

Clifton Hall School Woodlands: A Living Classroom of Nature

A Legacy of Learning and Heritage

Nestled in the picturesque Midlothian countryside, Clifton Hall School occupies a striking Scottish baronial mansion built in 1857, likely designed by renowned architect David Rhind. The estate's roots stretch back over 700 years to the reign of Alexander II. Through centuries, Clifton Hall has been home to influential figures, including Thomas Macalzean, Provost of Edinburgh and Lord of Session, and his daughter Euphame - tragically remembered as Scotland's most infamous witch.

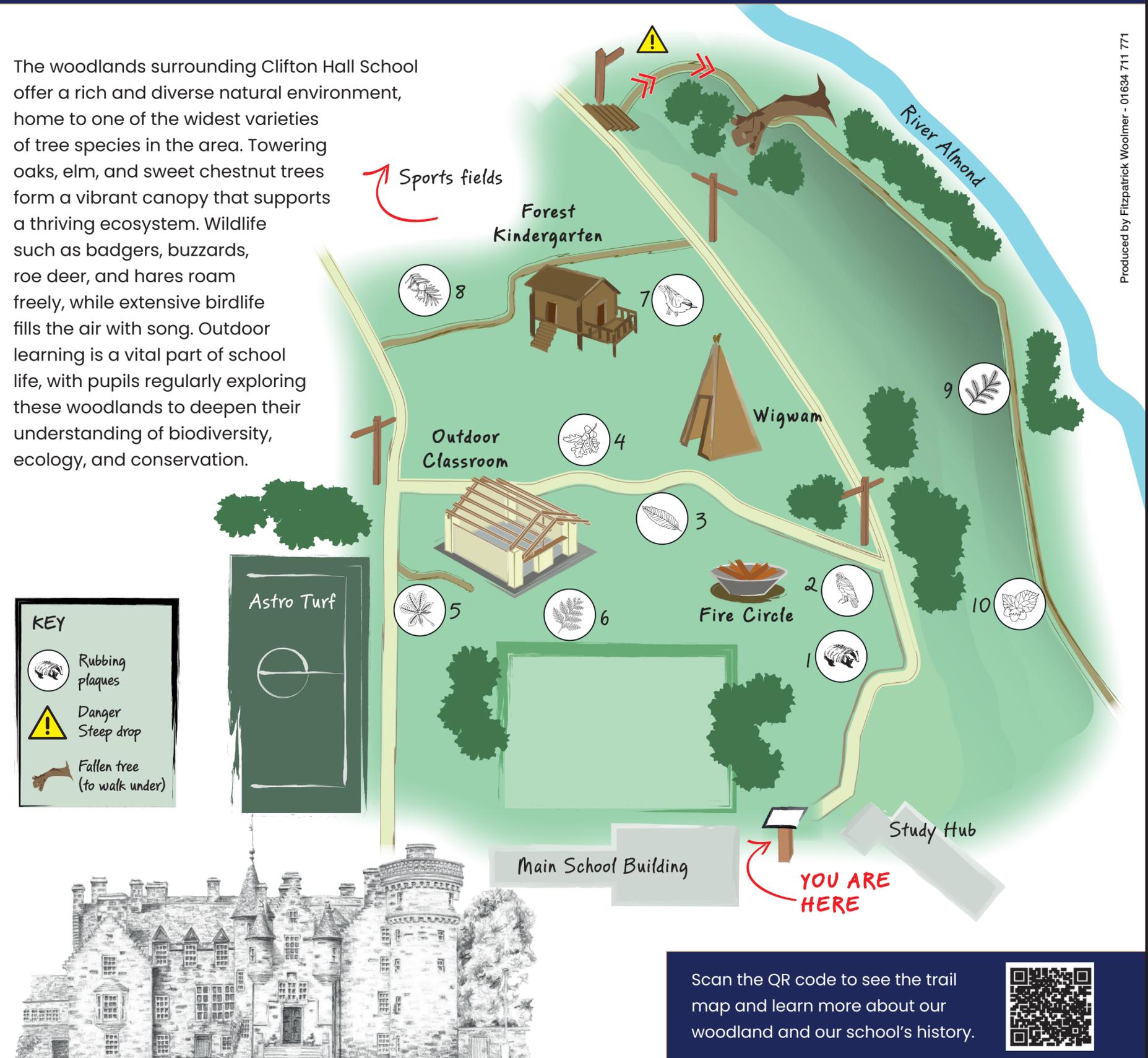
In 1930, the mansion was transformed into Clifton Hall School by founders Richard Killick and Robert Ainslie. Today, it is a vibrant independent school for children aged 3-18, where tradition meets innovation in a setting rich with architectural and cultural significance.

Euphame MacCalzean

Euphame MacCalzean, born at Clifton Hall in the 16th century, was the daughter of Thomas MacCalzean, Lord Clifton Hall and a prominent Edinburgh judge. A well-educated and influential woman, she became tragically infamous during the North Berwick witch trials. Accused of witchcraft and conspiracy against King James VI, she was the only Scottish woman known to have been burned at the stake alive. Her dramatic story casts a haunting shadow over the historic estate of Clifton Hall.



The woodlands surrounding Clifton Hall School offer a rich and diverse natural environment, home to one of the widest varieties of tree species in the area. Towering oaks, elm, and sweet chestnut trees form a vibrant canopy that supports a thriving ecosystem. Wildlife such as badgers, buzzards, roe deer, and hares roam freely, while extensive birdlife fills the air with song. Outdoor learning is a vital part of school life, with pupils regularly exploring these woodlands to deepen their understanding of biodiversity, ecology, and conservation.



Scan the QR code to see the trail map and learn more about our woodland and our school's history.

