



A Vision for Young People

2021-2031

Thriving Through Residential Outdoor Education



SU Scotland



THE
OUTWARD
BOUND TRUST



Foreword

By participating in regular, frequent, enjoyable and challenging opportunities in the outdoors, Scotland is the best place for children and young people to grow, learn and develop.

This Vision is of Scotland as the place where every single young person has the right to progressive outdoor learning including the immersive, residential experiences.

Residential outdoor education has achieved incredible things in the past decade but there is more to do. This Vision explains the commitment of signatories to extend these progressive benefits to all children and young people in Scotland.



Why Residentials?

The evidence of educational, health and wellbeing, social and personal development benefits, from outdoor education residential experiences, is irrefutable.

Residential experiences combined with outdoor education is a powerful pedagogy. It creates opportunities and benefits that are life affirming and life changing for children and young people who demonstrate newfound confidence, determination, resilience and compassion while developing new skills.

Why now?

The benefits of the outdoors for young people are more important now than ever. The impact of Covid-19 has been particularly hard on young people. Worries about their families and months spent isolated from their friends have increased mental health issues, stress and loneliness.



The lockdown and subsequent school closures have increased the attainment gap. Emerging from the devastating effects of the global pandemic, our children and young people need opportunities to break free from the constraints they have faced. Residential outdoor learning gives young people the chance to take part in challenge and adventure and by connecting meaningfully with nature, while also supporting pupil and school recovery.

Residential outdoor education contributes to narrowing the attainment gap in our society. Our specialist outdoor educators create spaces for our children to build stronger relationships, develop resilience and re-imagine society that is stronger and fairer; one that truly values nature and our environment, and one that is sustainable to benefit future generations.



What will it look like?

From 2022, every single young person has the opportunity to experience residential outdoor education

The residential experience is often a young person's first time away from home without their parents or carers, and for many it is their first trip beyond their urban environment. Immersive residential experiences provide new contexts and add relevance to school based learning, that greatly enhance positive changes, benefits and outcomes making them more long-lived.

Young people enjoy challenging and adventurous activities shared with their peers. This results in improved confidence, self-perception, self-belief, and positive peer relationships, as well as understanding and respect for our environment.

All young people benefit from progressive outdoor learning involving residential experiences

Outdoor learning is embedded in each and every young person's journey growing up in Scotland. From woodland nurseries, learning in school grounds and taking youth work outdoors, to residential experiences and expeditions in Scotland and abroad, all young people are engaged in opportunities to be active outdoors, building on their achievements and learning in new contexts. All learners should have an entitlement to learning for sustainability which includes, outdoor learning that should be a regular, progressive curriculum-led experience for all learners.

Young people benefit from continuity and progression in their outdoor learning experiences, leading to increased confidence, resilience, physical and mental health and wellbeing, self-motivation and teamwork, and improved life chances.

The benefits of wider outdoor learning are understood and valued by all

Everyone in Scotland, including young participants, parents, the government, industry and business leaders, education and youth professionals, parents/carers and the wider public, understand and embrace the benefits that residential outdoor education brings to young people, families, communities and the work place.



What difference do we see through residential experience?

The myriad benefits of progressive residential experiences combined with outdoor learning are clear. By ensuring they are fully embedded in every young person's journey growing up in Scotland, we make massive strides towards closing the attainment gap, improving the physical and mental health of our young people, and protecting our environment.

Young people and children are...

Healthier, happier, more confident, more resilient, more optimistic, better connected to nature, and have improved life chances. They achieve and attain more.

Parents and carers...

Embrace the benefits for their children and appreciate the opportunity for their children to spend time with people they trust as important steps toward independence.

Teachers...

Value the opportunities of young people transferring their school-based learning to other contexts and collaborate with specialist outdoor educators to support young people's learning for attainment and achievement.

Business and Industry Leaders...

Recognise the potential of the immersive residential experience to develop the skills and qualities sought in the future workforce. They value the emergent understanding for social and environmental responsibility as well as an increase in important employability skills.

The Scottish Government is...

Committed to the importance and potential of residential outdoor education for all children and young people. They value the contribution of residential experiences in the delivery of educational and development outcomes, and its contributions to many policy priority areas including health and wellbeing, mental health, economic development and the environment.

The Government creates and oversees an architecture in Scotland that forges partnerships and makes full use of the resources available in the private, public and Third sectors to realise this Vision.



This Vision from residential outdoor centres in Scotland is ambitious for young people. It will be achieved with support from across society and it will produce lasting, positive changes. Young people will be empowered and motivated, to develop the qualities and skills that they will need, to succeed in a world of change.

