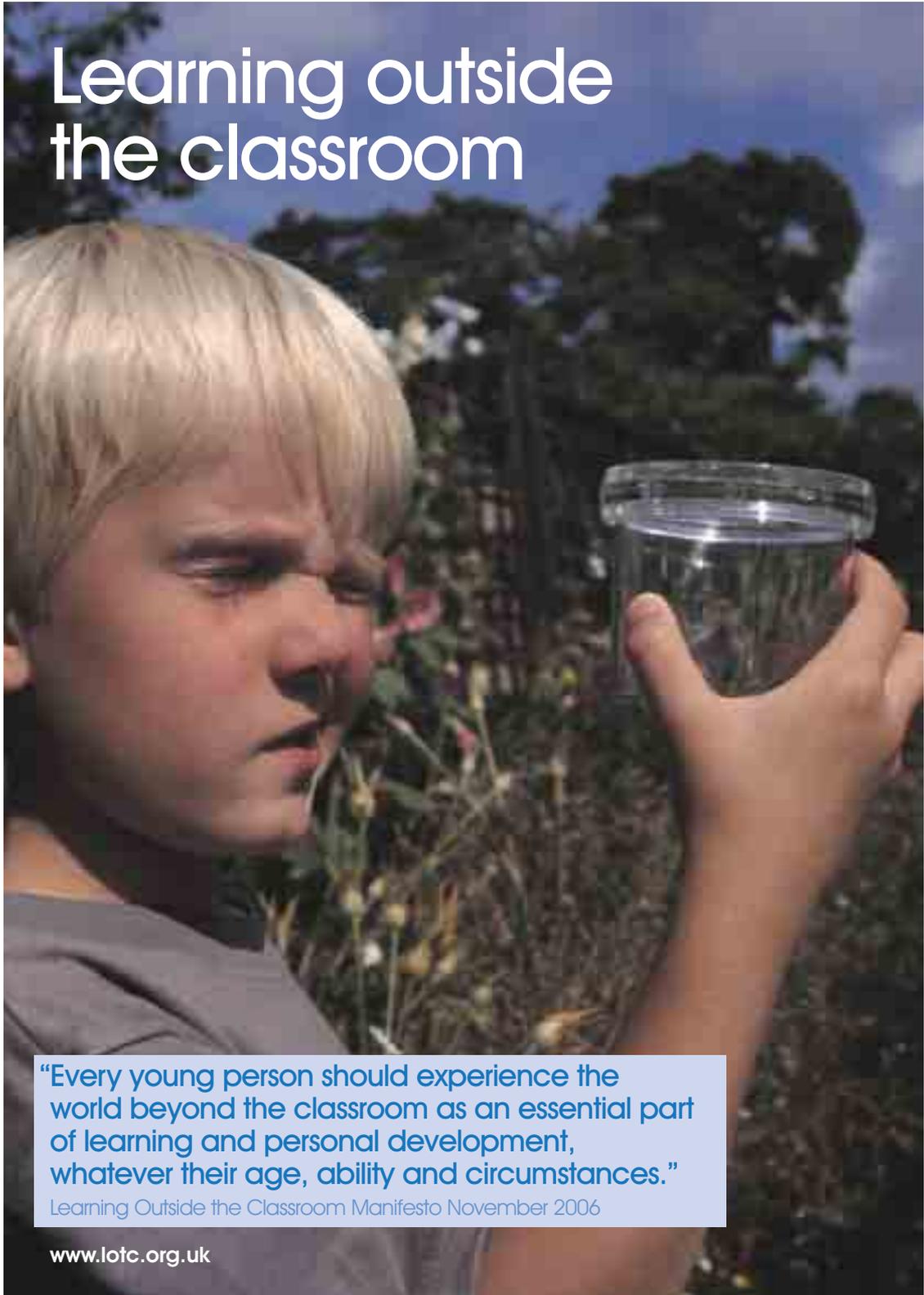# Learning outside the classroom

"Every young person should experience the world beyond the classroom as an essential part of learning and personal development, whatever their age, ability and circumstances."

Learning Outside the Classroom Manifesto November 2006

www.lotc.org.uk

What are the benefits of learning outside the classroom?

Young people of all ages benefit from real life 'hands on' experiences; when they can see, hear, touch and explore the world around them and have opportunities to experience challenge and adventure. They need to find out how what they learn at school relates to their life outside it and to the world around them. **The classroom environment doesn't always provide young people with enough of these opportunities.**

Learning outside the classroom aims to get children and young people out and about. These experiences can take place in the school grounds, in the local environment or further afield on day visits or residential stays, but they all help motivate young people, reducing poor behaviour and truancy, while helping schools to raise attainment and meet Every Child Matters outcomes. Read about how some schools are already integrating learning outside the classroom into their curriculum.

Photo: Low Bank Ground Team

ABLE Project
Wakefield's ABLE project uses learning outside the classroom to improve the lives of young people at risk of exclusion from mainstream education. The project transformed a 34 acre landfill site into a sustainable development project with a working fish farm, tree nursery and agricultural areas. The scheme gives young people the chance to develop practical and social skills, enabling them to participate more fully and take up local employment opportunities.

"All children have a natural enthusiasm for learning about the world around them. But we also know they can become disengaged if their school day is rigid, routine and boring. If we listen to what children and young people say inspires them most, we can be left in little doubt that good quality learning outside the classroom should be part of our educational mainstream."

Sir Al Aynsley-Green
Children's Commissioner for England

Photo: Learning through Landscapes

Ethelred Nursery School

Based in central London, Ethelred Nursery had no green space for children to enjoy quality outdoor play and learning. As a result nursery staff established an outdoor classroom on the only space available – a flat roof. Parents painted murals on the walls, local businesses funded some covered space for wet weather play, and a local community artist created mosaics with the children. The nursery has a quiet garden area where children grow herbs and fruits which they are encouraged to smell and taste. The area allows children to experience challenge in a safe outdoor environment.

The implementation of the Manifesto's vision is a long-term project:

January 2005	Education and Skills Select Committee recommends development of LOtC Manifesto
February 2005	Manifesto announced by the Prime Minister
July 2005	100 organisations attend workshop to develop Manifesto's vision and aims
November 2006	Manifesto launched by Secretary of State after public consultation
April 2007	First meeting of National Advisory Group (NAG)
July 2007	Growing Schools/LOtC Garden wins 'best in show' at Hampton Court Flower Show
October 2007	Work begins on 'Out & About' guidance and quality badge
April 2008	1,000th signatory to the Manifesto
June 2008	First Awards launched
October 2008	First National Conference; 'Out & About' Package and Quality Badge launched
January 2009	First Quality Badges awarded
April 2009	Council for Learning Outside the Classroom takes over responsibility for Manifesto

For more information and to download the resources visit **www.lotc.org.uk**