



"LITTLE NATURE LOVERS"

Project Summary

Children, especially preschoolers, can record things into their long-term memory in learning environments, which stimulate all the senses. Nowadays kids spend more time playing on gadgets than they do being physically active outside. Since they have less and less direct experiences in nature, these kids will miss out crucial opportunities to enhance their overall well-being, health and relationships. Many children today do not have a lot of direct or indirect contact with and access to the natural world. Direct experience with nature during childhood is of great importance to influence the children's relationship with nature as a child now, but later as an adult. Sensory experiences will develop understanding and enrich child's appreciation of the great outdoors.

Playing in nature children develop a sense of wonder and curiosity about elements of nature (e.g. weather, flora and fauna, sand, water), and become inspired and motivated to explore, discover, inquire, critically think, and reflect about the real world. Considering these benefits 6 partner countries -Latvia, Turkey, Romania, Portugal, Bulgaria and Italy have come together to create the project: Little Nature Lovers.

Project aim: Increase teachers' knowledge and skills to use contemporary teaching approaches to connect children with nature and improving children's knowledge of natural objects in the local area.

Nearly 850 children aged between 3-7 and 100 teachers and educators will participate in this precious project.

We will focus on the following objectives:

- To enable teachers to acquire knowledge and competence to use nature as a learning environment via engaging children in outdoor nature activities;
- To provide teachers with competence in nature based interdisciplinary lessons;
- To inculcate teachers with new ideas and methods to guide special needs kids in nature activities;
- To promote the formation of the child's ecological awareness and attitude focusing on trees, plants, birds and small animals;
- To develop children's creative and cognitive skills in Maths, Science and Art in nature;
- To enable teachers to work in a mutual exchange with other kindergartens' teachers to gain new ideas, insights, and methods across Europe.



Our project will have 6 joint staff training with 6 different themes in which the participants will be provided with competence in order to conduct project activities more effectively.

Methodical collections for preschool teachers (6 collections joined in one Little Nature Lovers' Activity Pack) will be created (digital and 6 journals)

Throughout 2 years period, we plan to create the following outputs and products with the collaboration of our partners:

- Project Roll-up,
- Project web page,
- eTwinning project,
- Little Nature Lovers' Activity Pack,
- Teachers' Guide for Nature Activities,
- Recipe Book, Picture Dictionary for kids.

During the project, the partner schools will learn from each other, project activities will become an integral part of the daily learning process. This project is also closely linked to preschool educational programs and curriculum of each participating country.

Our project will contribute to the development of the involved schools in the long-term. For instance: the staff will have a raised awareness of recent changes in Nature education, which will raise the quality at our respective schools;

Nature-based project activities will nurture children's mental, academic and emotional development while bringing a sense of fun and adventure to kids. School community will be more conscious about the benefits of children's connection to nature and outdoor learning. School and local community will feel themselves as part of the European Community.

The implementation of the project will foster positive attitude about nature, promote school development and improve the quality of early childhood education and care in each partner school.