

Outdoor learning: Practical guidance, ideas and support for teachers and practitioners in Scotland ^[1]

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AVAILABILITY

Full version in pdf ^[2]

Excerpts:

This resource provides practical, accessible and straightforward advice on how to engage children and young people with learning outdoors. It incorporates ideas for organising learning in the outdoors, for making connections across the curriculum and for planning within curriculum areas.

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Early years outdoors

There are an increasing number of early years settings throughout Scotland demonstrating leading practice outdoors. In line with the medium-term priorities stated in the *Early Years Framework*, there are established outdoor and nature kindergartens where children are outside all year round in almost all weathers. Many other centres are incorporating aspects of this philosophy and approach in their routines.

Quality practice in outdoor learning through play is often characterised by:

- knowledgeable and enthusiastic practitioners who collaboratively plan, facilitate and enable children to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding through child-initiated, play-based experiences - this is developed from observing and consulting children using a variety of approaches
- the development of outdoor spaces within settings as stimulating play environments that include many open-ended resources, natural materials and opportunities to engage in risky, challenging and adventurous play
- the indoor and outdoor spaces given equal consideration and being simultaneously accessible to children
- opportunities for children to experience natural places which give a feeling of wildness through regular and frequent off-site visits to woodlands, beaches or other areas of greenspace - this also includes time to visit and get to know the local community, its people and its services

Practitioners who are willing, keen and interested in working with children outside can make a positive difference to the quality of outdoor provision. Even a small outdoor space has the potential to be developed on a low budget using cheap or unwanted items. The organisations listed in Appendix 1 can help committed practitioners to do this using a participatory approach that fully involves young children. Making outdoor spaces as safe as necessary and not as safe as possible is an important step when allowing children more freedom to self-assess risk in their play.

Region: Europe ^[3]

Tags: curricula and pedagogy ^[4]

Source URL (modified on 27 Jan 2022): <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/research-policy-practice/11/11/outdoor-learning-practical-guidance-ideas-and-support>

Links

[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/research-policy-practice/11/11/outdoor-learning-practical-guidance-ideas-and-support> ^[2]

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