

Golf and Outdoor Education - From Fairways to Futures



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A Greater Game, For a Greater Good

In a world increasingly driven by sustainability, golf has an opportunity to step forward as a positive force for change. The game, with its 80 million players, proven health and community benefits, and thousands of carefully maintained green spaces, has the potential to promote a unique model of environmental stewardship and social value — one that blends the protection and conservation of nature with sport, inclusion, health and education.

In doing so, golf can help build a greater game for a greater good and create a legacy of real impact for all.





From Fairways to Learning Landscapes

A growing part of this opportunity is the use of golf facilities as outdoor learning environments. Golf has always been rooted in landscape, community and a deep respect for place. Many clubs already hold long-standing connections with local families and schools, and most offer a safe, diverse and carefully managed environment shaped by years of responsible stewardship.

These qualities make golf courses exceptional spaces for young children to play, learn and develop in and through nature — places where they can experience seasonal change, discover wildlife and gain confidence in open and inspiring surroundings.





Bridging a Growing Gap

At a time when children spend significantly less time outdoors, meaningful encounters with nature have become essential to their learning and wellbeing. Yet many schools face practical constraints: fewer resources, demanding schedules and limited access to high-quality green spaces.

Golf courses can bridge that gap. Their mix of habitats, sense of space and calm, well-managed environments create learning conditions rarely available elsewhere — places where curiosity can grow, confidence can flourish and pupils can experience the natural world in a way that feels engaging and accessible.





Learning that Connects

Most clubs sit close to the communities they serve and offer landscapes rich in natural variety. For many children, a course may be the closest woodland, wetland or open grassland they can explore in a structured, supervised way.

These environments also help children make meaningful academic connections: linking maths to distances and shapes, science to habitats and life cycles, art to colours and textures, and wellbeing to movement and fresh air. This type of holistic learning often emerges naturally outdoors, without the need for specialist equipment or complex preparation.





Shared Value, Lasting Impact

By welcoming local schools, clubs can support healthier, more confident learners and help foster early, lasting connections with the natural world. In doing so, they reaffirm the sport's long-standing role as a steward of landscapes and a contributor to community life — demonstrating how golf can help build a more active, resilient and environmentally aware generation.

This work also brings advantages for clubs: deeper community relationships, a stronger public profile, pathways to funding, and opportunities to introduce future players to the game.





Outdoor Learning and Early Development

Outdoor learning can be highly enjoyable, engaging and effective for young minds. The combination of natural light, fresh air and hands-on, experiential activities has been proven to reduce stress, improve focus and support social, physical, emotional and cognitive development.

Connection to nature also fosters a sense of care for the environment, while opportunities to move, make noise and take risks can help to inspire ideas and creative thinking.





Curiosity Comes First

These kinds of experiences also create a strong foundation for early STEAM-based learning — Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics — which begins with noticing, questioning and experimenting in living landscapes.

Young children learn best through play and sensory engagement. They watch how things grow and move, test simple ideas, spot patterns, compare shapes and distances, and express themselves through drawing, building or storytelling.





A Living Laboratory

A golf course can offer the space and variety to nurture these first steps in scientific thinking, creativity and problem-solving. Children can follow their curiosity, observe living things and interact with natural features in ways that help build confidence and lay the groundwork for more advanced concepts.





Your Golf Course as a Learning Landscape

Around 60% of a typical golf course is natural or semi-natural habitat, offering environments that lend themselves exceptionally well to outdoor learning. When viewed through an educational lens, golf courses become a living laboratory where children can learn and develop by observing change, exploring ideas and understanding the world around them.

Most golf courses contain a rich diversity of landscapes, each supporting a different type of learning experience.





Managed Turfgrass

Open, shorter-cut areas such as practice grounds that offer safe, flexible spaces for movement, teamwork, simple measurements, early exploration and activities that benefit from clear visibility and easy supervision.





Grassland

Roughs, meadows and longer grass that support noticing patterns, comparing shapes and sizes, observing insects and plants, and engaging in creative or exploratory tasks that draw on natural textures and variety.





Woodland

Trees, leaves and shaded spaces that encourage quiet observation, careful listening, sensory exploration and small-scale investigations linked to habitats, materials, seasonal change and creative expression.





Wetlands and water bodies

Ponds, rivers, streams and damp areas rich in biodiversity, offering opportunities to explore movement and flow, life cycles, weather influence and the relationships between living things and their environment.





Coastal dunes

Beach and links landscapes that provide unique textures, plant life and landforms, enabling exploration of natural forces and form, adaptation and the distinct ecological characteristics of maritime environments.





Play a Part and Bring Education to Life

Across all these spaces, everyday observations — seasonal change, animal tracks, plant growth, weather patterns, water movement and bird activity — can become natural entry points for creativity, curiosity, discovery and learning.

Even small details within the landscape can spark questions, exploration and discussion. For children, these moments help bring abstract classroom ideas to life; for clubs, they highlight the immense social value already present across the course and surrounding landscape.

Please use the toolkits that follow to plan a visit, explore the activities, and bring outdoor learning to life on your golf course. Whether you are starting with a single session or building a longer-term partnership, these resources are designed to make it simple, safe and rewarding.

By opening your golf course to learning and development, you can play a meaningful role in shaping the next generation.

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