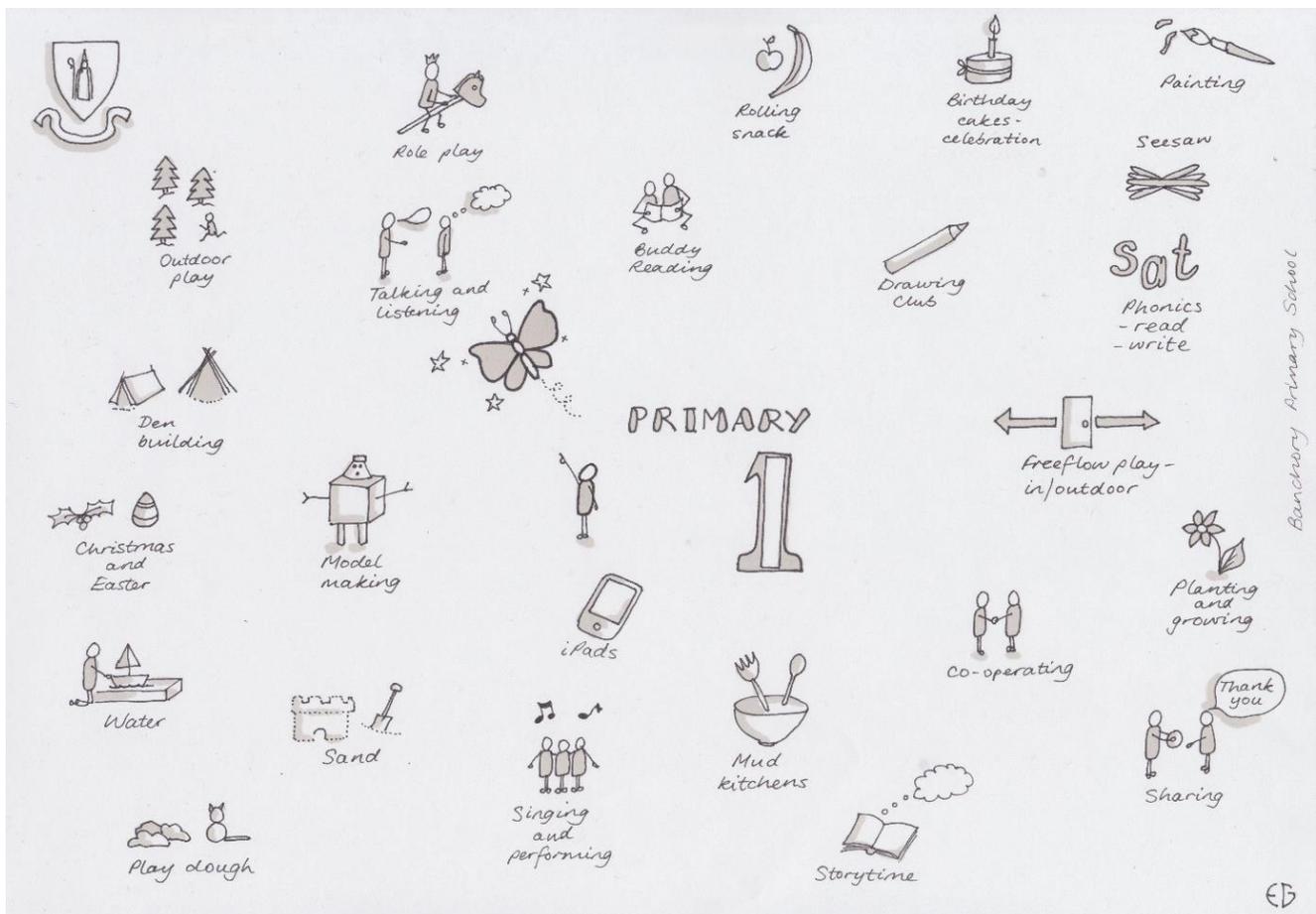




Play in Primary 1 at Banchory



Play in all its rich variety is one of the highest achievements of the human species, alongside language, culture and technology. Indeed, without play, none of these other achievements would be possible. The value of play is increasingly recognised, by researchers and within the policy arena, for adults as well as children, as the evidence mounts of its relationship with intellectual achievement and emotional well-being” (Whitebread 2019)

“Play is the programme of childhood. It is how children explore the world and make sense of themselves and the world around them. Having worked closely with the team at Banchory Primary, it's been wonderful to see how they have embraced the richness of play and shown a real determination to give children something very special. Like me, they believe that education should be an adventure and it's my hope that as parents you will agree that your child deserves the opportunity to be creative and curious in combination with high quality teaching and interactions. Banchory is on an adventure into play and I hope you will join them...”

Greg Bottrill

WHY play in P1 at Banchory?

A play-based curriculum offers rich opportunities to equip our young learners with the skills, attributes and dispositions necessary for them to thrive in an ever-changing world. Play promotes physical health and mental wellbeing. Through play, children learn to answer their own questions, learn new skills and learn to work collaboratively with other children or adults.

Some theorists emphasise that when playing, the child tries out ideas and comes to a better understanding of thoughts and concepts; others see play as a means of the child coping with reality through using their imagination; and, others see play as a means to practise new skills.

According to Education Scotland's Play Pedagogy Toolkit, play supports the four capacities of the curriculum for excellence as follows:

- **Successful learners** - through the use of imagination and creativity, tackling new experiences and learning from them, and developing important skills including literacy and numeracy through exploring and investigating while following their own interests.
- **Responsible Citizens** - through encountering different ways of seeing the world, learning to share and give and take, learning to respect themselves and others, and taking part in making decisions.
- **Confident Individuals** - through succeeding in their activities, having the sense of satisfaction of a task accomplished, learning about bouncing back from setbacks, dealing safely with risks.
- **Effective Contributors** - through playing together in leading or supporting roles, tackling problems, extending communication skills, taking part in sustained talking and thinking, and respecting the opinions of others.

HOW does play work in P1 at Banchory?

A combination of wide experiences, knowledge, skills, professional dialogue, recent training with Mr Greg Bottrill (author of “Can I go and Play Now”), professional research and reading can be found in our team here at Banchory. This helps to ensure that best practice is constantly adapted and shared.

Structure of the day

- There are several teacher-led sessions each day. These might be for the whole class or in small groups, with specific learning outcomes.
- Children have daily opportunities for freeplay and free flow between indoor and outdoor spaces. Children are encouraged to lead their own learning - through play, bringing meaning and understanding.

Child-led learning supported by the environment and teachers

This can be defined as behaviour that is freely chosen, personally directed and intrinsically motivated. Children are invited to wonder about things which interest them.

There is always an adult available in each space to observe, scaffold and extend the children’s learning through their play.

Children have the choice of:

- multiple classrooms and spaces
- social interactions across the year group
- a wide range of resources and open-ended materials

We have adopted Early Years author Greg Bottrill’s approach focussing on “the 3Ms”: Mark Making, Mathematics and Making Conversation. During play, the adult’s role is to observe children and identify learning opportunities. This may result in the adult provoking the child/ren with new vocabulary, questions, challenges or support as appropriate. Adults may join in and scaffold or model skills. The 3Ms are further explained below.

1. Mark Making

- early level emergent writing and writing skills
- gross motor control – core strength
- fine motor control – pencil grip and letter formation

2. Making Conversation

- introducing new vocabulary
- open ended questions to extend thinking and promote enquiry and wonder
- encouraging children to talk to one another by modelling conversation

3. Mathematics

- opportunities for counting and exploring mathematical concepts
- exposure to number formation and order through specific resources
- problem solving – often occurs naturally through childrens own ideas, inventions, designs and games
- use of money, weight, measure, capacity, speed, distance, time, data-handling – often through roleplay and games
- shape, symmetry, pattern often occur naturally through the provision of interesting loose parts

Our Early Years learning spaces at Banchory

We offer several spaces in P1, where children can play and learn. Across spaces, the levels of provocation might change, the interactions might be variable, and the experiences on offer might be different, but the P1 environments should be conducive to learning through play throughout the year.



- Our P1 spaces are known as 'Kingdoms' – there are classroom Kingdoms and a large, enclosed outdoor Kingdom.
- Health and well-being are promoted through positive social interactions, physical activity and the development of self-confidence through choices in child-led learning.
- A wide variety of 'open-ended' loose parts are available for the children to develop and use to create their own play experiences.
- Children can access the outdoor Kingdom in all weathers.
- Different environments encourage different opportunities for learning and play.
- Resources are available to all to encourage independence and promote inclusion through self-selection and independence.
- Gross and fine motor skills are developed through the provision of various resources and different spaces.
- Resources and opportunities are planned to encourage literacy and numeracy skill development both indoors and out.

Learning opportunities

As well as adults working in school, we are developing an open-door ethos for parents to support play and learning through:

- adult observations and interactions
- adult intervention supporting children towards their next steps in learning
- daily seesaw posts to share learning and play with parents and families

How do we know it works?

- tracking and monitoring to check progress of individuals against benchmarks and expected levels
- measure progress against baseline assessments and EY setting handover
- parent feedback
- learner feedback
- formal assessment of childrens knowledge and skills – SNSAs
- holistic assessments – encompassing social and emotional development and circumstantial changes
- use challenge questions in HIGIOS & HGIOELC to adapt and change practice
- self-evaluations, peer observation, SLT classroom monitoring

Sources

Greg Bottrill's website

<http://www.canigoandplaynow.com/>

A Scottish website aiming to deliver children and young people's right to play in Scotland

<https://www.playscotland.org/play-strategy/>

Education Scotland website

<https://education.gov.scot/education-scotland/>

Education Scotland's National Improvement Hub – A toolkit which aims to support practitioners working with children in the early level to appropriately use play pedagogy to support learning and development.

<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/learning-resources/early-level-play-pedagogy-toolkit/>

The Scottish Government Early Years Framework

<https://www2.gov.scot/resource/doc/257007/0076309.pdf>

Curriculum for Excellence - building the curriculum 2 - active learning in the early years

<https://www.education.gov.scot/Documents/btc2.pdf>

How Good Is Our School? 4th Edition

<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/self-evaluation/HGIOS4>

How Good Is Our Early Learning and Childcare?

https://education.gov.scot/improvement/Documents/Frameworks_SelfEvaluation/FRWK1_NIHeditSelf-evaluationHGIELC/HGIOELC020316Revised.pdf

P1 In Action – GALLERY

Mark Making



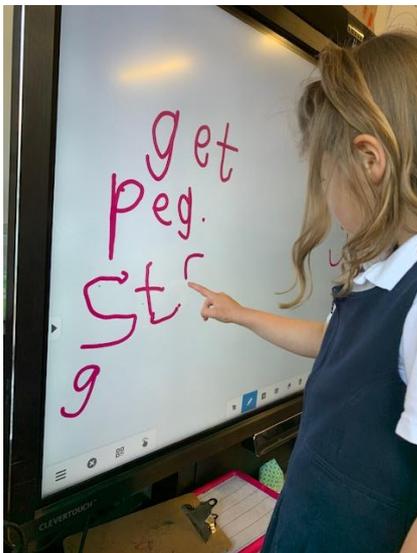
Chalk boards provide resistance which is great for remembering formation. This is a menu in the café the children set up.



Adults can model writing, with provocation.....



Signs in child led role play contexts are super to encourage writing for a purpose.



Digital resources provide children with large spaces to experiment.

Our outdoor message centre provides endless possibilities for mark making and writing.





Opportunities for physical play to develop gross motor skills, particularly core strength, which in turn helps children to gain the control required for writing comfortably.



Making Conversation



Children can choose social settings, roleplay ideas and problem-solving games during which rich conversations take place.



Maths



Digital resources to enhance mathematical thinking.



Natural loose parts to explore number concepts.



A variety of construction materials to play with shape, symmetry.



Loose parts come together to create a maths / science game involving speed, distance, time, friction .



Open ended maths games.



Money concepts are learned in the theatre box office!



Provocations and eye-level displays to challenge thinking.

Opportunities for cooking and baking to practise following instructions, weighing and measuring ingredients.



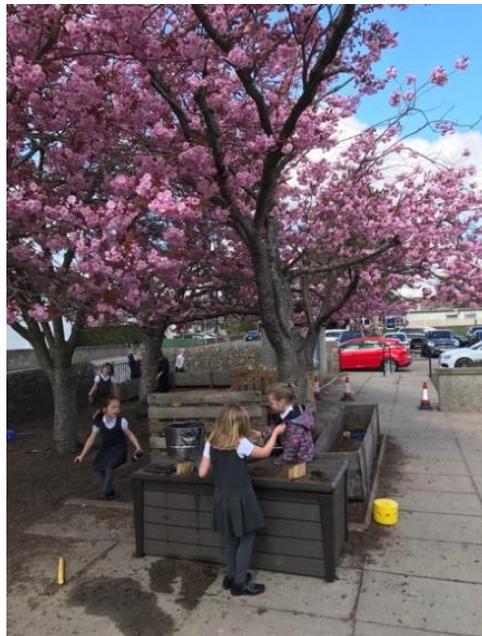
A variety of construction materials and loose parts to play with shape, symmetry.



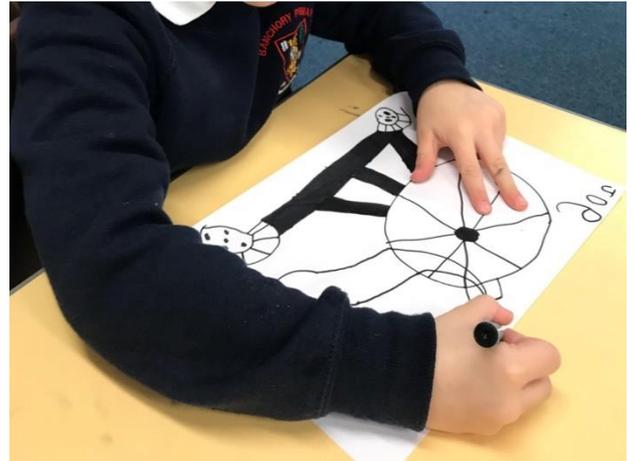
Loose parts promote natural opportunities to develop ideas about size and measuring.



All-weather outdoor play



Different environments to encourage different opportunities for learning and play.



Resources are available to all to encourage independence through self-selection.



Gross and fine motor skills are developed through the provision of various resources and different spaces.



Literacy and Numeracy – inside and out



***** had a great year last year in P1.
 Her learning really progressed and I
 felt her teacher knew her well as a
 learner and as a person. I feel our
 children are very lucky to experience
 learning in this way. 🙌👧



It's remarkable how much *****'s
 progressed in such a short space of
 time. Learning through play is fun and
 magical and it works, no question.
 Keep going!



Learning through play has absolutely
 helped **** settle in at school and he is
 so happy to go in as he enjoys the
 environment that has been set up.
 They are also learning so much,
 without really realising it a lot of the
 time! Brilliant 🌟

