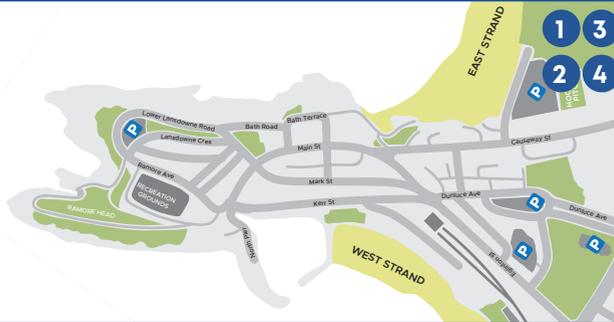




# A WILD YEAR ADVENTURE OVERVIEW



## Resources Required

- Binoculars (not essential)
- Pre-printed tables / tick charts and species ID charts
- Clipboards
- Camera (not essential)
- Appropriate clothing for weather conditions
- Magnifying glasses
- Specimen jars / clean transparent container with holes

## List of Locations

- Home
- School Grounds
- East Strand
- Antrim Gardens
- Ramore Head / Coastal Zone

## Additional Information

**Overview:** Plants and animals have an 'envelope' of environmental conditions in which they can survive and thrive. This can include temperature, moisture, nutrients, daylight hours, salinity etc. Some plants and animals can survive a wide range of conditions, whilst others have very specific requirements. This topic explores how living things survive and interact with the environment throughout the seasons in the Portrush area.

- **At home** – Children should be encouraged to observe changes in their own environment throughout the school year by keeping a record of changes associated with their own environment throughout the seasons using their five senses e.g. what can they see (autumn leaves), smell (freshly cut grass), feel (hot and cold), hear (new born lambs, birdsong...) and taste (seasonal produce). How does this compare to their classmates?
- **Within the school grounds** – If your school has a small pond or marshy area, or an area with bird feeders it can be a great place to get children to check off the insects and / or birds they can see at a particular time of year. Why might they find less insects or birds in winter? Does the variety of plants and animals increase in spring? What are the first plants to emerge after winter e.g. snowdrops, daffodils, bluebells etc. Antrim Gardens could be used instead of the school grounds.
- **East Strand** – is a great place to take a walk through the dunes at any time of the year and check off the different plants and animals which can be found in a duneland. This could be combined as part of another trip (e.g. the Coast). Give the children 15 – 20 minutes to find as many species as they can. This could be repeated in winter and summer to show the difference.
- **Ramore Head and the Coastal Zone area** – is perfect for spotting seabirds and possibly even some marine mammals (e.g. seals, harbour porpoise, dolphin etc). Children could be asked to check off the species they spot and then find out where they spend the winter. Most children can identify a gull, but they could also try to categorise them into their 8 different types using a flow chart.

## Site Specific hazards/Risk Assessment

- Exposure / weather conditions
- Uneven surfaces
- Slippery surfaces
- Deep ponds or open water
- Cliffs or steep edges
- Traffic
- Steps

## Curriculum Links

### Interdependence:

**How do living things interact with each other and the environment?  
How do living things survive?**

The variety of living things in the world and how we can take care of them (S&T KS1); How we might act on a global or local issue (G KS2); Local habitats (G KS2); The main stages in the life cycle of some living things (S&T KS2).

### Place:

**Where do I live? What is in my world?**

Aspects of their own immediate world (G KS1); an issue in the local or contrasting environment (H KS1); how animals use colour to adapt to their natural environment (S&T KS1).

### Movement and Energy:

**Why do people and animals move? Where do people and animals move?**

The effects of extreme weather conditions here and in the wider world (G KS2).

### Change over time:

**Can we stop unwanted change? How can we influence change?**

The consequences of change through investigating global issues (G KS2); Changes in the local natural environment including how they can affect living things (S&T KS1); How animal or plant behaviour is influenced by seasonal change (S&T KS2); Obvious changes that occur in lifecycles (S&T KS2).

## Plenaries:

**KS1:** Make a fact file indicating the animals you have discovered.

**KS2:** Describe in pictures, or in words, the life cycle of some of the List some facts about them. What can we do to protect them? animals you have looked at. What environmental impact are we making on their habitat and what can we do to help them?



LOCATION	BEFORE ADVENTURE	DURING ADVENTURE	AFTER ADVENTURE
<p><b>At Home</b></p>	<p>Have a discussion with the children about their five senses and how these could be used to detect changes in the seasons e.g. what could their five senses detect in autumn, winter, spring, and summer.</p> <p>Distribute a table in which they can record what they detect with their senses at home e.g. over a weekend.</p> <p>Inform guardians about the exercise to be undertaken at home particularly the taste exercise i.e. pick a seasonal fruit or vegetable item at the supermarket.</p>	<p>Children should record what they experience at a particular time of year. It is likely that everything they record will be relevant in some manner e.g.</p> <p><b>Sight</b> – autumn leaves, snow, trees blowing in wind, ice cream van at the beach etc.</p> <p><b>Sound</b> – the wind, birdsong, crunchy leaves, waves crashing etc.</p> <p><b>Smell</b> – wood / peat fire, freshly cut grass, spreading of manure, fragrant garden plants etc.</p> <p><b>Taste</b> – harvest produce in autumn, wild garlic in spring, salt in the air during a winter storm, ice cream in summer.</p> <p><b>Touch</b> – hot/cold, wet/dry, sharp/smooth.</p>	<p>Encourage children to discuss their experiences and predict how their experience might be different in another season e.g. if carried out in Autumn you could get the children to predict what they might experience in Spring and then get them to repeat the exercise and see how their prediction compared.</p> <p>Ask how the changing seasons affects their daily life e.g. it might be too dark or cold in winter for an activity they enjoy.</p>
<p><b>Within the School Grounds or Antrim Gardens</b></p>	<p>Discuss local wildlife with the children, introducing them to the range of interesting plants and animals which can be found in the Portrush area and where these can be found.</p> <p>Get the children to learn about changes associated with the seasons e.g. weather, daylight etc, and how these impact on them and might therefore impact on plants and animals.</p> <p>If using a magnifying glass, specimen jars, ID charts etc. ensure that the children are familiar with the use of these items.</p>	<p>Pick an area within the school grounds or Antrim Gardens and give the children a set time whilst they look for plants and animals found on their ID charts.</p> <p>Ask the children to note the weather conditions and season and how this might influence what they can find.</p> <p>It can be useful to do this exercise at a special time of year e.g. when daffodils, snowdrops or bluebells are emerging, or when trees are losing their leaves in winter.</p> <p>It is important to stress to the children that they cannot pick wildflowers as it is against the law to do so.</p> <p>Participate in a quick litter pick around the school grounds or Antrim Gardens. Record what is found.</p>	<p>When back in the classroom it can be useful to pick a plant or animal which the children have found and focus on its lifecycle e.g. the lifecycle of a daffodil, snowdrop, caterpillar, or frogs. There are some fantastic videos available on YouTube for all species. This exercise helps the children to learn that many aspects of the environment, plant and animal life are cyclical, and often linked to the seasons.</p> <p>Have a look at another part of the world which does not have such marked seasons like Northern Ireland. A really good comparison is the island of Cyprus as it is also an island, slightly smaller than Northern Ireland, but with a much warmer climate.</p> <p>Ask the children to review the litter they found and question whether or not action is required to prevent litter from impacting on plants and animals. A good activity is to create posters informing the local community or other children in school, about the dangers of litter or any action that might be taken against offenders.</p>