Mini Explorers
Nursery and Foundation Stage
1 ¼ hours

We would like to welcome young explorers to the Garden, to discover what a Botanic Garden is. Find Peter Rabbit in the veg beds and see which vegetables are growing. Spot all the colours to be able to sing a rainbow, and search for mini-beasts near the Bog Garden. We will sing different songs and include a range of activities to encourage exploration. This session is part guided and part self-guided tour.

Learning Outcomes:

During this session, your pupils will:

• Explore the Botanic Garden using their senses
• See the variety of plants we grow outside
• Sing nursery rhymes and songs related to our Garden
• Look for mini-beasts and other garden creatures
• Enjoy some time scavenging for plant treasures on the ground

EYFS Framework

• Communication and language
• Personal, social and emotional development
• Understanding the world
• Expressive arts and design

Pre visit activities:

Have a discussion about your visit:

• What is a Botanic Garden?
• Where do the plants come from?

Take a look outside…

• Explore your school grounds to find out what season it is.
• Have a look for leaves: can you find leaves of different sizes? Can you find some with different shapes?
• Take some magnifying glasses outside with you to help you see what plants look like close-up.
• Are there any creatures living in your school grounds?

Storytime
Post visit activities:

**Creative writing…**
Re-write the story “Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?” using your memories from the visit to the Botanic Garden. Which colours did you see? Which plants or trees do you remember? Perhaps your new story could be read out in assembly?

**Exploring is exciting!**
Read “Lollipopp and Grandpa’s Back Garden Safari” by Penelope Harper and Cate James (ISBN 978-1907912092). Now that you are expert explorers, go on a school grounds safari to see what you can find. Will there be any crazy creatures to discover? Did you notice anything new this time that you haven’t seen before?

**Story-Stick**
Create a story-stick of your time at the Botanic Garden. Ask your pupils about their favourite parts of the visit to the Garden. Then go on a scavenger hunt around the school grounds to find items that remind them of being at the Garden, and attach them onto a large stick. A good memory exercise: get out the story-stick at a later date and ask the pupils to recall what each item on the stick represents. As an extension activity, each pupil could make an individual story stick of a mini-exploration of the playground.

**Get creative in the garden!**
Get creative and make a Mini Explorers map of a secret garden from your imagination. What kind of environment is the secret garden? Decorate your map with lots of plants, ponds and paths. You could then bury these maps in a time capsule for future Mini Explorers to find.

**Make a minibeast exploring habitat at school!**
Choose a small area of grass and fence it off. Let the grass grow long, and put in a log pile for mini beasts to use as a home. You could also include a hedgehog house, solitary bee house, and a compost pile. A small bucket of water will attract other insects and encourage amphibians! Get more ideas from:
http://www.bbc.co.uk/breathingplaces/downloads/how_to_poster/

**Resources:**
- “Exploring Nature with Children” booklet:
- Lots of outdoor exploring and craft ideas:
- Learning Through Landscapes, information to help you improve your outdoor learning spaces: