Sustainable Development Placement Task

**Positives-**

The playgrounds are divided into three areas to encourage safe play. There are two playground areas, one at the infant end and one at the upper end. There is also a lovely Rose Garden for the children to use. Added to this, there is a large grassy area, that allows children to play football and run around on.

Within the playground there are, permanent goals in the top area of the playing field and a Trim Trail for the more adventurous. Added to this there is also an amphitheatre with seats and a story telling chair and toadstools for children who want to entertain one another. When speaking to teachers, they said this is ideal for outdoor learning, they often use it in the summer for many different lessons.

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| The Technical department and pupils at Carrick Academy built a wonderful reading chair and toadstool seats. When speaking to teachers and members of staff they have said that this has been a fabulous place to share stories and enjoy reading in the open air. They also built a beautiful rainbow bench which is situated in the upper playground and classroom assistants said they often see children sitting here and chatting to one another.  There are many planters around the different playground areas, and there is also a vegetable patch in the upper end of the school.  There is an Eco committee in the school and they have got new trees planted around the school. They hope to develop further planting in the green areas of the playground and hope to plant some springtime bulbs in the coming months. Added to this, they are aiming to enhance their outdoor learning initiatives. They have already achieved their silver certificate and are currently working towards their green flag award. When I went to secondary school I was part of the eco committee and we were able to achieve the green flag award. Due to this, I would be eager to get involved and help encourage the eco committee to do more and think of ways to make their school more environmentally friendly.  Recycling happens both in the classrooms and with food waste in the dinner hall. There are 2 separate bins in the classroom, one for general waste and then one for paper. Within the dining hall there is separate bins for food waste and plastic bottles/food cartons. Added to this, within the class I was working with, they had light monitors. Their role was to ensure the lights were turned off whenever they were leaving the classroom. This type of behaviour will encourage children to do this at home, therefore will have a great impact on the environment. Within the school there was many signs and posters about remembering to turn off the lights and about recycling.  The school also encourages parents to support their recycling efforts by sending old ink cartridges and mobile phones in to the school.  The school are also encouraging the daily mile. This activity I believe is very beneficial. When it was mentioned the children were extremely excited and could not wait to get outside for fresh air. I believe the daily mile has many benefits. It gives children the opportunity to engage with daily exercise which is essential for them. It allows children to get time away from their work, which in turn should make them more motivated when they go back to their work because they have had time to get all their hyper energy out and are now ready to concentrate. Added to this, it allows the teacher to build up a good relationship with the children. Due to the teacher participating, this will allow the children to connect with her/him and see them on a relatable level. Lastly, the daily mile also allows for outdoor learning, whilst doing the daily mile, no matter where it is, it allows the teacher to talk to the children about the outdoors and explore different concepts.  Overall, the school is extremely lucky to have the amount of space that they do.  **Areas that need improved-**  Within the concrete playground of the upper end, there is basketball stands, however there is no nets/hoop attached. Therefore, the children are unable to play basketball.  The trim trail is still able to be used, however there are parts of it broken off, therefore it is not ideal and discourages children to use it as it has become very difficult to move from one area to another, due to parts been broken off.  Allow there is many planters, there is no plants planted in them. The teacher said it has been like this for a long time and doesn’t seem to be a priority for the school. Added to this, the vegetable garden lacks care and is practically non-existent, due to weeds and damage. The teacher expressed that it is difficult to have a vegetable patch and plants in a school playground for many reasons. When the school is on holiday for a long period there is no one there to maintain it, and often leads to flowers dying. Added to this, it has been known that children have caused damage to the vegetable garden outside of school hours. This is hard to avoid and can discourage the school to continue doing such things.  Allow there are different bins within the lunch hall, I do feel more could be done about this and a bigger push on separate bins and wastage could be introduced.  It was disappointing that out of the 6 serial days I had, the class only did the daily mile once. It clearly was not a priority. I found this sad as the children seemed to enjoy it and responded to it well, however this seemed more like a treat, rather than an everyday occurrence.  Although the children are able to use the playground and grass area, I do feel like it could be further developed to encourage children to love the outdoors and get full benefit of the space available to them. The areas surrounding the school is extremely big. There could be games painted on the concrete playground such as snakes and ladders. Added to this, there could be bird watching stations, this could include binoculars and information on different birds, this equipment could be kept in the storage area and be used at lunch times.  **Children’s Opinions-**  When speaking to the children about their playground, they all felt lucky to have such a large playground with many different areas to explore.  They said that they would like if the playground toys were out more often as sometimes they aren’t available to use.  Added to this, the children said that they are discouraged to use the large grass area if it has been raining as they may get dirty and bring the dirt into the classroom.  Regarding the daily mile, the children wished they got it more often as they love going outside and running about with their friends.  When I asked the children if there was anything they would add to their playground they said; climbing frames, fix their trim trail and more playground equipment, such as footballs and better skipping ropes.  The children said that they feel they do well at recycling. Added to this, the children enjoy being light monitors as they feel this gives them responsibility.  **Conclusion -**  The historic town of Maybole is situated on a sloping hillside and has magnificent view of the southern uplands.  There are many places of interest in and around Maybole such as, the Maybole castle, Cross Raguel Abbey, The electric brae and Culzean Castle.  Due to this, it allows from many outdoor trips and education. The school need to take advantage of their surroundings and use this to benefit the children’s learning. The outdoors allows for many cross curricular learning, such as; history, health and wellbeing, science, art and literacy. |