

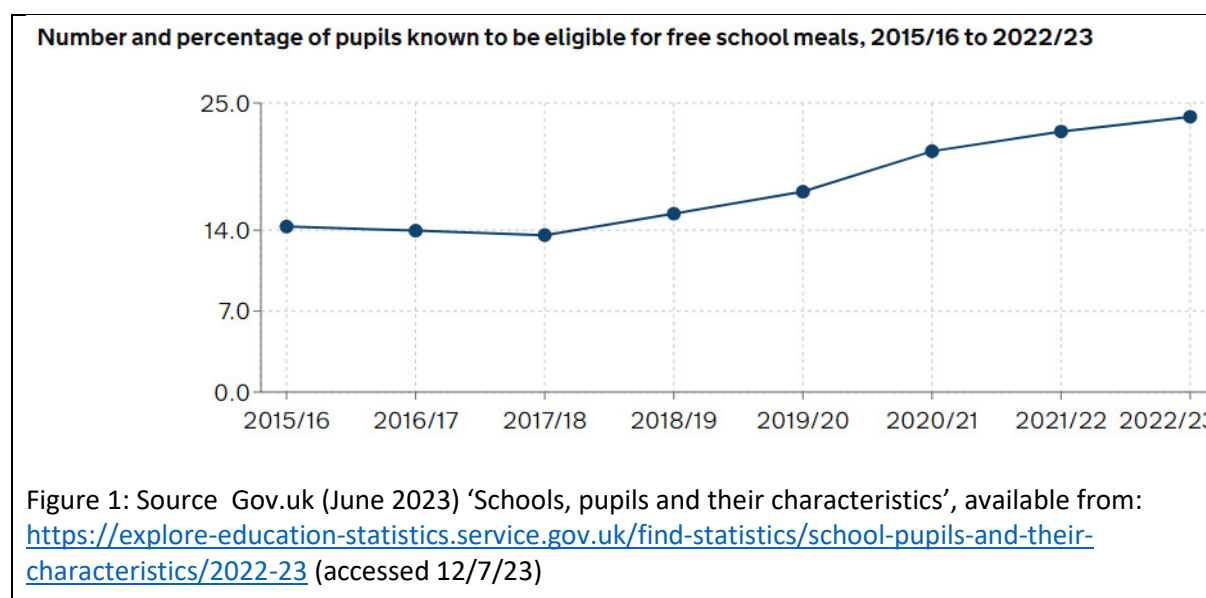
St Andrew's C of E Junior School

MACAWS outdoor facility – project funding proposal

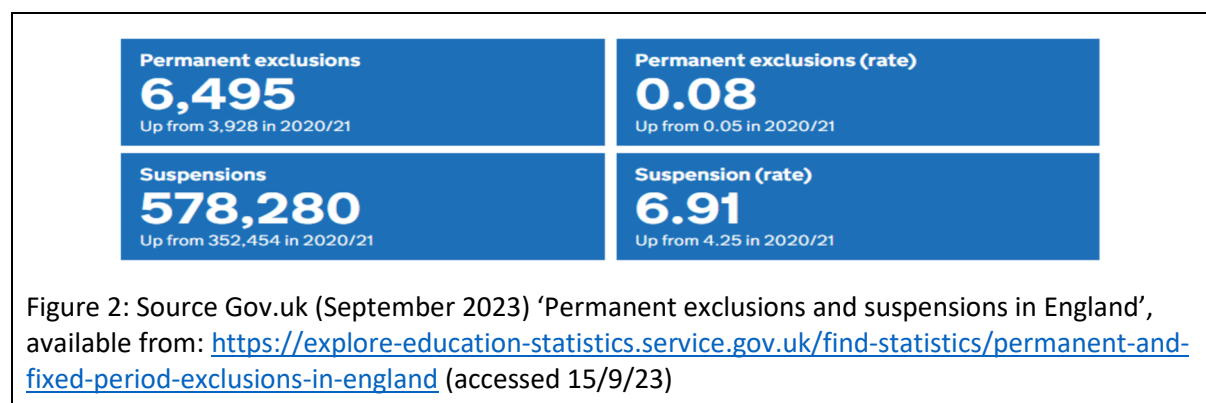
1. The problem we are trying to address

Across the country we are seeing a rise in the numbers of school children on Pupil Premium, indicating increased levels of deprivation. These are undoubtedly linked to the COVID pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis, both of which have put additional pressures on families, pushing many over the threshold from “coping” to “struggling”¹. This impacts on children’s well-being and mental health, and reduces resilience; all of which have a detrimental effect on their ability to learn.

This is not a new phenomenon (see Figure 1), and pre-COVID these numbers were already on the rise, but the above factors have made the situation worse. At St Andrew’s C of E Junior School in north west Derbyshire the proportion of Pupil Premium children currently stands at 45% (with 39% on free school meals), higher than the national average of 23.8%².



Furthermore, recent statistics on suspensions and exclusions show that post-COVID these have risen as well – and our school has seen a rise in cases too.



¹ For example, Joseph Rowntree Foundation “UK Poverty 2023: The essential guide to understanding poverty in the UK” https://www.jrf.org.uk/sites/default/files/jrf/uk_poverty_2023_-_the_essential_guide_to_understanding_poverty_in_the_uk_0_0.pdf (accessed 19/9/23)

² Source: Gov.uk ‘Schools, pupils and their characteristics, Academic year 2022/23’ <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/school-pupils-and-their-characteristics/2022-23> (accessed 19/9/23)

For us, as for all schools, the concern is how do we address this? How can we improve resilience, well-being and mental health (and therefore, ability to learn)?

2. Our strategy

We have an extremely successful programme that aims to support children's mental health which we developed before COVID, and which has proved itself as an invaluable support during the pandemic. MACAWS (**M**otivating **A**ll **C**hildren to **A**chieve **W**ith **S**upport) provides a bridge between home and school; a place where children can feel safe and secure to explore their emotional and social wellbeing, learn about themselves, develop and grow. MACAWS bases its foundation on the school's vision and ethos. It also links to our values-based Collective Worship that is linked to Global Goals, and to our restorative practice behaviour policy. MACAWS is led by a dedicated Specialist Teaching and Learning Assistant (the school's Wellbeing Support Leader).

Currently we provide two zones within the school where MACAWS activity takes place:

- **The MACAWS Room** is an essential part of our school's inclusion and PSHE (Personal, Social, Health and Economic) provision and supports the school Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy. Research shows that children's learning is most effective when they have a sense of emotional wellbeing, good self-esteem and a feeling of belonging, helping to develop resilience and self-awareness in a safe environment³. The activities undertaken in the MACAWS Room enables this to happen.
- **The MACAWS corner** additionally provides a safe environment where children can go to be by themselves and re-balance their emotional state, it includes sensory toys and a beautifully designed jungle space in which to be calm and de-stress.
- A third element of MACAWS is our **Mental Health Champions**, children in Years 5 and 6 who are available for children to go to when they want help and advice but feel they cannot approach an adult.

In our latest Ofsted inspection (November 2021) we were rated as a Good school, and Outstanding in terms of Personal Development – the MACAWS provision being a key component in this.

Visitors to our school⁴ often comment on the fact that the children are well behaved, confident and articulate, and undoubtedly our MACAWS provision is a major component in this outcome.

3. Our vision and project proposal

We know, and can evidence, that MACAWS has a positive impact on children's mental health, and as the number of children needing additional support continues to grow, we want to meet this need by growing our provision. We also wish to share this success with the wider educational community, so part of the grant funding will be used to develop a case study and "MACAWS pack" that can be offered to schools to enable them to develop their own provision.

We now wish to take this tried and tested approach outdoors, and provide an area within the school grounds that complements the two indoor spaces. We envisage the area having a similar MACAWS

³ For example, Leslie Morrison Gutman & John Vorhaus (2012) *The Impact of Pupil Behaviour and Wellbeing on Educational Outcomes*, The Childhood Wellbeing Research Centre, (DFE RR253) https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/219638/DFE-RR253.pdf (accessed 19/9/23)

⁴ Visitors have included Robert Lorgan (MP for High Peak); Carolyn Lewis (Diocesan Director of Education, Derby Diocesan Board of Education); Paul Hardy (Mayor of High Peak); Michael Copestake (The High Sheriff of Derbyshire)

corner part of which is covered so that it can be used in all weathers, and which has various sensory aids including natural elements (plants and shrubs).

Alongside this will be a redesigned multi-use play area with musical instruments, ropeway and various graded physical activities including equipment suitable for children with disabilities. This can be used for directed MACAWS activities outside (complementing the MACAWS room) – but which also will be used for general play and exercise as well, and thus benefit all the children in the school. Although this will be a professionally designed and built space, we will actively involve our children in the design and build process as far as is practicable and safe. A draft plan of the scheme is illustrated in Figure 3. The zone involved is currently on a grassy slope and subject to being very muddy and slippery in wet weather, and will thus become a usable space.

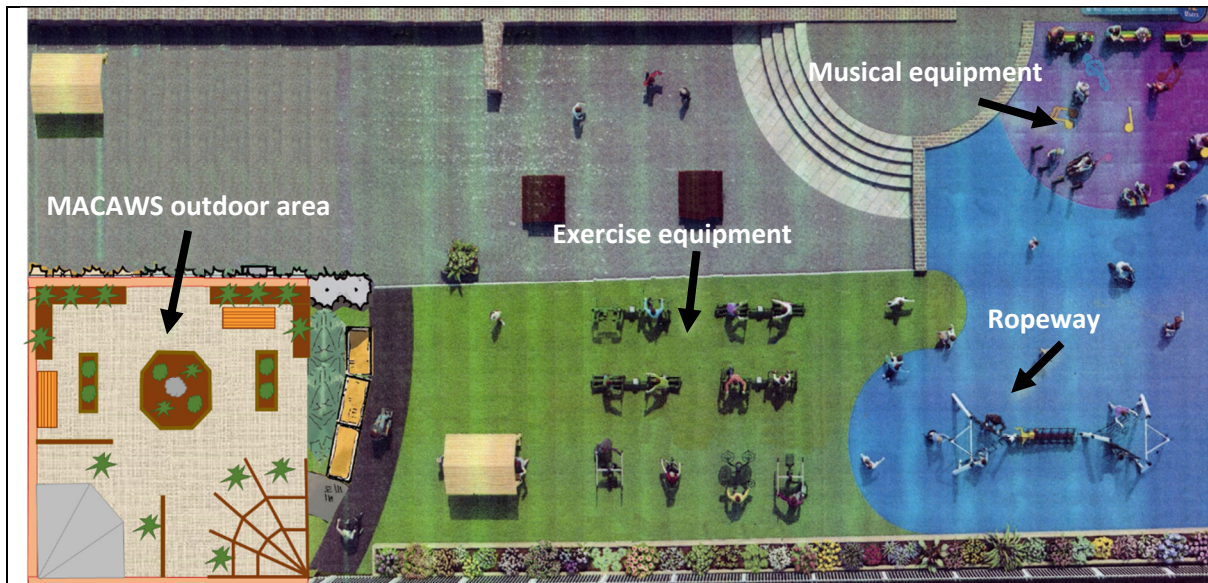


Figure 3: Draft plan of outdoors MACAWS area and play equipment (not to scale) – additional illustrative material is in Appendix 1.

3.1 What is the need/primary use for our multi-use play area?

The school currently does not have a playground that contains any play or exercise equipment. The front of the school has a tarmac surface and the rear – where the planned project will be located – has a mixed tarmac area and a grassy slope. The latter measures approximately 9m by 60m and gets muddy and dangerous when wet. The vision is for this grassed area to become a usable all-season area that will provide a mixture of play and exercise equipment some of which can be accessed by children with physical disabilities. Part of the area will be reserved for “sensory play” where children can go to be quiet and de-stress, and which will be linked to our mental health “MACAWS” provision as described in section 2 (Figure 2).

3.2 Who will be using the multi-use play area?

Whilst the main users of the play area will be the children who attend school, we hope to be able to open this playground up to supervised groups at weekends, thus extending the reach of the provision beyond the children who attend the school, to the benefit of the community at large. Any external groups who use the school, e.g. Brownies, would also be able to use this space.

4. What benefits will the project bring?

St. Andrew’s CofE Junior School is located in the small town of Hadfield in north-west Derbyshire, an area with relatively little open-air provision for children of primary age, and according to the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) much of the town is in the second highest zone of

deprivation (2019 data⁵) and this is reflected by the fact that 45% of the 208 children at school (as of September 2023) are on Pupil Premium, well above the national average as noted in section 1. The provision of this play and exercise area will be of great benefit to the children as there is little provision elsewhere in the town – it is well-known that outdoor activities have a positive impact on well-being and mental health.

In addition, our unique and highly successful MACAWS provision will benefit from an outdoor sensory area to complement the successful small indoor area that we have already developed. MACAWS not only helps to stabilise and improve the mental health of children who are struggling, but through our peer-support mental health champions, helps to develop empathetic leadership and social responsibility in many of the children. The outdoor area will enable them to provide an even greater degree of support to those in need than is currently possible. The year 5 and 6 Mental Health Champions, who provide peer support, will be able to utilise this area during breaks and at lunchtime.

Part of the project will be to develop a “MACAWS school pack” that describes how MACAWS works and gives detailed case studies and costed examples, so that other schools can adopt and adapt this approach which has proved so successful in St. Andrew’s. This will include a professionally produced video that will be posted online and made available to subscribing schools (free of charge) and a booklet to accompany the video. We anticipate producing 250 booklets up front as part of the project, and these would be provided free of charge to subscribing schools. Subsequent demand might have to be charged at cost depending on project fund availability.

5. What deadline are we working towards?

Whilst we would like to achieve this project as soon as possible, there are no time constraints other than our desire to make this a reality.

6. Do we have enough space?

The area we have available measures approximately 9m by 60 m and is large enough for the proposed project, as shown on the plan. Planning permission is not required.

7. Outline costs

A summary of costs is shown in the table below. A more detailed breakdown is given in Appendix 2.

Item	£
1) MACAWS sensory area	
1.1 MACAWS sensory area design	1,500
1.2 MACAWS sensory area landscaping, furniture and equipment	8,500
1.3 Installation costs	16,000
2) Exercise and Adventure equipment	
2.1 Gym equipment (8 mixed apparatus)	13,392
2.2 Rope-walk Adventure trail (8 play activities)	11,260
2.3 Outdoor musical instruments and seating	9,778
2.4 Wooden shelter	3,978
2.5 Play-safe surfacing	59,878

⁵ Source: Derbyshire Observatory <https://observatory.derbyshire.gov.uk/poverty-and-deprivation-imd/> (accessed 19/9/23)

2.6 Installation costs (inc. discount)	4,915
3) MACAWS school pack	5,308
Total	134,509

7.1 How will we fund the project?

A project of this scope and size is far beyond the resources of the school to fund out of our school budget. Therefore, we are seeking grant aid from a number of sources, including:

- Major grant bodies such as The National Lottery Community Fund, who we hope will provide the majority (if not all) of the funding;
- Local businesses, who we will ask to sponsor particular items of equipment – as items of equipment are around £1,500 each we hope that larger local businesses might sponsor some items in return for branding on the equipment and the project plaque;
- Fund raising within the school, e.g. PTA sponsored events – we anticipate that we might be able to raise funds towards the project, but probably fairly small amounts.

As a fallback, the project could be delivered in a modular fashion, with the priority being the MACAWS area, and the play/exercise equipment could be installed in phases. Ideally the scheme would be carried out as a single project to achieve economies of scale as a modular approach will cost more and cause more disruption and have a longer time scale.



Figure 5: Gym equipment area⁷



Figure 6: Adventure Ropeway

⁷ Figures 5-7 are drawn from material by the supplier Caloo, from whom we have obtained costings; however, a tender process would be used to appoint a final supplier



Figure 7: Musical Instruments

Appendix 2: Detailed cost breakdown⁸

1) MACAWS sensory area

Ref	Item	Amount	Sub-total
1.1	MACAWS sensory area design	£1,500.00	£1,500.00
1.2	MACAWS sensory area landscaping, furniture & equipment		£8,500.00
1.2.1	Shelter	£3,000.00	
1.2.2	2 x Recycled Benches	£1,000.00	
1.2.3	3 x Raised bed planters	£600.00	
1.2.4	5 x Shrubs / small trees	£600.00	
1.2.5	Pathways	£800.00	
1.2.6	Sandpits	£500.00	
1.2.7	Water feature	£2,000.00	
1.3	Installation costs		£16,000.00
1.3.1	Levelling and Basework	£9,000.00	
1.3.2	Soil and grass infill	£3,000.00	
1.3.3	Labour	£4,000.00	
1.0	Total for MACAWS sensory area	£26,000.00	£26,000.00

2) Exercise and Adventure equipment

Ref	Item	Amount	Sub-total
2.1	Gym equipment - 8 mixed apparatus:		£13,392.00
2.1.1	2 x Workout Cross Rider Duo (2 user station)	£3,588.00	
2.1.2	2 x Workout Air Walker Duo (2 user station)	£3,588.00	
2.1.3	1 x Workout Arm Bike (1 user station)	£1,314.00	
2.1.4	2 x Workout Skier (2 user stations)	£3,588.00	
2.1.5	1 x Workout Tai Chi Wheel (2 user stations)	£1,314.00	
2.2	Rope-walk Adventure trail, comprising:	£11,259.60	£11,259.60
2.2.1	Seat Spinner		
2.2.2	Vertical Climbing Nets		
2.2.3	Twister		
2.2.4	Rope Tunnel		
2.2.5	Vertical Rope Ladder		
2.2.6	Physical Play		
2.2.7	Social and Emotional Play		
2.2.8	Cognitive Play		

⁸ Costs are based on quotations received by play equipment supplier Caloo, landscape gardener SG Bespoke Landscaping, and video production company Joltmedia

2.3	Outdoor musical instruments and seating:		£9,777.60
2.3.1	3 x 1.5m recycled coloured bench	£1,170.00	
2.3.2	Rainbow Sambas	£3,468.00	
2.3.3	Xylophone	£3,720.00	
2.3.4	Post chimes	£1,419.60	
2.4	Wooden shelter with benches	£3,978.00	£3,978.00
2.5	Play-safe surfacing:		£59,877.60
2.5.1	Treated Timber Edging	£936.00	
2.5.2	Stone baseworks in preparation for surfacing	£24,732.00	
2.5.3	Play-safe surfacing	£34,209.00	
2.6	Installation costs (inc. project discount of £8,327 exc. VAT)	£4,915.00	£4,915.00
2.0	Total for Exercise and Adventure equipment	£103,199.80	£103,199.80

3) MACAWS school pack

Ref	Item	Amount	
3.1	Video filming and production	£2,400.00	£2,400.00
3.1.1	Scriptwriting	£400.00	
3.1.2	Filming	£1,000.00	
3.1.3	Editing	£1,000.00	
3.2	Booklet Production and Printing	£2,208.00	£2,208.00
3.3	Postage	£700.00	£700.00
3.0	Total for MACAWS school pack	£5,308.00	£5,308.00