

OUTDOOR CURRICULUM FOR EXCELLENCE

Outdoor learning experiences are often remembered for a lifetime. Integrating learning and outdoor experiences, whether through play in the school grounds or adventures further afield, provides relevance and depth to the curriculum in ways that are difficult to achieve indoors.

Learning outdoors can be enjoyable, creative, challenging and adventurous. It helps children and young people learn by experience and grow as confident and responsible citizens who value and appreciate the spectacular landscapes, natural heritage and culture of Scotland.

The journey through education for any child in Scotland must include opportunities for a series of planned, quality outdoor learning experiences. *Curriculum for Excellence through Outdoor Learning* is designed to help teachers, educators, Community Learning and Development (CLD) and their partners, including the voluntary sector, plan such experiences to ensure that progressive and sustainable outdoor learning opportunities are embedded in the new curriculum.

Outdoor learning contributes to delivering the Scottish Government's overarching strategic objectives towards 'creating a more successful country':

Smarter – Outdoor learning encourages learners to understand the interplay and relationship between curriculum areas. This awareness promotes lifelong learning and develops critical thinking skills.

Healthier – Learning outdoors can lead to lifelong recreation. Activities such as walking and cycling which are ideal for physical and emotional wellbeing contribute to a healthier Scotland. Scots have a reputation for adventure activities such as mountaineering and have achieved international sporting success in canoeing, sailing and skiing.

Safer and stronger – Outdoor learning activities span social divisions and can help build stronger communities. Some organisations have therapeutic programmes where outdoor learning plays a central role. Children and young people have opportunities to develop skills to assess and manage risk when making decisions.

Greener – Frequent and regular outdoor learning encourages children and young people to engage with the natural and built heritage. Scotland's countryside and urban areas provide ideal settings for children and young people to understand the global significance of sustainability issues and inform personal decisions that contribute towards a greener Scotland.

Wealthier and fairer – The outdoors provides excellent opportunities to use a wide range of skills and abilities not always visible in the classroom. Becoming aware of such skills can fundamentally change personal, peer and staff perceptions and lead to profound changes in life expectations and success.

(Extract from curriculum for excellence through outdoor learning 2010)