

# curriculum for excellence

## supporting the early level

## Environments for learning (Outdoor learning)

### A CPD activity for practitioners

#### Introduction

*Children are entitled to take part in physical activities and to play, including outdoors, and have an opportunity to experience and judge and manage risk. (UNCRC Article 31, quoted in the Early Years Framework)*

The purpose of this activity is to enable practitioners to develop their understanding of the importance of the environment in providing high quality learning experiences for children in pre-school and primary settings. This CPD activity is based on staff reflecting on their own practice, using video clips which illustrate features of good practice and identifying aspects they could improve.

#### Time required

This activity will take approximately 1 hour.

#### Outcomes

- Staff will gain greater knowledge and understanding of the impact of the outdoor environment on learning and teaching.
- Staff will agree on action(s) for making use of the outdoors for learning to improve children's experiences.

#### Preparation

This CPD activity is based on staff using video clips to identify features of good practice and reflect on their own practice. In advance of the session, it will be helpful to organise facilities to watch the appropriate video clips and record your discussions.



## Activity 1

In a group, think about the outdoor learning environments children experience in your setting:

- make a list of the kinds of learning experiences currently taking place outdoors
- how does learning outdoors enhance children's learning
- why do you think this is?
- considering appropriate experiences and outcomes, what future activities can be planned outdoors.

## Activity 2

As a staff team, watch the video

- As you watch, note down how the learning environment supports high quality learning experiences for children.
- Supporting the Early Level DVD resource – 'Environments for learning' (12.0 mins)



- The Journey to Excellence – 'Outdoor play' (7.0 mins)



## Reflecting on practice

### As a staff team

Having considered your own practice and that shown in the videos:

- identify an aspect that, as a staff, you intend to improve in your setting
- discuss what steps you will take to develop this
- how will you know that this outdoor learning approach is successful in providing relevant experiences and in achieving appropriate outcomes?

## Useful online resources

*(Click on title to view file)*

There are a range of resources to support this topic available online and on the accompanying CD-ROM.

- The **Learning and Teaching Scotland** Early Years website
- Examples of good practice in environments for learning can be found on the **HMIE** website and on **The Journey to Excellence** website.

