

FSC Scotland

Providing opportunities to:

- Raise attainment through outdoor learning – including learners who struggle in a traditional classroom setting
- Develop literacy and numeracy in a real-world context
- Use the natural environment to promote meaningful health and wellbeing
- Support teachers by facilitating high-quality field work, whilst supporting them with workload and outdoor learning issues
- Learn about our unique Scottish ecology and biodiversity



Field Studies Council (FSC)

We provide opportunities for people of all ages to discover, explore and be inspired by the environment and local biodiversity.

Established as an educational charity in 1943, over 140,000 learners each year visit one of our 19 centres. FSC has become internationally respected for its outreach training projects, research programmes, information and public services, professional training and leisure courses.

FSC has directly invested over £1.6m in Scotland in the last decade as part of its commitment to its work here.

In Partnership with Local Communities

Support the local economy, by providing jobs directly and indirectly.

Actively participate in local groups, providing a programme of events open to local people.

Develop strong links with local schools to ensure they benefit from effective and progressive outdoor learning at our Centres.

In Partnership with Higher Education

Significantly expand the range of taught courses for undergraduates and professional development identification courses.

Provide a hub for research to take place, utilising our laboratory facilities and research vessel for a series of projects each year.

Create a series of pre-university courses to help young people make the transition to university, and work placement opportunities.

In Partnership with National and Local Government

Deliver outdoor learning residentials to thousands of school students focusing on raising literacy and numeracy skills and closing the attainment gap.

Provide a series of innovative outdoor experiences which use nature to improve health and wellbeing for participants.

Deliver a programme of innovative teacher training course promoting outdoor learning whilst not increasing teacher workload.

About Us

Raising Attainment: Outdoor Learning



Benefits

We are the UK's leading provider of science, geography and cross-curricular outdoor learning. Both visiting groups and staff see real evidence of the far reaching impacts of an FSC experience such as increased knowledge and motivation, personal development and enjoyment - characteristics, values and habits that last a lifetime¹. Outdoor learning can often engage those that sometimes struggle in a classroom setting.

Practical cross curricular learning allows children to make rapid progress in their literacy and numeracy by seeing how these subjects are used in the real world and in context.²

"When we were on the field trip we did maths, English and science, but it was like we didn't realise we were doing it"
Pupil on an FSC cross curricular course.

Fieldwork is a great way to raise students' attainment, enthusiasm and aspirations. Increasing their subject knowledge helps them on their way to becoming our scientists, geographers and environmentally literate citizens of the future.

Closing the Gap: Importance of Accessibility

Increasingly, people are becoming more remote from the natural environment. The rise of the virtual world is a challenge that field centres must embrace rather than bemoan. Transport costs are rising, creating ever greater financial barriers to more distant travel. Children from the most disadvantaged communities are most affected: **already up to 80% of 14 year olds from some groups will never have been away on an overnight educational visit³.**

We must also work to ensure those from more deprived backgrounds have access to the benefits of outdoor learning and residential. If we are going to close the attainment gap in Scotland these young people need to be given these powerful learning opportunities.

"The focussed time over four days is hugely important for us. We tried delivery at school in the past but on a residential there is no daily absence and sessions run seamlessly between each other – minds are on the job hour by hour with little distraction or need to recap between sessions"
Teacher on an FSC residential

Residential provide the time and space for both academic improvement and personal development. They give teachers time to get to know their students better. Students are more willing to ask for help and try new things¹. Teachers adapt their teaching methods when back in the classroom. Parents and teachers have reported increased selfconfidence, self-esteem and independence after a residential experience.

Supporting Teachers, Reducing Workload

As public sector outdoor education centres close, this reduces the number of teachers with the competence, confidence and commitment to meet the modern day challenges of teaching fieldwork to the next generation of young people.

Working collaboratively with schools, Education Scotland and other partners we aim to support teachers manage their workload. By providing teacher training; organising the logistics of residential and sharing outdoor learning resources we aim to ensure teachers can direct high quality outdoor learning without it being overly burdensome.

Why FSC Scotland?

We have delivered open access courses in the islands of Scotland for over 20 years. Our centres offer a wide range of contrasting landscapes in which to learn.

In 2010 SFSA gifted Kindrogan to FSC who have invested over £1.3m in upgrading the facility and to create the Highlands leading environmental education centre for all.

In 2013 the announced closure of the University Marine Biology Station at Millport on the Isle of Cumbrae, led to the

FSC acquired ownership of the site in 2014. With the generous support of the Scottish Government, North Ayrshire Council and Highland & Islands Enterprise, Magnox, The Robertson Trust, Big Coastal Communities Fund, The Wolfson Foundation, The Garfield Weston Foundation the Centre has undergone £4.3million redevelopment and is now a flagship Centre welcoming numerous school, university and professional development courses each year.



The Centres

Millport

FSC Millport welcomed its first learners in March 2014. It has undergone a comprehensive programme of development and refurbishment since then, re-establishing itself as the UK's premiere marine teaching location. New facilities include 65 en-suite twin rooms, 150 seater lecture room, new teaching rooms and labs and a renovated aquarium and museum.

Unique Locations – Common Values

We not only support outdoor learning at our two centres, but also provide support to learners throughout the Central belt and beyond through our OPAL citizen science work and teacher training.

Residential

The centres offer full board with:

- Comfortable accommodation
- Dining room serving a good range of healthy local and regional food
- Lounges and breakout spaces

Kindrogan

FSC Kindrogan has established a strong reputation for high quality courses in a magnificent setting amongst the unparalleled wildlife of the Highlands. Looking out over 100 square kilometres of landscape unbroken by road, yet less than two hours away from over half of Scotland's population it is ideally located for experiencing the amazing habitats and wilderness on its doorstep.

Teaching Facilities

The centres provide:

- Well equipped teaching rooms
- Seminar rooms and tutorial space
- Workshops and laboratories
- Paper and digital resources
- Long term secondary data sets
- Specialised field equipment
- In addition Millport has access to RV Actinia – an 11m teaching orientated research vessel capable of a wide range of off-shore and near-shore sampling and monitoring.

- *Young Darwin Scholarships and Bursaries*
Working with Others to Widen Our Reach

Supporting the Curriculum

The centres in Scotland aim to deliver world-class residential field courses ranging from one day to two weeks. These are tailored to meet the learning needs of the school, college and university students, corporate professionals and inquisitive adults and children.

Primary and Secondary Schools

Field courses covering relevant parts of the Curriculum for Excellence at all levels offered include:

- *Island and Highland Survival for Primary Students - with a focus on literacy, numeracy and cross curricular learning*
- *Primary to Secondary Transition Courses*
- *Biology and Geography for National 4 & 5*
- *Biology for Advanced Highers*
- *Geography for Highers & Advanced Highers*
- *Outreach Secondary Science Courses*
- *Science Summer Camps*

We are working with other biodiversity organisations such as RSPB, Marine Conservation Society, Clyde 2020, TCV and RZSS to raise the profile of biodiversity in Scotland and provide learning opportunities in the area.

In partnership with others in the sector we have taken a lead in real world learning networks to promote outdoor learning more widely within Scotland.

With partners including SNH, Glasgow City of Science and Imperial College we have run a programme of citizen science engaging with over 15,000 learners in Scotland including some of its most deprived areas.



FSC Scotland contacts

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Image credits: Field Studies Council

¹ Learning Away Report, Paul Hamlyn Foundation (2015)

² First Steps: A new approach to our schools, CBI (2012) ³ City Challenge, Field Studies Council (2009)

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