

Learning outside the classroom

Sweden 6-10 May 2018

Forest school leader Berni Westley and PE leader Amy Green attended a training course in Sweden to further their knowledge on educating children outside of the classroom, using the outdoors to its maximum to stimulate children to learn in new and exciting ways. Sweden are leaders in this kind of education and have been teaching their children outdoors for many years with great success.

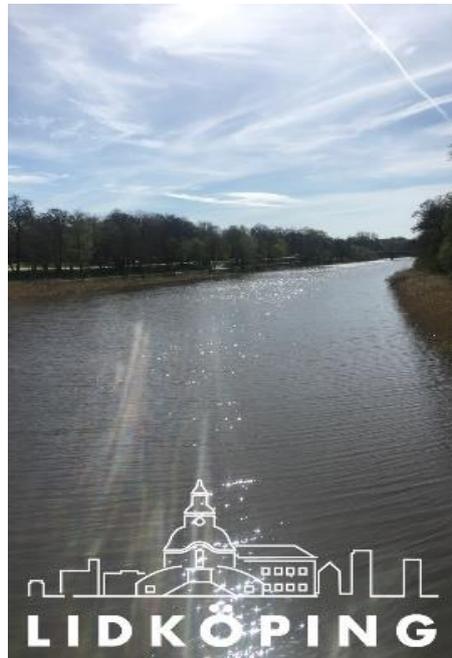
This was all part of a project called Erasmus+ funded by the European Funding programme.

Numerous participant's arrived in Sweden from all parts of the UK to visit two schools. One in Lidköping and one in Vara.

After an early start from the UK Berni and Amy arrived in Sweden at Gothenburg airport and headed to our hotel in Lidköping.



We met all the others on the training course and were given our training times and dates for the week. The hotel was in the lovely town of Lidköping and situated right by the river.



The first days training was at a school in Vara which meant an early start and a bus ride for about 45 minutes the school was set right by a large woodland and the school used this to the maximum, we attended a Forest school session lead by class teachers seeing the children participate in activities that taught them about caring for their surroundings, alongside maths, and science lessons in beautiful woodland surroundings.



We lunched at the school, the children then gave us a tour of the school and we observed some lessons.

Day two was a visit to the school in Lidköping, this was a more urban school in the town we were staying but the children still had access to a big woodland which was about a half hour walk from the school.

We had a tour around this school before setting off with a group of children to the woodland. Here they had a designated forest school leader who in this session was teaching the children what plants are safe to eat that grow outside, we tasted some leaves from trees and some plants from the floor, the children then learnt about pollination.

Amy practised climbing one of the trees!



We returned to school, had lunch and then out in the afternoon with some older children to go dipping in the river with nets looking for creatures that live in there and identifying them.



Day 3 was a complete day of training in the woods in Lidköping, we learnt how to use the outdoors to deliver, all the core subjects, Maths, English and Science.

Berni and Amy enjoyed the activities learning new technique's, as well as learning to light a fire and preparing food to cook over a large campfire for our lunch.



Day 4 was based back at the hotel sharing ideas and knowledge gained from our training amongst others on the course.

Berni and Amy enjoyed some lovely sunny weather in Sweden, which meant they could embrace the outdoor learning to the maximum, the knowledge they gained will be implemented into their future planning and delivery of lessons with a new enthusiasm for learning outside the classroom to inspire children to explore and learn. The Swedish education system is an expert in this and if we can pass even a small part of this onto the children at Rowan Gate that we have experienced and learnt it can only benefit the lives and education of our children.

Berni & Amy