



Scottish Learning contexts and themes and links to the Scottish Junior Forester Award

Learning for Sustainability

Learning for Sustainability is an holistic educational approach that encourages learners and educators to explore concepts of sustainable development, global citizenship and outdoor learning in ways which develop the skills, knowledge and values needed to live sustainable lifestyles. At its most effective, it is delivered across the curriculum and extends to influence the life and ethos of an educational setting. There is strong evidence of the effectiveness of Learning for Sustainability in developing pro-environmental attitudes and behaviours, and that it has an impact on broader educational outcomes.

It is an entitlement of all pupils, a professional registration requirement of the General Teaching Council for Scotland, and currently a priority in Scottish education.

Learning for Sustainability is aligned to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, offering a starting point to explore local issues within a global context and vice versa (see below).

Use the Learning for Sustainability [Word Cloud](#) to consider and explore its relevance. Reference: [The Impact of Learning for Sustainability on Educational Outcomes: A Summary of Findings](#). Reference: [A summary of Learning for Sustainability resources](#)



Outdoor Learning

Taking learning outdoors in a range of places engages people in active ways and gives opportunities for learning in real life contexts. Nature provides rich, multi-sensory experiences that can be a catalyst for curiosity and an important starting point and context for learning. Daily contact with nature is a right for all children.

Outdoor Learning approaches are at the heart of Learning for Sustainability, an entitlement for all 3-18 learners in Scotland. A report by HM Inspectors [successful approaches to learning outdoors](#) (February 2022) highlights features of effective practice in outdoor learning, and these include experiences with nature.

Nature Connection is good for us, with potential for vitality, purpose and happiness (see summary of benefits in [Noticing Nature](#) p.41). Nature connection and pro-environmental behaviours that can result are also good for the planet. The Scottish Junior Forester Award encourages learning outdoors and can help build a connection with nature.

See [The Pathways to Nature Connectedness postcard](#) for the framework and some things to try.

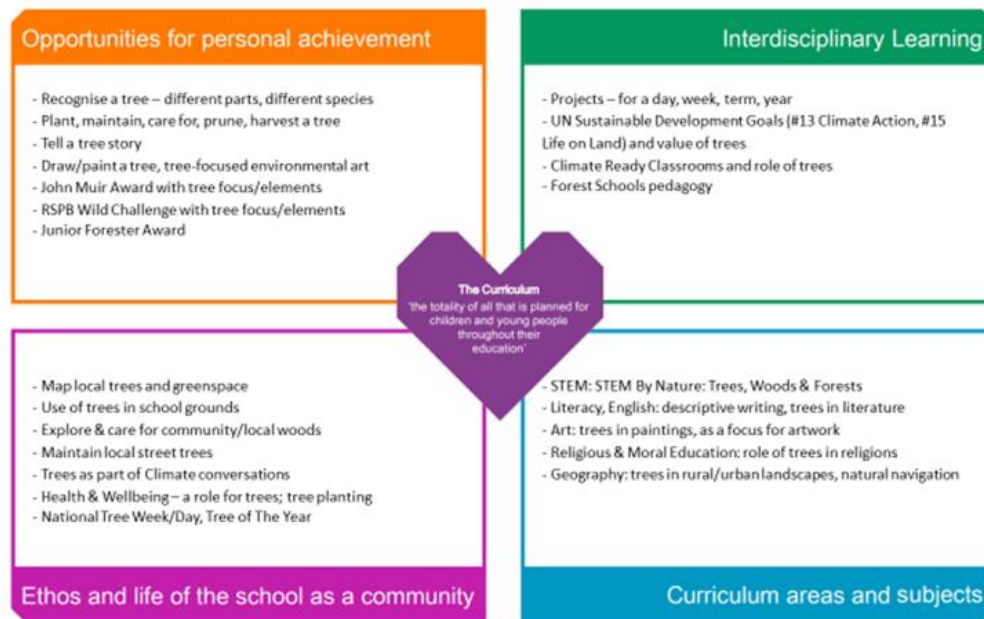
Refreshed Curriculum Narrative

Scotland's Curriculum for Excellence helps children and young people gain the knowledge, skills and attributed needed for life in the 21 st Century. Scotland's curriculum places learners at the heart of education and at its centre are four fundamental capacities: Successful Learners, Responsible Citizens, Effective Contributors and Confident Individuals.

Curriculum is defined as the totality of all that is planned for children and young people from early learning and childcare, through school and beyond. The [Refreshed Narrative](#) highlights the totality that can be planned for and experienced by learners across four contexts: interdisciplinary learning, ethos and culture, opportunities for personal achievement and curriculum areas and subjects.

See the diagram below for how trees, woods and forests can help with learning across the four contexts. Participating in the Scottish Junior Forester Award supports personal achievement. See below for how Awards meet interdisciplinary learning and curriculum areas.

Learning across the four contexts with Trees, Woods & Forests



Interdisciplinary Learning & Curriculum areas

[Interdisciplinary Learning](#) enables educators and learners to make connections across learning through exploring clear and relevant links across the curriculum. It supports the use and application of what has been taught and learned in new and different ways. It provides opportunities for deepening learning, for example through answering big questions, exploring an issue, solving problems or completing a final project. The Scottish Junior Forester Award offers rich potential for Interdisciplinary Learning.

STEM

STEM refers to a collective of specific subjects (Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths). The Junior Forester Award provides opportunities to develop STEM Skills e.g. Science (identification and surveys), Engineering and Technology (design and building animal homes), Maths (measuring and data handling).

An inclusive approach is to consider [STEM employability skills](#). Educators can frame and review activities to meet the Scottish Junior Forester Award in relation to these skills, and consider how progression in these skills can be observed and developed.



Developing the Young Workforce

[Developing the Young Workforce](#) is part of Scotland's Youth Employment Strategy which recognises the importance of creating opportunities for all through employment, education or training to tackle youth unemployment.

Involvement in the Scottish Junior Forester Award can help young people to develop and practise core skills for life, learning and work. It can provide positive, real-life examples and experiences where skills such as problem solving, decision-making, communication and team-working are cultivated, as well as exposure to specific skills relating to trees and forestry. It can bring young people into contact with a range of Forestry-related roles and can provide positive experiences to include in personal statements and discuss at interviews.

Careers in forestry

There has never been a better time to consider a career in forestry. Scotland's woodland cover is increasing from 19% to 23% by 2032 with ambitious planting targets set out by Scottish Government to tackle climate change, provide sustainable jobs and support the Scottish economy.

Scotland's forestry sector is worth £1 billion annually and provides employment for approximately 25,000 people – this number will grow like the trees and woodlands.

Forestry is a long term, green industry. Foresters must think to the future because trees that are planted today will be growing for the next 25, 50, 100 years!

If you would like to find out more information about working in forestry, take a look at the following websites:

[Scottish Forestry - Starting out in forestry](#)

[What we do - Forestry and Land Scotland](#)

Pupil/Learner enquiry

Pupil/Learner enquiry is an approach by which learners decide, ask questions, and carry out their own independent investigations. It is typically active and learner-centred. Practitioners/teachers take on a facilitator role to develop skills (e.g. information processing, problem solving) and nurture inquiring attitudes.

The Scottish Junior Forester Award offers opportunities for participants to ask their own questions around access, biodiversity and sustainable use of woods and forests; to create a management plan for their own area and identify solutions to help improve their area.

Improving Gender Balance and Equity

Improving Gender Balance and Equalities (IGBE) ties in with national priorities in Scottish Education. Gender imbalance is a particular issue with STEM subjects and related employment opportunities. See the IGBE resources on the [National Improvement Hub](#).

Internationally, women are recognised as being critical for the sustainability of forests (see [UN Food and Agricultural Organisation](#)). In the Scottish Forestry Sector there are specific issues around [gender balance](#) (see [women in forestry](#) blog) and equity in general which could be explored through running a Scottish Junior Forester Award.

Sustainable Development Goals

UN Sustainable Development Goals are world intentions to create a better world by 2030, by ending poverty, fighting inequality and addressing the urgency of climate change.

This [Biosphere](#) model shows how they can be seen to interconnect. The Scottish Junior Forester Award and associated activities can be set in a context of one or more UN Sustainable Development Goals e.g. #13 Climate Action and #15 Life on Land and include related initiatives e.g. land-based surveys, trees and woodland studies (Citizen Science), Climate Ready Classrooms. Reference: [Sustainable Development Goals](#)

