



# The Learning Escape

Grants Bulletin  
2017



## Funding your eco-classroom

If you don't have the capital to pay for your eco classroom outright but you don't want to enter into an operating lease, there are other options available to you. There are many charitable funds to whom schools can apply for grants that will cover at least some of the build costs.

This funding bulletin aims to help you identify some of the grants potentially available to your school; we've also included case studies of some of the schools that we've worked with so you can get a flavour for how the funding has worked in practice.

This isn't an exhaustive list of funding sources, but hopefully it'll give you an idea of where to start. Two other excellent sources of information that are worth looking at are:

[Grants 4 Schools](#)

[Funding Education](#)

## Top five grants for school buildings and grounds

### 1. [BBC Children in Need](#)

*The Main Grants programme awards grants over £10,000 per year for up to three years (up to £20,000 for building projects); the Small Grants programme provides grants of up to £10,000 per year for up to three years.*

BBC Children in Need awards grants each year to charities and not-for-profit organisations supporting disadvantaged children and young people in the UK. Grant applications must reflect its core principles of:

- Being focused on outcomes for children and young people
- Addressing disadvantage
- Safeguarding children
- Enabling participation by children and young people
- Avoiding statutory overlap or substitution.

Schools can apply for grants, but need to demonstrate how their project would benefit young people outside of school hours too.

There are three application deadlines each year for the Main Grants programme – January, June and September, and four application deadlines for the Small Grants programme – March, June, September and December.

### [Top tip for applying to BBC Children in Need](#)

- Applications must demonstrate how your project will change the lives of children for the better.

## 2. [Awards for All \(England\)](#)

*Awards between £300 and £10,000.*

Awards for All offers grants of between £300 and £10,000 for grassroots and community activity that aims to improve life for local people and neighbourhoods. It doesn't have a deadline and you can apply at any time.

It's open to any community or not-for-profit group, parish or town council, health body or school.

- Awards for All funds projects must meet one or more of the following outcomes:
- People have better chances in life with better access to training and development to improve their life skills
- Stronger communities with more active citizens working together to tackle their problems
- Improved rural and urban environments which communities are better able to access and enjoy
- Healthier and more active people and communities.

Awards for All doesn't fund projects which only meet the statutory requirements of schools, ie to help deliver the national curriculum. Projects must help children learn new things in addition to what is delivered during the school day, for example, before or after school, at lunchtime, weekends or during the holidays.

Although Awards for All won't fund projects which cost more than £25,000, phases of a building project may be eligible, eg landscaping, furnishings or equipment, which could help to free up funds in the school budget towards the cost of the build.

### Top tips for applying to Awards for All

- Demonstrate in your application how your project will benefit the wider community
- Never ask for the full £10,000; always match fund with some of your school budget or PTA monies if possible.



### 3. Foyle Schools Library Scheme

Majority of grants to schools range from £1000 - £10,000

The Foyle Foundation is an independent grant-making trust that distributes grants to UK charities. The majority of its funding for schools is directed through its Foyles School Library Scheme, which gives priority to primary schools.

Its main interest is in funding reading books, but it will also consider contributions towards library software, necessary IT equipment and furniture.

Although major school building projects are unlikely to be supported, a grant could be used to help free up funds in the school budget towards the cost of the build.

It doesn't have a deadline and you can apply at any time.

Top tip for applying to The Foyle Schools Library Scheme

- Demonstrate in your application how you will maintain and renew your library in the future and how your PTA will support the project





#### 4. The Foyle Foundation Main Grants Programme - Learning

State funded secondary and primary schools can apply for other, non-library related projects with direct educational benefit under the Main Grants Scheme (Learning). Any state funded school can apply; independent schools won't usually be supported.

It doesn't have a deadline and you can apply at any time.

Key areas for support are:

- Libraries, museums and archives
- Special educational needs
- Projects that encourage sustainability by reducing overheads or generating additional revenue
- Projects and activities which increase access and widen the diversity of visitors.

##### Top tip for applying to The Foyle Foundation Main Grants Programme

- Focus your application on how your project will develop the ability of children and young people to access learning and educational opportunities.

#### 5. The Garfield Weston Foundation

*Provides regular grants up to £100,000 and major grants for £100,000 or more*

The Garfield Weston Foundation is a charitable grant-making foundation which supports a wide range of causes across the UK.

Key areas for support include:

- Arts
- Education
- Youth
- Health
- Museums and heritage
- Community
- Environment
- Faith
- Welfare

Grants fall into one of three categories – capital, revenue (core costs) and project work. For building projects, a grant is unlikely to be given for more than 10% of the total project cost.

##### Top tip for applying to the Garfield Weston Foundation

- Be sure to include a sensible business plan with your application.

## More Top tips for all grants:

1. **Allow plenty of time.** Pulling together a comprehensive bid takes longer than you think; you'll be kicking yourself if you miss a deadline.
2. **Choose your fund carefully.** Always read the guidance and eligibility criteria. If in any doubt, pick up the phone and give the fund a call – they're there to help. There's no point wasting your time and theirs applying for an inappropriate scheme.
3. **Get creative.** Though your main concern may be getting extra space for your school, be aware that you'll probably have a much better chance of success if you make it available to community groups too. Look at what the different funds are most concerned about, and see if your project could be tweaked to be more appealing to them.
4. **Consult.** Talk to the wider school community and local community as early in the process as possible to understand what they want from the project. Early consultation can help you design a really strong project that will stand out.
5. **Tell a compelling story.** Remember that you're essentially selling your project. Have clear aims, and include a convincing narrative as to how you're going to achieve them.



## Case studies - How have other schools funded their Learning Escape buildings?

### Case study 1 – A primary school in Yorkshire

The school needed a space for before- and after-school provision. They wanted the room to be accessible, and alarmed separately to the main school building so that it could be used outside of school hours. The build and furnishing cost was just over £90,000.

The school applied to their local authority for Extended Services provision, and was awarded £50,000. They had saved its Devolved Formula Capital for the project, which contributed £35,000. They also successfully bid for an Awards for All grant of £6,500 for furnishing and fitting the room; their experience of the bidding process was that it was very straightforward.

### Case study 2 – A primary school in the South East

The school wanted a room for lessons, nature and wildlife study (including Forest Schools Training), and before- and after-school clubs. They needed a flexible space, ideally set in a woodland area of the school grounds. The total build cost was £145,000.

Recognising that they would need outside funding, the school worked hard to forge links with a variety of different community groups to whom the room would be made available. Demonstrating that the building would have a real impact on the community and those most in need enabled them to be able to access a variety of different funds. The Lottery's People's Millions (now closed) provided £50,000, the central government's Target Support Fund provided £75,000, the local authority gave £10,000 from its Extended Services Funding budget, and Awards for All contributed the final £10,000.

