

Ways to Play trail map



Explore our beautiful garden and magical woodland, the playful way.

Ways to Play is a trail for children – big, small and young at heart. Follow it through the garden or venture out into Stand Wood, discovering all the fun you can have along the way.

Peek at a secret garden in a block of stone. See the landscape through the eyes of a bird. Soak up the sound of nature among the leaves. And let our lawns be your playground. Some of the stops on this trail are seasonal, things might look different or be harder to spot.

It's playtime!

Find out more about our family activities at: chatsworth.org/family-activities

Stand Wood

7 Get a view from up high

There are a lot of steps to get up the hill (count them!) but the sights from the top are worth it. Look down. What can you see below? Lie back and look up at the clouds. Do their shapes remind you of anything?

6 Make leaf art

Get wild with your imagination by creating a masterpiece from fallen leaves. Shape a forest friend from leaves on a patch of ground – perhaps adding stones for eyes or twigs for whiskers. Pile them up into a sculpture. Or use crayons and paper to take a rubbing.



1 Build a den

Create your own hideout using natural materials. First, find your spot. Somewhere flat would do nicely. Gather fallen sticks and branches to lean against a tree for the walls, and dry leaves for a carpet. Now, get building.

2 Sail leaf boats

Ahoy, captain. Make boats from leaves and twigs for an epic race down the stream. Launch them on the water and cheer as they set sail. Maybe an ant or two will hop on for the ride.

5 Be a nature detective

All kinds of wildlife live in these woods – look amongst the trees and flowers for woodland birds and butterflies. Peek under dead logs and bark for woodlice, millipedes and beetles. Remember: these are their homes, so be gentle and roll them back.

3 Be a birdwatcher

Eyes on the skies! How many feathered friends can you spot as you head between the trees? Look for birds of different sizes and colours. Do you have a favourite?

4 Explore with your ears

Be still. Close your eyes. Soak up the sounds of the woodland with your ears wide open. Can you hear the rustle of leaves? The chirp of birds? The trickle of water falling from the Sowter Stone?

Garden

1 Meet a plant from a land of giants

Go inside the Display House and look through the doors. Imagine floating on one of these giant lily pads on the Amazon river – its natural home – 5,000 miles away.

2 Don't get wet!

Put your hood up or splash about under the willow tree fountain. What's different about this tree? Pipes hide in its leaves and branches, ready to sprinkle water on anyone who gets too close.

3 Hide among rocks

Ready or not! Children around the world have been playing hide and seek for centuries. Sneak around winding paths and rocky nooks to find your hiding spot. Look out for fossils in the central rock stacks.

10 Swing from a tree

Gliding through the air on a rope swing is a timeless joy. Take a seat on the swing hanging from a tree here, kick off the ground, and enjoy that feeling of the wind in your hair.

9 Get a bird's-eye view

Can you see any birds in the garden? Do you think they can see you? Birds have a wider view of the world than humans. Artist Abigail Reynolds has made this special bird box to show you what a bird, looking down from a branch, might see.*

8 Enter the bog garden

Everything is so gigantic in the bog garden – do you feel like you have shrunk? What kind of magical creature would you like to be in this leafy, lush world?

7 Try not to get lost!

Can you find your way through the hedge maze? Work as a team to find the centre.

6 Discover a secret garden

Get up close to the stone cube sculpture by Martin Cook and Gary Breeze. What can you see through the peepholes? An enchanting world of plants and flowers grows within.

5 Be a statue

Stone statues quietly keep watch over the Ring Pond. They seem happy enough, so why not join them? First, get into position. Now, strike a pose.

*During Picturing Childhood exhibition only, 16 March–6 October 2024.

