Transcript: Grounds for Learning - Wet and wintry

Narrator: We live in Scotland. Sadly our famous weather means that children often don’t get out to play at school. But is doesn’t have to be this way, with the right clothing and positive support from staff, wind, rain and snow can be wonderful resources for outdoor play.

Christina Sutherland, Playground Supervisor: It has to be really heavy rain or high winds and they don’t go out but rain, hail, sleet and snow they go out and they really like outside.

Narrator: All weather play has a number of benefits: it stimulates the senses, teaches children about the value of keeping warm and dry, allows the opportunity to learn about weather systems and playtimes spent out in the fresh air give children the chance to let off steam.

Jane McGuinness, Playground Supervisor: When they’ve been in the classroom all day they get stuffy and they have to get out and run about to get back into class to learn and I think it actually helps the learning process as well, they’ve been out, they’ve got all this energy, they’ve used it up, they’re back into class again to work.

Narrator: Try not to think of weather in a negative way but think instead of the opportunities it presents.

Christina Sutherland: If it’s snowing they are very busy, very busy, they’re building igloos and snowmen, making slides, they’re working together and I think that’s the benefit of it.

Narrator: There are many easy to implement approaches to encouraging and managing all weather play. Ensuring suitable clothing is available for children is key.

Jane McGuinness: We have waterproofs for the children, when they want to go out they just put their waterproofs on. They play anywhere and they’re really geared up for it, they’ve got their wellies on as well.

Christina Sutherland: Children come prepared to go out in all weathers and it’s just a question of they have to dry off when they go in and it’s one of these things that you just have to balance it out, the benefits for them, they’re outside.

Carolyn Paterson, Playground Supervisor: Primary ones to threes, generally speaking, stay in if it’s very wet, above that they are given the choice if they want to go out but they have to have waterproof clothing. We do have waterproof suits and things that they can put on if they don’t have a jacket without a hood or that.

Irene McCafferty, Playground Supervisor: You know, if they’re cooped up inside all day, they think it’s great just to get out for that fifteen minutes, you know, run around, get fresh air.

Narrator: Overcoming the challenges all weather play presents is really worthwhile; the benefits for children are clear for all to see. If children can enjoy the experience of being outdoors in winter, then they are more likely to be active outdoors in all weathers as adults.