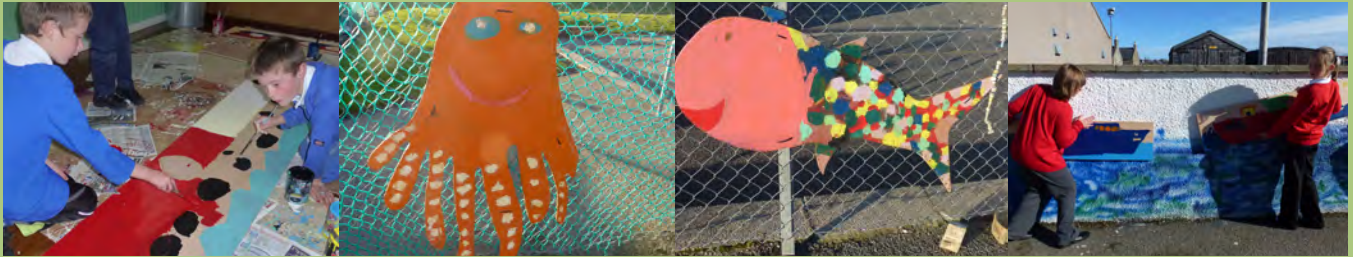


Operation Eco Allochy



Eco newsletter 2012/13

Operation fence and wall make over continues.....

Our marine ply boats, fish etc are now bolted onto our wall or fence and the 'green wardrobe' has now been painted according to the winning design. Many thanks to our work experience former pupils for selecting the best ideas from our pupils' entries.



Four members of staff: Miss Anderson, Mrs Lyon Mrs. Grant and myself attended Forest

School training for two Saturdays. We learnt some bush craft skills: how to light fires, whittle wood, make shelters and have lots of fun outdoors. The thing that made the most impact on probably all of us was the why. Why is it important that children play outside in nature?. As scientists learn more about the brain it is becoming clearer that we have underestimated the power of outdoors.

Children need a sense of freedom to play and experience the weather and the change from minute to minute, and season to season. Children need to have space to run, climb, balance. As children's mastery of the physical skills develop, the pathways to the brain that are connected to learning are reinforced.

Children who play outside regularly show more advanced physical skills, balance, coordination and

are sick less. When children play outside they are more imaginative and learn to cooperate more. Children who play in nature have more positive feelings towards each other.

Interestingly nature offers unbelievable benefits for our health: reduced stress levels; increased energy and attention levels; boosted immune system and creativity; improved brain development in children and better relationships.

Unfortunately children and adults are leading 'organised' and often sedentary lives indoors, spending a lot of time with electronic gadgets as the pull of the TV screen, i-pad, mobile and other technologies is very strong.



Ironically the more high tech our lives become, the more we need nature to achieve balance and protect us from the harmful effects of too much time spent using modern technologies.

Outdoor play

This year nursery have been going out for a full session most Thursdays as part of our school work in developing more opportunities for pupils to play out doors adventurously. Researchers tell us that whilst children should be out every day, they need to have a long block so they can relax and settle into the space and develop their play ideas.



Messy play

The favourite activity of our nursery pupils, regardless of the weather, is the mud kitchen! Even when the ground is hard, our pupils like the nursery team to dig up some of the ground; so they can get on with making sappy dubs. They love using real utensils, pots, baking trays etc. Yes they do get very messy, but they don't seem to mind- neither do the nursery team.



Risky play

We have moved away from not allowing children to play with anything dangerous, to providing opportunities for risk and adventure as they are essential for early development. Through play children can take risks and make mistakes. They learn how to assess risk which is an important life skill.



Wanted!

If you have any old cooking equipment it will be gratefully received: sieves, spoons, spatulas, old pots and pans, baking trays

SO WHAT ARE OUR PRIORITIES?



Feedback from our last Eco meeting.



At our last meeting pupils and adult members listed their priority action points.

Plant more trees- this was unanimous! We are liaising with our local ranger Jodie Rhodes and Greens nurseries for suitable bushes and trees to be planted some time soon.

Make entrance more attractive by putting planters at entrance.

Make a large mosaic welcome board and decorate the panels either side of the door.

Mark the jungle area with willow - possibly as logs and stones don't show up with long grass

Totem poles. We are going to explore the possibility of getting a lottery grant to work with an artist to make totem poles. Meanwhile we may put in some wooden posts for children to use for all sorts of things - den making, playing with pulley systems
Investigate how we can get some large tree trunks for the playground.



Wanted any spare tiles which we can break up for mosaic - any colour! Send to school a.s.a.p for our mosaic.
Info regarding our tree, bush planting to follow.
Miss Stephen