

The John Muir Award – Upper School

The John Muir Award is an environmental award scheme that encourages people to connect with, enjoy and care for wild places. All sorts of people get involved, including families, adults and young people. The John Muir Award is a structure or framework in which activities identified by learning groups (such as schools, colleges, clubs or youth organisations) can be tailored to meet the needs of participants, the wild places, and desired outcomes (such as meeting the Curriculum for Excellence). The Award isn't a set programme, and it doesn't have a syllabus, but it does have award criteria:

Meet four challenges that lie at the heart of each John Muir Award:

- ❖ Discover a wild place — this can range from urban school grounds to rugged mountain tops
- ❖ Explore its wildness — do things to increase awareness and understanding in an active way
- ❖ Conserve it — take personal responsibility
- ❖ Share your experiences
- ❖ Complete the required time commitment
- ❖ Show enthusiasm and commitment towards their involvement
- ❖ Have an awareness of John Muir
- ❖ Understand what the John Muir Award is and why they are participating.

The John Muir Award encourages progression through three levels – Discovery, Explorer and Conserver. Centres are required to map the evidence generated by the learner against the Unit Outcomes and the Assessment Standards/Performance Criteria of the relevant unit specification.

Northumberland PRU will take full advantage of being situated adjacent to the North East Coast and uses this natural location to support the John Muir Award in the school. All pupils who take part in the Discovery level of the John Muir Award.

The John Muir Award at Northumberland PRU will be delivered through a collaboration of subjects:

Geography, History, Modern Studies, English, Technologies and Science.

In addition to the commitment from the school staff, other wider-community partners may be introduced to provide valuable support. Pupils carry out tasks related to the John Muir Award over a period of ten weeks and also have four days when outdoor tasks are completed. Learners carry out exercises and tasks which not only support aspects of the John Muir Award but allow them to complete Experiences (E's) and Outcomes (O's) of CfE. The school would map the E's and O's to the John Muir Award activities. To achieve a John Muir Award, each participant must meet the award criteria, but this does not require any formal evidence collection or keeping records of John Muir Award activity. However, by retaining the evidence and keeping records of any 'outcomes' achieved by the learners, this could be used to generate evidence for the Assessment Standards of SQA units if the school wished to look at this as an option. During the session and if the school wanted to formally certificate learners for the work carried out as part of this project Northumberland PRU could investigate the SQA suite of wider achievement qualifications.

The following outlines the details of Northumberland PRTU's John Muir Award. This planning tool is completed by teachers or group leaders and submitted to the John Muir Award before activity takes place and before a John Muir Award can be formally registered. The Proposal Form outlines the aims, timescales, and details of how Northumberland PRU's group and activity plans to meet the Four Challenges of the Award within the four coloured boxes of the form.

Discover a wild place Where/what is your wild place (or places)? This can be school grounds, local park, beach, woods, river, mountain or national park... Briefly: Tell us what gives the place(s) its natural character. What makes it special? Why is it a suitable place for your Award activity?	The Northeast Coast is close to Northumberland PRU.. The pupils will also discover the new wind farm facility being developed with an environmental aspect and have input on the wildlife elements to the area. Learning about the history of the environmental movement and the work of John Muir and the John Muir Trust.	Pupils research the use of the River Tyne and the local history, demography, fauna & flora, wildlife etc. Guided walk of the Dams area- explore its features, compare its present/ past's condition and uses. Use GPS/Google Earth digital exploration/Digimap. Record experiences using video, photos, journals etc. take part in a creative writing course focusing on whole school related projects e.g. climate challenge fund project, Wild fashion day.	Explore it tell us what you'll do to increase your awareness and understanding. How will you experience, enjoy and find out more about your wild place(s)? You might: Visit it at different times of day and night, in different seasons, alone or with others. Travel extensively – walk, camp, bike, canoe. Sit, look, listen - engage senses. Identify and find out more about landscapes, habitats and living things (biodiversity), and how they connect. Make maps. Take photographs. Research local geology, natural and cultural history.
Conserve it How will you care for your wild place(s), take some personal responsibility, make a difference, put something back? Take practical action for nature - wildlife or pollution surveys, litter picks and audits, tree or shrub planting, grow plants for wildlife or clear invasive plants, create or monitor habitats... Campaign and educate to highlight an environmental issue or help protect a wild place. Apply minimum impact approaches to your activity	The environmental audit will identify issues pupils can tackle to conserve the area and raise awareness in the local community. Pupils will identify a practical conservation task- working with SWT and CATCA e.g. litter picking and prevention, pond clearing, dog fouling prevention, invasive species removal. In school grounds and community garden- litter picking, wildlife friendly planting, orchard tree planting, bug hotels and nest boxes. Pupils will consider global citizenship- moral decisions around environmental issues and make links to our climate challenge fund project aiming to reduce food waste/promote local growing and management of local green network of paths and cycle routes.	The pupils will be responsible for gathering information such as photos, videos, creating Google street views/maps etc for a presentation to the rest of the school, parents and local community. Share with our link school 'Woodlands' in Cape Town, South Africa. The pupils will undertake an awareness raising exercise in the local community to help the transition of a negative image for the area to that of a positive place to be used and cared for. Opportunity to lead guided walks. Their work will be published to the wider school community and shared via social media, website and other literature. Review pupil's experiences using the Four Challenge Review.	Share your experiences Tell others about what you've done – experiences, achievements, feelings, what's been learned. Celebrate! Reflect, review and discuss your adventures and experiences in wild places – do this during as well as after, informally or more formally. You might: Make a display of photos, drawings, stories, poems, and artwork. Make a group diary – as a book, wall display or film. Organise a presentation. Lead a guided walk around your wild place(s). Use newsletters, websites and social media.