

Holy Child Primary School Generation Wild Experience

During Term 2 our Primary four classes took part in nature-based activities as part of the Generation Wild programme.

The impact on the pupils has been profound. We noticed that children who typically struggle with focus or confidence in the classroom flourished outdoors. Nature provided a calming, stimulating environment that encouraged their natural curiosity and creativity. Pupils developed a deeper understanding of the world around them and their connection to it through hands-on exploration. They learned to collaborate, problem-solve, and communicate more effectively. Watching them build dens together, make animal homes, or record their observations highlighted how nature nurtures both academic and personal growth.

These activities have also had a ripple effect on the wider school community especially our Primary Five and Six children who had the benefit of taking part in the Generation Wild programme in previous years. We are gradually adding more outdoor learning resources and opportunities for all pupils in the school from Nursery to Primary Seven where classes have the opportunity to spend dedicated, scheduled time outdoors. The time spent outside seems to reset the pupils' energy and focus, making them more receptive to learning back in the classroom. Our school grounds have become more vibrant and purposeful, with pupils taking pride in maintaining their outdoor spaces. This sense of ownership has fostered a stronger connection between students and our school environment.

Families, too, have felt the positive impact. Many parents commented on the success of the programme and how their children came home excited to talk about what they had discovered or eager to complete their ten challenges with family members. Using Seesaw parents were able to share beautiful photos and videos of their experiences in nature. Children were celebrated in class and in a school assembly upon becoming Guardians of the Wild. Our principal, Mr. Kieran Austin, praised the programme and told the children how he personally would have loved an opportunity like this when his children were young to get the family outdoors and more engaged with nature.

Through our school social media channels, we were able to promote the scheme and showcase our outdoor learning opportunities ranging from our visit to Castle Espie, outdoor learning days, music-making (our song for Ava), drama (hot seating as Ava) as well as completing 708 nature activities in the Primary Four year group.

In conclusion, we have once again enjoyed taking part in this programme and can see the success it has had on the previous year groups who took part along with our wider school community. Integrating nature activities into our curriculum has enriched our pupils' learning, and deepened family engagement. It has reminded us that education is not confined to four walls and that some of the most powerful lessons come from the world outside.

As we look ahead, we are committed to continuing this journey, ensuring that the Generation Wild philosophy to, "have fun and discover the wonders of nature," remains a vital part of our educational landscape in Holy Child.

Sinéad Thompson and Fionnuala Dougan
P4 teachers at Holy Child Primary School, Belfast





Holy Child's Song for Ava



**We like the forests,
We like the lovely trees,
We like the rivers,
We like the morning breeze.
We like Ava soaring high and free,
Singing Guardians of the Wild come follow me!**

**She says, "Be kind now,
Protect the precious land,
Help all the creatures,
Be sure to lend a hand."
The birds and blossoms, foxes and the bees,
We must care for all that we see.**

**Show others gently
How we can try our best,
To love the Earth well,
For we are truly blessed.
From mountains tall
To the oceans deep,
Our promise to Ava we must keep.**

**We like the forests,
We like the lovely trees,
We like the rivers,
We like the morning breeze.
We like Ava soaring high and free,
Singing Guardians of the Wild come follow me! X3**