



Here for good.

# WILLOW DEN AT SPARTANS

WILLOW  DEN  
WHERE CHILDREN THRIVE OUTDOORS



## What is Willow Den?

Founded by Inspiring Scotland, Willow Den offers fully outdoor nursery provision for children aged 3 years to school age. Registered with the Care Inspectorate we offer high-quality play, education, and learning opportunities using the outdoors as a key part of your child's learning experience. Your child will have fresh air and active play, every day.

## Together we are Willow Den at Spartans

Spartan's goal is to help North Edinburgh thrive. Willow Den's goal is to help children thrive outdoors. Together we will create exciting, positive play and learning experiences with children.

## Why Spartans?

Spartans Community Football Academy offers much more than football. We are mindful of the challenges facing many children, young people, and their families in the local area. By adding an outdoor nursery to our existing facilities and community coaching programmes, we can support even more children to change their lives through active outdoor play and sport.







## What pre-school education do we offer ?

We provide early years education based on 'Realising the Ambition' and the Scottish Government's Curriculum for Excellence in a way that prepares children for school, and for life.

At Willow Den children learn by engaging in natural play, in spaces where they have adventures, use their imagination, build, design and create, ask questions, We make mud pies and maps, we follow paths, we find and create dens and special places.

Through positive experiences and interactions with skilled early years staff, children learn early literacy, numeracy, science, art, and technology. Most of all, we offer learning through play that builds confidence and self-esteem, in a fun, caring, and stimulating environment.



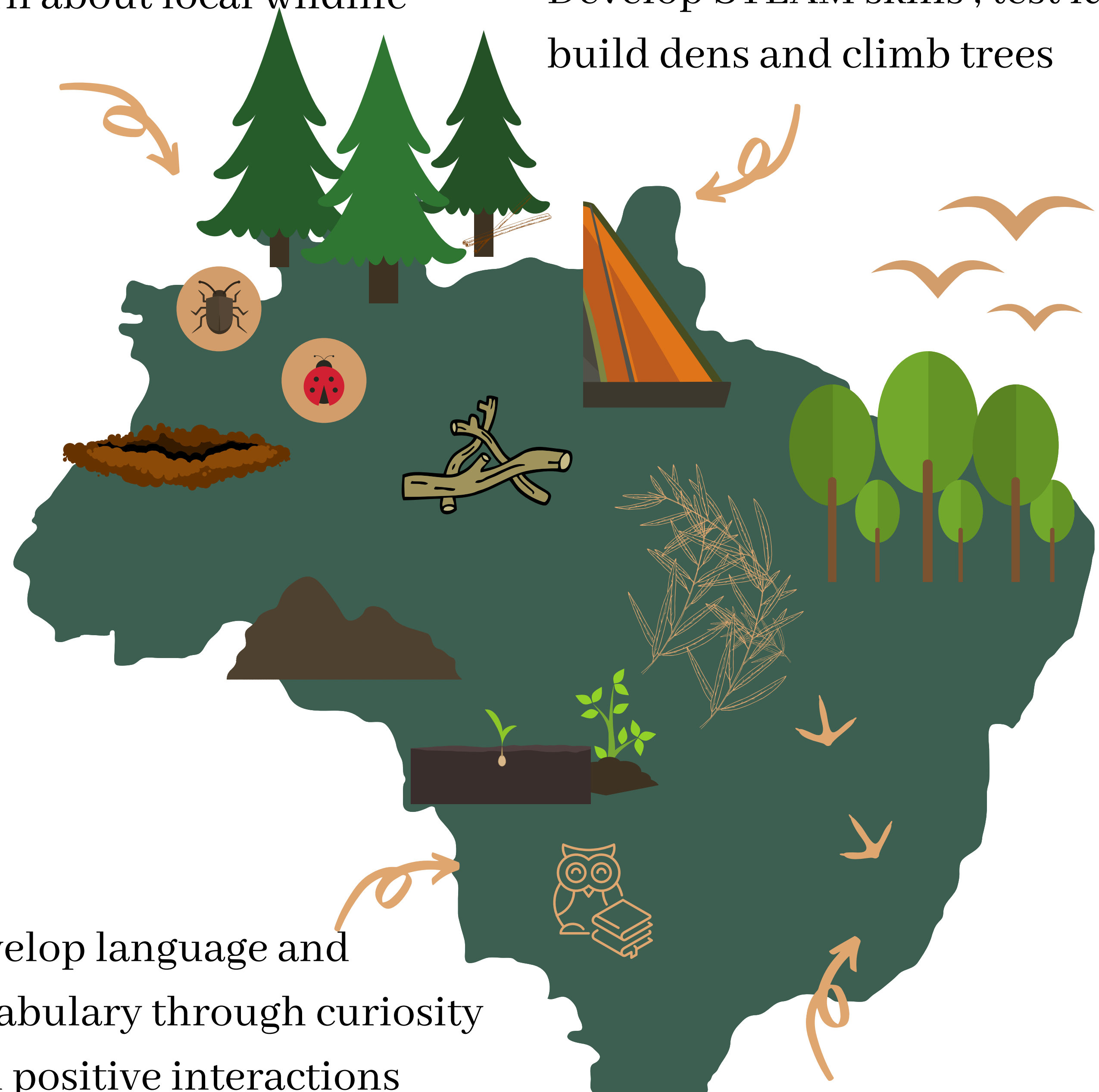
Connect to nature and  
learn about local wildlife

Develop STEAM skills , test ideas,  
build dens and climb trees

At Willow Den  
we play and....

Develop language and  
vocabulary through curiosity  
and positive interactions

Make maps, have adventures and  
follow trails





## Why Outdoors?

Research continues to show that spending time outdoors is hugely beneficial to children's physical and mental health, and overall wellbeing. There is evidence to show that children are playing outdoors less than ever before, not least because of the restrictions of living through a global pandemic.

Willow Den offers opportunities for children to play and learn in a stimulating outdoor environment.

We believe that spending time outdoors contributes significantly to children in Scotland having the best possible start in life.





## How much does it cost?

From August 2021 the Scottish Government is expanding funded Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) provision from 600 hours to 1140 hours per child, per year. This ensures that eligible two-year-olds and all 3 to 5 year old children, have access to funded early learning and childcare. Willow Den will work closely with the City of Edinburgh Council by applying to become a partner provider, offering funded childcare places for children from 3 years old to school age.

You can choose to use your 1140 funded hours with more than one nursery, this is called a split or blended placement. For families requiring more than 1140 hours of childcare, additional hours are available to purchase. This is called 'wrap-around' care.



## Who will take care of my child?

Willow Den at Spartans has a team of staff trained in early years education, and outdoor play-based learning. All of our staff are required to register with the Scottish Social Services Council and recruited in line with our safe recruitment policy. Staff will engage in regular training as a commitment to their continued professional development and the nursery's ethos of ongoing improvement.



## Where can children go to relax and get warm?

Children are busy at outdoor nursery but there are times when they will want to snuggle down for a story, a rest, or maybe even to take 40 winks.

Willow Den will have a heated shelter on site where children can rest and relax. While we are outside we will create all kinds of dens and shelters with tarps, tents, and ropes. Out in the park we will even have hammocks for impromptu rests and cloud gazing!

In high wind or very bad weather, we have access to indoor space within Spartans buildings.

## What food will be available?

We will provide a hot lunch every day with both a morning and an afternoon snack. Children will be able to grow their own vegetables and have fun preparing snacks, sometimes we'll even cook on our open fire pit.

## Everything else

You probably have lots more questions, and we would really like the chance to answer these. You can find lots more information, including Frequently Asked Questions on our website. You can also connect with us on social media. See our 'contact us' page for details.





# Potential opportunities within the Spartans Family

- Community Football Coaching Programmes
- Youth Work Provisions
- Volunteering Opportunities

To find out more, contact: 0131 552 7854 or  
Debbi McCulloch at  
[debbimcculloch@spartanscfa.com](mailto:debbimcculloch@spartanscfa.com)

Children attending **Willow Den**  
outdoor nursery will all have the  
opportunity to take part in sport  
and physical activities





## Contact Willow Den

For more information or to register your interest in a nursey place at Willow Den at Spartans please contact Amy Davidson at [amy@willowden.scot](mailto:amy@willowden.scot)

You can also find us on social media here: [!\[\]\(666e09182d4cd268646ea700ea60dcdf\_img.jpg\)](#) [!\[\]\(1ef1ef0bf9af6c6996401964cf280f2d\_img.jpg\)](#) [!\[\]\(e9a80c8557f9285916925bd4ac40fff5\_img.jpg\)](#) [!\[\]\(88e2edecff3400e68a80dd08c57d2f9c\_img.jpg\)](#)

## Parent Information Video

Parents in Scotland share their experiences of sending their child to an outdoor nursery in this short film:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6yGxKgBJLu0>

## News

Inspiring Scotland's Rachel Cowper talks about the opportunity for more outdoor learning and play in Scotland.

<https://www.scotsman.com/education/why-are-kids-learning-inside-how-the-covid-pandemic-could-take-education-outdoors-in-scotland-for-good-3155677>





We Are



Where Children Thrive Outdoors

Willow Den Scotland Ltd.

Company Number SC674391

Riverside House, 502 Gorgie Road, Edinburgh, Scotland, EH11 3AF