

'First Tracks' Programme Inspires Scotland's Next Generation of Snowsports Enthusiasts

Austria Tourism-funded initiative introduces more than 150 young people to skiing and snowboarding across Scotland

Austria Tourism and Snowsport Scotland are celebrating the success of their groundbreaking First Tracks programme, which has introduced more than 150 primary school pupils across Scotland to the exciting world of skiing.

Launched to remove financial and accessibility barriers to participation, First Tracks provided fully funded introductory skiing lessons for young people at artificial snow centres across the country. The initiative has enabled children to experience the thrill of skiing for the very first time, while also learning about Austria's rich alpine culture and world-renowned snowsports heritage.

Among the schools taking part were:

- Riverside Primary School, Glasgow, with lessons delivered at Glasgow Ski & Snowboard Centre
- Galston Primary School, where pupils took part in sessions at Newmilns Snow & Sports Complex
- Kaimhill Primary School, Aberdeenshire, hosted at Aberdeen Snowsports Centre

The programme aimed not only to introduce young people to snowsports but also to inspire confidence, encourage physical activity and create lasting memories through positive first experiences on the slopes.

Iain Ramsay-Clapham, CEO of Snowsport Scotland, said:

"We are incredibly proud of what First Tracks has achieved. Thanks to the generous support of Austria Tourism, we have been able to provide opportunities that many children may never otherwise have had access to. Seeing the excitement and confidence grow throughout the lessons has been truly inspiring, and we hope this experience marks the beginning of a lifelong connection with snowsports for many of these young people."

Alongside their practical lessons, participating pupils were introduced to Austria's vibrant culture through educational materials highlighting the country's alpine traditions, food, music and internationally renowned snowsports industry.

Martina Jamnig of Austria Tourism said:

"Austria is proud to support First Tracks and help introduce Scottish children to the joy of snowsports. As a country with a deep passion for skiing and snowboarding, we know the

positive impact these activities can have on young people. It has been wonderful to see so many children take their first turns on Scottish slopes while learning about Austrian culture, and we hope this experience inspires future adventures both on and off the snow."

Teachers and instructors involved in the programme praised the enthusiasm shown by participants, many of whom had never considered trying skiing before. The initiative has demonstrated how local facilities and strong partnerships can play a vital role in broadening access to sport and encouraging healthy, active lifestyles.

The success of First Tracks highlights Snowsport Scotland's ongoing commitment to growing participation and creating accessible pathways into the sport for young people across the country.

As Scotland's newest snowsports enthusiasts complete their first runs, First Tracks has successfully laid the foundations for the next generation of skiers and snowboarders to take their first tracks in Austria.