

Learning and Teaching Scotland

PRESS RELEASE

2 March 2007

Learning and Teaching Scotland takes learning outdoors

Today (2 March 2007) Learning and Teaching Scotland (LTS) is pleased to announce the launch of *Taking Learning Outdoors – partnerships for excellence*, a report from the combined work of the national Outdoor Connections development programme. The report is available now for download from the LTS website Taking Learning Outdoors (<http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/takinglearningoutdoors/index.asp>) and it will be distributed to all education establishments soon.

Taking learning outdoors – partnerships for excellence was launched simultaneously at professional development events in Perth and Fort William.

David Cameron, Director of Children's Services Stirling Council, and Chair of the Outdoor Connections Advisory Group, launched the report at the Grounds for Learning National Networking Day at the Scottish Natural Heritage Centre in Battleby near Perth. He said: "As a group, we are convinced that outdoor learning offers unique opportunities to extend the potential of our children and young people. We learn in context and through experience and place. Therefore, we need to offer different and challenging experiences to stimulate their learning and development. Learning beyond the classroom, in all its forms, can make a huge contribution to this."

At the same time Willie White, LTS development officer for outdoor education, launched the report at the Lochaber College inaugural Outdoor Education conference as part of the Fort William Mountain Film Festival. He said: "This report outlines the challenge for all educators, indoors and outdoors, to work together to maximise the opportunity and quality of outdoor learning experiences for young people. This is necessary for better learning, better health and wellbeing and better sustainable living and working for children and young people."

The report outlines the rationale and vision arrived at by the combined work of the Outdoor Connections programme, it states: "To achieve sustainable outdoor learning in Scotland we must work in partnership to overcome the barriers and provide all children and young people across all subject areas and beyond, and at all stages 3–18, with opportunities to learn outdoors regularly."

The launch of the report will be followed by the first Scottish Outdoor Learning Festival on 30 April 2007 at the Royal Highland Centre, Ingliston near Edinburgh (http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/sharedevents/2007/eventgeneral_tcm4384920.asp). The festival is a major national networking event, bringing together a wide range of organisations and professionals and offering them the opportunity to reflect on the *Taking Learning Outdoors – partnerships for excellence* report and to share good practice and build partnerships that will increase the opportunities for more children and young people to learn better outdoors more often.

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Notes for editors

1. Learning and Teaching Scotland is a major organisation involved in the development and support of the Scottish curriculum and is at the heart of all the major developments in Scottish education, moving education forward with its partners.
www.LTScotland.org.uk
2. In 2005 the Minister for Education and Young People initiated an outdoor education development programme, sponsored by the Scottish Executive and led by LTS. The development programme, Outdoor Connections, is designed to make outdoor connections across a range of current and emerging education policies, programmes and people. It seeks to improve the quality of learning experiences and to secure a sustainable status for outdoor education as part of overall education and lifelong learning provision.
3. The programme is supported by an Advisory Group with representatives from a range of interests: local authority, voluntary and commercial providers, teachers, headteachers' associations, education directorate, higher education institutions, HM Inspectorate of Education (HMIE), the Scottish Advisory Panel for Outdoor Education (SAPOE), Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) and the Institute for Outdoor Learning (IOL). The programme has been further informed by a wider range of partners through a national conference and research seminar.
4. The programme research findings, *Taking Learning outdoors – partnerships for excellence* report and Festival details are available at
<http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/takinglearningoutdoors/index.asp>
5. Further information about LTS and its work can be found at: www.ltscotland.org.uk

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