

SFT Outcomes Demonstrating progress with impact



2020 CASE STUDY

Outcome 10



Infrastructure-related carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emissions are reduced, supporting Scotland's transition to a low carbon economy

Early Learning and Childcare Reference Designs

Delivering additional capacity through indoor/outdoor nursery approach

Scottish Government's ambition to almost double the amount of funded early learning and childcare (ELC) is a significant opportunity to explore different ways in which refurbished, extended and new facilities can offer a high-quality experience for young children.

Since 2016, the Scottish Futures Trust (SFT) has been working with Scottish Government and all 32 local authorities to support the development of their own local ELC expansion plans.

Such is the size of the ELC programme that it comprises around 900 projects valued at over £500m, and it is estimated that around 160 new facilities will need to be delivered, worth an estimated £250m.

In managing the £1.8bn Scotland's Schools for the Future programme to deliver 117 schools across Scotland, SFT developed Reference Primary School designs to create high-quality, efficient, flexible, sustainable and affordable primary school solutions for local authorities. Expanding this learning, SFT in conjunction with East Ayrshire Council as well as architects, consultants and contractors developed a suite of cost-effective ELC Reference Designs that could be adapted and used by every Scottish local authority.

SFT helped develop and promote the concept of indoor/outdoor nurseries through the Reference Design process and associated workshops encouraging the use of outdoor space to help increase capacity without the need to build new space and impacting on the environment. These helped explore the practicalities of encouraging free flow indoor/outdoor play and the facilities and practices which would help secure Care Inspectorate registration of outdoor space.



[Play video](#)



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As well as considering the experience for children indoors, the approach to these new Reference Designs embraced the many benefits that outdoor learning provides in terms of health and well-being as well as physical and cognitive development.

The Reference Designs illustrated how space could be designed in an efficient and flexible manner to provide welcoming and accessible facilities for children, staff and families.

There are around 250 projects equating to c.2400 additional spaces that are being planned or delivered using the indoor/outdoor model. On these projects up to 20% of the indoor capacity is being registered outdoors thus reducing the need for additional build.

Many of the individual ideas and concepts that were incorporated in each Reference Design have the potential to be taken on their own and used as part of a catalogue of ideas to inform options for any refurbishment, extension or new build ELC facility.

Across Scotland many new nurseries will be developed over the next few years and all will reflect the needs of their local communities. These ELC Reference Designs provide a platform to inform local choices as to how individual nurseries can best respond to local needs and emerging operating models of early learning and childcare.

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