

School grounds focus:

- Where are we now?
- Where do we want to be?
- How can we get there?
- Making the changes
- Using your grounds

Curriculum focus:

- English
- PSHE
- Design and technology

Purpose of this activity:

- To assess the impact your current school entrance makes on visitors, pupils and staff.

Equipment and materials:

- A copy of the checklist over page.

Preparation:

- The appearance of the external environment can have a big impact on how children feel about their school. In turn this affects their behaviour and attainment. Staff and visitors are also affected. A poor entrance may be deterring parents from sending their children to the school; harming the community's opinion of the school or encouraging vandalism.
- Discuss with pupils how the appearance of different places can affect how you feel about that place. You might show them a variety of photos from different locations – some bleak, littered or vandalised; some colourful, attractive and well-maintained. How would they feel arriving at each one?

What to do:

- Take the children out to the school entrance – small groups might be easier to manage.
- Ask them to imagine that they are arriving at the school for the first time. What sort of school would they think it was just by looking at the entrance?
- Prompt their ideas with questions or by using the checklist overleaf: does it look a friendly school? A safe school? A scary school? An exciting school? Can you tell where you are meant to go?
- Explore with the children what elements of the entrance influence their opinions. For example: colour, natural elements, building materials, litter, damage, size and scale, signs etc.
- Back in the classroom, collate their opinions – maybe as a wall display with words and pictures to reflect the comments made.

Extensions:

- Older children could use this as either the starting point or the conclusion of a more detailed study of how the appearance of our surroundings affects how we feel.
- Children could carry out similar interviews with other pupils, or with staff and parents, to gather a broader range of opinions.
- Based on the findings, children could make suggestions for improving the entrance.

Our school entrance

Stand outside your school entrance. Imagine this is your first visit to your school. Just by looking at the entrance, what sort of school do you think it is?

Do you think it looks friendly?

Yes

No

Do you think it looks fun?

Yes

No

Do you think it looks scary?

Yes

No

Do you think it looks exciting?

Yes

No

Do you think it looks welcoming?

Yes

No

Do you think it looks boring?

Yes

No

Do you think it looks caring?

Yes

No

What makes you feel this way about the entrance? Think about...

- Colour
- Plants
- Shape
- Signs
- Tidiness
- Building materials

