

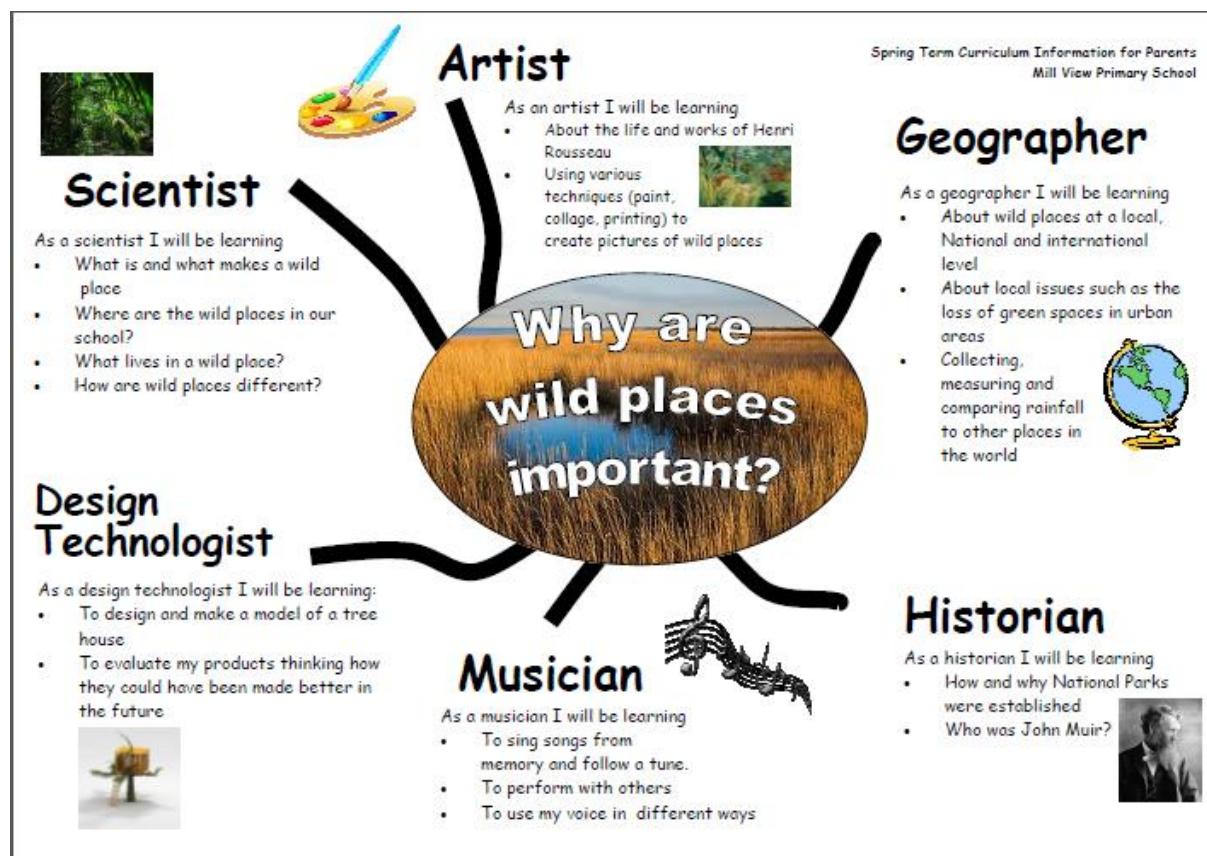
## Mill View Primary School: Using the John Muir Award in a Cross Curricular Project

Mill View Primary School, a suburban Primary School in Chester, believes in a holistic approach to learning. It has established a curriculum that supports both personal development and academic progress with a strong emphasis on outdoor learning.

**"The quality of learning outdoors is exceptional and superb use is made of the school grounds to enhance the learning opportunities of all pupils"** Ofsted 2013

### Embedding the John Muir Award into the Curriculum

Having attended a John Muir Award Leader training, Year 6 teacher Rachel MacDonald saw the similarities in the ethos and aims of the John Muir Award and Mill View Primary and the potential to use it within the curriculum. Staff worked to embed the Award into termly plans for Year 6 through a cross curricular project; '*Why are Wild Places Important?*' Each subject area played a role in delivering the Award allowing for a wide range of experiences and activities to engage all students. The cross curricular aspect led to the most unlikely of pupils showing most interest. A focus on outdoor learning allowed many students to thrive.



*Spring Term curriculum information for Year 6 parents*

## **Extra-curricular commitment**

Many aspects of the Award were delivered during curriculum time but in order to achieve the Award, pupils had to show an additional personal commitment. This was done through completing tasks and challenges in an after school club, 'The John Muir Club' and at home. This enabled staff to see very clearly the level of commitment from each individual to their Award.



Record Books were used by the students to record and reflect on their experiences both in school and in their own time and showed the care and interest from each individual.

The John Muir Club focused their conservation tasks on a neglected area of the school grounds. The group initially took part in flora and fauna surveys and then worked to improve the biodiversity of the area and reinstate a wonderful wild place for all to enjoy. They planted 800 trees of local origin, planted strips of wild flower meadow plants to attract bees and butterflies, installed a bee box and released rescue hedgehogs into the area.

***"I love helping to keep this place safe for all the animals; it looks so much better. I really enjoyed that!"*** Award participant - having completed a litter pick

## **Developing a sense of pride**

Working towards achieving the John Muir Award allowed all members of the group to grow in self-confidence and develop their ability to work well together towards a common goal. The group developed a real interest and sense of pride in their school grounds and took ownership of it, encouraging others to do the same. Pupils at Mill View now have a greater respect and appreciation of their local environment. They have shared this with parents and family members, who enjoyed a presentation by the students at the Certificate Award Ceremony.

***"The John Muir Award has made such a difference to my son's understanding and love of the outdoors, he loves coming to school and we have learnt so much from him"*** Parent of Award participant

The John Muir Award is now a regular feature in the year 6 curriculum and on the after school club's list. This year's cross curricular project '*Where will my wellies take me?*' is being used to explore ideas of John Muir, travelling, learning along a journey, observing signs and predictions from the natural environment. This is proving equally successful in delivering the John Muir Award.