Session Plan – Rockpooling (KS1 & KS2)

This session lasts one hour and is suitable for a maximum of fifteen children.

Learning Objectives

- Children understand that the natural world around them holds a diversity of fascinating organisms
- Children understand that organisms' bodies are adapted to their lifestyles
- Children understand that each organism needs an appropriate habitat in which to live
- Children understand that our lives are linked to the lives of other organisms and their habitats
- Children understand that our actions affect other organisms and their habitats

Personal Development Objectives

- Children work in groups
- Children learn to assess risk and behave accordingly
- Children learn responsibility towards other organisms

Curriculum Links

KS1 – Life processes and living things

Pupils should be taught:

- 1b. that animals move, feed, grow, use their senses and reproduce
- 1c. to relate life processes to animals and plants found in the local environment
- 4b. to group living things according to observable similarities and differences
- 5a. to find out about the different kinds of plants and animals in the local environment

KS2 – Life processes and living things

Pupils should be taught:

- 1c. to make links between life processes in familiar animals and plants and the environments in which they are found
- 4c. that the variety of plants and animals makes it important to identify them and assign them to groups
- 5. all points covering adaptation, feeding relationships and micro-organisms

Safety Considerations

Refer to relevant risk assessments for session and site. In particular bear the following points in mind:

- The rockpools are extremely slippery and the substrate is hard. Appropriate footwear must be worn and children should be adequately supervised by adults.
- Children are allowed to catch rockpool organisms. They may only handle organisms when told to do so and how they are told to do so. They must wash hands at the end of the session.
- Children must clearly understand that they may never be closer to the sea than the leader and must always be at least two metres from the water's edge.
- Adults accompanying the group must ensure that children stay in a close group at all times and listen very carefully to the leader as communication on the beach can be very difficult.
- Leaders should take care to watch the tide as it can rise fast. The session should only ever be offered on a falling tide, finishing at the point when the tide turns.

Resources

Nets, buckets, white trays, identification charts

Introduction

This session requires two leaders, one on the beach and one in the rockpools. At no point should children be allowed in the sea.

Explain to the group the importance of the North Norfolk coast as habitat for wildlife. Explain that the tide is currently low and prompt a discussion of what tide is, how it happens and what effects it has on the lives of the organisms living in the rockpools. Discuss in general terms the pressures and dangers faced by rockpool organisms.

It must be stressed at this point that in addition to safety considerations for humans this session raises safety considerations for rockpool organisms. Children must understand that they should only catch animals which they cannot observe and identify in the rockpools, they should keep them in adequate sea-water and they should never mix predatory species with prey species. All animals must be returned to the rockpools as soon as possible.

Activities

One or more of the leaders should lead the group carefully into the rockpools, while one stays at the top of the beach and fills the white trays with sea-water. The person leading the group gives a brief introduction and demonstration of how to watch the rockpools, how to find the organisms living in them and how and when it is appropriate to catch them for a closer look.

The leader in the rockpools then allows the group to wander in small groups, under the supervision of adults, across a designated area and sets a clear time for returning to the white trays. The leaders circulate among the groups, explaining what organisms are being seen, how they live and how they are adapted to their surroundings. Give the children the opportunity to identify organisms themselves using charts. Children should understand that with any questions or concerns they should carefully return to the leader at the white trays.

At the end of the session, ten minutes should be spent at the white trays, looking at any organisms which have been brought back and explaining their lifestyles and their special adaptations. Try to talk in general terms about the pressures and dangers facing organisms which live in tidal areas. Talk about the conservation of the North Norfolk coast and the threats which face it and which face marine areas in general. Talk about the importance of marine habitats and coastal areas to humans and our responsibility to look after them. When appropriate discuss the Marine Act.

Conclusion

Ask the children what was the most interesting creature they saw and why. Ask them what threats they think their favourite creature faces and what they think should be done to protect the sea. Ask them how they think they can get involved with marine conservation.

<u>Updated 2/3/10</u>