

Education, Children and Families Committee

10:00 am, Tuesday, 31 January 2023

Outdoor Learning (Update)

Executive/routine
Wards
Council Commitments

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 The Education, Children and Families Committee is asked to:
 - 1.1.1 Note the update on Outdoor Learning, particularly regarding the 4 key parts of the Motion.
 - 1.1.2 Note and support the Council's vision for Outdoor Learning (Appendix 3 Table 4).
 - 1.1.3 Note and support the ongoing rationale and benefits of the Council operating its own centres.

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Outdoor Learning (Update)

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 This is a report in response to a Motion by Councillor Burgess regarding Outdoor Learning for Edinburgh Schools. This requests an update report on Outdoor Learning in Edinburgh schools including in particular: *'I. How outdoor learning is delivered day-to-day in Edinburgh schools; II. The coverage and frequency of provision of outdoor learning across all schools, particularly primary schools; and III. How schools and teachers are supported to provide outdoor learning; and IV. Plans for further development of outdoor learning.'*
- 2.2 The Council, in line with a renewed national focus on Outdoor Learning, continues to be committed to a range of progressive and creative onsite, local and residential outdoor learning experiences. Progress is demonstrated in current practice and planned developments linked to wider Council priorities and approaches.

3. Background

- 3.1 Outdoor Learning includes the entire range of learning experiences undertaken outside (Appendix 1.1.1). It is one of the three core strands of Learning for Sustainability, alongside Global Citizenship and Sustainable Development Education. Learning for Sustainability is a core part of the General Teaching Council for Scotland's (GTCS) Professional Standards (Appendix 1.3).
- 3.2 Outdoor Learning is a context for learning rather than a discrete subject. National guidance and resources consistently detail the need for planned, progressive and creative outdoor learning experiences that are part of the curriculum (Appendix 1). These should be frequent, regular, enjoyable and challenging opportunities throughout a child's school career and beyond. Outdoor Learning 'types' (onsite, local, further away and residential) will occur at different frequencies and are complementary i.e. one should not replace another (Appendix 1.1.1).
- 3.3 Substantial research and national guidance details significant and wide-ranging benefits of Outdoor Learning (Appendix 2). Outdoor Learning is likely to feature significantly in any national curriculum review findings and updated guidance. Learner feedback at the local and national levels consistently highlights the importance of Outdoor Learning. The retention and ongoing development of Outdoor Learning has a key part in supporting Council priorities, including ending poverty, supporting wellbeing and delivering environmental sustainability.

- 3.4 Improvement in Outdoor Learning requires a whole-school and community approach (e.g. Appendix 1.2). Since the pandemic, many schools and local authorities across Scotland are revisiting, revising/renewing and developing Outdoor Learning via their curriculum rationale, vision and planning (national thematic inspection – February 2022, Appendix 1.6).
- 3.5 Edinburgh schools and settings are supported with Outdoor Learning by the Council's Early Learning and Childcare Team and the Sport and Outdoor Learning Unit (SOLU – part of the Lifelong Learning and wider Achievement Team). SOLU includes the Council owned Bangholm (Edinburgh), Benmore (Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park) and Lagganlia (Cairngorms National Parks) Outdoor Centres.
- 3.6 Additional background information, data, and recent good practice can be found via past reports (Section 8).

4. Main report

- 4.1 Council Officers have approached the Motion in two parts with references made in the main report and appendices from Early Years up to the Senior Phase:
Part 1: How outdoor learning is delivered day-to-day in Edinburgh schools; and the coverage and frequency of provision of outdoor learning across all schools, particularly Primary schools.
- 4.2 The Council's renewed vision for Outdoor Learning is aligned to national guidance and research (Appendices 1 and 3 - Table 4). This involves planned, progressive and creative experiences; delivered by staff, volunteers and partners via frequent, regular, enjoyable and challenging experiences across the curriculum and all ages.
- 4.3 Schools vary in their local contexts and onsite/local access to resources. This is reflected in their practice; very often resulting in creative/effective solutions. Some schools with limited grounds utilise local offsite resources more often.
- 4.4 The Council's approach recognises that different types of Outdoor Learning (onsite, local offsite, further away, residential) are complementary, thus enabling a wide coverage of opportunities and experiences (Appendix 1.1.1). Onsite and local Outdoor Learning should be frequent. Nearly all Edinburgh Primary schools use the Council's own residential centres (Benmore and Lagganlia) and generally achieve through great skill and dedication a high attendance rate, thus adding high quality provision to Edinburgh pupils' spectrum of experiences (Appendix 4 – rationale and benefits of the Council having its own centres / Appendix 10.3.1 – St Andrew's Fox Covert residential case study feedback).
- 4.5 Like many schools across Scotland and in response to the pandemic (Appendix 1.6), The City of Edinburgh Council schools were requested to review their vision and curriculum rationale, often resulting in a renewed focus on Outdoor Learning. The City of Edinburgh Council school improvement planning for 2022/23 required schools to include appropriate Learning for Sustainability actions. SOLU has therefore recently asked Primary schools to baseline their position in line with the renewed Outdoor Learning vision (Appendix 3 Table 4). The results so far (54

schools) indicate about 61% of Primary schools judge themselves to be currently undertaking 'highly effective practice' or 'building achievements' in relation to the vision. 39% of schools judge themselves to be in the early stages of developments, although many of these schools will exhibit good practice in certain parts of the curriculum and/or year groups. Schools prioritise their school improvement actions linked to local self-evaluation/contexts. This data is important for setting a renewed baseline and informing future support and action (Part 2 below).

- 4.6 All Council Early Learning and Childcare centres have immediate access to secure outdoor environments; allowing for outdoor provision for most of the day, and at all times for many settings (Appendix 6). Most centres provide weekly opportunities to utilise local offsite resources. The Council operates 10 forest kindergarten sites with continued growth over the last 6 years resulting in 160 children a day accessing this service. Beach kindergartens will be trialled from May 2023 (2 pilots).
- 4.7 The Council's Additional Support for Learning Service uses Outdoor Learning to support its different interventions (Appendix 7). These range from Forest School sites and working with partners including Bridge8, local farms and Edinburgh Zoo.
- 4.8 There are many examples of good practice and progress with improving Outdoor Learning across Edinburgh (Appendix 11 – case studies). This includes schools and settings identifying opportunities / understanding challenges and creating solutions; creative whole-school curriculum planning to support all-year Outdoor Learning; using Outdoor Learning to support other school priorities; meaningful and sustained professional learning to develop staff confidence and skills; effective partnerships to build capacity and develop coverage; purchasing appropriate resources; using wider achievement awards and developing pupils' risk awareness.
- 4.9 Secondary and Special Schools are supporting a very good pandemic recovery for the Duke of Edinburgh's Award; resulting in substantial Outdoor Learning via volunteering, physical activity and expeditions (Appendix 10).

Part 2: How schools and teachers are supported to provide outdoor learning; and plans for further development of outdoor learning.

- 4.10 Schools and settings are supported through guidance, training, resources and direct delivery. These are detailed in Appendices 6 (Early Learning and Childcare Service); 8 (Future Schools Edinburgh Project – onsite outdoor spaces); 9 (SOLU) and 11 (Case Studies) and support all types of Outdoor Learning. The aim is to build capacity, competence and confidence to deliver safe and high-quality experiences. This includes access to central resources and staff (Early Learning and Childcare Team and SOLU); school to school support (e.g. The Council's [Outdoor Learning Map](#)); and a robust and proportionate Excursions Policy and resources to facilitate safe and effective offsite visits.
- 4.11 Plans are in place to support the ongoing development of Outdoor Learning (Appendix 9). This includes a new strategic action plan to ensure Outdoor Learning support is part of and contributes to Edinburgh Learns for Life and the new Learning Communities approach (April 2023). A renewed training offer (based on consultation and need), continued action on supporting attendance on residential

(Appendix 3), direct delivery and the review and renewal of the Excursions Policy are also included.

- 4.12 The new Outdoor Learning school improvement toolkit is a key part of future support (Appendices 3 and 9). It is being rolled out to Primary schools first; allowing them to explore curriculum drivers, create a vision and plan for school improvement. This is a flexible development tool with resources to support staff, volunteers and partners. Access to a supplementary external resource for April 2023 – August 2024 will assist with curriculum design and lesson planning. The toolkit will allow SOLU to work with schools to monitor progress towards the City’s vision, and design additional support.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 Schools and settings will continue to use self-evaluation and improvement planning to develop Outdoor Learning further and realise the renewed vision.
- 5.2 SOLU will continue to deliver its strategic and upcoming actions as detailed in Appendix 9 and via a renewed action plan.
- 5.3 SOLU will continue to monitor attendance on residential visits to ensure guidance and resources are used to maximise attendance in line with the Council’s equity guidance.
- 5.4 Council officers will monitor potential discussions regarding national school residential entitlements and any corresponding funding guidance and resources.

6. Financial impact

- 6.1 Outdoor Learning provision and improvement work are generally managed at the school/setting and service level. Schools/settings and services annually auditing their Outdoor Learning programmes allow budgets to be allocated in advance, thus minimising financial risks.
- 6.2 There is a potential financial risk if establishments do not comply with the Education and Children’s Services Excursions Policy and Excursions Toolbox.

7. Stakeholder/Community Impact

- 7.1 SOLU undertakes work by involving staff, volunteers, young people, families, and partners. This is via evaluation feedback; working groups, surveys; parent enquiries; discussions during training; updates to Council procedures; and meetings with colleagues from across the Council.
- 7.2 Views of parents/carers, families, and young people continue to be gathered by schools and settings, the Early Learning and Childcare Team, Additional Support for Learning Service and SOLU. This is part of their self-evaluation process.

- 7.3 The Education and Children’s Excursions Policy and any updates will provide ongoing guidance on safety, educational effectiveness, equity and environmental sustainability. Compliance with this guidance will minimise a range of risks.
- 7.4 SOLU continues to be a joint lead in the Edinburgh Outdoor Learning Network. This ensures consultation with community partners and sharing good practise.

8. Background reading/external references

- 8.1 School Excursions – Equity (Further Update). Education, Children and Families Committee, Tuesday, 01 March, 2022. [General link to meeting documents \(Item 7.7\)](#). [Minutes – Section 12](#).
- 8.2 Excursions – Equity Report (Update). Education, Children and Families Committee, Tuesday, 07 December, 2021. [General link to meeting documents \(Item 7.12\)](#).
- 8.3 Excursions – Equity Report. Education, Children and Families Committee, Tuesday, 24 August, 2021. [General link to meeting documents](#).
- 8.4 Outdoor Learning Report. Education, Children and Families Committee, Tuesday, 10 December, 2019. [General link to meeting documents](#).
- 8.5 Curriculum for Excellence Through Outdoor Learning – a planned and progressive approach: <https://education.gov.scot/Documents/cfe-through-outdoor-learning.pdf>.
- 8.6 Educational value of Scotland’s Outdoor Education Centres: <https://www.sapoe.org.uk/links/local-authority-outdoor-education-centres/>.
- 8.7 Education Scotland – How Good is Our School? – HGIOS 4: <https://education.gov.scot/improvement/self-evaluation/HGIOS4>
- 8.8 Education Scotland – Successful Approaches to Learning Outdoors (February 2022): Successful approaches to learning outdoors - <https://education.gov.scot/education-scotland/what-we-do/inspection-and-review/chief-inspector-report/national-thematic-inspections/successful-approaches-to-learning-outdoors/>
- 8.9 Education Scotland – Outdoor Learning Practical guidance, ideas and support for teachers and practitioners - <https://education.gov.scot/media/0fklf35p/hwb24-ol-support.pdf>
- 8.10 Education Scotland – A summary of outdoor learning resources - <https://education.gov.scot/improvement/learning-resources/a-summary-of-outdoor-learning-resources/>
- 8.11 The City of Edinburgh Council – Future Schools Edinburgh Project <https://futureschoolsedinburgh.com/>. Outdoor spaces: <https://futureschoolsedinburgh.com/outdoor-spaces/>
- 8.12 The City of Edinburgh Council – experienceoutdoors.org.uk website: <https://www.experienceoutdoors.org.uk/>

- 50 Ways to Experience Outdoors (Edinburgh):
<https://www.experienceoutdoors.org.uk/images/Download/50-ways-to-experience-outdoors-edinburgh-21.pdf>
- The Council's Outdoor Learning Map - <https://www.outdoorlearningmap.com/>
- Supporting attendance on residential visits -
<https://www.experienceoutdoors.org.uk/poverty-proofing>
- Technical and safety, including excursions -
<https://www.experienceoutdoors.org.uk/technical-advice-safety>

9. Appendices

Appendix 1	Planned and progressive outdoor learning and excursions
Appendix 2	Benefits of Outdoor Learning
Appendix 3	School improvement toolkit and baseline research – Primary schools
Appendix 4	Rationale for the Council operating its own residential centres (Benmore and Lagganlia residential outdoor centres)
Appendix 5	Action plan / dashboard to support developments linked to Edinburgh Primary Head Teachers Association (EPHTA) workshop – December 2022.
Appendix 6	Early Learning and Childcare Service
Appendix 7	Additional Support for Learning Service
Appendix 8	The Future Schools Edinburgh Project
Appendix 9	SOLU current and planned support matrix
Appendix 10	Wider achievement awards – the Duke of Edinburgh's Award
Appendix 11	Case studies

Appendix 1 Planned and progressive outdoor learning

1.1 Curriculum for Excellence through Outdoor Learning (national guidance)

Curriculum for Excellence Through Outdoor Learning:

<https://education.gov.scot/Documents/cfe-through-outdoor-learning.pdf>.

“The Journey through education for any child in Scotland must include opportunities for a series of planned, quality outdoor learning experiences”

The vision for outdoor learning in Scotland is that:

- all children and young people are participating in a range of **progressive and creative** outdoor learning experiences which are **clearly part of the curriculum.**
- schools and centres are providing **regular, frequent, enjoyable and challenging** opportunities for all children and young people to learn outdoors throughout their school career and beyond
- teachers and educators **embed** outdoor learning in the curriculum so that learning in the outdoor environment becomes a reality for all children and young people.

Curriculum for Excellence through Outdoor Learning

Learning and Teaching Scotland

1.1.1 Outdoor Learning – Practical guidance ideas and support for teachers and practitioners in Scotland (Education Scotland).

<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/documents/hwb24-ol-support.pdf> (8.9)

Section 1 Outdoor learning within the curriculum (page 6)

Outdoor learning **encompasses the entire range of learning experiences undertaken outside.** Whether it is reading a book outside or participating in an overseas expedition, the curriculum design principles apply. **Curriculum planners and managers should recognise the place of the full spectrum of outdoor learning experiences and should not interpret the promotion of the use of school grounds and local areas as an alternative to outdoor residential experiences but as part of a spectrum of learning opportunities. Each type of outdoor learning experience should complement the other and should form a progressive and coherent range of experiences for children and young people.** Practitioners need to know how the experience benefits their learners. The quality of learning and teaching is of paramount importance regardless of the place in which it occurs.

Section 3: Making connections to the curriculum (p45)

Curriculum for Excellence through Outdoor Learning states that all children and young people should be able to participate in a **range of planned, progressive and creative**

outdoor learning experiences that are part of the curriculum. These should be frequent, regular, enjoyable and challenging opportunities that take place throughout a child's school career and beyond. The challenge for practitioners is to ensure that outdoor learning is embedded in the curriculum so that it becomes a reality for all children and young people.

It is the responsibility of all staff. This means that every teacher and educator needs to plan and integrate outdoor learning as part of a range of learning and teaching approaches within interdisciplinary projects as well as within and across all curriculum areas. Each curriculum area lends itself to outdoor learning. There are specific benefits within each subject. When planning outdoor work, consider the connections to be made with work undertaken indoors and in the context of the curriculum as a whole. Rather than offer an 'outdoor learning week' or a special 'outdoor learning day', most formal activities that take place outside need to be part of a planned holistic approach to learning and teaching that links to ongoing work.

1.2 Learning for Sustainability (national guidance)

<https://education.gov.scot/education-scotland/scottish-education-system/policy-for-scottish-education/policy-drivers/learning-for-sustainability/>

Learning for Sustainability is an entitlement for all learners within Scotland's curriculum. It weaves together global citizenship, sustainable development education, and **outdoor learning** to enable learners, educators, schools and their wider communities to build a socially-just, sustainable and equitable society. It supports the development of knowledge, skills and values at the heart of the curriculum's four capacities, helping to nurture learners as responsible citizens and effective contributors.

Scotland's ambition is that all learners receive their entitlement to Learning for Sustainability. This requires all settings to develop an effective whole-school and community approach. This is supported by a strong focus on Learning for Sustainability within the GTCS Professional Standards and within Scotland's approach to self-evaluation.

1.3 Professional Standards for Teachers

<https://www.gtcs.org.uk/professional-standards/professional-standards-for-teachers/>

Refreshed and restructured Professional Standards were enacted on 2 August 2021,

There are specific cross-cutting themes in the Professional Standards, including Learning for Sustainability. The following link supports teachers to find out where they are on their professional Learning for Sustainability journey; helping them to celebrate their strengths and identify areas for development. <https://www.gtcs.org.uk/professional-standards/key-cross-cutting-themes/learning-for-sustainability/where-am-i-on-my-learning-for-sustainability-journey/>.

Table 1 An example of progression in standards linked to Outdoor Learning.

Standard for Provisional Registration	Standard for Full Registration	Standard for Career Long Professional Learning	Standard for Middle Leadership	Standard for Headship
<p>As a student teacher you are required to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • outdoor learning, including direct experience of nature and other learning within and beyond school boundaries 	<p>As a registered teacher you are required to demonstrate a depth of knowledge and understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • outdoor learning, including direct experience of nature and other learning within and beyond school boundaries; 	<p>As an accomplished teacher you have an enhanced and critically informed understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the most appropriate contexts and environments for learning, including outdoor learning, and how to apply appropriate pedagogies for these environments; 	<p>As a middle leader you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support and contribute to a strategic vision that embraces Learning for Sustainability; 	<p>As a headteacher you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • embrace Learning for Sustainability within the shared strategic vision for the learning community;

Adapted from <https://www.gtcs.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/overview-learning-for-sustainability-professional-standards.pdf> page 3.

1.4 How good is our school (HGIOS)?

Education Scotland's 4th EDITION of HGIOS details the importance of a progressive curriculum.

<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/self-evaluation/HGIOS4>

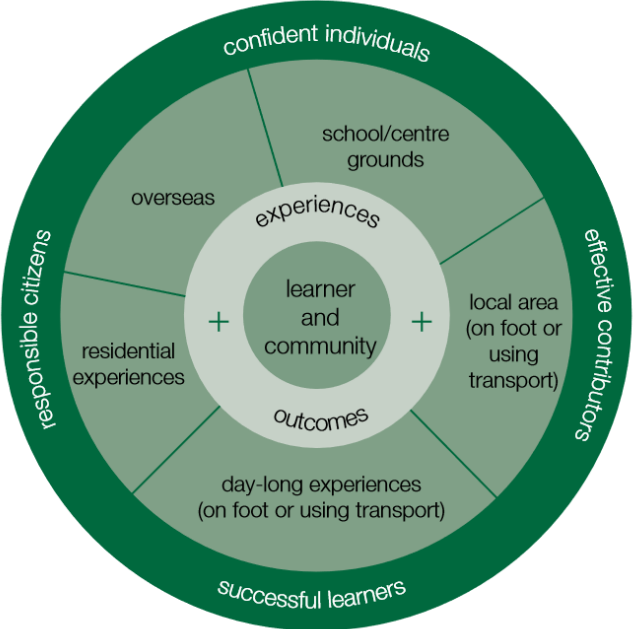
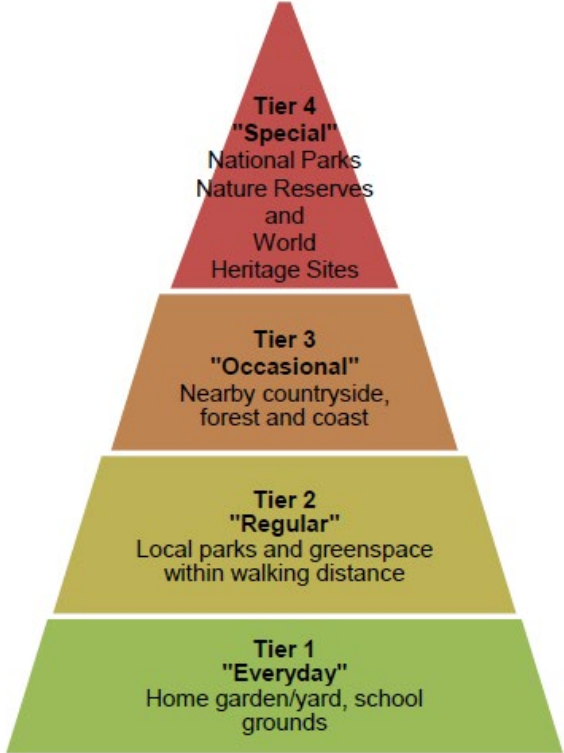
2.2 Curriculum

Features of Highly Effective Practice

*Outdoor learning is a **regular, progressive curriculum led experience for all learners.***

1.5 Diagrams presenting a progressive approach to planning outdoor learning and excursion.

Table 2 Outdoor Learning Diagrams

Curriculum for Excellence Through Outdoor Learning	NatureScot
	
<p>Residential experiences are included as a key consideration within the planned opportunities.</p>	<p>The pyramid provides a useful indication of frequency.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Onsite and local greenspaces should be regular and routine.</p>	

1.6 Thematic Inspection: Successful Approaches to Learning Outdoors

The national report provides the independent view of HM Inspectors of Education about effective practice in outdoor learning. These thematic inspections promote improvement by sharing more widely ‘what works’.

Extracts from: Successful approaches to learning outdoors -

<https://education.gov.scot/education-scotland/what-we-do/inspection-and-review/chief-inspector-report/national-thematic-inspections/successful-approaches-to-learning-outdoors/>:

Since the initial COVID-19 lockdown in March 2020, Scottish education has continued to develop and change approaches to delivering education for children and young people.

Staff adapted the learning they provided during the first national lockdown and when they moved to a period of remote learning in January 2021. Staff increased knowledge, developed skills and explored the benefits of using the outdoors to support curriculum delivery. **A number of staff teams revisited their vision and values and then refreshed their curriculum rationale to reflect better a renewed focus on learning outdoors.**

We have found that circumstances arising from this pandemic have accelerated the breadth and depth of outdoor learning across sectors. Practitioners are continuing to maximise the potential of the outdoors to enhance children’s and young people’s learning experiences. Outdoor learning is increasingly becoming an embedded feature of our learners’ everyday experience.

Table 3 Thematic inspection key findings:

Leadership	Supporting the delivery of the curriculum	Children’s and young people’s experiences
Effective leadership of outdoor learning is a key factor in establishments that are fully using the outdoor environment to improve outcomes for children and young people	Increasingly, outdoor environments are being used to deliver the curriculum. Learners’ views, ideas and interest are influencing how staff plan opportunities for children and young peoples’ learning outdoors.	Learning in and about the outdoors is becoming a stronger, more regular feature of children’s and young people’s learning experience.
Wellbeing	Partnerships	Professional learning
Staff are using outdoor learning effectively to support the wellbeing of children and young people.	Partners are involved effectively in the planning, delivery and evaluation of outdoor learning.	High quality professional learning is building staff confidence in delivering learning outdoors.

Appendix 2 Benefits of Outdoor Learning

Substantial evidence of significant outcomes related to outdoor learning are well documented.

There are some general benefits from taking learning outside within and across curriculum areas:

- connections are made experientially with the real world outside the classroom, helping to develop skills, knowledge and understanding in a meaningful context
- outdoor environments and surroundings act as a rich stimulus for creative thinking and learning. This affords opportunities for challenge, enquiry, critical thinking and reflection
- children and young people find that not everything outside matches the models or the textbooks. This does not mean that what they have found is 'wrong'. Instead, it develops awareness of the complexities of the real world and can help to develop critical thinking skills
- children and young people are able to understand the relevance of a subject taught in school to everyday life
- children and young people can sometimes behave differently outdoors. Quiet pupils may speak more, others become calmer and more focused when outside, especially in a natural space
- the multi-sensory experience outdoors helps children and young people to retain knowledge more effectively. There are opportunities for pupils to learn with their whole bodies on a large scale
- learning in a less structured environment can provide a different learning experience from that of the classroom
- being outdoors can be a more relaxing learning experience for many learners

Extracted from Education Scotland – Outdoor Learning Practical guidance, ideas and support for teachers and practitioners (Section 1 Page 7)

Further reading:

Education Scotland – Outdoor Learning Practical guidance, ideas and support for teachers and practitioners - <https://education.gov.scot/media/0fklf35p/hwb24-ol-support.pdf> Section 1 Page 7.

Learning Through Landscapes - <https://ltl.org.uk/news/5-key-benefits-of-outdoor-learning/#:~:text=Research%20has%20even%20suggested%20that,and%20positive%20attitude%20to%20learning.>

Learning Outside the Classroom - <https://www.lotc.org.uk/category/research/>

Importance of residential visits: School Excursions – Equity (Further Update). Education, Children and Families Committee, Tuesday, 01 March, 2022. [General link to meeting documents \(Item 7.7\)](#). Appendices 3 and 4.

Outdoor Education Centres Fit for the Future - Scottish Advisory Panel for Outdoor Education and Scottish Government - [Outdoor Education Centres Fit for the Future \(sapoe.org.uk\)](https://sapoe.org.uk)

Appendix 3 School improvement toolkit and baseline research – Primary schools

In response to the pandemic and like what is outlined in the Thematic Inspection (Appendix 1.6- *A number of staff teams revisited their vision and values and then refreshed their curriculum rationale to reflect better a renewed focus on learning outdoors*), Council schools revisited their curriculum rationale and vision. This included a focus on Outdoor Learning for many schools and priority actions relating to Learning for Sustainability were required for school 2022/23 improvement plans.

The Sport and Outdoor Learning Unit (SOLU) is currently creating a new and innovative **school improvement self-evaluation toolkit** to support whole-school developments in Outdoor Learning. The first phase is to focus on the Primary curriculum and involves a small consultation group including school staff. The toolkit incorporates Council priorities including equity and environmental sustainability, thus supporting schools in contributing to local, City wide, national and global urgencies. It will also align to Edinburgh Learns for Life the new Learning Communities approach.

4.1 Baseline exercise – Primary Schools

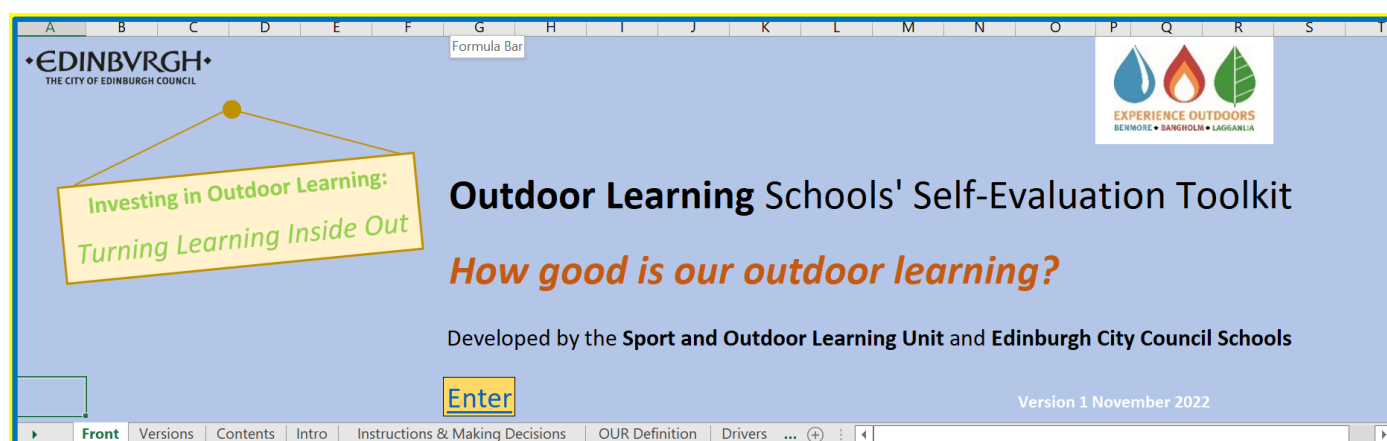
A short baseline judgement exercise was introduced in December 2022 to help SOLU understand the current context and assist in designing and launching the toolkit. The new toolkit will support schools in accurately judging where they are on their Outdoor Learning journey and plan for improvement. Effective practice can be identified and then shared school to school to further support city-wide improvements. Significant good practice already exists, some of which is detailed in Appendix 11.

Table 4 The results so far

Question: Primary schools were asked to complete a short baseline response to the vision below (Row 1) by selecting one of the 3 responses in Row 2.	
Results are shown in Row 3.	
1	<p>Renewed vision for outdoor learning (adapted from Curriculum for Excellence guidance and vision for outdoor learning):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- outdoor learning is used as a context for learning and integral to learning for sustainability;- children and young people have the opportunity to participate in a range of progressive and creative outdoor learning experiences which are clearly part of the curriculum (onsite, local offsite, extended and residential); and- outdoor learning experiences are regular, frequent, enjoyable and challenging across the school. <p>Please can you complete a best fit judgement linked to your progress towards the above description.</p>

2	Response 1	Response 2	Response 3
	Starting the journey (early stages).	Building achievements. Strengths outweigh development points.	Highly effective practice. Major strengths / focused areas for development identified and progressing.
3	Results up to 19 December 2022. 54 responses (54 schools).		
	Response 1	Starting the journey.	39%
	Response 2	Building achievements.	50%
	Response 3	Hight effective practice.	11%

4.2 School improvement toolkit



The new toolkit is currently in development and SOLU is aiming to launch it after Easter 2023. This will be used as a primary tool for supporting the whole school development of Outdoor Learning. Schools will be able to engage with the resource in a flexible and developmental way so it meets their needs, including assisting them to:

- make informed judgements;
- link in with wider Council priorities including equity and environmental sustainability;
- capture evidence to support whole-school self-evaluation (resource is aligned to HGIOS – 8.7).
- understand key drivers (global, national and local) for developing Outdoor Learning (rationale);
- create a vision for outdoor learning (aligned to an updated City-wide/Council vision); and
- access further support, including an updated training offer (internal), school to school support including sharing good practice via case studies and the Council's Outdoor Learning Map (<https://www.outdoorlearningmap.com/>) and access to external resources including online courses and subscription to lesson ideas.

The aim of this resource is to support whole-school improvement and provide key information that will help SOLU and other Council officers in supporting Outdoor Learning and tracking progress towards the renewed vision. This is sector-leading work.

Appendix 4 Rationale for the Council operating its own centres (Benmore and Lagganlia residential outdoor centres)

Updated from the March 2022 Committee Report

Table 5

	Key points
1	<p>The Council operating its own centres allows it to directly control the safety, availability of residential provision, cost and quality of its services in accordance with national guidance, Council policy and good practice; guaranteeing some of the best and safest provision in the UK to Edinburgh children and young people.</p> <p>The centres work closely with Edinburgh schools and are a beacon of good practice throughout the UK and beyond. This supports the delivery of meaningful programmes and there are countless examples of the Centres and School staff working effectively as Council employees to best support individual pupils and families. Council staff can also collaborate on key priorities, new programmes and access shared resources through the IT systems.</p> <p>A complete reliance on third parties may introduce significant capacity issues (access to high quality provision) and fluctuating charges including increased charges due to demand across the sector.</p> <p>Council schools have priority booking and are always accommodated first. Many non-CEC schools and LAs pursue places at Benmore and Lagganlia.</p> <p>The Council having its own centres allows it to better manage capacity and future charges.</p>
2	<p>The Council's centres can be utilised to support Council priorities including provision for target groups. This includes holiday provision and weekends. Work can be extended and will support achieving high quality outcomes for children, young people and adults, and often best value for the Council. This will be especially important as the Council reviews how it works and looks at in-house solutions. The Council centres will be able to assist in building capacity.</p>
3	<p>The links between the Council's centres and schools are very close. For example, staff work together to support young people with additional needs to attend. This can often involve attendance at Child Planning Meetings, support with risk assessments, additional supervision and general guidance. This significant pre-visit work supports attendance.</p> <p>Centres are also able to reinforce Edinburgh initiatives through the context of residential outdoor learning. The Centres have Council officers deliver training so the provision is relevant and meaningful to Edinburgh young people.</p>
4	<p>Utilising the Council's centres delivers high quality provision via inspirational locations (National Parks) allowing Edinburgh's young people to experience at first hand Scotland's inspirational landscape (Curriculum for Excellence requires an understanding of Scotland's landscape).</p> <p>Instructors are generally with a group for the week; this has a profound impact on developing relationships and maximising outcomes e.g. trusting relationships and young people given time to develop and apply skills rather than experiencing a strict timetable of</p>

	<p>activity. Activity is wide-ranging and mostly offsite. Pupils build confidence and instructors are not rushed due to another group needing to use a specific resource (can be the case with venues that use just onsite activity).</p> <p>Cheaper alternatives do exist; these tend to involve onsite activities, which can generally be replicated in or around Edinburgh, and delivery by multiple instructors trained via inhouse qualifications. Conversely, more expensive options exist with some retaining the features of onsite activity and staff trained 'inhouse'.</p> <p>High quality third-party residential providers do support the Council in providing sufficient capacity for all schools.</p>
5	<p>Operating its own centres allowed the Council to commence with a prompt incremental restart during this pandemic; delivering a safe, proportionate and manageable return to high quality residential visits.</p> <p>Being the user and the provider via Benmore and Lagganlia had allowed the Council to manage/coordinate the whole process and trial guidance and resources. This had involved developing an enviable relationship with Health Protection Lothian and the creation of robust sector leading resources and processes. Recognised nationally, Council staff are co-lead on the development of generic resources for use across Scotland.</p> <p>Feedback from schools continues to be overwhelmingly positive (100% strongly agree; 'Overall, our visit has been a success' and 100% satisfaction rates for Covid support and mitigations); the robust planning, resources, repatriation solutions and Covid financial guarantee provided significant and unrivalled reassurance and confidence to staff and families. This has a significant impact on maintaining a high attendance rate for Benmore and Lagganlia residential.</p>
4	<p>The importance of the Council having its own centres is highly valued by Edinburgh schools as highlighted in a survey of Council Primary Head Teachers (August 2021 Committee report – 8.3). 100% of survey responses from primary Head Teachers (40 responses) agreed that 'Our school community values CEC having its own residential centres'. Quotes from Head Teachers are recorded in Appendix 9.6 below.</p> <p><i>'It's particularly important that our centres are managed by our own staff who share our values, understand our contexts and ensure the high-quality provision using trained and experienced staff. The Health and Safety around our visits are simplified and are a shared responsibility.'</i> Head Teacher response.</p>
6	<p>A Scottish wide consultation on a national entitlement to residential visits has been completed: https://www.schoolsresidentialbill.org/ . Findings are expected soon, and Council officers are engaged at the national level.</p> <p>If a national entitlement was proposed and introduced, the Council having its own centres is likely to be of significant benefit to implementing a plan promptly; meeting statutory requirements and ensuring high quality outcomes. A national entitlement may introduce national capacity challenges potentially resulting in a phased introduction whilst this is being addressed. This Council, depending on entitlement conditions, may be able to respond sooner.</p>

	Operating its own centres is therefore future proofing potential requirements.
7	Operating two residential outdoor centres supplies significant breadth and depth of technical expertise to review, advise, support and approve a vast number of different types of excursions across Education and Children's Services (2018/19: 3032 excursions approved by the Council's Sport and Outdoor Learning Unit involving 24,367 participants - overnight / and adventurous day activity). This is an important health and safety benefit that is allowing Edinburgh young people to access a wide range of safe activity.
8	Council staff at Benmore and Lagganlia provide flexible workforce solutions. A good example is how SOLU was able to incorporate Benmore and Lagganlia staff into the 2021 P7 Epic Days programme (c3000 pupils during the 2021 summer term). This allowed for a much larger programme and a key part of the Council's Covid recovery. This innovative programme was shared with inspectors during the Outdoor Learning thematic inspections (see row 8 below).
9	Inspectors via the national thematic inspections were shown how Edinburgh invests in residential school visits and the importance of a progressive approach (onsite, local, further away and offsite). These were noted with positive initial feedback from Inspectors.
10	Both centres operate onsite kit stores which provide access to a comprehensive range of technical kit and general clothing. This is a key part of reducing and removing inequality, whilst allows pupils to access a wide variety of environments and enjoy/experience many kinds of activity.
11	Lagganlia (Friends of Lagganlia - FoL) and Benmore (Friends of Benmore House – FoBH) have associated charities. FoL has an established record of supporting eligible families with the cost of residential. FoBH is more recently established and is planning fundraising activity to support eligible families in the future.
12	Having many schools visiting a fewer number of centres supports efficient working and responding to exceptional circumstances. The latter has been proven by how the Council has been able to respond to the pandemic and incrementally reintroduce residential visits (row 3).
13	The effectiveness of the Council's centres is illustrated by the demand for bookings from non-Edinburgh Council schools. Both centres regularly turn down requests for stays as Edinburgh schools are always prioritised via the booking process.

Appendix 5 Action plan / dashboard to support developments linked to Edinburgh Primary Head Teachers Association (EPHTA) workshop – December 2022.

The following action plan was created in response to the workshop delivered by the Sport and Outdoor Learning Unit (SOLU) in November 2022. This focused on supporting attendance on residential, specifically linked to the current cost of living crisis and reducing the cost of the school day.

The workshop included sharing good practice via case studies and discussions.

SOLU and schools are working closely to supporting attendance on primary school visits. Data is collected on how many Primary pupils attend residential/how they are funded plus understanding why some pupils are not attending. This informs planning and developments at the school and City levels.

5.1 Data (linked to previous Committee Reports – Section 8)

The Council continues to maintain a high attendance rate on school primary residential.

Table 6 Results for 611 schools / pupils (November 2022) – data is collected throughout the year / monitored continuously which in-turn informs support to schools.

Key area	Proportion (Nov 2022)	Number of pupils
Attendance on a residential:	90%	547 pupils
Paying full amount:	65%	357 pupils
Value of 'subsidy':	£49,733	N/A
Attending – how are they supported?	62% PEF	101 pupils
	22% Other direct school funding	36 pupils
	1.2% School fundraising	2 pupils
	2.5% Third party charity	4 pupils
	12% Combination	19 pupils
Not attending – why?	31% General concerns linked to attending a residential	15 pupils
	57% Pupils not wanting to attend	28 pupils
	8% Short notice e.g. illness	4 pupils

5.2 Action Plan / Dashboard

An action plan / dashboard was created in response to the November 2022 workshop. This is allowing schools to see how SOLU and Council officers are progressing with key actions.

Table 7 Latest action plan / dashboard

What's working well? SOLU = Sport and Outdoor Learning Unit	Good practice
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prioritising bookings for CEC schools. Advance notice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Case studies from meeting: PowewrPoint Case Studies

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case studies from different contexts. Really useful practice and good to share. • Excellent, high-quality provision at Benmore and Lagganlia. Positive lifechanging experiences. Supportive and inclusive. Permanent staff. • Having City-owned provision is a huge benefit. Centres well known and trusted by Edinburgh families. • Substantial collaborative working between schools and SOLU staff, including Additional Support Needs. • School presentations by SOLU staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Benefits: SOLU has liaised with the CBs Team – Benmore and Lagganlia residents are now on the menu. Contact Julie McCormack1 Julie.McCormack1@edinburgh.gov.uk to register your interest and 'locate' any new opportunities. STOP PRESS: since the updated menu was launched in Nov '22, £6750 has been pledged to schools attending Benmore and Lagganlia residents. • ParentPay allows regular payments. Some schools encourage small payments throughout the school. • Transport: share coaches – contact the centre and they will put you in touch with the other school. Small schools: potential solutions via minibuses – contact Andrew.Bradshaw@edinburgh.gov.uk.
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Table 8 Latest data

Data	% Attendance (Benmore and Lagganlia)	% Paying full amount	Attending – how are they supported?	Not attending – why?	Community benefits
Nov'22	90%	65%	62% PEF 22% Other direct school funding 1.2% School fundraising 2.5% Third party charity 12% Combination	31% General concerns linked to attending a residential 57% Pupils not wanting to attend 8% Short notice e.g. illness	£6750

Table 9 Action Plan

	Area	SOLU actions and timelines	Progress notes – end of Jan '23	Progress Notes – end of Mar '23	Progress Notes – End of June '23
1	Charity support	Host a meeting between key charities. Pool expertise / explore significant amounts. Plan for Jan 2023. ASAP.	Dec – discussions started.		
2	Charity support	Liaise with - Edinburgh School Uniform Bank re: options to support families. ASAP.	Dec - discussions started. Meeting planned for Jan '23.		
3	Transport	Feedback to Transport Unit re: challenges and variation in costs. Involved in new procurement framework. ASAP / ongoing.	Dec - discussions started. Update in Jan.		
4	Transport	Support flexible solutions e.g. putting schools in contact – combine coaches. Contact the centre. Potential minibus support for small schools (subject to capacity). Discussions with Fleet supporting driver assessment expansion. ASAP.	Dec – discussions started with Transport and Fleet. Proposal = SOLU to support driver assessments.		
5	Transport	Liaise with Lothian Buses to explore how to facilitate free transport across the City	Dec- to organise a meeting in		

		(general excursions) plus any opportunities for travel to Benmore and Lagganlia. ASAP.	Jan. LB contact found.		
6	Transport	Raise potential of free bus travel to support transport to B and L at the national level. ASAP.	In progress. Will be raised at the next national Outdoor Education Cross Party meeting in Jan. LINK .		
7	Community Benefits	Ensure Benmore and Lagganlia are on the new CBs menu. Nov '22.	Completed.		
8	Signposting and access to info	Poverty Proofing (experienceoutdoors.org.uk) updated to include more support and case studies. Complete by Dec '22.	On-track to be completed by Friday 16 December. Ongoing updates and improvements.		
9	Bookings	Bookings 2 years ahead – supports planning. Autumn '22.	Completed. Schools to be informed in Dec '22 – phase 1 and before Easter – phase 2.		
10	Supporting progression	Continue with EPICS programme (March '23 onwards) to support plus use case studies and Outdoor Learning Map (experienceoutdoors.org.uk) to share good practice (ongoing).	Epics 2023 business plan in progress. For targeted provision and supporting transition.		
11	Supporting attendance -	Ad-hoc solutions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raising confidence – social stories (video and templates): Spring '23 / family and teacher clips. • SOLU staff attending info sessions (ongoing). Contact centre or Andrew.Bradshaw@edinburgh.gov.uk. • Wider reasons – contact Andrew.Bradshaw@edinburgh.gov.uk – ad-hoc support. • Widen case studies – share good practice. • Review pre and post visit resources. Improve. Spring '22. 	Various – in progress.		
12	Championing OL / residential	Update CEC cllrs of progress and current context (Jan 22). Update at the national level (ongoing) via our memberships of AHOEC and SAPOE . Ongoing. CEC is a well-respected member of various groups. It actively supports engagement with Scottish Government about good practice and key issues.	Outdoor Learning Committee paper in Jan '22. National update in Jan'22: national Outdoor Education Cross Party meeting.		

Appendix 6 Early Learning and Childcare

Key contact: Tracey Shaw Tracey.Shaw@edinburgh.gov.uk

Outdoor play and learning 0-5 years

Outdoor learning is high on the agenda for all Council settings across the Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) sector. Outdoor opportunities provides creative coverage across all circular interests while promoting wellbeing and a love of nature from 0-5 years.

The Scottish Government has enshrined children's right to play outdoors every day in its national Health and Social Care Standards : ' As a child, I play outdoors every day and regularly explore a natural environment' (HSCS 1.32)

All Council nurseries have immediate access to a secure outdoor environment. ELC promotes the availability to access the outdoors as an independent choice, for all children, ELC staff support outdoor provision during the majority of the day, and at all times for many settings. Areas available to children are spaces to run, spin, climb, slide, be upside down, find quiet spaces, be in nature and experience different terrains. Children have opportunities to grow and plant, to make potions in mud kitchens. A volume of sand and water offers children sensory experiences which as children progress, develop science and mathematical learning. Children can investigate and learn about insects and birds, with many settings being involved in environment projects such as planting hedges and green flags.

The majority of Council ELC centres provide children with an opportunity to be in a local green outdoor space weekly, with trips such as 'welly Wednesdays', when children, staff and parent helpers take children into a park or woodland space to engage with learning opportunities there.

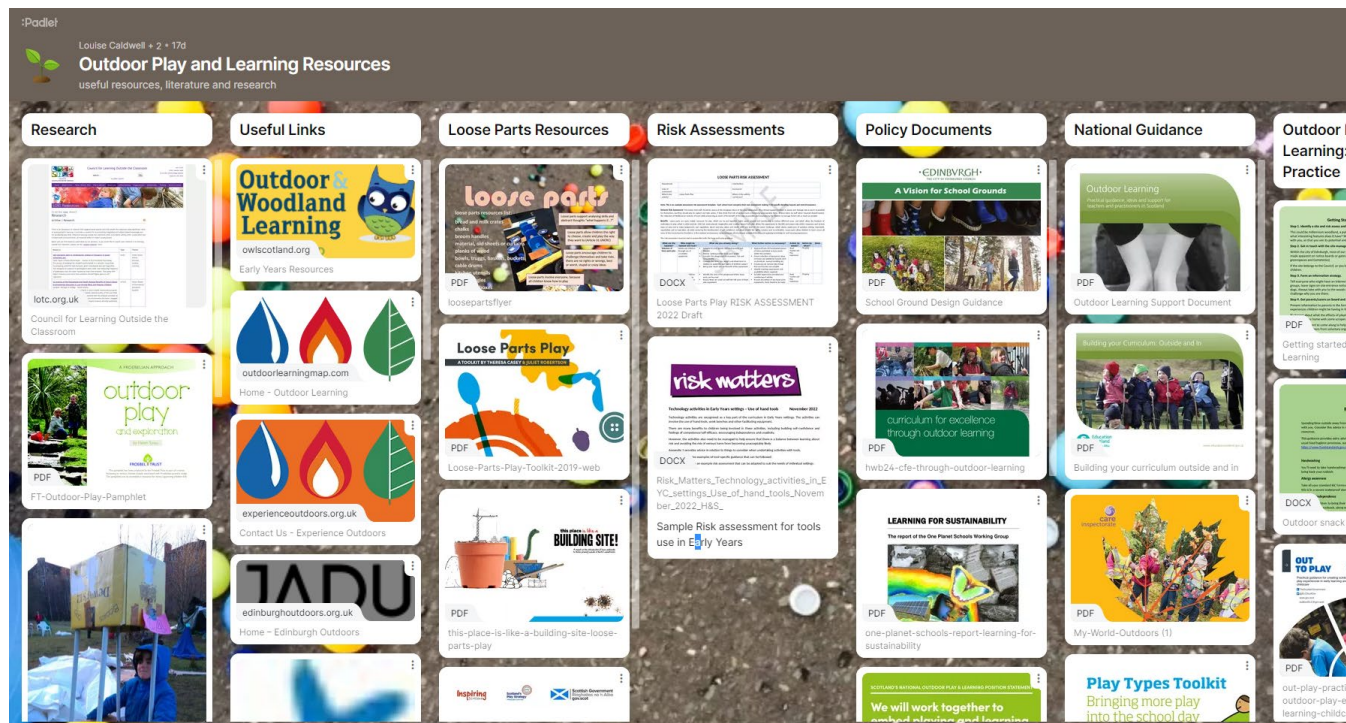
The Council has 10 forest kindergarten sites, where children received their 1140 ELC entitlement fully in forest kindergarten or a blended placement within a local ELC setting. This service has been growing year on year over 6 years with 160 children a day accessing this ELC service.

In May 2023, the Council will trial 2 beach kindergartens, this will provide children with time on the beach weekly for an extended period. Opportunities such as exploring rock pools, learning about biodiversity and participate in foraging, with trained staff will be provided. Reflection and feedback will allow the Council to consider next steps for beach kindergarten opportunities.

A Council officer has the lead in outdoor learning and is available to support settings as required. As restrictions reduce, Career Long Professional Learning (CLPL) opportunities will return, with a particular focus on loose parts play, observation and planning in the outdoors and forest kindergarten skills.

The padlet provides self-directed opportunities for staff across the sector to develop their personal professional development, teams can engage and develop as individual settings or learning communities can focus on a particular area for growth in an aspect of outdoor learning.

Screenshot of padlet:



Early Years case studies can be found in Appendix 10.

Appendix 7 Additional Support for Learning Service

Outdoor Learning plays an important part in supporting children and young people with additional support needs. This is primarily achieved via regular outdoor activity at school.

Additionally, the Additional Support for Learning Service works in partnership with other providers across the City to offer targeted provision to eligible primary aged pupils at Edinburgh Zoo and Bridgend Farm.

There are other flexible pathway supports such as Bridge8, Growing Youth, Spartans, Youth 180, and Locality Outdoor Learning groups for secondary pupils.

Forest schools are also run by the Additional Support for Learning Service.

These different programmes occur regularly and are designed to support children and young people with specific additional needs, as identified via a referral process. Access to these resources is normally discussed and agreed as part of a child's plan and a referral agreed in discussion with a school's Additional Support for Learning Service leader.

The Additional Support for Learning Service and Sport and Outdoor Learning Unit have recently worked together to employ a new Outdoor Learning Instructor. This role is delivering in-house activity via specific intervention pathways.

Appendix 8 Future Schools Edinburgh Project

This project, led by the Council's Estates Team with representation from SOLU, provides a vision and guidance for designing and creating effective school grounds to support frequent, safe and high-quality Outdoor Learning.

<https://futureschoolsedinburgh.com/outdoor-spaces/>



Outdoor spaces

We see the benefits of creating wonderful outdoor spaces that can be used for both play and learning

Our vision for school grounds was approved by City of Edinburgh Council Education, Children and Families Committee in October 2018 and we would like to share that vision with you.



Read our Vision for School Grounds



Check out our poster



Create your space

We believe that good school grounds should be quality places for play and learning, and have links with the community. There should be a diverse provision of all these things at the heart of the design and all of this should be within a safe environment.

Child's right to play (UN Convention on the Rights of the Child)
Develops physical, cognitive, emotional and social skills
Behaviour that is intrinsically motivated
The universal language of childhood
Behaviour that is personally directed

Environments that have educational value
School's Quality Improvement Plan
Whole school approach
Environmental learning
Collaborative learning
Experiential learning

Tweets by FutureSchoolsEd

- Recent Posts -

Trinity Academy Redevelopment
June 2022 Newsletter June 28, 2022

Future Schools Project Award
Competition: Finalists at the
Education Buildings
Scotland Conference April 1, 2020

Spotlight on St John's RC
Primary School September 5, 2019

Future Schools Project
Award Workshop August 28, 2019

Trinity Primary School P7
pavilion video August 19, 2019

Appendix 9 SOLU current and planned support matrix

The information below sets out recent Sport and Outdoor Learning Unit (SOLU) priority work and next steps.

SOLU's draft mission statement / purpose is to **CHAMPION, EMPOWER** and **DELIVER** safe and high-quality Outdoor Learning.

The Council's vision for outdoor learning (adapted from Curriculum for Excellence guidance and vision for outdoor learning) and stated in Appendix 3/Table 4 is as follows:

- outdoor learning is used as a context for learning and integral to learning for sustainability;
- children and young people have the opportunity to participate in a range of progressive and creative outdoor learning experiences which are clearly part of the curriculum (onsite, local offsite and residential); and
- outdoor learning experiences are regular, frequent, enjoyable and challenging across the school.

Securing this vision requires whole-school development. The matrix below shows how SOLU is working with schools, other Council services and partners to secure this vision across the City. The baseline and self-evaluation/school improvement toolkit will provide ongoing information so progress can be monitored and appropriate support provided.

Table 10 Matrix

	What we have been doing to support Outdoor Learning (existing support):	What we will be doing (next steps):	Key performance indicators (KPIs)
Strategic development and Learning Communities	<p>Collaboration with other Council services including the Early Years and Childcare Service and the Additional Support for Learning Service.</p> <p>Creating a city-wide renewed vision for Outdoor Learning ready for the new school improvement toolkit.</p> <p>Resources available via the Council's Teaching and Learning SharePoint to support schools in reviewing their curriculum drivers and visions.</p>	<p>Ensure updated OL Strategic Action Plan incorporates the new Edinburgh Learns and Learning Communities, plus collaboration with other services areas and includes consultation with school communities. The action plan is fit for purpose and built on evidence linked to priorities and needs.</p>	<p>Updated Outdoor Learning Action Plan – April 2023 (in line with financial year). Actions are fit for purpose because they are based on the new school self-evaluation toolkit, consultation and link to wider Council priorities and initiatives.</p>
Direct delivery	<p>-5773 young people visiting the Council's Benmore and Lagganlia Outdoor Centres (2021/22).</p> <p>-5700 pupils accessing the Epic Adventures programmes via the Bonaly Scout Centre (staffed and delivered by SOLU) during 2020/21 and 2021/22 (COVID-19 P7 residential alternative / then targeted programmes – transition / Special Schools / supporting progression in residential visits).</p> <p>-City-wide Bikeability programmes (see January 2023 Bikeability in Primary Schools Committee report and data).</p> <p>-Scotland Cycle repair scheme – 3 waves in 2021 and 22. Repairing family bikes in the communities.</p> <p>-8 DofE Expeditions via Bangholm Outdoor Centre (2021/22).</p> <p>-Large City-wide events e.g. Games at the Hub and Beach games.</p> <p>-4 new targeted programmes via the Bangholm Outdoor Centres to support Ukrainian pupils.</p>	<p>Nearly all Council primary schools have booked for Lagganlia and Benmore – 2023/24 and 24/25 (90%).</p> <p>Wave 3 of the Epic Adventures programme at Bonaly Scout Centre. Targeted programmes including transition projects and supporting progressing in residential.</p> <p>Continuation of targeted programmes to support Ukrainian pupils: bike, Duke of Edinburgh's Award and general Outdoor Learning. Review regarding future provision.</p> <p>Continuation of City-wide events. Reintroduction of the Edinburgh Adventure Race (Secondary) and Outdoor Learning Challenge Day at Holyrood (2023/24).</p> <p>Continuation of Bikeability programmes.</p>	<p>90%+ Primary Schools attend Benmore and Lagganlia.</p> <p>2700+ Epic Adventures participants via targeted programmes.</p> <p>Maintain City-wide events.</p> <p>Completion of targeted Ukrainian programme (March 2023). Future provision planned if required.</p> <p>95%+ satisfaction ratings for all provision.</p>
School improvement / self-evaluation	<p>Draft school improvement toolkit developed via working party (Appendix 3). This is incorporating key considerations including equity and environmental sustainability.</p>	<p>Finalise toolkit for post Easter 2023. Provide launch materials, guidance and training.</p>	<p>Launch Toolkit Summer Term 2023.</p>

		<p>Toolkit will support schools in making judgements, creating a vision linked to curriculum drivers, accessing support (internal and external) and achieving whole-school improvement.</p> <p>Toolkit will be accompanied with access to an external resource for the 2023/24 academic year providing lesson ideas and sharing good practice.</p>	<p>Resources accessed and used by all Primary Schools as appropriate to their needs (2023/24).</p> <p>Track a City-wide improvement in proportion of schools judging themselves to be Building Achievement and Highly Effective.</p>
Supporting attendance	<p>Monitoring attendance on P6 and P7 residential visits to Benmore and Lagganlia has continued. This sector leading work allows the Council to understand how many pupils are attending and how they are funded, plus how many are not going and why. This informs planning, guidance and training. Current attendance is 90% (December 2022). Further detail in Appendix 5.</p> <p>Addition of visits to Benmore and Lagganlia to the Community Benefits menu for local businesses to purchase. £6750 raised in November and December 2023.</p>	Actions identified in Appendix 5.	<p>Maintain 90%+ attendance on P7 residential visits.</p> <p>Secure £15k+ from Community Benefits for residential visits to Benmore and Lagganlia (full academic year).</p>
Training	<p>Training is wide ranging involving 1000+ staff, volunteers and partners. Includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Excursion health and safety Group Leader and Excursion Coordinator training, -Mandatory probationer Outdoor Learning for Primary and Secondary. The Primary Session 1 was a full day at the Bonaly Scout Centre (high levels of satisfaction). -Bespoke Outdoor Learning training sessions (full days / half-days / twilights). -Regular 'Coffee Catch-up' Outdoor Learning sessions – discuss and share good practice. -Adventurous activity training including Lowland Leader Award. 	<p>Renewed training offer to build capacity across Outdoor Learning. Launch for August 2023. To include internal and external training opportunities. This builds capacity, confidence, competency and can reduce costs.</p> <p>Based on consultation and links to the new school improvement toolkit.</p> <p>Align offer with main Schools training provision.</p>	95%+ satisfaction ratings for all training.

Learning Communities	Co-lead the Edinburgh Outdoor Learning Network .	Ensure SOLU supports the new Learning Communities trials and implementation. Continue to work with partners via the Network and other routes. Partners provide important capacity to maintain a wide coverage of Outdoor Learning.	Outdoor Learning resources and guidance support the new Learning Communities approach.
Signposting and resources	<p>Experience Outdoors provides access to different resources including the Excursions Policy, Supporting Attendance on residential, Outdoor Learning Map (sharing good practice) and 50 Ways to Experience Outdoors. The latter is being used by many schools as a link between home and school.</p> <p>Access to a wide range of Outdoor Learning resources on the Council's Teaching and Learning SharePoint system.</p>	<p>Update Experience Outdoors website with new signposting information, internal and external resources.</p> <p>Access to a third-party resource to support lesson planning. Active from April 2023 – August 2024. Wrap-around support provided via SOLU to discuss use of resources and share good practice via the Outdoor Learning Map.</p>	<p>95%+ satisfaction rate for each of access to different resources from one central hub (Experience Outdoors website).</p> <p>All schools and settings report they use the website regularly to access different guidance and resources. Website updated by May 2023.</p>
Excursions policy and guidance – safety framework	<p>SOLU typically reviews and approves around 3000 excursions annually involving around 24k participants (Cat 3 and Cat 4 – adventurous, more hazardous and/or overnight).</p> <p>16 editions of the Coronavirus Excursions Toolbox. This guided schools and other settings throughout the pandemic and on the recovery phase. This provided confidence and resources to staff, enabling them to undertake different types of Outdoor Learning including onsite, local offsite, extended day and residential visits.</p> <p>The Excursions Policy and resources support schools in planning and delivering safe and high-quality offsite visits. A range of resources are available via: https://www.experienceoutdoors.org.uk/cec-excursion-planning . These include template risk assessments and checklists to reduce duplication of work across the City.</p>	<p>Updated approval process for UK overnight (package and self-led) and overseas visits (January 2023).</p> <p>Complete review and update of the Excursions Policy (2023). Ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -it is fit for purpose linked to Education and Children's Services (switch from Communities and Families) and supports services that have moved to Place; -provides suitable and proportionate resources; and -incorporates wider Council considerations – educational effectiveness, reducing financial risks, equity, equality and environmental sustainability. <p>The Policy will allow overseas visits to restart subject to following the new approval system and the visit judged to be appropriate.</p> <p>Update the Adventurous Activity Approved Providers list – enter onto the Outdoor Learning</p>	<p>All Cat 3 and Cat 4 visits approved prior to departure.</p> <p>Excursions Policy reviewed and renewed by December 2023.</p> <p>Release an updated Adventurous Activity Providers list via the Outdoor Learning Map (April 2023).</p>

	<p>Adventurous Activity Approved Providers. External providers are checked externally and a central list maintained via the SOLU Team. This significantly reduces duplication and streamlines the approval process for adventurous activity. Provides significant confidence to Council staff and volunteers.</p> <p>An updated draft approval process for UK overnight (package and self-led) and overseas visits. Aligned to wider considerations: educational effectiveness, reducing financial risks, equity, equality and environmental sustainability.</p>	<p>Map to assist schools and settings in providing appropriate partners.</p>	
National engagement and support	<p>Engagement with Scottish Government via the Council's membership of the Association of Heads of Centres (https://ahoec.org/) and the Scottish Advisory Panel for Outdoor Education (SAPOE - https://www.sapoe.org.uk/). The Council currently provides a Chair for AHOEC Scotland and Secretary for SAPOE.</p> <p>Recent activity has involved Council officers presenting at two Association of Directors of Education Scotland events; co-leading on creating resources e.g. COVID-19 guidance and support – GOING OUT THERE; attendance at the Cross Party Outdoor Education group and supporting feedback on national consultations e.g. Residential Education .</p> <p>This level of engagement develops how Council Officers support schools and allows the creation of high quality and useful guidance and resources.</p>	<p>Continue to engage with national stakeholders, consultations and development of resources. This will have a direct impact on Outdoor Learning in Edinburgh.</p> <p>Some actions are included in Appendix 3.</p>	<p>Regular attendance and participation with national working (when beneficial to Edinburgh Outdoor Learning).</p>
Wider achievement awards	<p>Coordination of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award pandemic recovery.</p> <p>Very positive performance in pandemic recovery – see Appendix 19.</p>	<p>Continued focus on increasing 'Disadvantaged' starters and completions via targeted provision, support and resources.</p>	<p>300+ disadvantaged starters – April 2024.</p> <p>175+ disadvantaged completions – April 2024.</p>

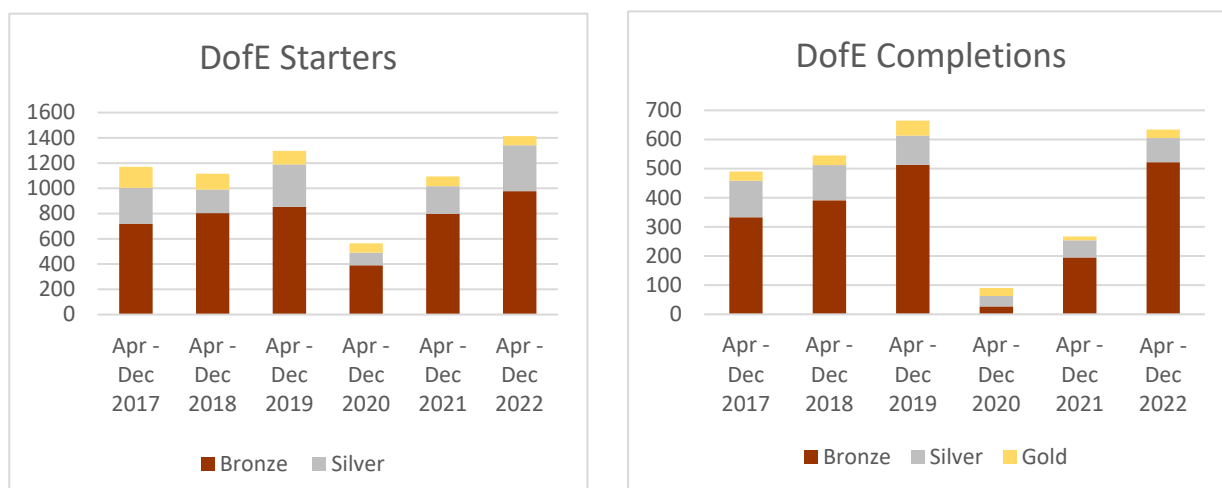
		The use of wider achievement awards will be included in the new school improvement toolkit.	
National resources external	<p>A summary of outdoor learning resources: https://education.gov.scot/improvement/learning-resources/a-summary-of-outdoor-learning-resources/</p> <p>Acts as a useful hub to accessing wider support. Individuals can also access the Learning for Sustainability audit tool for professional standards.</p>	Ensure the Council's new school improvement toolkit utilises these resources.	N/A

Appendix 10 Wider achievement awards – the Duke of Edinburgh’s Award

The Duke of Edinburgh’s Award programme is continuing to benefit many young people in the City. This incorporates significant Outdoor Learning, including the expeditions module. Programme coordination is led by the Council’s Sport and Outdoor Learning Unit (SOLU) via staff at the City’s Bangholm Outdoor Centre.

Council staff and volunteers have and continue to be focused on delivering a strong pandemic recovery so that young people can access high quality provision and opportunities. This has been supported by the UK-wide [flexible arrangements](https://www.dofe.org/dofewithadifference/programme-changes/) - <https://www.dofe.org/dofewithadifference/programme-changes/>. SOLU can continue to report an impressive performance with the number of overall DofE enrolments (starters) and completions combined at all levels (Bronze, Silver and Gold combined) returning to pre-COVID levels and continuing to rise (best ever performance for starters).

Well done and thank you to all the young people and leaders taking and supporting the DofE challenge in Edinburgh.



Volunteering is a key part of the Duke of Edinburgh’s Award. SOLU reports that DofE Scotland has recently estimated that our young people undertaking their award with this Council spent an estimated **9,685 hours** volunteering in just one year. This equates to a social value of **£44,745** within their local communities.

The City’s developments continue, including ensuring all young people can access this award. Recent examples include collaborative work between SOLU and locality youth work staff to start a new DofE community group based at the Wester Hailes library; and the Broughton University (UP) Programme. The latter involves a collaboration between teachers, learners, parents/carers and local university partners to deliver an ambitious targeted intervention initiative, which has recently introduced DofE to its programme. A thank you to locality youth work and Broughton HS staff for their great skill and dedication, plus the many partners who play such a critical role.

Appendix 11 Case studies

11.1 Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) Sector

Three case studies show the quality and range of play and learning across the service for children 0-5.

11.1.1 Tynecastle ELC case study:

<https://sway.office.com/fp9rThB6dNF1z9KR?ref=Link>

11.1.2 Greendykes ELC case study:

<https://sway.office.com/HRL6gfy57MbMk7C3?ref=email>

11.1.3 Forest Kindergarten case study:

<https://sway.office.com/fp9rThB6dNF1z9KR?ref=Link>

Key contact: Tracey Shaw Tracey.Shaw@edinburgh.gov.uk

11.2 Edinburgh case studies from the national thematic inspection

Education Scotland – Successful Approaches to Learning Outdoors (February 2022):
Successful approaches to learning outdoors.

The national report provides the independent view of HM Inspectors of Education about effective practice in outdoor learning.

<https://education.gov.scot/education-scotland/what-we-do/inspection-and-review/chief-inspector-report/national-thematic-inspections/successful-approaches-to-learning-outdoors/>

Wellbeing - Staff are using outdoor learning effectively to support the wellbeing of children and young people. Woodlands School. Case study 2 – page 18.

Inspectors also visited St Andrew's Fox Covert Primary School and held discussions with the Sport and Outdoor Learning Unit. This evidence supported the main report.

11.3 Learning Outside the Classroom - St Andrew's Fox Covert School

St Andrew's Fox Covert RC Primary received national recognition for its commitment to taking learning outside the classroom (LOtC) and has been awarded the national LOtC Mark (Gold) by the Council for Learning Outside the Classroom, the highest award of its kind and the first in Scotland.

<https://foxcovertprimary.files.wordpress.com/2021/07/press-release-lotc-july-2021.pdf>

Classrooms Without Walls: <https://standrewsfoxcovert.com/classrooms-without-walls/>

For every child at St Andrew's, the journey through education must include planned, quality learning experiences that take place out with the classroom. We have embedded **Learning Beyond the Classroom** in all aspects of learning, teaching and assessment.

At St Andrew's our vision for outdoor learning is that:

- all children participate **daily** in outdoor learning experiences (throughout the year and in variable weather) which are embedded in our curriculum and raise attainment and achievement;
- learning beyond the classroom is seen as a **normal part** of the St Andrew's learning, teaching and assessment experience (we provide waterproofs and wellies as appropriate); and
- learning beyond the classroom **connects our staff and pupils** with their spaces and stories, with each other, with the natural world, with our built heritage and shared Catholic values; this can happen within our grounds, our local area and at indoor and outdoor venues across our City.

11.3.1 Residential visit to Lagganlia

The pupils of St Andrew's benefited hugely from their recent residential experience. The intended outcomes, linked to both wellbeing and the school's core ecological values were covered in depth - undoubtedly more robustly than we could have explored within the school day and school locality / environment.

Our assessments demonstrate significant improvements in a range of pupil's skills. The visit resulted in improved engagement and participation both during and post camp and a greater understanding and application of the emotional and social wellbeing skills essential to develop the Curriculum for Excellence 4 capacities (successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors).

The physical/fitness elements of residential activities are obvious but the residential experience also fosters a lifelong love of the outdoors (so essential to wellbeing).

The residential also impacted positively on our staff team as they co-delivered content with instructors, gathering skills to be used to develop their own pedagogical approaches for the 'urban wild spaces' back at school.

There's something magical about camp - it's education at its very best.

Rebecca Favier (November 2021 – past Head Teacher).

11.4 Outdoor Learning Map

<https://www.experienceoutdoors.org.uk/outdoor-learning-map>

There are currently just over 180 activities recorded on the Map. Schools and other groups can use these to showcase and share good practice and ideas.

11.5 Case Studies from previous Committee Report

The August 2021 Committee Report provides a range of case studies linked to residential and non-residential specifically focusing on equity (Excursions – Equity Report. Education, Children and Families Committee, Tuesday, 24 August, 2021. [General link to meeting documents.](#))

11.6 Other case studies

Many examples of good practice exist across Edinburgh. Building on the examples above, the following case studies provide information on how 4 schools are undertaking their different Outdoor Learning journeys; **each school is at a different stage.**

- 11.6.1 Colinton Primary School
- 11.6.2 Leith Walk Primary School
- 11.6.3 Trinity Academy
- 11.6.4 Oaklands School

11.6.1 Colinton Primary School

Outdoor Learning Case Study

School name: Colinton Primary School

School contact: Louise Hill
Louise.hill@colinton.edin.sch.uk

School 'general context' description (number of pupils / SIMD context) and access to onsite and offsite outdoor learning venues and resources:

Colinton Primary School and Nursery Class is situated in the South-West of Edinburgh. We have 7 classes and a term-time nursery making a school roll of 171. In 2021, 21% of our pupils were SIMD 5 or below and 79% were SIMD 6 or above. The majority of our pupils (36%) were in SIMD 8. Our catchment area consists largely of Armed Forces (MoD) housing and a large % of our pupils are identified as being from armed forces families. This provides us with a unique set of circumstances including parents being deployed and working away from home (often with lots of uncertainty), families leaving & arriving at short notice, and pupils coming from different school systems (mainly England and Northern Ireland)

We have a fantastic Outdoor Resource here including a large wrap around playground and a full-size football pitch next door (which is owned by the local high school). We have a large school garden, known as the 'Room to Grow' which was created by The Beechgrove Garden TV programme in 2009. We also have a smaller gated area called 'The Flower Garden' and a small quadrangle area with a 'Trim Trail'. Our school grounds back onto a small local woodland – Redford Woods which has the Braid Burn running through it. A 10-minute walk away is Dreghorn Woodland which connects to the foot of the Pentland Hills. We have the local Colinton Village, 20 mins walk away, which includes the Water of Leith and Colinton Dell with the 'Colinton Tunnel', part of an old railway line, now walkway and cycle route.

You recent/current whole school outdoor learning strategic priorities, actions and progress, and outcomes. What have you focused on and why? Has this been successful – coverage, type and progression across the school / frequency / outcomes? How do you know? Also, mention any internal and external support, plus links to stakeholders including parents / carers.

It was identified in our 2019 HM Inspectors of Education visit that we should be making more use of our extensive outdoor space. This priority was taken forward by our new HT, Yvonne Moore, upon our return to school after Covid Closures in 2020.

Following a successful year of weekly outdoor learning sessions with a P4 class and a post-covid pupil recovery group – 'The Coli-TEN' We decided to take our outdoor learning vision forward and across the whole school in 2021 with Mrs Louise Hill leading on this priority and using NCCT as a focus time for Outdoor Learning.

The main focus was about Health and Wellbeing, Teamwork and Recovery post-covid. We developed a whole school vision where all classes were encouraged to follow a monthly theme or focus which was based around seasons and special dates. It was designed to be child-led and flexible for teacher/class preferences and prior experiences. We delivered a staff training session in August 2021 to launch the programme and documented class experiences in a whole school floorbook over the school year. We also delivered a parent session on the benefits and outcomes of Outdoor Learning (via Teams)

Any specific challenges and how are you overcoming these?

Developing staff confidence, skills and knowledge; ensuring suitable supervision and securing sufficient time were the key challenges.

Pupils with 1to1 support and medical needs were also considered and included. Time was a big factor, taking time to develop this, encouraging staff, supporting children with routines and risk awareness. We worked out solutions as we came up against issues. Not giving up! Support from management was key.

Next strategic steps and why:

We'd like to take on external awards such as the John Muir Award. Would also like to take on bigger projects – going further afield and visiting different locations, such as local beaches. Would love to get more pupils on 'away days' earlier in primary – EPIC days for P4s and up. Costing is a barrier to this so we'd love to get better at fundraising and applying for grants and financial support to do this.

How do you support staff development in outdoor learning – internal and external?

As well as the staff training to launch our vision at the August inset, we created a staff Teams page where monthly ideas, planners and reminders were sent to keep the vision in focus.

Our aim is to keep Outdoor Learning simple and easy to access for all, a teaching tool which can be used across the curriculum and in different ways in different classes. It is also very much 'outdoor learning for beginners' where we are coming at this without significant prior experience or training – just a passion for being outdoors and seeing how much success and enjoyment it brings to classes.

Additional information:

- Presentation to parents/carers regarding the School's journey with Outdoor Learning:

<https://screencast-o-matic.com/watch/c3Vvr6VDTYH>

- Our Outdoor Year (following pages)
- November Outdoor Learning Contexts



Colinton Primary Outdoor Learning Themes



 <p>August is ... Stay safe and work as a team (from 22/8/22 - three weeks)</p> <p>Problem solving and Risk Assessment Children's Health Week 5th</p>	 <p>September is ... Natural Materials and Elements (from 12/9/22 - three weeks)</p> <p>Earth, Wind/Air, Water, Fire Clay, sticks, stones, mud and more!</p>	 <p>October is ... Explore Autumn (S.T.E.A.M) (from 3/10/22 - three weeks)</p> <p>Dens, shelters and Habitats Signs of seasonal change Living lifecycles and care</p>	 <p>November is ... Community (from 31/10/22 - four weeks)</p> <p>Armed Forces and Remembrance Road Safety Week Exploring and mapping Safety with Darker nights and fireworks/Halloween Litter Picking</p>	 <p>December is ... Celebration (from 28/11/22 - four weeks)</p> <p>Storytelling, dance and drama Festive Art and Games Risky Play</p>
 <p>January is ... Explore Winter (S.T.E.A.M) (from 9/1/23 four weeks)</p> <p>Space and the changing sky Signs and seasonal changes Poetry and nature (Burns) RSPB Big Birdwatch</p>	 <p>February is ... Numeracy/Maths Outdoors (from 6/2/23 three weeks)</p> <p>Collecting, sorting, counting Weighing, measuring and practical problems Construction Maths in 'real life' outdoors</p>	 <p>March is ... Literacy Outdoors (from 6/3/23 four weeks)</p> <p>Storytelling, mark making and environmental print World Book and World Poetry Day Taking time for Listening and talking</p>	 <p>April/May is ... Explore Spring and Grow! (S.T.E.A.M) (from 17/4/22 six weeks)</p> <p>Seasonal Changes and signs Water play and construction minibeasts and insects (bee week) Eggs, plants, seeds and growth British Science Week Earth Day and More!</p>	 <p>From 5th June it is ... Sport and Expeditions</p> <p>P7 Camp Sports Days Wildlife Trust Challenges – 30 Days Wild in June</p>



Outdoor Learning across the 4 contexts at Colinton Primary School 2021/22

<p style="text-align: center;">Opportunities for personal achievement</p> <p>Using the knowledge/setting of our local community to enhance and engage with outdoor experiences.</p> <p>Increased awareness of being safe outdoors (particularly in evening time)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Resources and activity</p> <p>Creating Mazes, Trails and Maps</p> <p>Expressing Remembrance with displays/artwork/outdoor symbols</p> <p>Exploring and researching our local area</p> <p>Celebration of colour and light</p> <p>Be bright Be seen and other Road Safety lessons</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Interdisciplinary Learning</p> <p>-Draw on prior knowledge, understanding and skills. What do we know about our local area?</p> <p>-Learn new knowledge, skills or understanding of concepts. What do we want to find out more about?</p> <p>-Transfer and Apply collective knowledge to new problems or areas. What could we achieve together as a class this month?</p> <p>-Shared Goals and collaborative Learning with purpose.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Ethos and the life of the school as a community</p> <p>Links with the Armed Forces Community</p> <p>Significance of Robert Louis Stevenson to our local area – Colinton Parish Church/ Tunnel.</p> <p>Road Safety week 2021 – Road Safety Heroes – celebrate the work of those who keep us safe and inform others</p> <p>Whole school participation in Outdoor Classroom Day – Thursday 4th November</p>	<div style="text-align: center;">  <p>November is ... Community</p> </div> <p style="text-align: center;">Significant Dates</p> <p>Outdoor Classroom Day – 4th November Diwali – 4th November</p> <p>Fireworks – 5th November</p> <p>Remembrance Day – 11th November</p> <p>World Kindness Day – 13th November</p> <p>Road Safety Week – 15th – 21st November Scottish Book Week – 15th – 21st November</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Curriculum areas and Subjects</p> <p>Religious and Moral Education World religious – values, beliefs, practices and traditions of festivals. (RME 06b)</p> <p>My own beliefs, values and actions (RME 08)</p> <p>Social Studies Past – looking at an individual (SOC 06a) The ways to remember and preserve Scotland’s history (SOC 02a)</p> <p>Place and Environment – exploring the local area and activities with mapping (SOC 14a)</p> <p>Society – rules, rights and responsibilities (SOC 17a)</p>

11.6.2 Leith Walk Primary School

Outdoor Learning Case Study

School name:	Leith Walk Primary School
School contact:	Amy Barr Amy.barr@leithwalk.edin.sch.uk

School 'general context' description (number of pupils / SIMD context) and access to onsite and offsite outdoor learning venues and resources:

Current role – 230 pupils.
We currently have 35% of pupils living in SIMD 1-4. Leith Walk is a diverse school with over 40 languages spoken and several different cultures/religions.
This year, we have developed our onsite by adding a sandpit, mud kitchen, water hut, picnic benches and planters/bug hotels. We have also just been signed off to install a wooden stage with seating and a 25m trim trail. However, we are still waiting for a quote to have more natural material to reduce the amount of concrete in the playground.
We have weekly outdoor learning lessons in Pilrig Park, Hopetoun Crescent Gardens and Calton Hill. We have plans to explore Arthur's Seat and St Mark's Park in the New Year.
We have bought in new resources this year. These include: waterproof trousers/jackets, tarps, ropes, water channels, mud kitchen tools, flint & steals, outdoor building blocks, compasses, a trolley to wheel to the park and more!
As well as this, we have had our playground mapped by Orienteering Southern.

You recent/current whole school outdoor learning strategic priorities, actions and progress, and outcomes. What have you focused on and why? Has this been successful – coverage, type and progression across the school / frequency / outcomes? How do you know? Also, mention any internal and external support, plus links to stakeholders including parents / carers.

We currently have outdoor learning for non-class contact time (NCCT) for P3-7 (75 minutes per week) and P1-2 has a Friday session (60 minutes) which was originally team taught. However, the P1-2 teachers are now confident about delivering lessons in the playground and will start to team teach again when we travel offsite in term 4.

Originally, I had planned for aspects of maths to be covered whilst at outdoor learning. Following further discussion with the HT this has changed to have a Health and Wellbeing and creativity focus. This allowed children to explore local green spaces and lead on their own learning.
We now focus on the skills-based curriculum and encouraging resilience, teamwork, and independence. There are planned outcomes each week. However, we often have unplanned learning for examples learning about animals that we see or trees that we walk past.
We have funded this through our PEF funding. We allocated £5000 for resources and £20000 for the playground. We timetable our support staff to ensure all classes have adequate staffing to allow for weekly outdoor learning.

I have worked with external agencies to support and build on teachers' confidence when delivering sessions in the local area. We have worked closely with Edinburgh Southern Orienteering, Friends of Hopetoun Garden and The Water of Leith Trust. Next term, we are working with The Green Team and will be taking part in the John Muir Award.

We have had extremely positive feedback from parents/carers, pupils and staff. We have also been able to see an improvement in attendance on a Friday for our younger pupils as they do not want to miss OL.

Any specific challenges and how are you overcoming these?

- Dogs in the local area. We have several children that fear dogs. We have found that using parks in the morning reduces the number of dogs.
- Litter, drugs and dog faeces. Unfortunately, all our local green spaces can have all 3. We report this to the Council and use a different area.
- Some pupils do not have appropriate clothing or footwear. We have purchased waterproof trousers and jackets for every child in the school. We need to invest in footwear (wellies/walking boots). We have started to collect second-hand wellies and shoes for pupils to wear.
- Staff illness. If we have several staff off sick, we cannot leave the school grounds. We would overcome this by having a session in the playground area.

Next strategic steps and why:

- Continue to develop our playground to allow for more meaningful outdoor learning. We would like more natural surfaces and a fire pit.
- Continue with Career Long Professional Learning for teaching staff to develop and widen provision.
- Start to look at building in more areas of the curriculum as children are now comfortable, safe and happy in the outdoors.
- Continue to explore local areas and further afield. We have plans to access The Pentlands, Portobello Beach and an overnight stay for our P5 pupils. As a school, we promote equality and our pupils do not have these experiences at home.
- Ensure that we have a bank of wellies/walking boots to keep children warm and safe.

How do you support staff development in outdoor learning – internal and external?

- Ensure staff have had appropriate training and CLPL experiences
- Team teaching
- Using external agencies
- Accessible resources
- Sharing of learning – TEAMS

Additional information:

The School has posted some recent adventures on the Council's Outdoor Learning Map:

[Forest Adventure - Outdoor Learning \(outdoorlearningmap.com\):](https://www.outdoorlearningmap.com/)
<https://www.outdoorlearningmap.com/listings/forest-adventure-8270>

[The Collective - Calton Hill - Outdoor Learning \(outdoorlearningmap.com\)](https://www.outdoorlearningmap.com/)
<https://www.outdoorlearningmap.com/listings/the-collective-calton-hill-1609>

11.6.3. Trinity Academy

Outdoor Learning Case Study

School name:	Trinity Academy
School contact:	Caroline Bannon caroline.bannon@trinity.edin.sch.uk

School 'general context' description (number of pupils / SIMD context) and access to onsite and offsite outdoor learning venues and resources:

The school has a current roll of 980. Approx. 50% of pupils are in SIMD 8-10. The school is currently benefitting from the opening of the new sports facility at Bangholm which features outdoor spaces. Playground space is limited on the school site but has been used for outdoor learning experiences by a number of faculties. A small school garden has been maintained by pupils from our Enhanced Support Base (ESB) and Support for Learning (SfL) faculties. We have a school allotment which has been used by our Food Growing Club. We are fortunate to be sited opposite Victoria Park which can provide outdoor learning activities and close to walkways leading to the Water of Leith. We also make use of urban environments for outdoor learning. The school has a long history of running Duke of Edinburgh programmes at all levels and these have featured walking and canoeing expeditions further afield. Previous activity weeks have featured white water rafting and Adventure centres in the Edinburgh area e.g. Fox Lake.

We are fortunate in some ways but very keen to extend our outdoor learning opportunities for young people. Our location does not feature very rural or challenging physical landscapes which we would like all pupils to have some access to. An organic outdoor experience would be our aim- some adventure but not necessarily adventurous activities, more just about exploring the outdoors.

You recent/current whole school outdoor learning strategic priorities, actions and progress, and outcomes. What have you focused on and why? Has this been successful – coverage, type and progression across the school / frequency / outcomes? How do you know? Also, mention any internal and external support, plus links to stakeholders including parents / carers.

It is a priority of ours to encourage outdoor learning. Staff at all levels are encouraged to take classes and groups outwith the school for learning experiences. In the past this has involved work in the grounds of the school and in Victoria Park e.g. sketching, photography and practice of fieldwork skills. The school allotment, work in Victoria Park, The Dandelion project and the school garden have given pupils the chance to work outdoors, all with a curricular link. The urban environment has been used for Geography fieldwork as well as local activities e.g. ESOL visit to town. Biology and Geography teams have taken pupils to complete river fieldwork, slope analysis and utilised the coastal environments of East Lothian. Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE) groups have benefitted from expeditions. We have held two S1 residential trips (Lockerbie) to provide pupils the chance to participate in adventurous activities.

Our pupils love all these opportunities. They enhance learning and develop knowledge and understanding in a real-life context. It is great to be able to offer an experience to a large group e.g. a whole year group but smaller classes and groups have also seen the benefit. In the past we have developed links with the Outdoor Learning Team who have supported the delivery of fieldwork. We have worked with the Water of Leith Centre and are seeking further partnership with the Outdoor Learning Team to run an event at Bonaly. Parents and Carers are hugely supportive and always comment on the positive experiences pupils have had. These sorts of opportunities are always mentioned as some of the best school memories in the S6 year books.

Any specific challenges and how are you overcoming these?

The main challenges we have are related to poverty proofing our school. Any opportunities we offer should be accessible to all and often the cost is prohibitive. We are attempting to overcome this by seeking additional funding streams, providing very advanced notice so that payments can be spread and adopting a 'pay what you can, pay for a friend' strategy- supported by school funding. Access to and the cost of transport is a major issue and so we are using the free bus pass service where possible to reduce costs.

Staff cover in school to allow colleagues to participate in more extensive outdoor learning can also prove problematic and expensive. We do our best to plan in advance and support with cover teachers.

Staffing expertise and confidence are also a priority. We are lucky to have some teachers with appropriate training but whilst there is often willingness, a lack of formal training can make staff feel uncertain. The Outdoor Learning team have supported training in the past and we seek to extend this over the coming months.

Next strategic steps and why:

We would really like to have a programme that ensures opportunities for each year group each session with progression through their time at the school. We are aiming to run an Activity Week in June 2023 which will feature at least a day of outdoor fun and learning for our S2 pupils at Bonaly Scout Centre. This is being developed in partnership with the Outdoor Learning Team- seeking to develop TA staff skills and confidence and involve them in the delivery of a real outdoor organic activity taking into account the skill level of our pupils. We would like to establish the offer for each year group so that pupils know what to look forward to. As always support and encouragement for ongoing curricular outdoor learning at all levels.

How do you support staff development in outdoor learning – internal and external?

We offer support for CLPL and link to the Outdoor Learning Team. We have devoted development time to help with the organisation of Activities Week. We offer financial support to pupils and families to increase access. We have purchased resources to help with outdoor learning. We continue to reach out to partner organisations to help us in the delivery of activities for which we are not trained.

11.6.4. Oaklands School

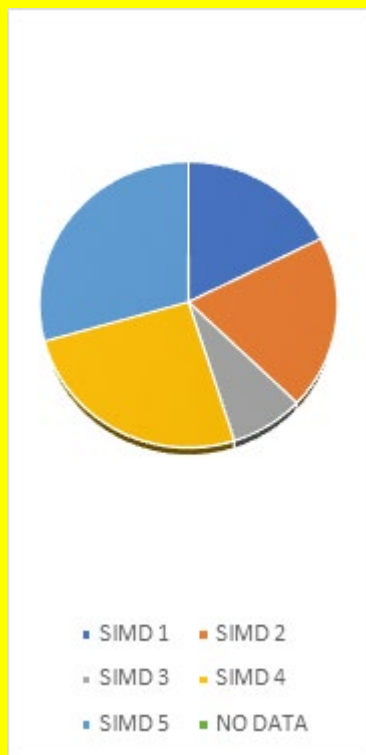
Outdoor Learning Case Study

School name:	Oaklands School
School contact:	Eleanor Arbuckle Eleanor.arbuckle@oaklands.edin.sch.uk

School 'general context' description (number of pupils / SIMD context) and access to onsite and offsite outdoor learning venues and resources:

Oaklands is a special school with a current roll of 60 pupils. All pupils have a learning disability, and most have associated physical disabilities and health issues. The majority of our pupils are wheelchair users or have other mobility difficulties. Oaklands has a variety of good outdoor spaces which have been fully adapted for wheelchair users including a wood area, an allotment and polytunnel, a wildlife area with pond, two playgrounds and a courtyard. We have access to school buses which can take us to local outdoor spaces such as Lauriston Castle and the Botanic Gardens.

SIMD data:



You recent/current whole school outdoor learning strategic priorities, actions and progress, and outcomes. What have you focused on and why? Has this been successful – coverage, type and progression across the school / frequency / outcomes? How do you know? Also, mention any internal and external support, plus links to stakeholders including parents / carers.

Outdoor learning has been a priority at Oaklands over the last 4 years. We have a lead teacher in outdoor learning and have run a number of all-staff OL training events. We worked collaboratively to identify barriers, both perceived and actual to getting outdoors with our pupils and to come up with ideas and solutions to address these. We have established an annual whole school outdoor learning week to tie on with the international outdoor classroom day in May. Staff enthusiasm for outdoor learning is reasonably high and most report being aware of and having witnessed the benefits to both pupils and staff of outdoor learning. Last year we had

a dedicated OL teacher who worked with classes across the school with the dual purpose of providing a wide range of OL opportunities for pupils and also upskilling classroom staff. Our main focus currently is providing regular OL opportunities for pupils as part of their weekly curriculum. All classes have weekly timetabled slots in our different outdoor spaces. We have created a shared resource of 50+ things to do outdoors at Oaklands and teachers are encouraged to share additional outdoor learning ideas and things that have worked well twice a year in recognition of the two international outdoor classroom days. We have a sports coach who takes pupils out in the community on adapted bikes. We have recently regained the use of two wheelchair buses and so are able to more easily access local green spaces.

Most pupils get outside once or twice a week with some getting out daily or multiple times a day depending on their interests, needs and the staffing levels in the class.

This year we have started up DofE for the first time and are planning an expedition experience in the summer term. We have had support with this from Fraser Robertson at the OL team and also Beatlie school in West Lothian. Longer term, we would like to offer the opportunity of a residential experience for pupils in upper secondary, but this will require careful planning to ensure pupils health and mobility needs are fully met.

This year we took part in the Dandelion project which gave pupils and families added motivation to get outside and grow things. We also take part in annual competitions including daffodil growing at Saughton and pocket gardens. We have an active Eco group and outdoor learning activities have featured in our whole school Eco action plans for the last four years. Lower primary pupils all take part in the RSPB activities.

We have a volunteer group of staff, friends and families who meet once a month to work on our outdoor spaces, helping to keep them in a good condition. We received two lots of funding from Cash for Kids in the last five years that enabled us to build our allotment and wildlife areas. We have also received smaller grants from various sources enabling us to buy OL equipment.

Any specific challenges and how are you overcoming these?

When visiting local green spaces, we are limited as to how far we can travel by the health, personal care and nutrition needs of our pupils. We usually only make short journeys which enable us to return to school within a 2–3-hour timeframe. We do refer to the PAMIS website when planning longer trips to see if there are fully accessible toilet facilities with hoists near our destination. This can enable us to extend the trip. We also sometimes take a school nurse to assist with health needs. We are also limited by staff availability as most pupils require 1:2:1 support when off-site.

We can only utilise spaces that are wheelchair accessible. We did once hire a pony and wheelchair trailer which enabled pupils to access non-paved spaces, but this is not a regular possibility due to costs. We sometimes also make use of the free beach wheelchairs.

Some of our pupils present with behaviour which challenges. We have positive behaviour support plans in place, risk assess on an individual basis and ensure high levels of staffing are available to support these pupils when out.

The weather can be an issue for staff and pupils. We bought a school set of waterproof ponchos for pupils and all pupils have blankets.

Staffing levels is currently our main barrier to regular outdoor learning both within the school grounds and for trips. We need to have high staff:pupil ratios to push wheelchairs and assist

mobile pupils to access outdoor spaces. We frequently don't have sufficient numbers to make this possible.

Next strategic steps and why:

Keep staff enthusiasm and support for OL high despite challenges presented by our current staffing levels. Work collaboratively to come up with solutions for maintaining good access to OL with a staff:pupil ratio that is lower than in previous years. Successfully run DofE and achieve the Bronze award for participating pupils. This will include an adapted and innovative approach to the expedition element.

How do you support staff development in outdoor learning – internal and external?

We run periodic training at CAT and in-service days. We have a lead OL teacher with a remit for promoting OL across the school. In the run up to our annual outdoor learning week, ideas and resources are shared and evaluated and whole school activities are planned and created collaboratively.

Additional information:

The school has created its own 50 ways to experience outdoors at Oaklands.

Extract:

1. Clay imprints of natural found objects.

Resources – clay, rolling pins, natural found objects.

Instructions – roll clay to required size, collect a range of natural objects, press into clay and leave to dry. Paint and varnish when dry. These make nice tiles.

2. Gardening/mud play

Resources – spades, buckets, trays, watering cans, spoons, any other random objects, wipes/handwashing stuff.

Instructions – Fill buckets or trays with mud or use the raised shallow beds in the allotment. Dig, make mud castles, bury objects to find. You could make a witches' cake mix – collect leaves and other things and some mud. Use a big stick to crush the leaves in a bowl or pan, then add mud and stir. Or hide plastic mini beasts or other objects in shallow digging beds and search for them using hands or digging implements.

3. Nature trail

Resources – Found natural objects or Xmas baubles, toys etc to hide in woods/playground beforehand.

Instructions – Choose and collect something to create a trail with, e.g. pine cones, bright leaves, sticks, pebbles. Or you could use baubles or other markers. Invite your friends to try and follow your trail. You could leave a prize at the end (a ball, bells, toy etc).

4. Scavenger hunt

Resources - Set a list of things to find e.g. 5 different leaves, something edible, something rough, something that smells nice etc. Your list could be pictorial or use real natural objects to match up to the things you find.

Instructions – Go outside and use your different senses to explore what you find. Can you find everything on your list? Compare with the rest of the group at the end. You could make up a rhyme to say as you go on your hunt. Here's one or you could make up your own: 'Into the forest (playground) we go. What will we find? Nobody knows. Explore with your ears, your eyes, hands and nose. Out in the forest (playground), anything goes.'

5. Campfire or Kelly kettle

Resources – fire pit or safe marked fire area, kindling, wood, fire steels, cotton wool, petroleum jelly, safety equipment as per risk assessment (fire extinguisher, fire gloves, buckets of water, fire blanket). Optional – Kelly kettle and stuff to make hot drinks.

Instructions – Ensure the person in charge is trained and competent and that the Risk Assessment has been shared with everyone present (remember to phone the fire station at the start and finish to let them know about your controlled burning). Put petroleum jelly onto the cotton wool. Build up kindling then larger wood. Use fire steels to light your fire. You could cook food: bananas and chocolate buttons in tinfoil, marshmallows on long sticks. Campfire songs are fun, we have adapted a few familiar songs. Here are a couple:

Campfire's Burning (tune: London's Burning)

Campfire's burning, campfire's burning,

Light the Kindling, light the kindling,

Fire fire! Fire fire!

Throw the sticks on, throw the sticks on,

Campfire's burning, campfire's burning.

If it's hot beside the fire (tune: If you're happy and you know it)

If it's hot beside the fire clap your hands,

If it's hot beside the fire clap your hands,

If it's hot beside the fire and you want it to go higher,

If it's hot beside the fire clap your hands.

6. Leaf bashing

Resources – white fabric cut into pieces, stones for holding and bashing with, rubber circles or chopping boards to place underneath, leaves, hard surface.

Instructions – collect leaves, put between two pieces of fabric or fold fabric over with leaf inside. Place on rubber/board on hard surface. Bash with the stone until the print of the leaf can be seen on the fabric. You can also try flowers and berries. You could put the fabric on the ground and wheel your chairs over it instead of bashing it.

7. Bark rubbing

Resources – wax crayons, paper

Instructions – Place paper against tree bark and rub until pattern appears. For pupils working on trays, look for pieces of wood that can be placed on tray. Or try other objects like leaves.

8. Making bird feeders

Resources – bowls or trays, lard, bird seed, string and whatever else you decide to use to shape it.

Instructions – Squish the lard and mix in the bird seed. Mould it into or around something, we like to use pine cones, yoghurt pots or to just make ball shapes with string through them. It's quite fun squishing. We have also upcycled gastro-feed bottles and turned them into hanging bird seed feeders. There are lots of other ideas available online.