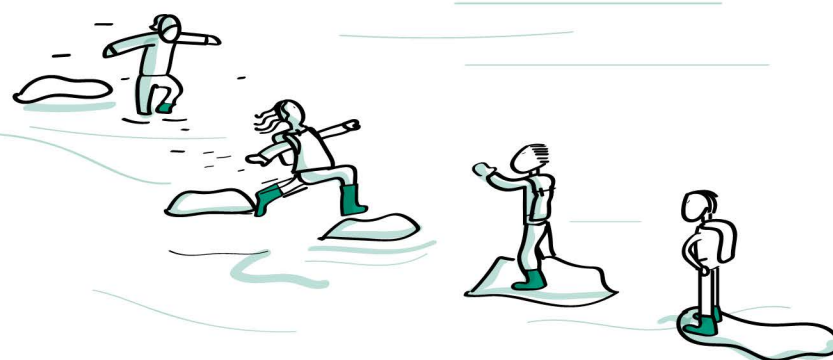




A wide range
**OF MOTIVATING
AND CREATIVE
LEARNING
OPPORTUNITIES**
engage children
using the local
environment.

BLOG

GARTOCHARN PRIMARY SCHOOL
Bookshelf of Reading and Research



**CRITICAL SKILLS IN THE EARLY
YEARS** - Vicki Charlesworth

**TRANSFORMING TEACHING AND
LEARNING** - Colin Weatherly

Messy Maths / Juliet Robertson
(A PLAYFUL, OUTDOOR APPROACH FOR EARLY YEARS)

Visible Learning Feedback,
John Hattie and Shirley Clark

LAST CHILD IN THE WOODS -
Richard Louv

**17 Reasons why football is better
than High School** - Herb Childress

Gartocharn is situated within Loch Lomond and the Trossach's National Park. It was vital that we took into account the context of our school to shape the rationale and design of our curriculum. This led to one of the major aims of everyone at Gartocharn Primary School and ELCC to be the development of high quality Outdoor Learning.

During the first phase of our improvements we looked at regenerating and resourcing our learning environments. In our immediate local environment we identified opportunities for Outdoor Learning: this included creating a forest area, a garden area, a loose parts play area etc. We looked beyond our school grounds to the National Park and explored how we could use it as an exciting and rich context for learning. We involved local partners and experts, RSPB, National Park, RHET and In Your Element in offering advice and practical help in developing the full potential of our context.

Phase two was to build the capacity of all staff. This enabled us to develop shared and agreed expectations for Outdoor Learning and a clear vision for success. All staff were provided with a wide variety of high quality professional learning from a range of providers. Through collaborative working the teachers and practitioners shared their learning and newfound expertise in Outdoor Learning. Parents were keen to support and provided Wellies and Waterproofs for every child and as a school we invested in high quality outdoor clothing for staff. Parents and families were also invited on regular Outdoor family Learning experiences such as whole school walks or campfires in our forest at night.



Over the 5 years, the curriculum has evolved and we now offer regular, planned, quality learning in the outdoors for all of our children. This is through outdoor Play and exploration, Forest School, Outdoor Curriculum Links, Citizen Science, Outdoor Social and Emotional Support Groups and Outdoor Conservation and Sustainability.

The impact of all this work has been to significantly increase the levels of engagement and enjoyment of all children in their learning. Children are given opportunities to lead their learning in the outdoors through planning expeditions and scientific investigations. Learning for sustainability is embedded and offers progressive experiences for learners. Children are excited about their learning and are able to apply learning from across the curriculum in new and unfamiliar contexts. Our self evaluation identifies that both children and parents, view Outdoor Learning as a key strength of the campus as it brings enjoyment, relevance and challenge to learning.

John McDonald, headteacher

