



## TCV Scotland's Outdoor Learning Programme

### *Learning outside the classroom*

**TCV Scotland believes that every child and young person should have the opportunity to participate in regular, sustained and inspiring outdoor learning and play.**

TCV Scotland's Outdoor Learning Programme can help your establishment in a variety of different ways. We offer inspiring, fun and practical outdoor learning for 3-16 year olds in your school grounds or local greenspace areas.

Our activities offer a creative way to link to Curriculum for Excellence experiences and outcomes, and help to raise attainment in core areas of Literacy, Numeracy, Health and Wellbeing. We can support teachers to deliver learning outcomes through practical, creative and engaging approaches that are beneficial to all.

***"Our playground has been transformed over the past two years from a concrete wilderness to a greener, more attractive space which offers and promotes a much wider range of activities. Our playground has become a space of rich potential."***

- Teacher, Freuchie School



## TCV Scotland's Programmes

**TCV School Green Gym** – Promotes the health and wellbeing of children and young people by engaging them in practical conservation tasks in school grounds or local greenspace. TCV Green Gyms have been proven to improve fitness levels, mental and physical health and self-confidence. Suitable for pupils aged 7 years and above.

Practical activities can include: gardening, pruning, using hand tools, tree planting, team building, health walks, creating wildlife areas and making bug homes.

The Green Gym is a flexible programme and can be tailored to suit the school, taking into consideration the school grounds and local green spaces.

**Outline of the session:**

- Introduction to the activity and the reasons for doing it.
- Introducing the tools, what they are used for, how to use, carry and store them safely.
- Green Gym warm-up exercises.
- Practical activity. The children/young people will be split up into small groups and help with specific tasks.
- Each group will get the chance to try every activity.
- Green Gym cool down exercises.
- An optimum group size of 8 children/young people per session.

**TCV Discover Me Natural Play** – Discover Me Natural Play is all about connecting and inspiring families with the outdoors and their local environment. Discover Me aims to promote health and wellbeing of children and families through increased contact with the natural world, connecting participants not just as a family but with their local environment - embarking on outdoor family play sessions run in the school grounds and nearby local community and green space areas.

**Outline of the session:**

Introduction to natural play, activities and ideas which are aimed at maximising children and families contact with nature, using natural objects and resources throughout the year.

The sessions will be delivered through planned, purposeful play with a balance of adult led and child initiated activities. Learning about living creatures, senses, storytelling, movement, arts & crafts, nature table, literacy & numeracy, textures & surfaces, natural materials, messy play, weather and growing plants.

Most of the activities can be adapted to different ages and abilities. We aim to give you some ideas and the confidence to provide outdoor play experiences to children, young people and their families. Discover Me play kits will be used during each session. These will be used flexibly with families to provide and support child-led activities and enhance children's learning and play.

**TCV Citizen Science** – Children and young people can get involved with collecting environmental data to protect and improve our environment. Citizen Science is much more than science. It's fun, it promotes a healthy, more active lifestyle and it delivers lifelong skills. Citizen Science is interdisciplinary, fits with existing curriculum subjects, encourages citizenship and meets requirements for outdoor learning.

We can support schools to get involved with carrying out a number of national surveys and collecting data to learn more about the state of their environment including:

- **Water** – River water quality, pollution and flooding.
- **Air** – Measuring air quality, (OPAL air quality survey).
- **Biodiversity** – Bug, plant and bird surveys.
- **Soils** – OPAL soil and earthworm survey.
- **Climate** – Weather and climate change surveys.

**Outline of the session:**

Introduction to Citizen Science carrying out a number of wildlife and OPAL surveys depending on the time of year, and either in school grounds or local greenspace. Pupils will use a variety of equipment and resources including identification charts, microscopes, hand lenses, bug jars and nets.

Variety of surveys, sampling, collecting data, classification of living things, using keys, nature hunts, wildlife walk, plant and animal identification, games and observe living things.

**TCV School Grounds Development** – Aims to develop school grounds into interactive, fun and learning environments where children can explore, gain new skills and improve their confidence.

TCV can provide support to teachers with ideas, opportunities, inspiration, planning & design, accessing funding, resources and physical construction of developing the grounds for play, biodiversity, health and wellbeing and community use.

Previous TCV school projects: Plastic bottle greenhouses, orchards, raised beds, wildlife areas, willow structures, seating, paths, tree planting, pizza gardens, bog gardens, outdoor classrooms, bird feeding stations, meadows, sensory gardens and wildlife hotels.

TCV are promoting food growing in schools and 'Pizza Gardens'. Children love pizzas and an easy way to get them to love gardening is by growing a pizza garden. It's a great way to get children outdoors and motivated to plant and eat vegetables.

**TCV Loose Parts Play Sessions** – 'Loose parts' simply means moveable materials children can use in play. Loose parts is about real world learning and offers children and young people inspiration, endless possibilities, a chance to think and encouragement to be creative.

TCV can help schools to raise awareness of the value of loose parts to children's play, provide practical guidance, and highlight benefits and risks of loose play. We offer loose parts taster sessions to schools with small groups of children and/or loose parts training sessions for teachers. All staff can get involved so they can see what is happening and witness firsthand the benefits of free play with loose parts.

***“Overall the Green Gym has been an excellent opportunity for us all to learn new skills and for the children to develop their physical and mental wellbeing. During their time in the local park the children enjoyed helping the local community by taking part in litter picking on a number of occasions. The games you introduced the children to were an excellent way of bringing the outdoors to life.”*** - Teacher, Gadburn School

***“I enjoyed working with my new friends in the school garden and have learnt new things about nature.”*** - Pupil, Gartmore Primary School

**TCV CPD Training** – We deliver Continuing Professional Development training for teachers and Early Years professionals either in your own location or at one of TCV Scotland's training venues.

Current courses include: School Green Gym Training, funding, making the most of your school grounds, food growing, nature play, Citizen Science, foraging, bush craft, forest skills, leadership, invertebrates, loose parts and environmental games.

CPD Training can be tailored to the needs and focus of the school. We also offer bespoke outdoor training to schools which focus on building a toolbox of creative ideas for engaging children/young people in outdoor learning and aligning to existing indoor projects or subjects and the Curriculum for Excellence.



***“I liked doing the planting in the butterfly garden”***

- Pupil, Gadburn School

***“I liked the leaves because they have colours”***

- Child at Discover Me session

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