

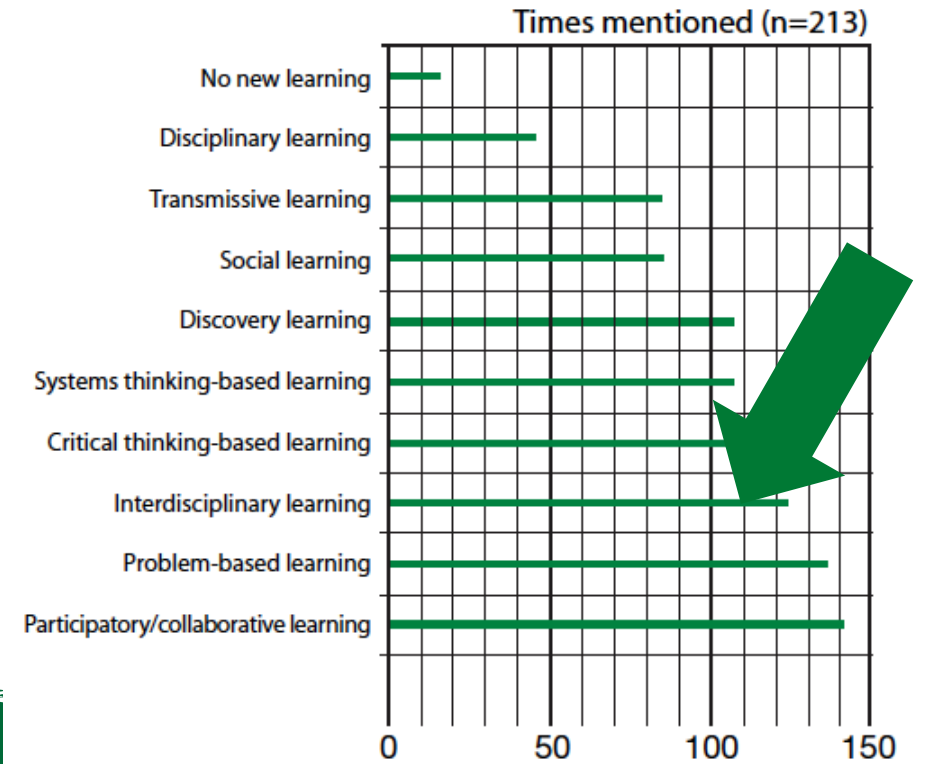
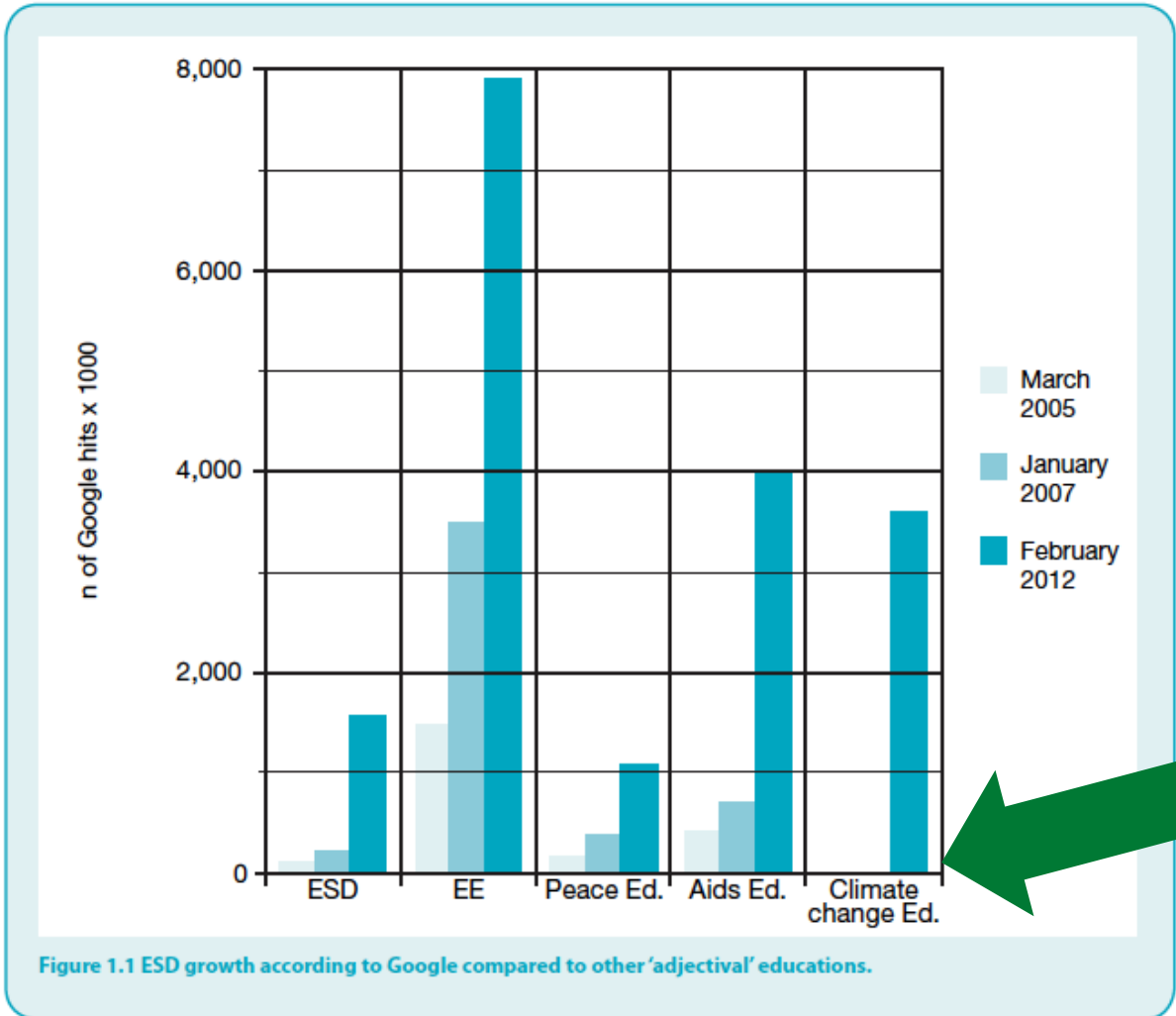
**Some Reflections on Progress in LfS in  
Higher Education *since 2014*:  
teachers' professional learning and research**

- Prof Greg Mannion (University of Stirling)

# By 2014 end of Decade

There was “no universal consensus on how to become more sustainable” but we did seem to agree on other aspects ...

*Shaping the Education of Tomorrow 2012  
Report on the UN Decade of Education  
for Sustainable Development*



# Looking back

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## Shifts in practice in 2012

HE / universities (in 2012) were moving to:

- Enhance participation in research design and in the conduct of research that **benefits communities**
- Engage students in **service learning and problem solving** projects in 'real life' contexts.
- Forge stronger **partnerships** with **local communities and development groups** to identify priorities for research and development work.

*SOURCE: Shaping the Education of Tomorrow 2012 Report on the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development*

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**In 2022**

**example  
undergraduate  
option**

**University of  
Stirling**

## UNI9A1: Wicked Problems, Sustainable Solutions

... 'wicked' problems': Each one is unique, every one **complex** and with no shared understanding or agreement on their nature or on how to address them.

The **interlinked issues** of **climate**, environment and sustainability lie at the heart of many problems ...

We address the central questions in the 'climate crisis', global food security pressures, biodiversity loss

- how we can make **active responses** as citizens
- explore how **interdisciplinary** responses to sustainable development
- project work - **collective actions**
- experiential learning, involving **time outdoors**
- address **real-world problems**,

Learning Outcome 4:

*learn from others and working as a team devise innovative collective actions that further sustainability at local and wider level.*

# HE Research – research and scholarship ...

Some examples from the field of ESE / ESD by Scotland-based authors:

Price, White et al (2020) Sustainability in HEs – barriers to scaling up ESD in HE

Christie et al.'s (2019) Learning for Sustainability is 'misunderstood' / Barrable's (2022) volume on nature-based learning via greenspace use.

Dunkley and Smith (2019) young people's experiences of national parks / Dunkley's (2022) on role of citizen science in education for sustainability.

Gray's (2022) the contribution of garden-based learning to wellbeing and sustainability. Gray and Colucci-Gray (2019) outdoor experience

Mannion (2020) / Lynch and Mannion (2021) / Nicol (various) place-responsive research and pedagogy in outdoor contexts

Scrutton / Smith / Beames - various studies on the personal and social benefits of and issues related to adventurous education, residential education Affifi – researches the ecological crisis and aesthetic knowing, interspecies linking

In early years, outdoor play and learning have gained attention in both research and in advice for practice (MacQuarrie et al, 2015, Robertson, 2014, 2017)

# HE Research – some doctoral contributions ...

Mackie (2023) - study on the role of place and Gaelic in supporting learning for sustainability / school-based adventurous learning

Ramjan (2023) study of ecological citizenship and the role of citizen science in schools

Fenwick (2021) study of the intricate relationship of outdoor learning with the curriculum

Baker (2015) study on policy development of outdoor learning in Scotland

Mattu (2016) study of primary school visits to farms

Patrick Boxall (ongoing) creativity and outdoor learning (QMU)

Sophia Georgescu – (commenced 2023) – biodiversity loss / young people, child rights and educational responses

Heena Dave (commenced 2023) – climate change education

# HE Research – a critical friend? ...

- measuring and recording outdoor provision in Scotland
- *empirical baseline measures (2006 , 2014)* provide the chance to assess *change over time*
- *touchstones for countering commonsense and everyday perceptions*



## NatureScot Research Report 1313 - Teaching, learning and play in the outdoors: a survey of provision in Scotland in 2022

[nature.scot/doc/naturescot-research-report-1313-teaching-learning-and-play-outdoors-survey-provision-scotland-2022](https://www.naturescot.gov.uk/doc/naturescot-research-report-1313-teaching-learning-and-play-outdoors-survey-provision-scotland-2022)

Year of publication: 2023

Authors: Mannion, G., Ramjan, C., McNicol, S., Sowerby, M. and Lambert, P. (University of Stirling)

Cite as: Mannion, G., Ramjan, C., McNicol, S., Sowerby, M. and Lambert, P. (2023) *Teaching, Learning and Play in the Outdoors: a survey of provision in 2022*. NatureScot Research Report 1313.



Whilst a 2022 HMIE report suggested outdoor provision was

- *an increasing feature,*
- the pandemic had ‘accelerated the breadth and depth of provision’ ....

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# Surveys of Provision - figures for 2006 – 2014 - 2022

## Early Years 2022

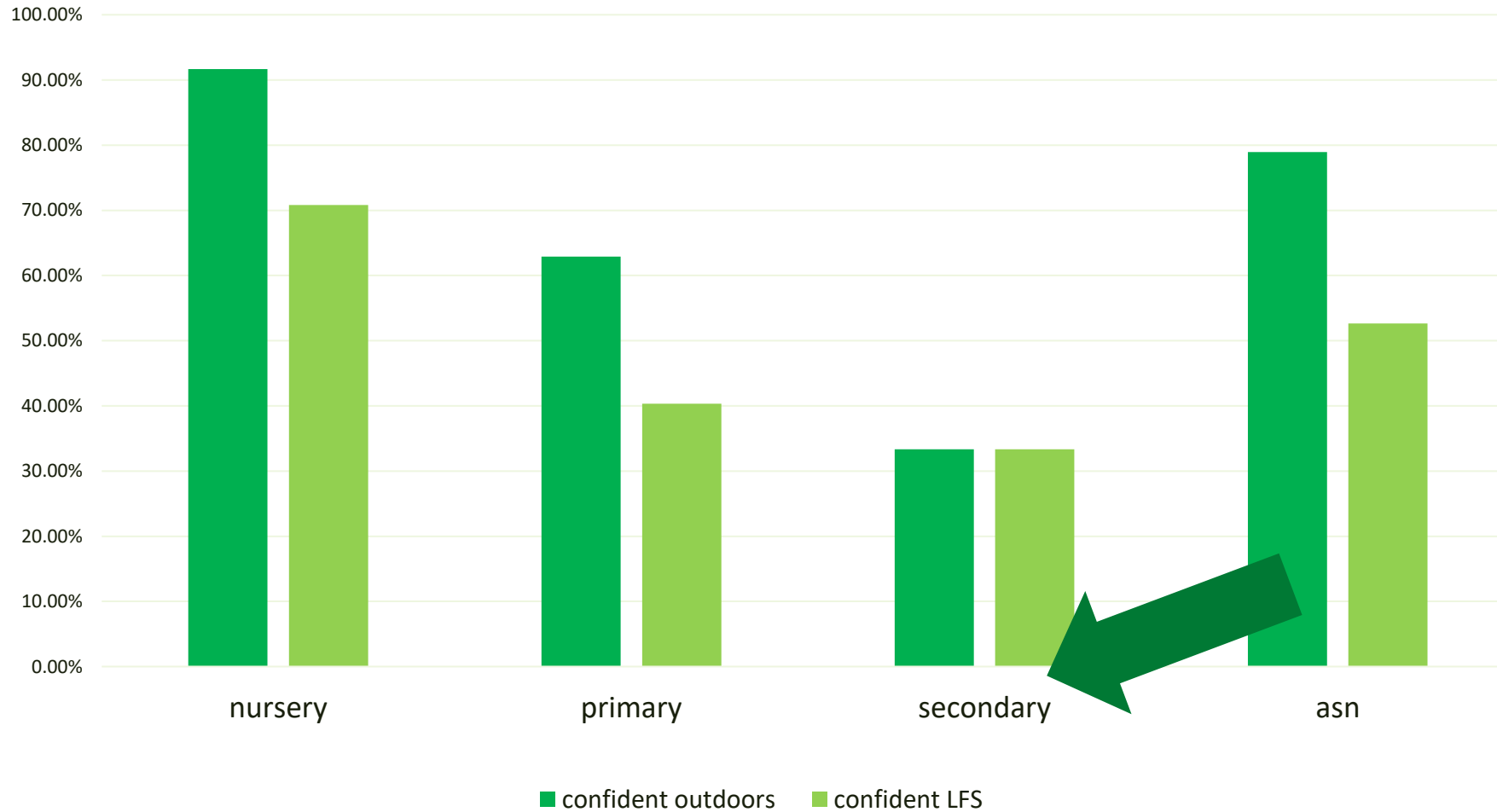
- % Duration of the day outdoors in early years day (May and June)
- 23% in 2006
- 36% in 2014.
- In 2022 **39%** of the time was spent outdoors

## Primary Schools 2022

- Minutes per pupil per week as an average for the sector
- 2014 – Non-residential provision was 24 minutes per pupil per week
- In 2022, it was **7 minutes per pupil per week**



### Proportion of teachers who reported being confident



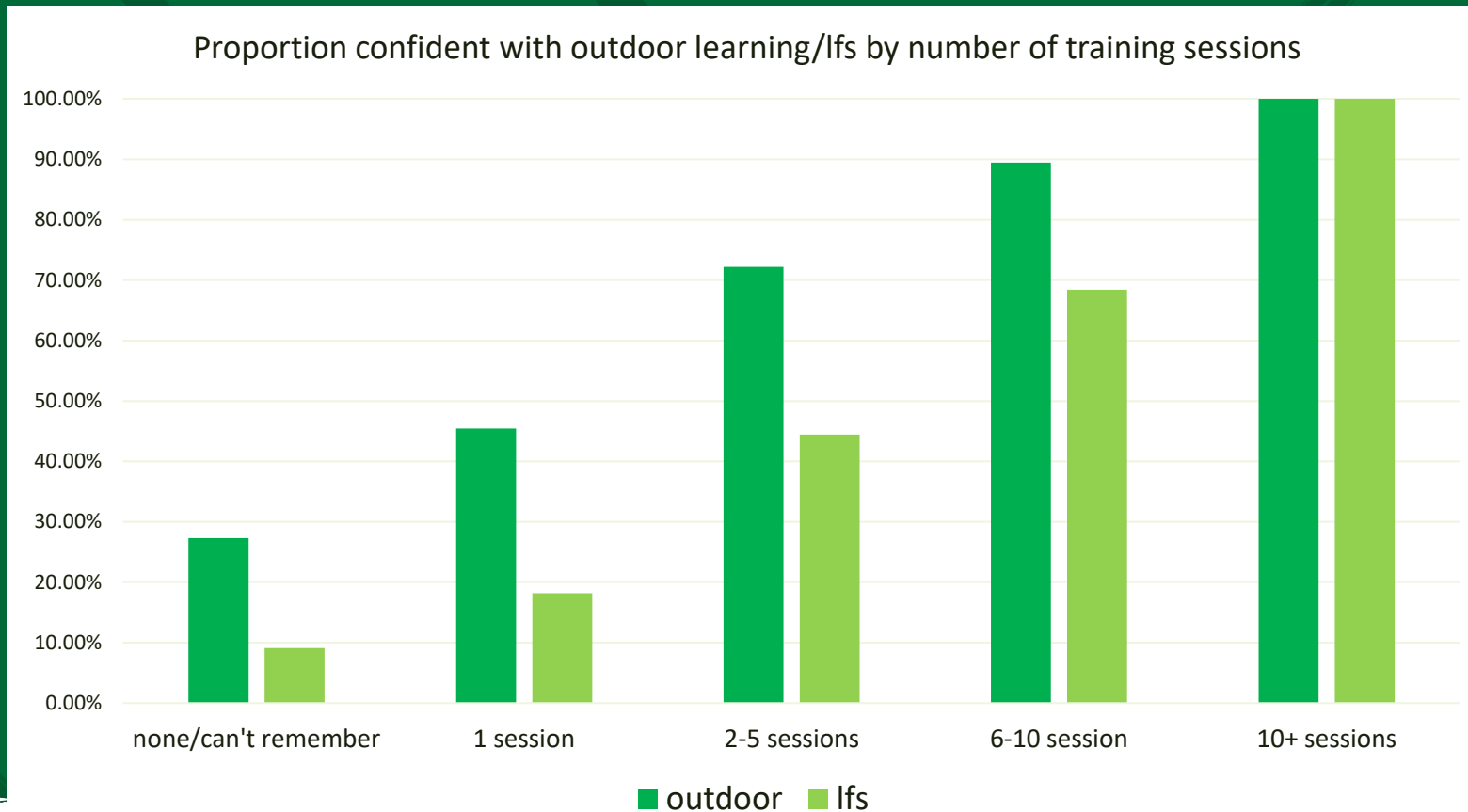
Considerable numbers of staff lack confidence

HE & FE can address this

	Confident outdoors	Confident LfS
Early years	92%	71%
Primary	63%	40%

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# Impact of professional learning on confidence



Staff with less professional learning report lower confidence

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# Some Future Orientations

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- **UN. Decade of Action, 2020 / Movement for Change 2030**
- **Anti-colonial, eco-feminist, indigenous, new perspectives**
- **Climate change / Biodiversity loss /**
- **Child rights / Wellbeing**
- **Young People: engagement of youth in policy formation and in evaluation as key informants leading to influential co-created findings, better decisions**

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