

ECO DRAMA



Out to Play Evaluation 2017



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1. Out to Play - Overview

Across 14 weeks during August-December 2017, Drama Artists Ben Mali Macfadyen and Sophie McCabe collaborated with teachers and pupils through residencies in 4 partner schools across Glasgow, to explore the role of **Drama** and **Storytelling** within **Outdoor Learning**.

The project encouraged collaboration between the teachers, pupils and Drama Artist to create a holistic programme of learning which will have a lasting legacy after the residencies are over. Teachers had the opportunity to co-lead sessions with the Drama Artist, and lead their own session, utilizing new skills in combining drama, storytelling and outdoor learning.

The 4 partner Primary Schools were **Battlefield, Dalmarnock, Chirnside and Merrylee**. Alongside the residencies, **5 CPD Sessions** took place in September and November 2017 to share best practice from the project to a wider community of primary teachers from 25 further schools across Glasgow.

In total Eco Drama's *Out to Play* 2017 project reached:

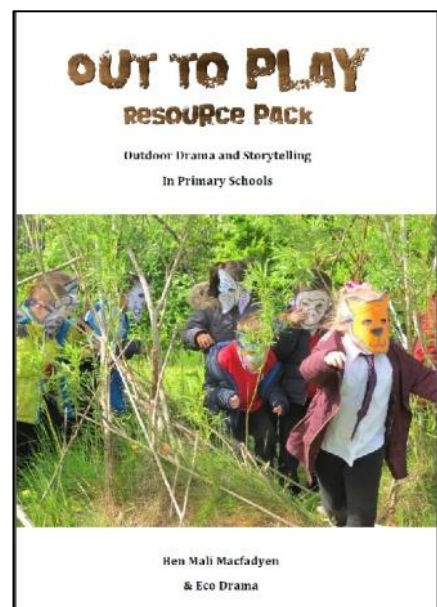


1.1 RESOURCES

In 2015, Drama Artist Ben created an [Out to Play Resource Pack](#), showcasing 8 session plans developed during the *Out to Play* pilot residencies in 2015. These session plans are tailored for P1-P7.

The 72 page resource is packed full of tried and tested outdoor drama ideas, stories, games and creative outdoor learning techniques from the project. Every participating 2017 teacher received a pack to give them further inspiration alongside the residency.

We are currently developing a second edition resource pack based on *Out To Play* 2017, which will be made available to Outdoor Learning Coordinators, teachers and educators throughout Scotland and the UK.



2. What We Set Out to Do

Out to Play is a creative learning project in which Drama Artists collaborate with partner primary schools and nurseries to explore the role of Drama, Storytelling and Theatre in Outdoor Learning. The project seeks to facilitate interaction with the natural world through quality artistic experiences, re-thinking traditional views of nature and noticing and appreciating nature on our doorstep.

Sessions are tailored to the unique surroundings of each school, and through imaginative play and adventurous learning, Out to Play aims to deepen young people's connection to our natural world. Following on from the successful pilot project in 2015, winner of the [Glasgow City Council Environmental Initiative Award 2016](#), each participating school worked with a Drama Artist for a 7 week outdoor learning residency, with the whole school participating.

2.1 KEY OUTCOMES

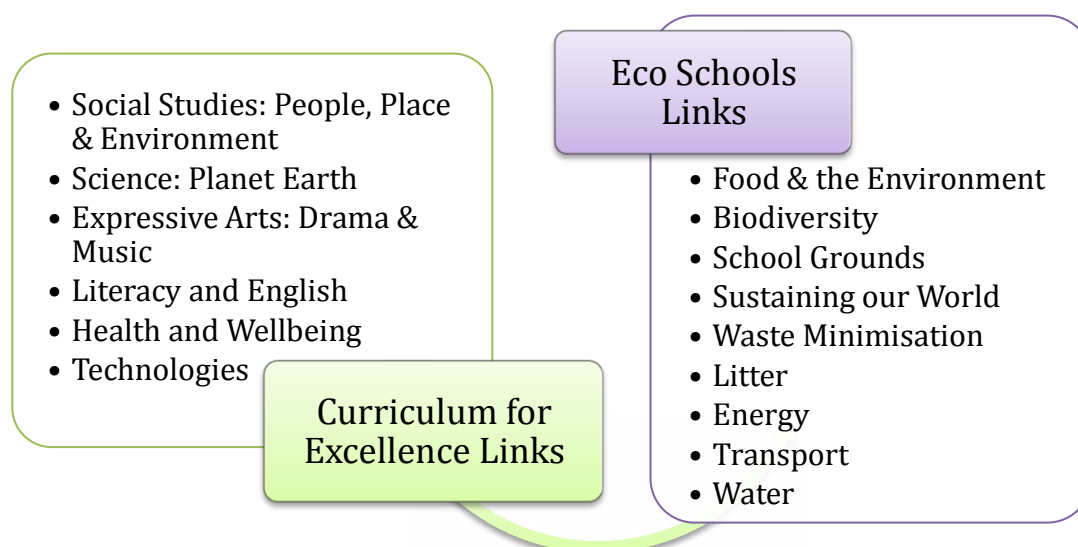
Outcome	Outcome Achieved
Children have access to higher quality outdoor learning opportunities	<p>378 outdoor sessions for 1,438 children were run by 2 experienced Drama Artists. These focused on the role of storytelling and drama within outdoor learning. This unique combined focus is one that many schools had little to no experience in, and gave them inspiration to implement these techniques with future classes.</p> <p>9 CPD sessions were carried out in partner schools and to the wider community and empowered 151 Glasgow teachers to engage their pupils with outdoor creative learning. Evidence in the form of qualitative and quantitative data has been collected from all participants to ensure the quality of these experiences, and follow up evaluations are to be carried out to ensure implementation of techniques going forward.</p> <p>A detailed Resource Pack is being created to share with teachers and educators to use techniques from the residencies to further engage and encourage outdoor learning using interdisciplinary techniques.</p>
Children spending more time learning outdoors	<p>All sessions were run outdoors, encouraging 1,438 children and 54 class teachers to view the outdoors as a valuable learning space and to encourage a deeper connection with nature.</p> <p>Participating class teachers expressed a desire to pursue outdoor learning further with future classes and to encourage their schools to implement future outdoor learning plans.</p>

<p>Through engaging with the arts and outdoor learning, children and young people have improved <i>Knowledge & Understanding, Attitudes & Values, Enjoyment, Inspiration & Creativity, Behaviour & Progression and Skills</i> in relation to their learning for sustainability.</p>	<p>Our evaluation process uses the ‘Inspiring Learning’ initiative from the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council as a model for monitoring pupil progression.</p> <p>Feedback from the project shows very positive progression through each of these learning outcomes in relation to learning for sustainability. For a full analysis of our qualitative and quantitative data, see Page 10-24</p>
<p>Create positive change in the lives of children and young people by improving academic attainment in relation to their learning for sustainability.</p>	<p>Our evaluation process included detailed teacher evaluation, both qualitative and quantitative, where teachers were given the opportunity to reflect on pupil attainment in relation to learning for sustainability.</p> <p>81% of teachers noticed a progression in pupil attainment from participating in the Out to Play project. Teachers were given the opportunity to expand on this academic attainment. For full analysis see Page 25-30.</p>
<p>Increased knowledge, understanding and enthusiasm for nature, leading to increased inspiration and commitment to cherish and care for the natural world.</p>	<p>Our evaluation process uses the ‘Inspiring Learning’ initiative from the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council as a model for monitoring pupils’ progression. Included in this monitoring is an assessment of changes in Attitudes and Values toward the natural world and specific “Nature Connection” questions. For full analysis see Page 14-16</p>
<p>Improve Teachers’ knowledge, confidence and skills in delivering arts-based outdoor learning.</p>	<p>7 weekly sessions led by the Drama Artist enabled teachers to increase their knowledge and understanding in using drama and storytelling techniques in an outdoor session. Teachers were encouraged to co-lead and lead their own session in week 5, allowing practical skills to be developed.</p> <p>9 Continued Professional Development (CPD) sessions were delivered throughout Out to Play 2017. 4 of these were delivered by the Drama Artists for 54 participating teachers within the 4 partner schools. Sessions offered support and guidance to teachers ahead of planning their own creative outdoor learning session in week 5, developing their ideas, skills, knowledge and understanding in utilising drama and storytelling within outdoor learning. A further 5 CPD sessions were delivered to an additional 97 teachers from across 25 Glasgow Primary Schools, sharing ideas, skills, resources and best practice from the Out to Play project. See page 31-32 for a detailed analysis of teacher feedback from the CPD Workshops.</p>

2.2 EDUCATIONAL LINKS

Education is at the heart of Eco Drama's work and *Out to Play* has strong links with Eco Schools Topics and the current Scottish Schools education framework, the Curriculum for Excellence.

Out to Play sessions were designed in collaboration with each school and made connections across the Curriculum for Excellence, with a particular focus on Sustainable Development Education & Global Citizenship.



2.3 MONITORING AND EVALUATING

Evaluation is fundamental to supporting Eco Drama's education initiatives. It enables us to ensure that we are delivering relevant and useful learning experiences for pupils and teachers in the schools which we visit.

For the *Out to Play* residency:

- ✿ **Evaluation forms** were distributed to pupils and teachers to complete before and after they had experienced the residency. These forms were designed to allow pupils and teachers to offer their opinions on the experience, and allow Eco Drama to monitor responses and progression, to ensure that the best possible learning experience is being provided.
- ✿ We monitored throughout the project by regularly logging comments from pupils and asking the classes to keep a '**Wonder Box**' to gather creative material and personal responses generated throughout the project.
- ✿ Teachers were given the opportunity to reflect on their experience each week through a **Creative Critique**, designed as an ideas log for their ongoing creative outdoor learning teaching practice.

For the CPD Sessions: Participating teachers were asked to fill in pledges and evaluation forms after the CPD session.

3. Getting Out to Play

THE SESSIONS: The Drama Artists were timetabled to work with each class for 1 hour. Ben and Sophie worked with up to 3 classes a day and tailored the sessions to suit each age and stage, with similar themes connecting each week. All sessions aimed to make use of outdoor spaces, to connect pupils with nature through creative play and imagination, and to use storytelling and drama as the catalyst for doing so. **After the twilight CPD, during week 4 of the project, teachers were given the opportunity to plan and run their own outdoor sessions during week 5, with support from the Drama Artist.**

“As I journey on to other projects, I’m left with a wish that all the children I have met see themselves as storytellers of their own lives, that they can shape their futures as well as a more sustainable collective future on Earth. And most of all that they never lose the incredible imaginations I have had the joy of adventuring alongside... *Keep exploring!*” - Ben Mali McFadyen, Drama Artist, Out to Play

THE BLOGS: Ben and Sophie wrote regular blogs on the progress of each residency, detailing the adventures, games played and stories told, reflecting on the journey, its progressions and challenges. You can read the blogs [HERE](#)

“Hundreds of explorers have **adventured across the playground** through various **imaginary landscapes**, joined in with several **stories**, played **umpteen games** and **devised lots of short pieces of drama** around themes including waste and recycling, water, magical forest fairies, Just So stories, imaginary & invented creatures, snow, the indigenous peoples of the Amazon and more...” [Sophie’s Blog](#)



“I think that desire for learning comes when one is curious, and the **best pathway to curiosity at any age is imagination**. The scale of ecological destruction we are facing is critical, and **unless people have a relationship with the natural world**, they will have no desire to protect it. **The unique combination of storytelling and outdoor play** that Eco Drama is pioneering is **one small step towards a more sustainable future, whilst being a lot of fun too!** [Ben’s Blog](#)

4. Pupil Feedback

"I loved Out to Play and I will think about the environment more."

Autumn, P5/4, Merrylee

"It was an incredible experience."

Matthew, P4 Blue, Battlefield

"I liked making the stories and I liked going back in time. There was nothing I didn't like!" Ahamad, P6 Red, Dalmarnock

"I liked the stories and games because it was really fun and the stories were amazing!"

Daniella, P4a, Battlefield



"P2 Red had a great time with Ben and will miss him very much! His stories and songs will stay with us and help us to remember him and our adventures with nature." P2 Red Class, Dalmarnock

"Before I never liked going out to play. Now I love out to play."

Lee, P4/3, Chirnsyde

"I go on adventures more through forests cause Sophie inspired me. I think about outside a bit differently now."

Marcus, P7, Chirnsyde

"We loved the games Sophie played, we will miss you, we loved the stories you told us." P2 Class, Chirnsyde

"Out to Play made me feel happy. I want to meet and do some more drama with the drama artist."

Prim, P5a, Merrylee



"Before Ben came I was not interested in nature, now after Ben came I am interested in nature."

Abdulla, P6 Blue, Dalmarnock

"It inspired [me] to help save the environment in any way possible."

Logan, P7, Merrylee

4.1 PRESENTATION OF DATA

Questions were designed to provide **qualitative and quantitative feedback** to describe levels of enjoyment and learning from the sessions. Comments and creative responses from pupils, teachers and the two Drama Artists have been included throughout this report.

To assess our qualitative feedback we used The 'Inspiring Learning' initiative originally devised by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council in 2008. This is a suggested framework for classifying qualitative data into learning outcomes. Arts Council England now features this as "a key improvement framework" for the sector.



We applied this to the pupil feedback to identify the key **learning aspects** which have occurred as a result of this project.

INSPIRING LEARNING FRAMEWORK

The framework identifies **five General Learning Outcomes (GLOs)** and recommends that these be used as a way of measuring outcomes and demonstrating the impact that a project has had on the participants.

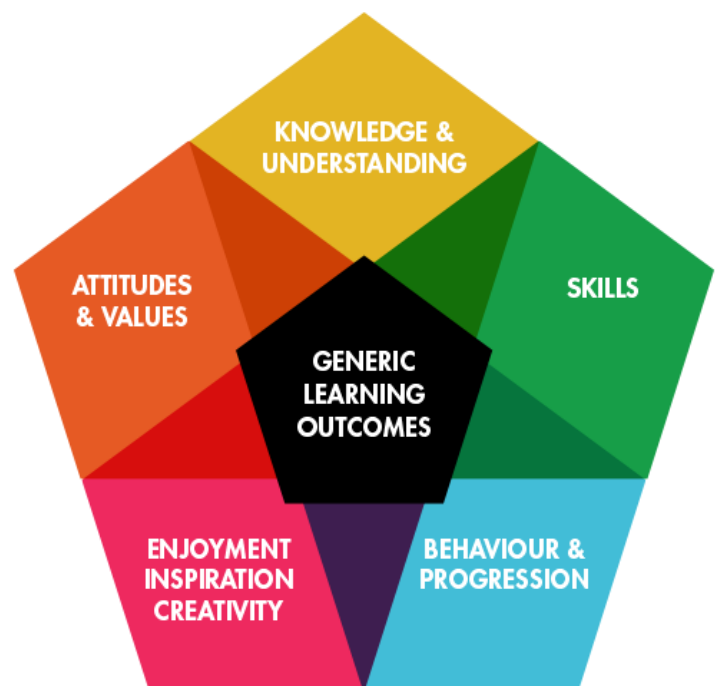


Figure 1 -
General
Learning
Outcomes

Also included in the feedback forms are questions which allow us to obtain **quantitative data** on the responses. Pie charts have been used to present data for these types of questions.

P1-3 PUPILS (AGED 5-7) WERE ASKED TO CIRCLE THE FACE  **WHICH BEST DESCRIBED THEIR EXPERIENCE.**

P4-7 PUPILS (AGED 8-11) WERE GIVEN 5 VARIABLES, RANGING FROM STRONGLY AGREE TO STRONGLY DISAGREE

4.2 QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE DATA

Qualitative data was taken from:

- ❖ Pupil Evaluation Forms: Pupils were asked questions such as “**nature is important because:**”, “**things I can do to look after nature are:**” to list their **favourite activities**, or to say **what inspired them and leave further comments on the project**.
- ❖ Wonder Boxes: Pupils decorated a recycled box and kept this in their class. They were encouraged to scribe activities of each lesson either during or before, listing **favourite things, things they learned/enjoyed**, and to use the boxes as creatively as they wished out-with sessions, adding **drawings, comments, stories, cards** etc.

We also asked pupils questions which enabled us to collect **quantitative data** on the responses. The questions were asked before the project began, then at the end of the 7 weeks of outdoor learning sessions. Presented below is the qualitative and quantitative feedback from evaluation both before and after the project. The quantitative data is calculated in percentages and presented in pie charts. This allows us to report the percentage rise and fall in answers, using all the data collected.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING was developed through a deeper awareness of many elements of nature and our relationship to it. Subjects covered included **sciences, social sciences, expressive arts and health and wellbeing**. Topics covered included plants and animals, food growing, rainforests, water cycles, seasons, life-cycles, production, disposal and recycling, politics of waste, animal migration, ecosystems, species classification, local history, evolution, climate change and extinction, hunger and poverty, interconnectedness and positive change.



“I learned that they **cut down the size of a football pitch every minute.**”

“I learned that **we are all storytellers.**”

“I learned that **everything in this world is connected like a web** and it could collapse if we don't look after our planet.”

“I learned that **humans, plants and animals are all equally important to nature.** And spending time outdoors helps me to understand how important nature.”

“I learned that **plastic takes millions of years to decompose.** I also learned that if you want bugs in your bug shelter it needs a roof, leaves for floor and food.”

“I learned that **nature is connected.**”

“I learned how beautiful and interesting nature really is. I also learned that the berries in the rowan tree can be poisonous to us.”

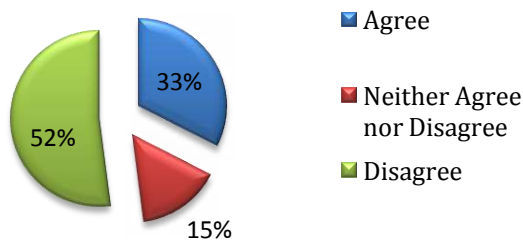
“I learned about over fishing, freeze framing, miming, water pollution/oil, littering, plastic decomposure, using puppets, body propping, drama, facial expressions, being different animals and lots more.”

“I learned how to look after plants and not overwater them.”

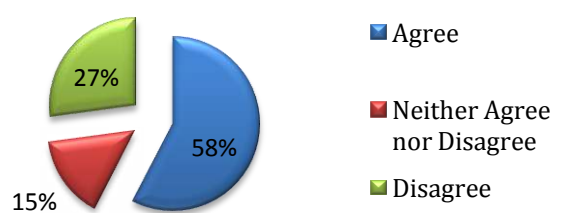
“Children became increasingly better at following outdoor routines because this was happening at regular intervals. They demonstrated their imagination and creativity through the drama. Using the story sticks and working with a partner was an exceptional lesson and blew me away when two quiet children told their story to others in their group. As nature and the care of nature was embroiled in the lessons and stories I feel the children gained appreciation for nature and how to care for their environment”. Catriona Brown, P4 Teacher, Battlefield Primary

Particularly positives rises in **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING** were observed in the below responses:

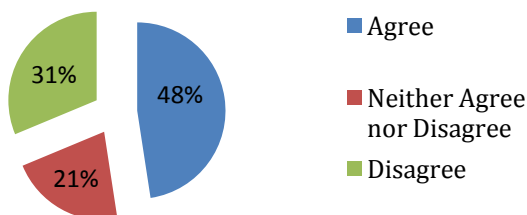
I know lots of stories about nature
P1-3 Before



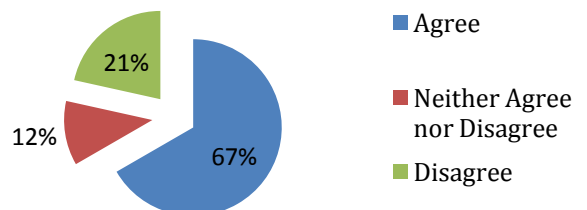
I know lots of stories about nature
P1-3 After



I know lots of interesting facts about nature
P1-3 Before



I know lots of interesting facts about nature
P1-3 After



P4-7 were given more variables to this question, but again we can see a very positive rise upwards from pupils answering **STRONGLY AGREE** and **AGREE** from Round 1 to Round 2.

Pupils in P4-7:

- ✿ **knowledge of stories about nature** rose from **35%** to **48%**
- ✿ **knowledge of interesting facts about nature** rose from **50%** to **66%**

A very high number of pupils indicated that they “**know lots of games to play outdoors**” in Round 1. For this reason there was only a slight increase of up to 4% of P4-7 pupils answering AGREE and STRONGLY AGREE in Round 2 but still with a very high number of **81%** of P4-7 and **75%** of P1-3 picking **Strongly Agree** and **Agree** in Round 2.

SKILLS were developed through the introduction of practical skills including orienteering, identification of plants and animals, gardening, design, drama skills, communication, movement and singing.

“There was a clear increase in interest in nature, and subsequently also the **amounts of retained information about the natural world**. For example, through playing games and embodying different parts of the natural world, children had a felt understanding of their qualities, habitats, and relationship with the wider natural world.... **Teachers noted an increase in classroom literacy interest due to the storytelling elements of the project**. Some pupils even wrote stories at home. We explored many different approaches to making drama, and they incorporated many into their final pieces.” - Drama Artist, Ben Mali Mcfadyen

“I learned how to be a confident speaker”

“We learned working as a team, making shapes with our bodies, learning new stories, learning to use items in nature to make things, acting and mime.”

“We loved being explorers, collecting leaves, making our presentation to parents, listening to Sophie tell stories and pretending to be animals.”

“I like using my creative ideas. I enjoyed it and it's really fun.”

“I've also learned that you don't have to be shy in front of other people, it's better to just get on with it.”

“I enjoyed the singing because everyone was singing and Ben was a really good singer. I also enjoyed him telling some very creative stories.”

“I liked making our own creatures.”

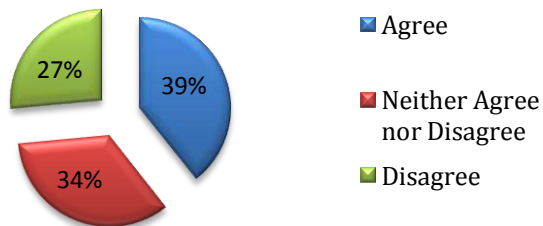
“We learned how to tell fun stories.”



Particularly positive changes in **SKILLS** were observed in the below responses:

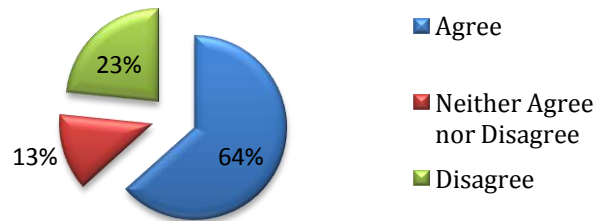
I can show my ideas, thoughts and feelings through drama.

P1-3 Before



I can show my ideas, thoughts and feelings through drama.

P1-3 After

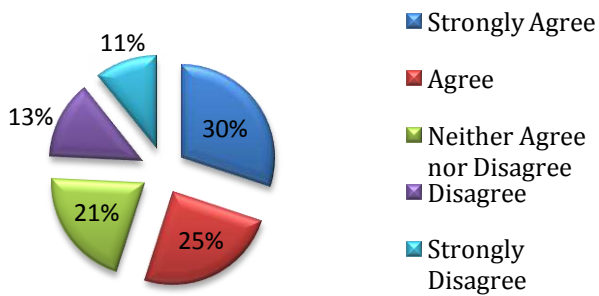


P4-7 saw an increase from **22%** to **30%** strongly agreeing and **28%** agreeing to **“I can express and communicate my ideas, thoughts and feelings through drama.”**

We also see a significant increase in **P4-7s** feeling confident speaking in front of class:

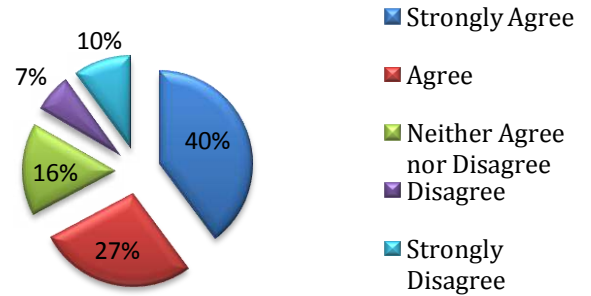
I feel confident speaking in front of my class.

P4-7 Before



I feel confident speaking in front of my class.

P4-7 After



ATTITUDES AND VALUES: Throughout the project, pupils developed a stronger sense of their own attitudes and values in relation to nature: the importance of conservation, pollution reduction, recycling, greater care for their own local environments and greater value of equality and diversity. At the end of the project, pupils made their own wish for nature and planted a bulb to leave a positive impact on the school environment, the perceptiveness of the results being testament to the progression of their understanding and values.

“It’s taught me how my actions impact the environment, so now I’m going to take care of it and pick up my litter if I drop it. And I might consider camping next year. And that’s a BIG change!!” – Alix, P7

“It has inspired me to **look after our planet.**”

“It has inspired me to **play outside.**”

“Out to Play made me **think more about nature.**”

“I enjoy outdoor learning more than I thought I would. We have to bin our rubbish because it affects the environment more than we think.”

“I learned how the world works.”

“I like **telling other people** what the world is coming to...they might stop littering our planet or stop cutting down trees.”

“I learned how to **use my imagination** to express reality facts to help the environment.”

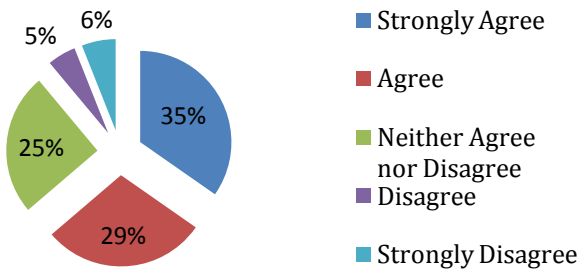
“I learned that **animals are important as well as humans.** You need to recycle your litter [because] all of the animals could die or get hurt.”

“I learned how important it is to **protect nature, use my imagination and work with others.**”

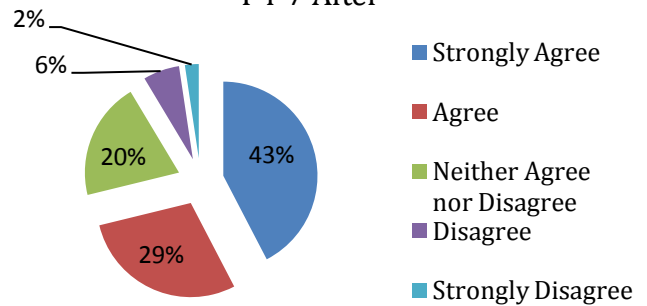


Some particularly positive rises were noted for **ATTITUDES AND VALUES:**

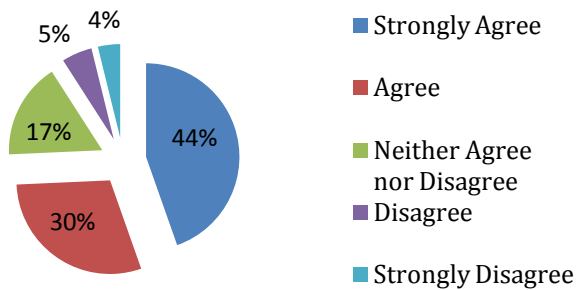
My actions impact on the environment
P4-7 Before



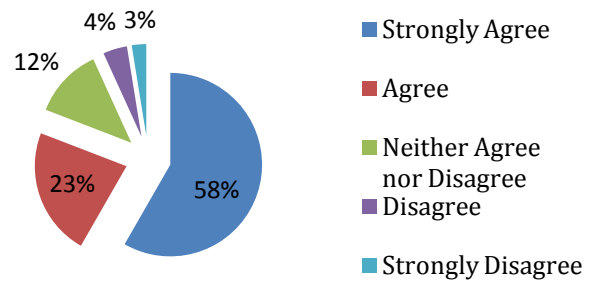
My actions impact on the environment
P4-7 After



Spending time outdoors helps me to understand how important nature is:
P4-7 Before

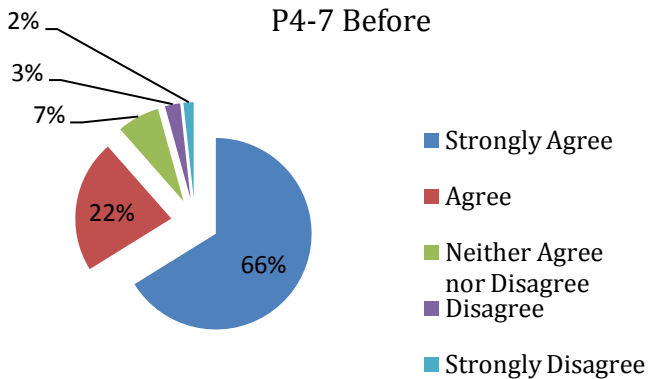


Spending time outdoors helps me to understand how important nature is:
P4-7 After

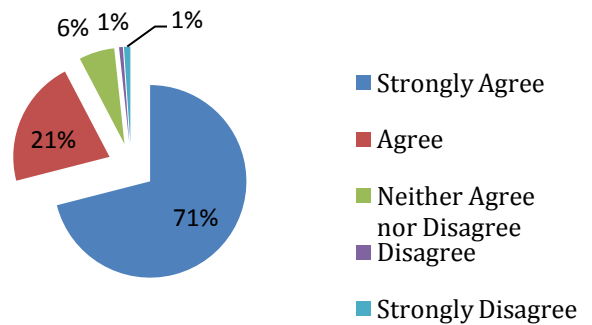


An appreciation for the importance of humans, plants and animals:

Humans, plants and animals are all equally important in nature:
P4-7 Before

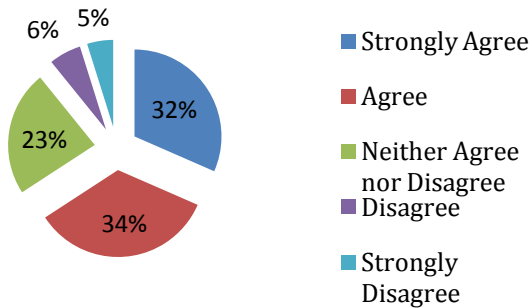


Humans, plants and animals are all equally important in nature:
P4-7 After



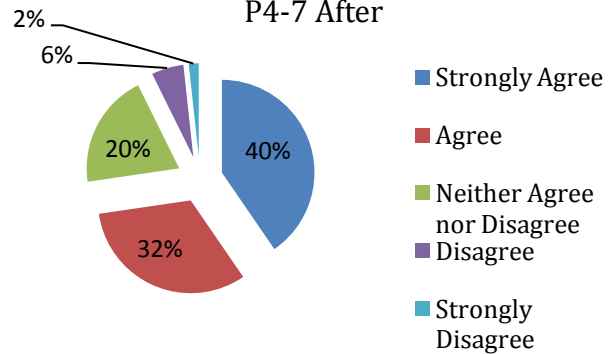
My actions will make the natural world different

P4-7 Before



My actions will make the natural world different

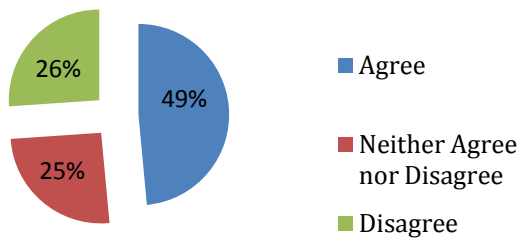
P4-7 After



There is also a particularly positive rise from **49% to 67%** in P1-3 pupils' awareness of their own actions in making the natural world different:

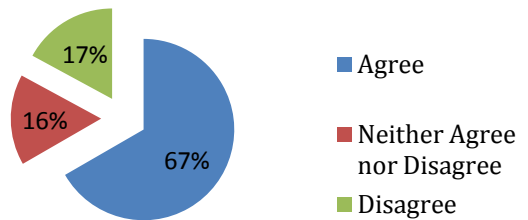
My actions will make the natural world different

P1-3 Before



My actions will make the natural world different

P1-3 After



10. Words I would use to describe nature are:

INCREDIBLE!

11. Nature is important because:

if nature wasn't here the world would be really dull 😞
 world without nature
 dark 😞

12. Things I can do to look after nature are:

grow plants

world with nature
 light 😊

ENJOYMENT, INSPIRATION AND CREATIVITY: Pupils showed increased ability to incorporate class-based learning through creative means: imaginative creation of stories, movement, sharing performances inspired by place; visual arts and drama techniques. This section received the highest amount of qualitative feedback, as pupils eagerly expressed their inspiration and enjoyment through the evaluation forms, wonder-box notes and creative drawings.

78% of pupils thought it was **LOTS OF FUN**

79% felt **EXITED TO GO OUTSIDE**

"Eco Drama has made me very arty and it's made me join a drama club"

"I liked the desert of dreams, cos we could make anything we wanted."

"I liked the stories and games because it was really fun and the stories were amazing!"

"It has inspired me to look after our planet."

"I really enjoyed learning outdoors and playing with Ben."

"I enjoyed seeing how important nature is to the world."

"I've used my imagination more."

"I liked meeting the dragon."

"It inspired me to care more about nature, for example not to step on insects and not to pull out plants."

"I also liked the storytelling and making up the story about the animals because the stories are very interesting!"

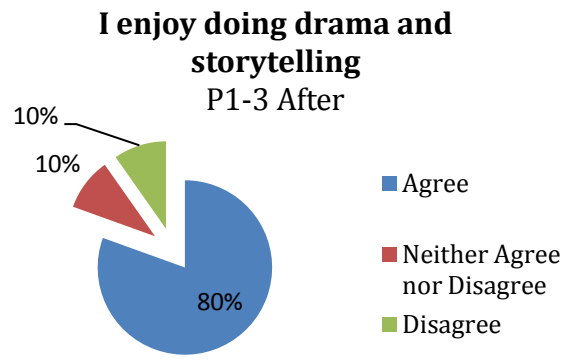
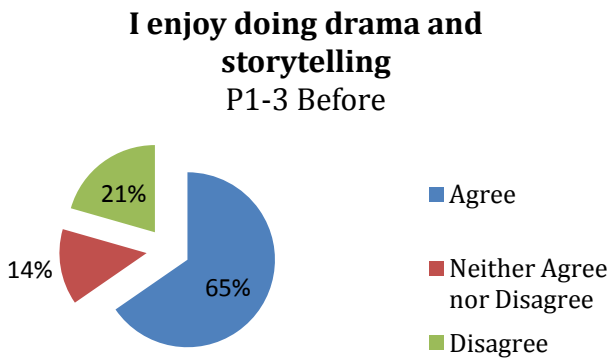
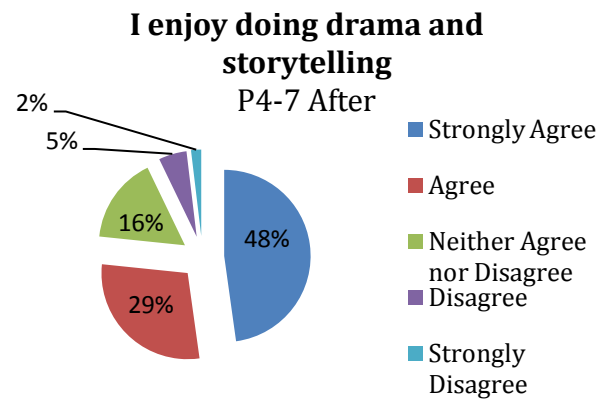
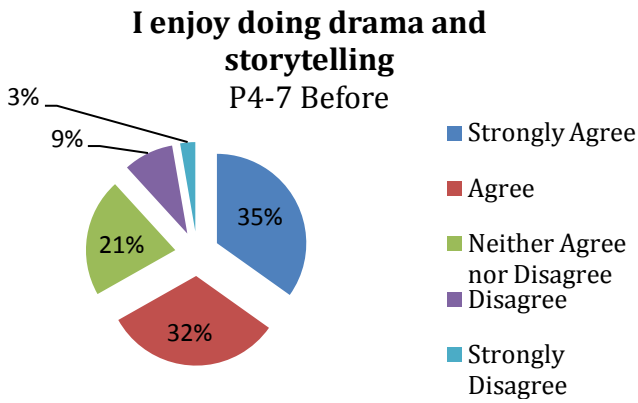
"That the acting was very very fun and it was inspiring to me because I used to not like standing up in front of people acting...The drama inspired me to not get stage fright."

"It inspired me to use my imagination"

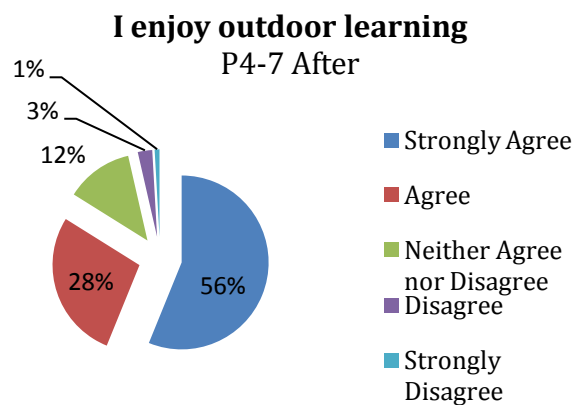
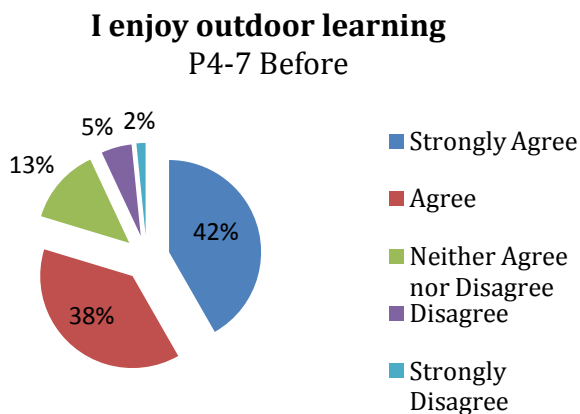
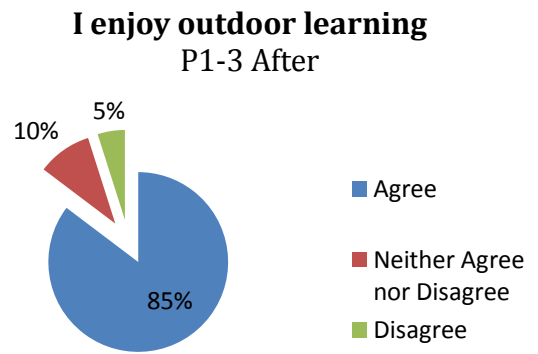
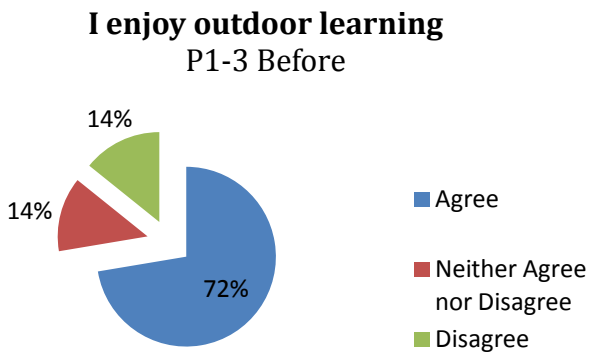
"It has inspired me to draw more animals"

"I enjoyed pretending to be animals"

Enjoyment of Drama and Storytelling:



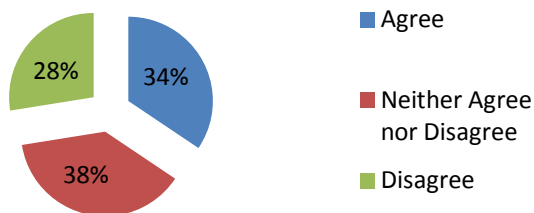
Enjoyment of Outdoor Learning:



We also see a very positive engagement with **Creativity**:

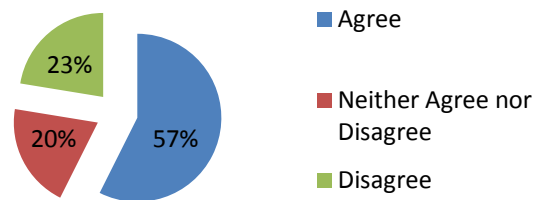
I can use drama to help me understand my world.

P1-3 Before



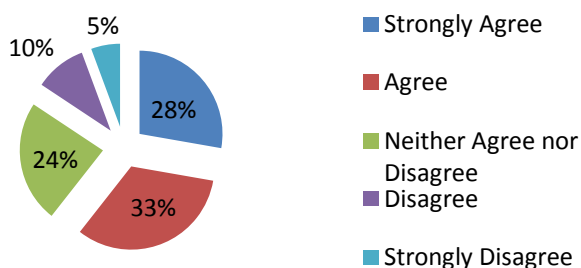
I can use drama to help me understand my world.

P1-3 After



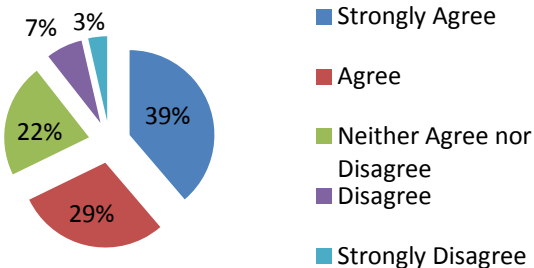
I can use drama to explore real and imaginary situations, helping me to understand my world.

P4-7 Before



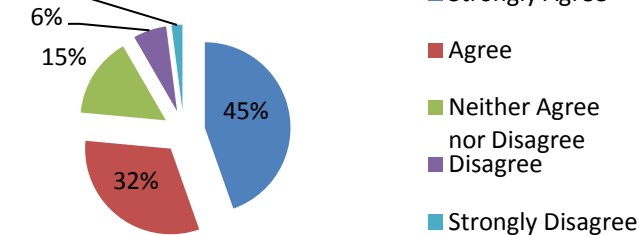
I can use drama to explore real and imaginary situations, helping me to understand my world.

P4-7 After



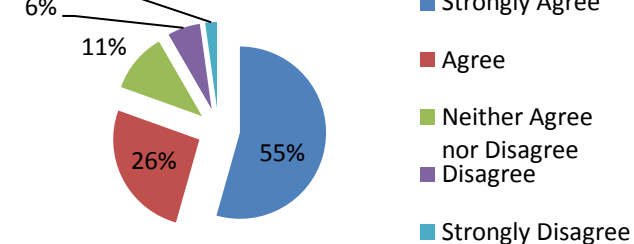
I enjoy using my imagination to explore the outdoors

P4-7 Before



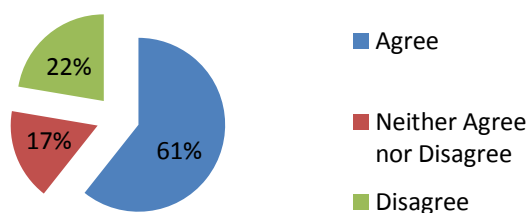
I enjoy using my imagination to explore the outdoors

P4-7 After



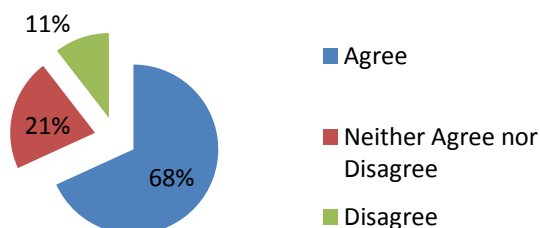
I enjoy using my imagination to explore the outdoors:

P1-3 Before



I enjoy using my imagination to explore the outdoors:

P1-3 Before



ACTIVITY, BEHAVIOUR AND PROGRESSION: Pupils showed a clear improvement in behaviour, focus, ability to follow instructions, stillness, collaboration, listening and respect of natural surroundings. Evaluation feedback also indicates a strong awareness of how to positively change behaviours and perceptions with regards to looking after and respecting nature.

"Instead of playing my phone and console all day I'm starting to **ride my bike and go running**".

"I plan to **go outside more after school.**"

"I have been **picking up rubbish** instead of just seeing it and just walking past it."

"I will **look after the environment** even more"

"It inspired me to **care more about nature**, for example not to step on insects and not to pull out plants."

"I'm going to start picking up rubbish in the playground because **it can affect wildlife.**"

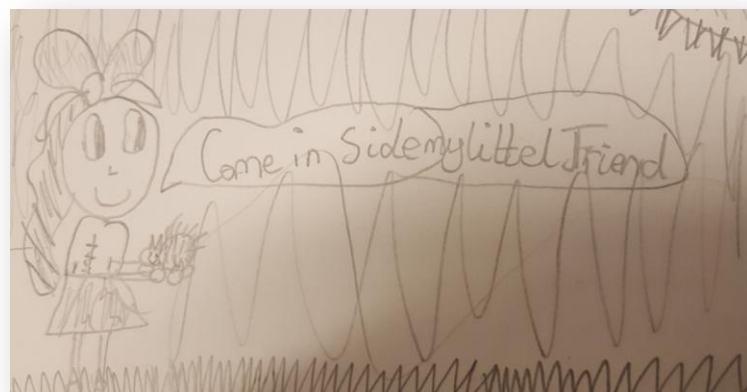
"I have more interest in animals and trees and all that kind of stuff and **I don't litter anymore.**"

"My week exploring the web of life instilled a clear increase in awareness about environmental issues and the ways we as individuals can contribute. Some quieter pupils fed back their learning which included identifying the ways we need nature to survive, for example. **The P4-7 final performances grappled with some huge themes that were entirely their own, including deforestation, trophy hunting, overpopulation and littering, and playful ways to overcome them.**" - Drama Artist, Ben Mali Macfadyen

When asked to respond to:

"I have played a part in caring for the environment."

P1-3 pupils responding with **AGREE** rose from **68-82%**, **P4-7 pupils** selecting **STRONGLY AGREE** rose from **40-51%** from before to after.



"I can encourage others to care for the environment."

P1-3 pupils responding with **AGREE** rose from **61-67%**, **P4-7 pupils** selecting **STRONGLY AGREE** rose from **36-43%** from before to after.

We also asked pupils the following questions before and after the project:

“MY FAVOURITE THING TO DO OUTDOORS IS:”

Typically the pupils listed common things to do outside, including running, climbing, games, sports, revealing that playing outdoors was still something that many children still connect with, but round 2 saw a higher increase in children stating they liked **exploring, using my imagination, expressing myself, connecting with nature, drama games, acting, picking up litter and storytelling**. There was also positive progression in caring for wildlife from answers such as “**catch butterflies**” in Round 1 to “**help animals**” in Round 2.

“WORDS I USE TO DESCRIBE NATURE ARE:”

The 2 rounds did have positive descriptive words in both. However Round 1 showed more pupils with negative descriptions like: **boring, not fun, brown, gloomy, sad, dirty, deadly, hyper, aggressive, scary and wild**. There was also a larger tendency of pupils to list nouns to describe nature, for example **trees, birds and insects**.



Round 2 however showed an increase in very positive adjectives to describe nature and less specific listing of nature nouns. Language used developed to show both appreciation and a deeper understanding about the natural world: **awesome, totally epic, deep, fun, exciting, marvellous, peaceful, free, imaginative, green, gentle, calm, beautiful and mystical, mysterious, creative, majestic, home to wildlife, gives us resources**.

There was also an increase in pupils using more activity based descriptions and adverbs to show personal connections and eagerness to protect nature: “**respect it, we must take care of it, taking care of animals and plants**”.

Lastly we saw more reference to how nature improves **HEALTH AND WELLBEING** in Round 2:

There was a significant rise in P1-3 pupils selecting **AGREE** in response to “**Being outdoors in nature makes me feel peaceful**” from 59% before to 71% after.

“**A good place to go when you’re angry, it makes me feel peaceful, calm, and excited.**”



There was a significant lack of negative adjectives used in Round 2.

“NATURE IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE:”

There was a strong focus in both rounds on the importance of oxygen which nature produces, looking after animals and their habitats and the aesthetic beauty of nature as well as a good understanding of nature’s importance to humans.

Round 2 however reveals a much deeper understanding of the **importance of nature within our day to day lives**, more specific details about things that nature provides: **“It might save your life”, “Nature makes us, without nature we wouldn’t have food. And without nature we wouldn’t have medicine”, “it takes in carbon dioxide and puts out oxygen”, “we wouldn’t have honey if it wasn’t for bees”.**

We also saw a deeper understanding about the importance of nature and what its loss would mean for us: **“It is a key part of the world”, “without it, where would we be?”, “They are like part of our family”, “it protects you”, “it helps animals have homes”, “it helps us”.**

“THINGS I CAN DO TO LOOK AFTER NATURE ARE:”

In Round 2, pupils showed a positive development and a desire to change behaviours and attitudes in relation to looking after nature, giving positive solutions such as: **“don’t litter and don’t build stuff on land that animals or plants are living”, “stop deforestation”, “stop a lot of pollution”, “stop illegal loggers”, “gardening, donating to WWF and buying sustainable products”.**

There were also a large number of pupils using the word *“them”* in phrases like **“feed them”, “look after them”, “make homes for them, or when a hedgehog or a fox is hurt I will help it”**, showing pupils perceiving the natural world as synonymous with animals and living things. There was a rise in pupils recognising the importance of not only their own actions, but their ability to encourage others to care for the environment, as well as an increase in more empathetic responses:

“encourage other people to not litter and tell my parents the importance of nature”, “Tell other people to look after nature”, “be caring”.



REFLECTIONS:

The qualitative data shows that pupils developed a very strong engagement with *Out to Play*. There were such positive progressions on all key learning areas – **Knowledge and Understanding, Skills, Attitudes and Values, Enjoyment, Inspiration and Creativity** and **Activity, Behaviour and Progression**. In addition it connected well with the **Curriculum for Excellence** and **Eco Schools Links**.

Choosing to use evaluation forms for before and after the project and allowing the pupils and teachers to have some autonomy over their own feedback process by using the Wonder Boxes, meant that the qualitative feedback became much more inspired and creative, and embedded and developed in classrooms out-with the ***Out to Play*** sessions.

Pupils were empowered to use creativity to express their thoughts on the project and to implement their learning. Much of the content in the **'Wonder Boxes'** were created outside of the sessions, as teachers used the content of the lessons as inspiration for their own teaching. Examples include **'Out to Play Blogs'** which pupils created in class, creative writing pieces such as **'Letters to the Awa Tribe', short stories, pictures, notes and wishes for nature**.

The qualitative data shows a similar rise in pupils' learning and positive responses to questions which reflect progression through the key learning areas, as well as assurance that the project aims and objectives were being attained throughout the project.



CASE STUDY:

A participating P2 child was new to English when he started in P1. Throughout P1 his communication was very difficult and he resorted most frequently to violence and aggression to express his frustrations. **This boy loved the Out to Play sessions with Sophie.** He loved playing games like Olly Octopus and Musical Statues (which he's very good at now!) and his communication improved greatly. This child can now communicate effectively with other children and the adults around him in positive ways and is now fully engaged in, and seeing the benefit of learning and being at school.

"I can be nice to people and help them to know what to do with their work." This is a big step forward.

This child went on to join an after-school Drama and Games Club run by one of the teachers after Out to Play. He fitted in well with the group and was able to join in effectively with all the activities.

This has been quite a transformation from a non-English speaker who struggled with peer relations, frustration and anger to someone who is happy at school and gets on with everyone and is building supportive relationships across the school.



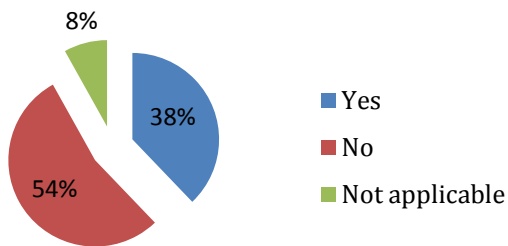
5. Teacher Feedback

Similarly to the pupils, teachers were asked **quantitative baseline** questions at the start of the project which were then followed up on at the end of the residency. The teachers were asked to share additional qualitative and quantitative feedback at the end of the residency.

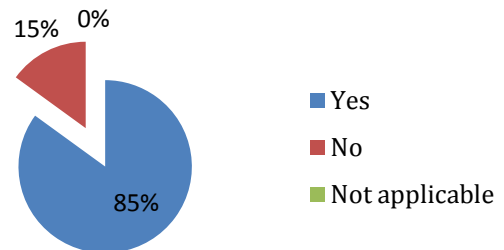
When asked “How well did the themes in *Out to Play* link with the Curriculum and your Eco Schools/Learning for Sustainability work?” 95% selected EXCELLENT or GOOD

There is a significant rise in teachers using drama and storytelling as tools within outdoor learning after the residency which rose from **38% to 85% answering YES:**

Do you utilise Drama & Storytelling as tools within your Outdoor Learning lessons? Before:

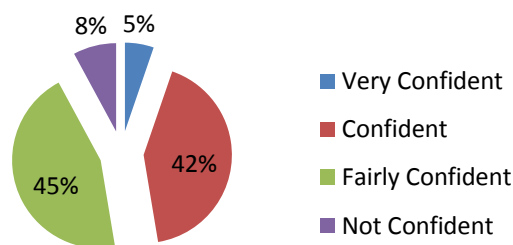


Do you utilise Drama & Storytelling as tools within your Outdoor Learning lessons? After:

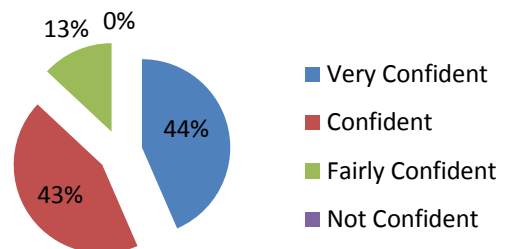


There was also a very significant rise in how teachers rated their pupils' confidence level in participating in Drama:

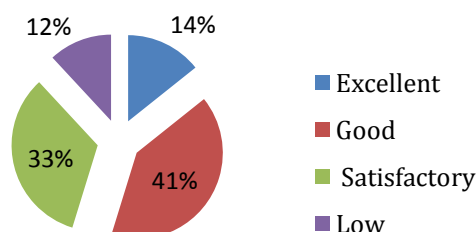
How would you rate your class's current confidence level when participating in Drama? Before:



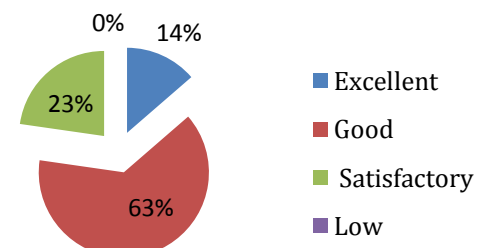
How would you rate your class's current confidence level when participating in Drama? After:



How would you rate your current level of knowledge and understanding of using Drama as a teaching tool? Before:

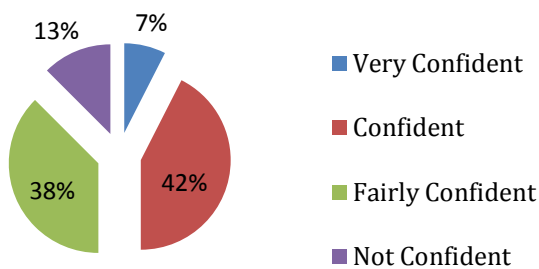


How would you rate your current level of knowledge and understanding of using Drama as a teaching tool? After:

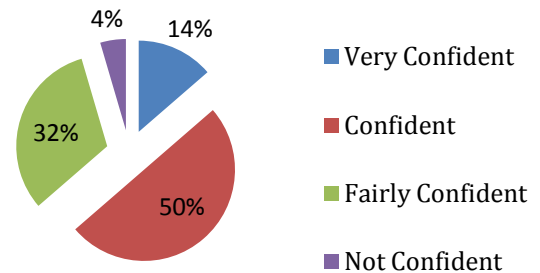


As well as a positive rise in their own confidence utilising drama and storytelling:

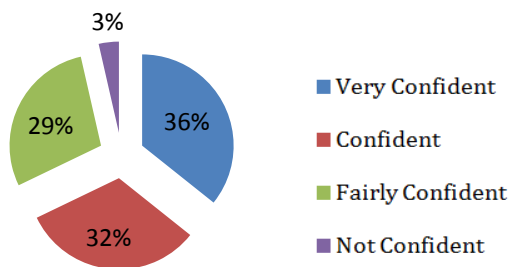
How would you rate your confidence level in utilising Drama within your teaching practice? Before:



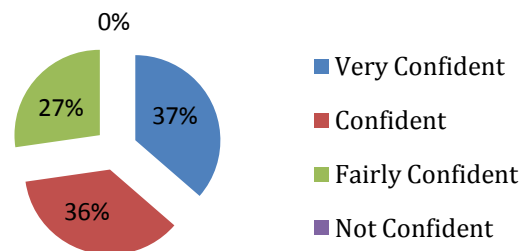
How would you rate your confidence level in utilising Drama within your teaching practice? After:



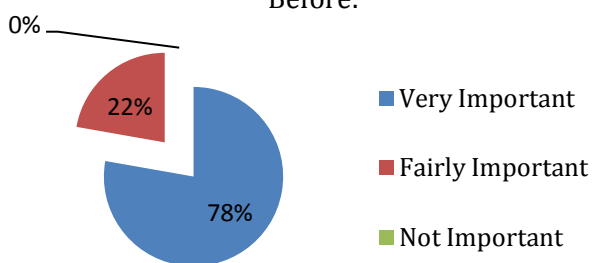
How would you rate your confidence level in utilising Storytelling within your teaching practice? Before:



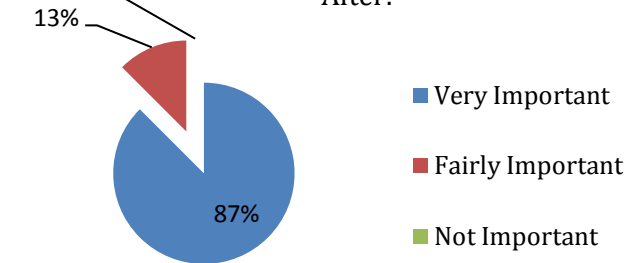
How would you rate your confidence level in utilising Storytelling within your teaching practice? After:



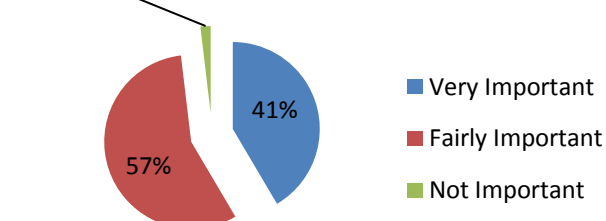
How important do you feel Storytelling is as a teaching tool across the Curriculum for Excellence? Before:



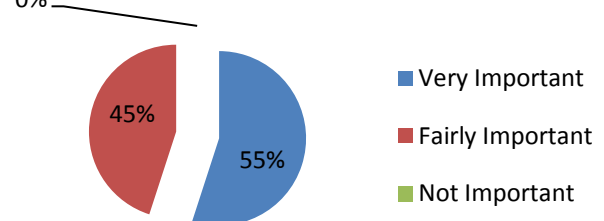
How important do you feel Storytelling is as a teaching tool across the Curriculum for Excellence? After:



How important do you feel Drama is as a teaching tool across the Curriculum for Excellence? Before:



How important do you feel Drama is as a teaching tool across the Curriculum for Excellence? After:



“As a teacher this has been a fantastic opportunity... When planning lessons I am now considering how I include outdoor learning and I have seen that other teachers are doing the same. The other day I used outdoor learning as a basis for writing about school setting which had a far greater impact than simply asking the children to write about settings in and around the school. It has also been interesting to observe the children in my class in a different environment which is particularly useful at the beginning of a school year with a new class.” - **Annabel Adamson P5 Red, Dalmarnock**

“I have gained openness to taking children outside for outdoor learning which will stay with me for the rest of my career – thanks Ben!” Annabel Adamson, P5 Red, Dalmarnock



“A fantastic way to encourage children to become explorers of the world.” Deborah Reid, P7b, Merrylee

“This was a really interesting project to take part in. It was very engaging from point of the teacher and the children; particularly in terms of the storytelling. It has been quite inspiring too and I feel motivated to take more learning outdoors.”

Laura-Anne Porterfield, P3 Blue, Dalmarnock

“Excellent. Very relevant to my topics and instructor very motivated. Also shared planning helped to enrich children’s learning.” Mrs Smith, P6b, Merrylee



“Very enjoyable overall – I felt I learned more about the drama conventions and how these can be used to link to Eco topics and raising awareness about global sustainability issues. Definitely increased confidence for some of our more reluctant pupils.” Rhona Taylor, P7a, Merrylee

“Out to Play has been fantastic – both for the children and teachers. The children have really enjoyed their sessions with Ben and have gained a lot from them. They have learnt a lot about nature and have been making links to nature during these sessions and within class. It has opened their eyes to the world around them and they particularly enjoyed Ben’s storytelling as well as the opportunity to act as different creatures as well as a range of scenarios.” - Teacher, P3 Red, Dalmarnock

"It was a **great experience for the children to use their imaginations and each week be transported through stories to a new world.** The children thoroughly enjoyed it and as their teacher it was **wonderful to see.**

On a teaching front it showed me the **power of story and storytelling.** It also made me give more control to the children and allow them the freedom to really immerse themselves into the activities." - Rebecca Gamble P2 Red, Dalmarnock Primary

"I thoroughly enjoyed the whole experience... **It was great to watch how Sophie used storytelling and drama techniques to engage the children in other curricular areas,** e.g. where plastics come from and our local wildlife, as well as giving the children room for imagination and creativity. **I learned a lot in terms of new drama techniques to try out in future with classes,** both in observation/participation in her sessions and through the CPD session in Week 4." Jackie Gallagher, P6a, Chirnsyde

"The Out to Play experience was a great way for the children to **explore environmental issues out with the classroom environment and in a fun and engaging way.**" Debra Reid, P7b, Merrylee



"The pupils gained a greater appreciation of the school setting, their surroundings and nature... when talking about limas in class the other day **the children spontaneously broke out into the Awongalema song.** This was five weeks after Ben had told them the story at the first sessions which shows that it has really stayed with them." Annabel Adamson, P5 Red, Dalmarnock

"Out to Play is the opportunity for your class/school to have their **imaginations unlocked and transport themselves on various adventures through nature.** It's a great opportunity for teachers and children and I would thoroughly recommend it!" Rebecca Gamble, P2 Red, Dalmarnock

"Out to Play has been a **resounding success in our school.** It has had a **huge impact on our staff and pupils.** The children are motivated and enthused by the approach and love working with Ben. The joy on children's faces in the playground is superb to see..."

I think the **children have gained an understanding of the interconnectedness between humans and the natural world.** I think the vast array of strategies that Ben has employed to this has meant that **all children have been able to access this on different levels.**"

Tommy Hynes, Depute Head Teacher, Dalmarnock

Of the participating teachers:

- ❖ **81%** noticed a progression in pupil attainment from participating in the *Out to Play* project.

IMPROVED LITERACY:

“I found that some children who are noticeably quieter and more shy were more able to discuss their adventures in Out to Play. Class teachers reported that some children who found responding to more structured class lessons difficult were able to engage with Out to Play in a **more confident manner.**” Tommy Hynes, Dalmarnock Primary

“More **confidence when presenting and showing better listening** when others present.”

“Improved listening skills for some; improved speaking skills through expressing ideas, thoughts and feelings. For some others, **it raised awareness of how they need to work on their talking and listening skills.**”

“Children became increasingly better at following outdoor routines because this was happening at regular intervals. They demonstrated their imagination and creativity through the drama. Using the story sticks and working with a partner was an exceptional lesson **and blew me away when two quiet children told their story to others in their group.**”

IMPROVED KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF LEARNING FOR SUSTAINABILITY:

“(they are) asking more questions and raising issues in the news more frequently.”

“Yes, as **nature and the care of nature was embroiled in the lessons and stories I feel the children gained appreciation for nature and how to care for their environment.**”



“The relationship between humans and nature **was a very strong message that came through the lessons. All staff commented on this.** It has led to some classes exploring this connection even further. **It tied in with our work on the Global Goals and Outdoor Classroom Day** too and so it felt a very natural extension of what we do here.”

IMPROVED SOFT SKILLS, I.E. CONFIDENCE, CREATIVITY, SOCIAL, MORAL AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT THROUGH THE EXPRESSIVE ARTS:

“Children **showed increasing confidence to express themselves throughout the 7 weeks.** They practiced different drama techniques in particular role-play, mime, freeze-frame and were developing effectiveness in these techniques”

“Their confidence grew as they became more familiar with the concept of adventures and using their bodies/faces to create characters.”

IMPROVED HEALTH & WELLBEING:

“Children were visibly calmer and more positive during and after Out to Play sessions. They also were able to discuss these emotions and what they enjoyed about the sessions with Ben at great length.”

“Children are more **willing to spend time outdoors and play more** traditional playground games.”

“Being regularly outside and promoting more use of the outdoors is always a good thing and P4 did not miss an Out to Play session outside – even when weather wasn’t brilliant.”



INCREASED CONNECTION WITH NATURE:

“Before they did not really have any interest in nature but through topics covered in Out to Play their understanding and knowledge of the nature around us and our impact on the world increased.”

“Children are **more aware of their responsibility to look after nature** (i.e. they have explained how they must carefully move a worm away from the path instead of stomping on it).”

“Definitely **the children recognize the importance of nature and its connection to everything.**”



CHANGES IN ATTITUDES AND VALUES, BEHAVIOUR

“An exciting and engaging project that provides opportunity for children to develop a range of skills across the curriculum and to develop in the 4 capacities: **successful learner, effective contributor, confident individual and responsible citizen.**”

“The children are no longer stomping on little creatures outside – thank you for this as I have been explaining this for a long time. They are also no longer pulling plants.”

“**Children are more enthusiastic about outdoor learning** and now have set boundaries for learning outside.”

When asked “How well did the themes in Out to Play link with the Curriculum and your Eco Schools/ Learning for sustainability work.”

47% said EXCELLENT and 43% said GOOD.

6. Out to Play CPD

Alongside the residencies, 9 Continued Professional Development (CPD) sessions were delivered by the Drama Artists. 4 of these sessions were delivered to the 54 participating teachers ahead of the teacher led session in Week 5, and a further 5 CPD sessions were delivered to an additional 97 teachers from across 25 Glasgow Primary Schools, sharing ideas, skills, resources and best practice from the Out to Play project.

Feedback from Out to Play CPD attendees:

"Having the opportunity to work alongside such an experienced storyteller has been wonderful. I've now got loads of practical ideas to bring into the class and extend/continue to use outdoors." **Maya Candido, Battlefield Primary**

"Eye opening and informative. A fabulous experience. Challenging but **stimulating** and informative. Thanks very much!" **P.Hardie, St Thomas' Primary**

"Ben is very creative and inspiring which has caused me to want to up my game." **David Shand, Battlefield Primary**

"Great ideas to incorporate writing. Helps to encourage confidence in myself." **J. McMillan, Chirnside Primary**

"Great workshop – very easy ideas that can be transferred into practice easily". **Stephanie Hughes, Carolside Primary**

"Feel more confident than before with more practical ideas/activities to use." **Jennifer Sluman, Merrylee Primary**

"Full of ideas to try and know the area around the school is full of fantastic areas to try them all out." **Jane Johnston Smith, Eaglesham Primary**

"Ben was sensational! The children adore him. **He's been a huge support and encouragement to the staff.**" **Maya Candido, Battlefield Primary**

"Outdoor learning is an area that I need to develop and this CPD has given me the confidence and skills to take my class out." **Marelle Sturrock, Sandwood Primary**



"I've been really impressed by the way the children have engaged in every session. **I'd be crazy not to continue the fantastic energy and enthusiasm.**"
Maya Candido, Battlefield Primary

"Really great lead for us to follow and **very inspiring**" S. Meehan, Shawlands Primary

"Loved it! Ben was excellent. **Great ideas, great presenter!**"
Teacher, Shawlands Primary

"This course helped me to be more creative and think of ideas to enhance my teaching."
Stephanie McCarry, St Bartholomew's Primary

"Fantastic! Really engaging, **could visualise using it. Very practical.**"
Joan Sweeny, Shawlands Primary

"Very Useful. Given me confidence to try something new, out of my comfort zone!" P Dunn, Shawlands Primary

"Excellent and inspiring!" S. Ward, Shawlands Primary



Of the participating teachers:

- ❖ **82%** felt the workshop was **VERY USEFUL** to their current teaching practices and **15% USEFUL**
- ❖ **100%** said **THEY WOULD** use some of the techniques and exercises explored that day in their current teaching practice
- ❖ **45%** chose **CONFIDENT** and **55% FAIRLY CONFIDENT** in using drama and storytelling as part of their outdoor learning plans going forward. No one selected the not confident option.



7. Learning and Reflection

- Each school received a 7 week residency, the first two taking place in August to October and the second two in October to December, with the half term break in between. Upon feedback at the end of the project, the Drama Artists felt that there was a dip in energy in weeks 6 and 7, and the residency could have been 5 weeks. This would allow for a unifying theme to go across the 5 weeks and hold the engagement of the participating pupils. This plan would also allow more time at the beginning of the school year to plan the residency with the participating schools, and more time at the end to gather evaluation responses before the term ends.
- The residency was structured so that there were 2 sessions rather than 3 on the Friday, leaving the Friday afternoon for planning and compiling the second edition resource pack. It was found that more time was needed for these tasks, and we will in future leave one full day each week for this. This will also allow for the 2 Drama Artists to meet up more often in order to share ideas and resources.
- While working in depth with 4 schools was positive as it allowed time for the Drama Artist to really integrate into the school, with many schools on our interest list, we felt it would be valuable to be able to reach more of these schools across the project years. Therefore in future, each participating school will receive 2 days of sessions per week, which allows us to reach twice as many schools.
- The final residency ended on 7th December, so the project came up against some very cold weather. While we advocate that outdoor learning should take place throughout the whole school year, the colder weather was difficult for the Drama Artists as they were outside for 2-3 hours each day. Making the residency 5 weeks and therefore finishing 2 weeks earlier will help us in avoiding the coldest weather.
- A weekly lesson plan was sent to participating teachers every Friday for the session taking place the following week. Teachers have requested to receive this earlier so that they can plan around the content of the session. With each Friday being kept free for planning in future residencies, this will allow the Drama Artist to plan ahead farther in advance and send these out earlier so that teachers can integrate themes into their plan for the rest of the school week.
- Some teachers were anxious about delivering their own session during week 5. We will make sure to emphasise to teachers that this is not an assessment of what they have learned, but a supportive experience to work with the Drama Artist.
- Some evaluation questions were quite difficult for the younger children, and we have planned to simplify the P1-3 forms for the next Out to Play.
- We found it was difficult to ensure that evaluation forms were returned as schools are very busy, especially at the end of term. We will make sure this process is as

streamlined as possible for teachers next time, giving them plenty of warning and making sure the forms aren't any longer than what is required.

- We split pupil evaluation into P1-3 and P4-7 age groups and reported on these separately. Although this took more time to analyse, this proved to be a more in-depth way of looking at the data, as there was often a difference seen in the age groups. It also allowed us to offer the older children more options (adding "Strongly Agree" and "Strongly Disagree" options) which made the data more effective.
- Out to Play 2015 was delivered by Drama Artist Ben Macfadyen and in 2017 both Ben and Sophie McCabe. Whilst the 2017 sessions involved fresh ideas, creativity and the exploration of new learning outcomes by both artists, we learned that much of the work delivered in 2015 could be revisited, and that many of Ben's original pilot project ideas were so effective that they should form part of future Out to Play projects, instead of continuously trying to reinvent the wheel. To enable this, we will build in time for previous staff to deliver training with new Drama Artists for subsequent projects, helping to retain the essence of what Out to Play has become, whilst enabling new artists to bring their own creativity and ideas.
- Both Drama Artists wove overarching stories across the 7 weeks using a story chest and puppet characters to support this, which the children responded very well to. Next time, we will continue this method as a really engaging way to tie the project to one theme, with plenty of opportunity to weave in other topics throughout.
- The unique combination of storytelling, drama and outdoor learning has proved powerful as an approach and has many positive effects on participants, including increasing confidence, inspiring team work, and improving children's emotional literacy. One teacher said that giving children a chance to use their imagination isn't often given enough time at school, and that this proved very valuable.



8. Conclusion

At the end of the project, there was a clear progression in pupils **enjoying the outdoors** and **feeling connected to nature**. We saw a wonderful increase in **enthusiasm for nature** and **commitment to care for the natural world**, with participants showing an **understanding that their own actions can make a difference to the environment**. Children engaged excellently with the project and enjoyment and inspiration levels were clear to see from their enthusiastic comments. The children showed **high levels of progression** through each General Learning Outcome in relation to learning for sustainability.



Pupils' creativity developed throughout the project through engagement with **drama and storytelling**, and they responded very positively to being encouraged to use their **imagination in their learning**. Their social and personal skills also developed greatly, with pupils showing improved **listening skills** and the ability to **articulate their feelings**, and **increased confidence** was seen in many participants.

Having seen new **interdisciplinary outdoor learning techniques** in action, and tried these themselves, teachers from participating schools and the CPD sessions felt empowered to engage in outdoor learning, and utilise more creative learning techniques such as drama and storytelling within their lessons, with the confidence and knowledge to implement and encourage this widely in their own schools and to do so for years to come.

The Resource Pack and upcoming second edition pack will continue to be available to education professionals in the hope that learning from this project will spread throughout the education system and that more **children will be given access to higher quality outdoor learning experiences**, as knowledge of the effectiveness of using **drama and storytelling within outdoor learning** is more widely shared.



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