

Case Study Name

Duns Primary School: 'Power of Play, the Duns Way'

Our Context

Duns Primary School is a 408 pupil school in a rural location in the Scottish Borders. We have a supportive parent council with good engagement on our play journey. We are implementing play pedagogy as part of a three-year journey starting in Primary One and then across the school. This will begin to address the impact of COVID and improve play opportunities for every child in our learning community. It will empower all stakeholders in understanding the purpose and importance of play.

Our Outcomes	Our Measures
Develop play within our school community	⇒ An audit of play taken at the beginning of year one and end.
Developing play partnership with our parent council	⇒ Teacher empowerment to improve classroom environments and provision for play across the school.
Take play out to our wider community	⇒ A greater staff understanding of the importance of play as a learning vehicle.

The Actions we took:

- A play pedagogy staff group was created with two lead teachers, one from Early Level and one from Second Level to draw upon skills and practice across all levels. The overarching aim of this group was to create a shared understanding across the whole school of the importance of play for our learners.
- Created a pupil play group to share expectations for loose parts in the playground and our play journey with learners.
- We completed an audit at the beginning of year one to identify teacher confidence in implementing play at different stages.
- A roll out of loose parts and their importance for classrooms across all stages in the school.
- Changing the learning environment in Primary One to foster a more play-based approach.
- Looking at the balance of the day in Primary One.
- A series of CAT sessions to share good practice, develop 'Duns Play Principles' and identify open ended resources the school may need.
- Showbie group dedicated to the 'Power of Play the Duns Way' where staff have access to a wide variety of professional reading to support our journey. There is also the opportunity to share good practice in this group.
- Development of an 'Importance of Play' poster to share with learners and the wider school community.



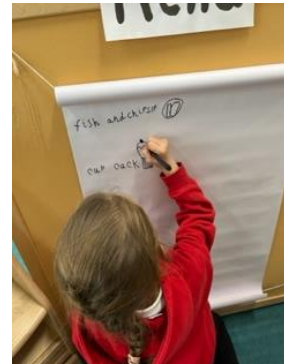
- Investing in large loose parts for the playground in partnership with our parent council.



- Ran parent drop-in sessions to share loose parts play outdoors and play posters created by each stage.
- Beginning to create a whole school play policy to share with the wider school community.
- Visits to other settings in SBC to see their approach to play in P1.
- A Learning School visit to look at Aberdour Primary's approach to play across their school setting.

Our Learning and the Impact we had

- Teacher and support staff confidence and understanding of play has increased after engaging in professional reading and webinars from our Showbie group and CAT.
- Through our CAT sessions we have created play principles and clear plans to move us forward on our play journey for different stages in the school.
- Classes are engaging with loose parts in a more creative way allowing learners to have more ownership over their learning.
- We have now taken this forward to develop the use of role play in upper stages by encouraging learners to be part of the planning process.
- Children in Primary One have been observed as confident, independent, and able to solve problems. There are opportunities to develop and consolidate literacy and numeracy skills through the provision that is offered and planned in partnership with them.
- Learners have been empowered through the pupil group and have supported each other in the use of our new large loose parts play for the playground. Children understand how to use the new resources appropriately.
- Staff in Primary One understand the importance of observing children at play and have a greater understanding of the balance of the day. We are now looking at how we can roll this out to Primary Two and beyond.
- In Primary One, there are opportunities for child led play, adult led, and adult initiated throughout the day to take learning forward.
- Staff are responsive to the interests of learners and act appropriately to take learning forward through the provision on offer.



NB SEIC will select some Case Studies to share on our website as examples of improvement journeys.