



# Out to Play & Uprooted Evaluation 2015



# Table of Contents

<b>1.</b>	<b>OUT TO PLAY OVERVIEW</b>	<b>3</b>
1.1	Resources	3
<b>2.</b>	<b>WHAT WE SET OUT TO DO</b>	<b>4</b>
2.1	Key Outcomes	4-5
2.2	Educational Links	6
2.3	Monitoring and Evaluating	6
<b>3.</b>	<b>GETTING OUT TO PLAY</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>PUPIL FEEDBACK</b>	<b>8</b>
4.1	Presentation of Data	9
4.2	Qualitative Data	10-18
4.3	Quantitative Data	19-21
<b>5</b>	<b>TEACHER FEEDBACK</b>	<b>22-23</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>OUT TO PLAY CPD</b>	<b>24-25</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>LEARNING AND REFLECTION</b>	<b>26-27</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>CONCLUSION – OUT TO PLAY</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>UPROOTED AND THE LIVING STAGE</b>	<b>29-36</b>



## 1. Out to Play - Overview

**F**or 13 weeks, from March-June 2015, Drama Artist Ben Mali Macfadyen collaborated with teachers and pupils 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 sessions, utilizing new skills in combining drama, storytelling and outdoor learning.

The 4 partner Primary Schools were **Aultmore Park, Balornock, Corpus Christi and St Vincent's Primary**. The residencies were followed up with **4 CPD Sessions** in September 2015 to share best practice from the project to a wider community of primary teachers across Glasgow. Eco Drama's *Out to Play* project reached:

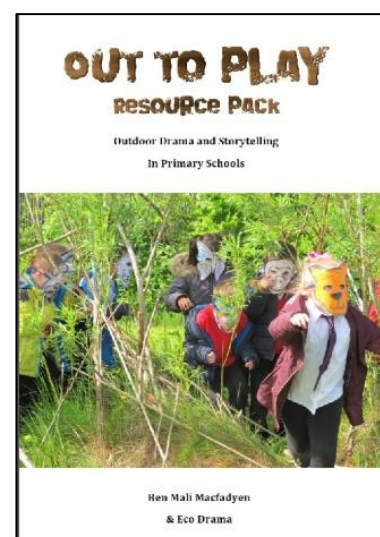


### 1.1 RESOURCES

After the residencies, Drama Artist Ben created an [Out to Play Resource Pack](#) showcasing 8 session plans developed during the *Out to Play* residencies. 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 residency and was shared widely to 91 participating teachers across Glasgow at the CPD Workshops.

Over the coming months the resource will also be made available to Outdoor Learning Coordinators, teachers and educators throughout Scotland and interested practitioners throughout the UK.



## 2. What We Set Out to Do

*Out to Play* sought to connect children and young people with nature through creative outdoor learning and quality outdoor drama and storytelling experiences. The project came about as a response to the current outdoor education movement within the Scottish education system and a creative response on the need to reconnect children with nature and the outdoors. We wanted to embark on a new journey to our previous indoor work, exploring the relationship between outdoor learning, creativity and outdoor performance, in the hope that creative experiences set in the outdoors might have a greater impact on children’s learning and reverence for nature. We wanted to bring city playgrounds to life, nurture a deeper connection with nature and inspire children and young people to notice and appreciate nature on their doorstep.

### 2.1 KEY OUTCOMES

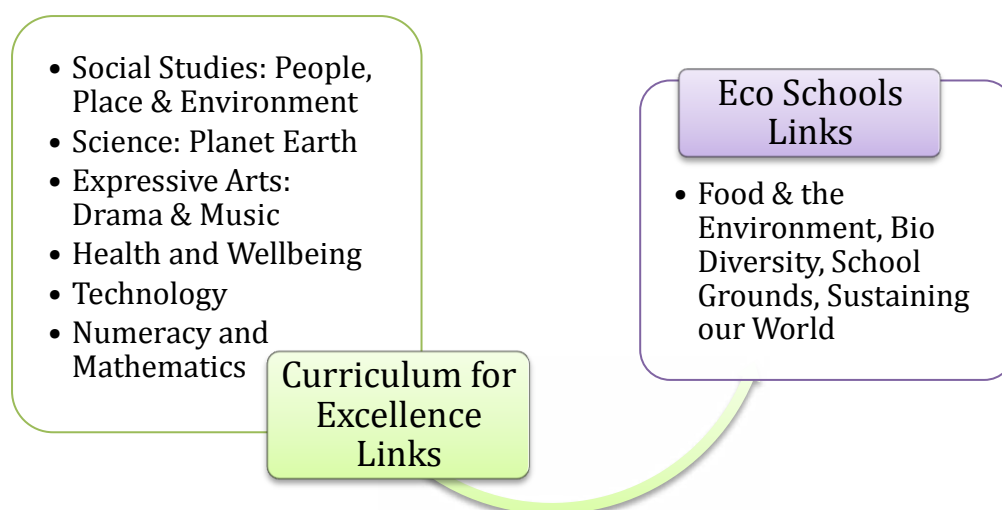
Outcome	Outcome Achieved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children having access to higher quality outdoor learning opportunities</li> </ul>	<p><b>151</b> outdoor sessions for <b>283 children</b> were run by an experienced Drama Artist. These focused on the role of storytelling and drama within outdoor learning. This unique 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><b>4</b> CPD sessions were carried out in August/September and empowered a wider community of <b>91 Glasgow teachers</b> to engage their pupils with outdoor creative learning.</p> <p>A detailed <b>Resource Pack</b> was created and <b>shared</b> with teachers and educators to use techniques from the residencies to further engage and encourage learning outdoors using interdisciplinary techniques.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children spending more time learning outdoors</li> </ul>	<p><b>All sessions were run outdoors</b>, encouraging 283 children and 10 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 <b>pursue outdoor learning further with future classes</b> and to encourage their schools to implement future outdoor learning plans. Our quantitative data showed <b>a rise in pupils spending time outdoors</b>. For a full analysis see page 19.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children and young people have improved <i>Knowledge &amp; Understanding, Attitudes &amp; Values, Enjoyment, Inspiration, Creativity &amp; Activity, Behaviour &amp; Progression</i> in relation to their learning for sustainability.</li> </ul>	<p>Our evaluation process uses the ‘Inspiring Learning’ initiative from the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council as a model for monitoring pupil’s progression. Feedback from the project shows positive progression through each of these learning outcomes in relation to learning for sustainability. For a full analysis of our qualitative data see Page 8-18</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children and young people have more opportunities to grow their own food.</li> </ul>	<p>As part of the Out to Play project pupils took part in planting sessions and planted their own ‘Living Stage’ and watched it bloom into the theatre production <i>Uprooted</i> which was performed in their school playgrounds in late summer. The set for this production was then replanted into one of the school playgrounds, transforming a grey fenced area into an enticing, unique garden play space. See Page 26 for more details.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased knowledge and understanding of the role of Drama and Theatre in Learning for Sustainability.</li> </ul>	<p>13 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 allowing practical skills to be developed. See pages 24-25 for a detailed analysis of teacher feedback from the project.</p> <p>4 Out to Play CPD Workshops were delivered to the wider community of primary school teachers across Glasgow. These sessions shared best practice from the residencies and offered ideas and creative learning techniques on embedding drama and storytelling within outdoor learning. See page 24 for a detailed analysis of teacher feedback from the CPD Workshops.</p> <p>The Drama Artist Ben created an <b><u>Out to Play Resource Pack</u></b> showcasing 8 session plans developed during the Out to Play residencies. The pack contains outdoor drama ideas, stories, games and creative outdoor learning techniques from the residency and was shared widely to 91 participating teachers across Glasgow at the CPD Workshops and to Eco Coordinators and educators of Scotland.</p>

## 2.2 EDUCATIONAL LINKS

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.

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



## 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 store creative material and personal responses generated throughout the project. Pupils also made '**Wishes for Nature**' at the end of the project.
- ✿ The Drama Artist met with ***Out to Play Committees***, consisting of 5-10 pupils representing each of the classes taking part in Out to Play. Here they were given a chance to feedback and input into future sessions.

**For the CPD Sessions:** Participating teachers were asked to fill in evaluation forms and pledges after the CPD sessions. These will be analysed in more details throughout the report.

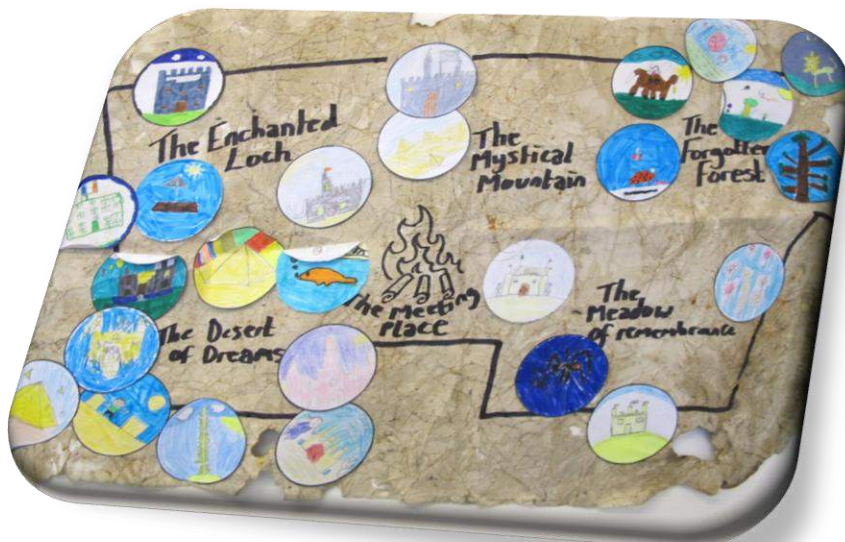
### 3. Getting Out to Play

**THE SESSIONS:** The Drama Artist was timetabled to work with each class for approx 1 hour 30mins. He worked with up to 3 classes a day and tailored his 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. **Towards the end of the project teachers were given the chance to lead their own session.**

*“My biggest hope is that each child leaves Out to Play sessions empowered and inspired, with a deeper connection to the natural world and their place within it.”* Ben Mali McFadyen, Drama Artist, Out to Play

**THE BLOGS:** Ben wrote weekly blogs on the progress of each week, detailing the class’s adventures, the games played and the stories told, reflecting on the journey, its progressions and challenges. You can read Ben’s blogs [HERE](#).

“My vision for the first week of the Out to Play sessions was to instil a sense of wonder; to dive deeply into imagination and free play and allow their own exploration to lead them to care for the natural world on their own terms. By creating the environment for magic and curiosity, they became open to the possibilities that spending time outside can create a deeper connection with nature, even when all you have to explore is a concrete playground. [Ben’s Blog WEEK 1: “TO NEVERLAND”](#)”



“I see so many people come alive when given a magical mysterious challenge to navigate with the promise of treasure at the end! It’s such a great way of teaching too. Rearranging letters to decipher the next destination; discovering objects and then counting them using times tables; answering challenging riddles that support logical deduction; collaborating and working as a team; engaging in physical exercise as they run between challenges; spending time outdoors and learning about natural processes. You can really shape treasure hunts to be about anything in the curriculum, and is much more fun than a quiz at the end of a topic.” [Ben’s Blog, WEEK 5: “A SENSORY TREASURE ADVENTURE”](#)”

## 4. Pupil Feedback

**"The most fun I have had in ages. Thank you."** James, P7  
Corpus Christi Primary

**"I have learned about nature and how it works. It was very fun too!! Thank you for taking us outside, I learned so much."** Eni, P7 Pupil Corpus Christi Primary

**"Ben, outdoor learning is great with you I hope we see you again. Everything we did with you was great. I love your stories and hope you see us again."** P7 pupil,  
Corpus Christi Primary

**"I loved it because nature is what is inside me. Thank you for everything. It has been a delight."**  
Leona, P4 Pupil,  
Balornock Primary



**"I really enjoyed the adventures!"** P3  
Pupil, Aultmore Park Primary

**"I like playing games. I actually like everything. Thanks for teaching me Ben."** Graham,  
P6/5 Balornock Primary

**"Thank you Ben. I appreciate your efforts to get pupils outdoors. Very amazing and interesting stories."** Jack, P6/5 Pupil,  
Balornock Primary

**"You are the best ever. I would like to see you again. I liked Outdoor Play. It was the best."**  
Dylan, P5/4 Pupil, St  
Vincent's Primary



**"Please can you come back! I had lots of fun!"**  
Matthew, P5 Pupil,  
Corpus Christi Primary

**"Thank you for teaching us. This program has made me aware of nature and made me more confident and happy"** – Aini, P6 Pupil St  
Vincent's



## 4.1 PRESENTATION OF DATA

Questions were designed to provide **qualitative feedback** from comments which describe levels of enjoyment and what pupils have learned from the sessions. Comments and creative responses from pupils, teachers and our Drama Artist Ben have been included throughout the evaluation document.



To assess our qualitative feedback we used The 'Inspiring Learning' initiative from the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council. This is a suggested framework for classifying qualitative data into learning outcomes. We attempted to apply this to the pupil's qualitative feedback for each workshop or production to identify the key **learning aspects** which have occurred as a result of Eco Drama's work.

### **INSPIRING LEARNING FRAMEWORK (2008 Museums, Libraries & Archives Council)**

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**

(Museums,  
Libraries and  
Archives Council,  
2008, retrieved  
from  
<http://www.inspiringlearningforall.gov.uk/learning/>)



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.

## 4.2 QUALITATIVE DATA

This 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:**” and asked to leave **any further comments**, to list their **favourite activities**, or to **leave a message** for Drama Artist Ben
- ❖ Wonder Boxes: Pupils decorated a recycled box and kept this in their class. A small notepad attached by string and a pen was given with each box. 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** etc.
- ❖ Wishes for nature: On Ben’s last session with the pupils, he encouraged them to each write an anonymous ‘**Wish for Nature**’ on a slip of paper and leave this with us.

**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**. Specific topics for P1-3 were the water cycle, seasons, life-cycles, production, disposal and recycling, and animal identification and for P4-7 the politics of water, animal migration, ecosystems and species classification.



“I didn’t know ants had so many jobs.”

“I learned worms are blind.”

“I learned how mud is made.”

“Nature helps us and animals to survive.”

“I have really enjoyed learning about the water cycle.”

“I learned why predators are important.”

“I enjoyed learning about all the different trees.”

“Nature keeps our world fresh.”

“I learned you can climb on trees.”

“We liked learning about the world.”

“I learned not to waste water.”

“I learned what is underground.”

**SKILLS** were developed through the introduction of practical skills including orienteering; co-ordination; model-making; design, drama skills, communication, movement and singing.



**“Through the project pupils became more focused, engaged, confident, inclusive and able to collaborate well in groups. I also noticed a development of creativity in movement, visual arts, storytelling and devising performances. Nearly all the pupils also became much more able to focus whilst outdoors which was a good sign for further outdoor learning possibilities beyond the project.”** Drama Artist, Ben Mali Mcfadyen

“We walked through a maze.”

“I enjoyed the digging.”

“We liked being animals.”

“We liked using model clay to make animals.”

“I liked growing plants.”

“I really enjoyed improvisation.”

“I liked learning about acting.”

**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 every pupil made their own wish for nature, the perceptiveness of the results being testament to the progression of their understanding and values.

**“Why do people keep killing animals?”** A P5 girl asked me this week.  
**“I just don’t know, Haley... maybe they don’t understand.”**  
**“Maybe they don’t understand that we are all part of the same family”,** she replied.  
BENS BLOG - WEEK 11: THE WEB OF LIFE





**"I wish that people would stop hunting down animals and killing them. I love nature."**

**"I wish that people wouldn't cut down trees and pollute rivers."**

**"If we did not have nature we would struggle to live happy lives."**

**"I wish that animals and humans lived peacefully."**

**"Nature helps us with day to day life."**

**"We cannot live without nature."**

**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.

**"It was mega fun!!!!!!"**

**"I enjoy seeing the beauty of nature every time I walk outside."**

**"I have enjoyed the fresh air and being active. The games are fun. I like to listen to the stories and going on adventures with Ben."**

**"I enjoyed being the queen and telling everyone what to do!"**

**"I didn't like it - I LOVED it! I hope you can come back again."**

**"Ben, I just enjoyed everything. But I enjoyed the stories so much!"**

**"I like playing with the parachute and the storytelling."**

**"I liked the experiments. I loved the ant game. I want to do more! It's fun."**





"You are a very good teacher. I loved it and I learned new things. Thank you Ben!!!"

"It's a fun and positive way to explore nature and life."

"I loved it. I loved when we did the spider web."

"Thank you so much I especially loved the game called "this is not a\_\_this is a \_\_\_" It was AMAZING! I also liked the factory game."

"The games were great."

**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.

"It's natural and if we didn't have nature nothing would live and culture wouldn't exist."

"When I am brushing my teeth I should save water."

"If nature was not there the world would be terrible."

"Respect bees and don't be afraid of them."

"I can look after plants, insects, other people and myself."

"Thank you so much. You have helped me with my dyslexia and taught me about nature."

"It's important to LEARN about nature."

"There was also an **amazing awareness developed about the natural world**. This encompassed a greater interest in nature in a broad sense but it also seemed to develop an **increased fascination with their own local natural environments and the animals and plants that live there**. From the wishes written in the final week there was an advanced understanding of the need to protect nature and a **deep care and commitment to do so**". Drama Artist, Ben Mali Mcfadyen

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 running, climbing, building dens, sports etc, revealing that playing outdoors was still something that many children still do, but round 2 saw a higher increase in children stating they liked to **use their imagination** and **play games, learn about nature** and **play in trees**. There were also a very high number of pupils who answered **Play with Ben**, showing a real positive engagement and association of being outdoors at school with Drama Artist Ben.



### “WORDS I USE TO DESCRIBE NATURE ARE:”

The 2 rounds are very similar; lots of positive descriptive words in both. However round 1 showed more of a tendency of pupils to list nouns to describe nature for example trees, birds and insects. The lower primaries predominately listed these in both rounds. There were also a few comments like “**sometimes dangerous**” and “**scary**”.

Round 2 however in upper primaries showed an increase in very positive adjectives to describe nature and less specific listing what nature *is*. The positive adjectives even developed more as well – words like **precious, elegant, joyful, loving, breathtaking, helpful** and concepts like **we need it**, showing a positive development in understanding and an emotional connection to the natural world. There were no negative adjectives used.

### “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.

Round 2 however reveals a much deeper understanding of the **importance of nature within our day to day lives** and what its loss would mean for us “**it would be terrible**”, “**culture wouldn’t exist**” It also sees a development of the concept that nature makes us “**happier**”, a very important benefit in terms of health and wellbeing. As one pupil aptly remarked “**If we did not have nature we would struggle to live a cool life. I AM HAPPY!**”

### “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: “**set up a club about saving plants**”, “**plant trees**”, “**use the 3 Rs**”, “**keep the environment clean**” etc. There was also a large number of pupils using the word “*them*” in phrases like “**show love to them**”, “**feed them**”, “**be kind to them**”, “**stop annoying them**”, showing them not only perceiving nature as synonymous with animals and living things that exist and grow around us, but perhaps more importantly a very strong development of empathy. The words “**love**” and “**kind**”, featured often in round 2, showing a very positive engagement with nature and a development of empathetic and compassionate attitudes and values.





I wish people didn't kill nature

I wish I am a flower so I can grow

I wish nature will never end

Wish people stopped killing animals for cloths and fashion..

I wish flowers could talk 

I wish nature has a good life    





Date Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> May ✓

First we made a circle we played a game called Swap Places.

Then we done rubbish and some someone pretend that rubbish was something else.

Next we went to the Enchanted Loch we had to touch the bottle then we waded around and slowly died down and pretended that we where oil.

Finally we walked in a line of oil then we talked about Recycling.



Pupil 'Out to Play Blog' by Balornock Primary

## Just so stories

How the cheetah got its speed.

By Luke

There was a cheetah drinking some water from the lake and a bear that lied a lot the bear seen the cheetah and told it that his shadow was a monster trying to eat him so the cheetah ran and ran un till night when the moon so the shadow disappeared so the cheetah rested until day his shadow was back so her ran and ran again day after day until the cheetah was SO fast he heard the bear telling his self that he tricked the cheetah but when he seen how fast the cheetah got he was jealous and that's how the cheetah got its speed.



Mansai

Hey Ben I have really enjoyed learning about the water cycle because its so much fun and the best bit is that when we were carrying the water in our head so that what I wanna tell you Goodbye from Mansai :)

Aini

I enjoy going out to play and having fun and I also like the fresh air.

Pupil 'Just so Stories', St Vincent's Primary from class 'Wonder Box'

Pupil notes taken from class 'Wonder Box'

**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 – **Enjoyment, Inspiration, Creativity; Knowledge and Understanding; Attitudes and Values; Skills;** 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.

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 based on the **‘Just so Stories’** used in sessions, **poems, cartoons and notes**. These notes actually became invaluable in assessing things that pupils had *learned*, as they used the Wonder Box for this process.

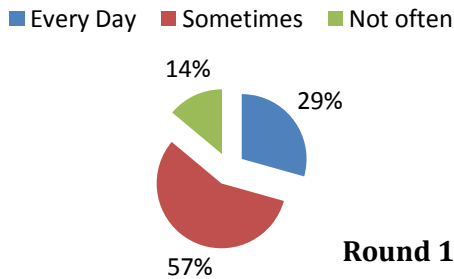
The ‘Wishes for Nature’ that Ben used in the last session was a lovely way for pupils to crystallise their feelings and showed a very **deep engagement with the natural world**, a **development of compassionate values**, and a **desire to change behaviour** in relation to caring for nature. Overall the extensive qualitative feedback generated over the 13 weeks is overwhelmingly positive, inspired and enthusiastic, a very tangible testimony to the success of the projects aims and objectives.



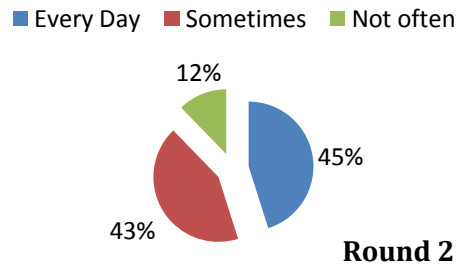
### 4.3 QUANTITATIVE DATA

We 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 13 weeks of outdoor learning sessions. Presented below are the full results of the quiz for both Round 1 and 2, calculated in percentages and presented in pie charts. This allows us to estimate the percentage rise and fall in answers, using all the data collected.

#### I Play Outdoors:

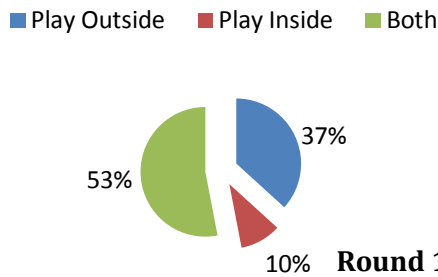


#### I Play Outdoors:

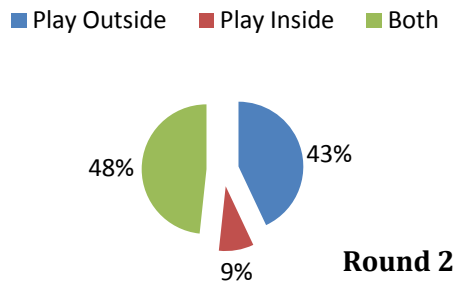


No of pupils playing outdoors every day rose from **29% to 45%**

#### At school I prefer to:

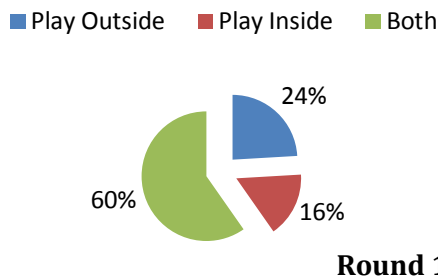


#### At school I prefer to:

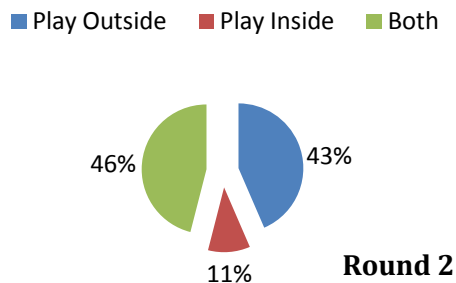


No of pupils preferring to play outdoors in school rose from **37% to 43%**

#### At home I prefer to:

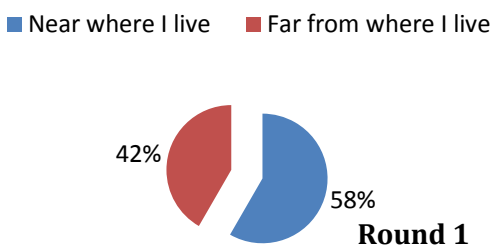


#### At home I prefer to:

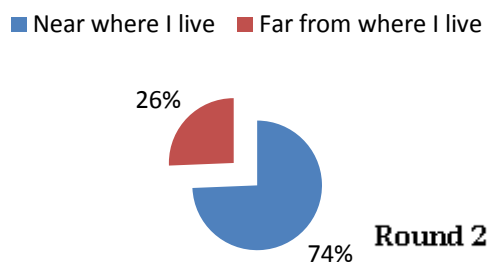


No of pupils preferring to play outdoors at home rose from **24% to 43%**

#### Nature is:



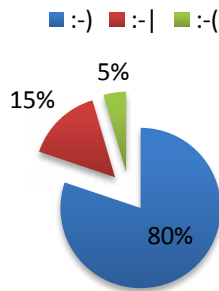
#### Nature is:



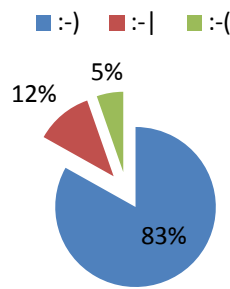
No of pupils perceiving nature as something near to them rose **58% to 74%**

PUPILS WERE ASKED TO CIRCLE THE FACE  WHICH BEST DESCRIBED THEIR EXPERIENCE OF THE FOLLOWING:

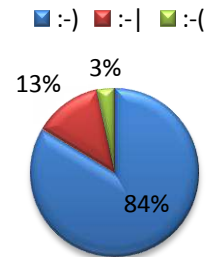
**It was lots of fun**



**I felt excited to go outside**

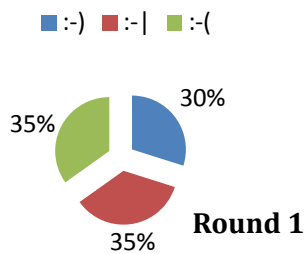


**I learned lots of new things**

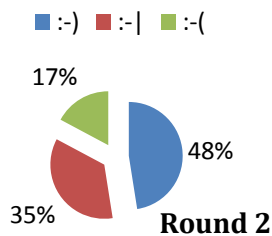


**SOME OF THE MOST POSITIVE PROGRESSIONS IN TERMS OF PROJECT AIMS AND OBJECTIVES CAME FROM THE FOLLOWING:**

**I know lots of stories about nature**

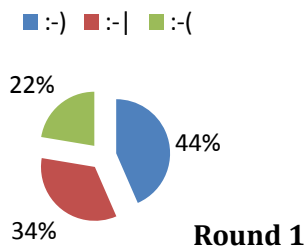


**I know lots of stories about nature**

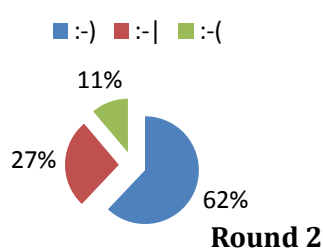


Pupils feeling they knew LOTS of stories about nature rose from **30% to 48%**

**I know lots of interesting facts about nature**

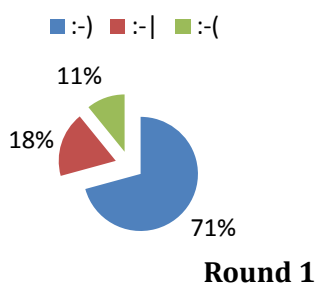


**I know lots of interesting facts about nature**

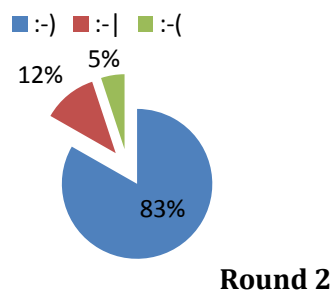


Pupils feeling they knew LOTS of interesting facts about nature rose from **44% to 62%**

**Playing outdoors helps me understand how important nature is**



**Playing outdoors helps me understand how important nature is**

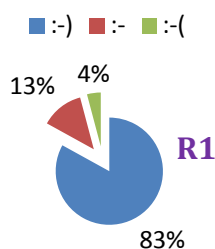


Pupils feeling that playing outdoors helped them understand how important nature is rose from **71% to 83%**

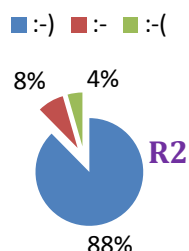
**THE REMAINING EVALUATION RESPONSES DISPLAYED EITHER AN INCREASE IN PUPILS PICKING THE TOP**

**😊 OPTION OR AN INCREASE IN PUPILS SHIFTING FROM 😞 TO THE MIDDLE OPTION 😐:**

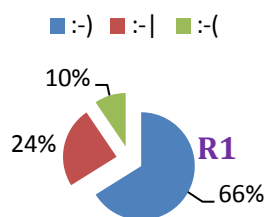
**I like to play outdoors**



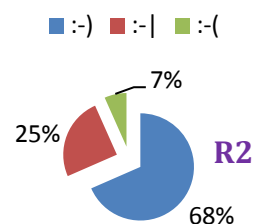
**I like to play outdoors**



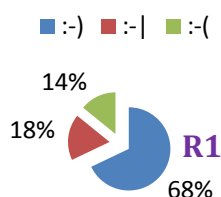
**I know lots of games to play outdoors**



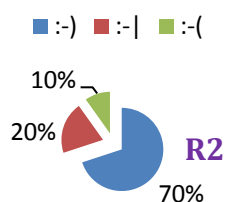
**I know lots of games to play outdoors**



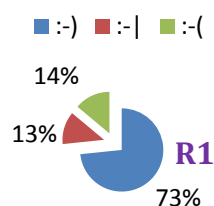
**I like to use drama to explore outdoor spaces**



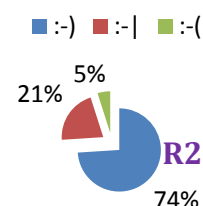
**I like to use drama to explore outdoor spaces**



**I enjoy using my imagination to explore outdoors**



**I enjoy using my imagination to explore outdoors**



**REFLECTIONS:** Overall, the quantitative data from the whole project shows a very clear **progression in pupils playing outdoors regularly and preferring to play outdoors in school and at home.** It also indicated that there is an increase in pupils **feeling connected to nature**, and more **perceiving it as something accessible** to them. They **had fun**, were **excited to learn outside** and **learned lots** from the project; in particular **stories and facts about nature.** There is also a growing awareness that playing outdoors is beneficial to the pupils for their own **understanding of nature.**



Analysing the quantitative data from individual schools it became apparent that Balornock Primary showed more pupils choosing the lower 😞 option in relation to using imagination and drama to explore outdoors. The other schools data predominantly rose very positively in these areas. Balornock had the least amount of green space, the playground predominantly concrete. One of our aims was to utilise imagination skills to connect children with nature, even in concrete spaces. Although we received wonderful quantitative data from the Balornock Primary (consistently **over 50% and up to 89%** of pupils selecting the highest 😊 option to describe their experiences and reflections), it is still interesting to note that more children *struggled* with using imagination and drama to explore outdoors in the environment with less access to green space.

## 5. Teacher Feedback

**"Ben has inspired me with lots of activities and stories – he has planted a seed and I look forward to implementing projects next season... I have loved being a part of *Out to Play* and the children have absolutely loved it also!"** Jilly Moffat, Teacher Aultmore Park Primary

**"It made me realise that a lot of what I do inside I can take outside. Very enjoyable and informative for the children and myself."** Fiona Harris, Teacher Balornock Primary



**"I think regular time outdoors encourages children to be creative and explore. I will definitely keep the routine going next year. Really enjoyed the experience. Loved the stories. Ben was great! This has been a very worthwhile."** Patricia O'Keefe, Teacher St Vincent's Primary

**"Thought it was very innovative and great for the children."** Barbara Thomson, Aultmore Park Primary

**"It has been a brilliant opportunity for professionals and children. Now I have a bank of ideas for future learning."** L Slinger, St Vincent's Primary



**"Has been a great experience for the class they have loved every session with Ben."** Catriona Goddard, Teacher, Aultmore Park Primary

**"The project introduced the children to some very important messages and I think that it did this in an accessible and natural way. I particularly enjoyed the use of storytelling and think that this is something I can use."** Sam Harte, Teacher Balornock Primary

“One of the most simple but successful elements of the sessions was the space given to the pupils to freely and creatively express themselves outdoors. One teacher commented that ‘**it gives permission for them to just be children again**’, rather than having to stick to often very rigid curriculum work in the classroom. This seemed to be an **effective tool for learning**, and I noticed **a real development in pupils ability to reflect on their learning**, even weeks later, through the games, exercises and performances they created.” Drama Artist, Ben Mali Mcfadyen

Of the participating teachers:

- ❖ **100%** felt confident **LEADING** a class in outdoor learning
- ❖ **100%** felt confident about using **STORYTELLING** to engage pupils in outdoor learning
- ❖ **78%** felt confident about using **DRAMA** to engage pupils in outdoor learning
- ❖ When asked “How well did the themes in Out to Play link with the Curriculum and your Eco Schools Programme?”  
**70%** said **EXCELLENT** and **30%** said **GOOD**

“A wonderful experience for the children and myself. A fresh look on how to develop Outdoor Learning in a more creative manner. Fantastic experience. I have learned so much from Ben. His nature and good humour with the children have been lovely to observe - thank you!” Tommy Hynes, Corpus Christi Primary School



“It was the first time I saw one child smile!” M Campbell, Teacher Balornock Primary



“I thought Out to Play was a good learning experience for the children and a good tool that could be used to boost the confidence of children who need extra encouragement to take part in active learning” Lee-Anne Beaton, St Vincent’s Primary

## 6. Out to Play CPD

The residencies were followed up with **4 CPD Sessions** in September 2015 to share best practice from the project to a wider community of primary teachers across Glasgow. **91 teachers** from across **33 Glasgow Primary Schools** attended the sessions. All teachers were given a free copy of the [Out to Play Resource Pack](#) to take away with them.

**“Best CPD event I have been to in ages.”** Catriona Brown, Battlefield Primary

**“Helpful, fun and now I want to go back to school and *have a go.*”** Alison Kerr, Antonine Primary

**“I sometimes find it difficult to come up with imaginative ways of taking learning outdoors so it was nice to observe this and be given a bank of ideas”** Kirsty Gray, Wallacewell Primary

**“Very practical demonstrations! Excellent CPD with very enthusiastic leaders.”** Linda Weir, St Francis of Assisi Primary



**“As Eco Coordinator I would like to expand the use of outdoor space for learning and teaching. Great fun. Thank you. Lots of food for thought.”** Fiona Young, Carntyne Primary School

**“Really enjoyable and a fantastic resource to take away. Already developing a garden and would like to take it further now I’ve been given ideas.”** Linda Houston, Knightswood Primary



**“This CPD session gave me lots of good ideas on how to incorporate outdoor learning into my teaching practice”** Amanda Deary, St Maria Goretti Primary



"Fantastic CPD. So important for kids to connect to nature." Hazel Ure, Bankhead Primary

"The resource given to us ensures that I have no excuse not to give it a go." Sandra Gill, St Stephen's Primary

"Before today I was quite nervous about outdoor learning, however I have heard lots of ideas today that I am very excited to get using." Irene Boyle, Corpus Christi Primary

"Presented really well. Team was very energetic and engaging. Thank you." Aafia Ali, Mount Florida Primary

"I hadn't realised the power of imagination within outdoor learning. Really informative session, lots of ideas to start with. Thank you." Irene Boyle Corpus Christi Primary

"The thought of outdoor learning sessions with the pupils was rather scary. However I feel much more confident now and look forward to trying new ideas. Thank you for an enjoyable interesting CPD Experience." Marie McGill Corpus Christi Primary

"I am new to outdoor learning therefore it was very useful to get ideas and I feel a bit more confident about teaching outdoor learning. Thank you very much. It was very helpful and your team are fab." Anon Teacher



Of the participating teachers:

- ❖ **89%** felt the workshop was **VERY USEFUL** to their current teaching practices and **11% USEFUL**
- ❖ **99%** said **THEY WOULD** use some of the techniques and exercises explored that day in their current teaching practice
- ❖ **59%** chose **CONFIDENT** and **38% FAIRLY CONFIDENT** in using drama and storytelling as part of their outdoor learning plans going forward. Only 3% were not confident

**NOTE:** many of the teachers commented that they would feel more confident after having had a chance to read through some more resource pack content, understandable as we only had a few hours to work with them. Comparing this with the *Out to Play participating class teachers* who felt **100% confident** leading outdoors **100%** using storytelling and **78%** confident using drama we can really see the impact that more **in depth residencies** can have on instilling confidence in teachers to try different creative learning techniques outdoors.

## 8. Learning and Reflection

- ❖ The Out to Play project ran from March to June 2015 for a total of 13 weeks. While this meant the Drama Artist could deliver a rich, varied and in depth programme of outdoor learning, he observed that towards the end it felt that there were just slightly too many sessions and it could perhaps have been a shorter residency. The ideal length suggested is 7 weeks for future Out to Play projects. This means there is enough time to really get to know pupils at each school and to cover various topics in depth. By condensing it this also means that more schools can benefit from the Out to Play experience.
- ❖ The Drama Artist gave feedback that it would be wonderful to work alongside another drama artist and meet with them from time to time - either working in other schools or on different days, because he felt it was sometimes quite an isolating role without a colleague to bounce ideas off or work in collaboration with. In future, we would take this feedback on to have at least 2 Drama Artists working on the project so that not only this helps mitigate the above, but also helps us to reach more schools during the project period.
- ❖ One concern was that on grey days or facing intermittent light rain, teachers chose to cancel their sessions or keep them in small concrete covered areas, which limited the possibilities for the sessions being about nature and play. As most days in Glasgow are wet (!) we believe it's important for the sessions to still go ahead as otherwise it could very much limit the time children spend learning outdoors. Emphasising this throughout the project will help, and ensuring the message reaches all teachers involved.
- ❖ During the Teacher-led week, there was a sense with some of the teachers that they were leading an indoor class outside more than using the space outdoors to support their learning. Now that we have piloted the project, next time we will provide more detailed guidelines for the teachers before leading their individual sessions in order to support a more integrated approach.
- ❖ It didn't work so well working so close to the end of the summer term. There was so much going on in the schools in June and many of the children (and teachers) had mentally and emotionally left the school grounds 3 weeks before the end of term! Therefore in future we will be mindful of planning Out to Play to finish up a few weeks prior to the end of term.
- ❖ Teachers appreciated getting a week plan early on, however a more extensive content plan could be offered should the project be implemented again, and therefore enabling teachers to integrate more of the Out to Play elements into other areas of their teaching.

- ❖ Teachers fed back that August-November would be a good time for Out to Play also. In future in order to maximise resources, work with good weather, and reach as many schools and beneficiaries, we would run the Out to Play residencies 3 times a year, with 2 Drama Artists each delivering 3 x 7 week blocks in the spring, summer & autumn terms. With 2 Drama Artists leading at the same time in different schools, we could reach many more schools and beneficiaries per year.
- ❖ One reflection that stands out from the quantitative data is that children with the least access to green space found it harder to engage imaginatively with the outdoors. To address this we will increase the use of visuals and props within the schools with solely concrete playgrounds.
- ❖ It was valuable to work with both older and younger pupils, as not only did we have the opportunity to create resources for every age and stage, but the feedback was more varied. The lower primary pupils had high enjoyment of the project and it appears valuable that this age group are introduced to outdoor learning at an early stage. However, the upper primaries were able to express their understanding and knowledge and articulate their learning. From an evaluation point of view, it was good to work with a mix of ages on the project.
- ❖ Making a resource book for P1-P7 proved quite challenging to do in one document as there was so much content to cover and meant that structuring it clearly took some time. Perhaps 2 separate documents may have been the best option.
- ❖ One very positive reflection is the quantity of valuable qualitative, quantitative, creative and verbal feedback. Because of the project length, the unique skills of our Drama Artist Ben and the novelty of taking learning beyond the four walls of the classroom, pupils and teachers alike, from the project and the CPD, showed much higher levels of enjoyment, engagement and creative expression than some of our previous indoor projects. There was a very definite rise in very inspired feedback from the sessions and CPD, with comments like **the best, I/the children loved it, please come back etc** repeated, and a flow of creative material being produced in the classroom out-with the sessions.



## 9. Conclusion - Out to Play

**B**Y the end of the project there was a clear progression in pupils **playing outdoors regularly, preferring to play outdoors in school and at home, feeling connected to nature and perceiving it as something accessible** to them. Pupils developed a **fascination with local environments and a care and commitment to protecting them**. They also showed **very high levels of progression** through each General Learning Outcome in relation to learning for sustainability.

They showed a wonderful **engagement with the project** and enjoyment, inspiration and creativity levels soared as the weeks went on. They connected extremely well with using drama and storytelling as outdoor learning tools and expressed a high level of pleasure at doing so. They were given unique opportunities to grow their own plants and food in creative containers and were encouraged to develop these skills at school and home.

With new access to interdisciplinary outdoor learning techniques, teachers from participating schools and the CPD sessions felt empowered to engage in their own outdoor learning and the Out to Play Resource Pack gave them the confidence and knowledge to implement and encourage this widely in their own schools. The Resource Pack will continue to be distributed in the hope that this learning will be passed on from school to school, classroom to classroom and that more **children will be given access to higher quality outdoor learning experiences**, as knowledge of the role of **drama and storytelling within outdoor learning** is more widely shared.

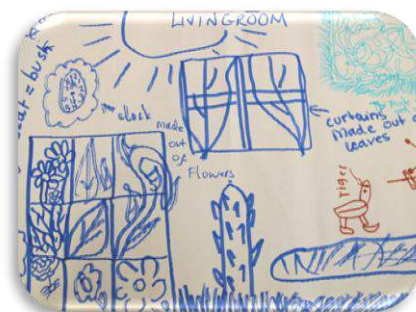
**Watch the Uprooted & Out to Play documentary:**

<https://vimeo.com/141887997>



## 7. Uprooted and the *Living Stage*

During the Out to Play residencies, pupils also planted their own '**Living Stage**', a recyclable, biodegradable and edible theatre set created from locally found, reclaimed materials. The plants were grown from seed & tended by the children across the four schools during the project, and pupils also input into the set design, brainstorming ideas around the theme of 'Home'. During summer, Eco Drama created a professional theatre production '**Uprooted**' and the pupil's plants were housed in the Living Stage set.



The production toured throughout August 2015 to various outdoor venues across Glasgow including the **Merchant City Festival**, **Barrhead Water Works**, **Kilmardinny House** and **The Children's Wood**, finishing with visits to the 4 Glasgow Primary Schools, with pupils excited to see how their plants had grown from tiny seeds into the amazing vegetables, fruits, herbs and flowers on set. Part theatre show, part garden and part art installation, audiences had the opportunity to nibble on plants, smell herbs and sample drinks made from the set.

**Uprooted reached 1364 children and adults over 31 performances.**





At the end of its tour, The Living Stage was returned to Corpus Christi Primary School, with set pieces becoming their planters, its plants their food and its waste their compost, transforming a grey metal fenced playground area into a unique enticing play space for children to use for storytelling, gardening and outdoor learning for many years to come.

### **Corpus Christi Playground Before & After**



## Audience and Pupil Feedback

Pupil feedback showed very high levels of:

### ENJOYMENT, INSPIRATION AND CREATIVITY:

***“It made me feel wonderful, bright and bubbly.”*** Primary 5 Pupil, Corpus Christi Primary

***“I felt like the show brightened up my day.”*** Primary 5 Pupil, Corpus Christi Primary

***“It made me feel like I wanted to stand up and dance.”*** P5 pupil Corpus Christi Pupil

***“The show made me feel calm and happy.”*** P5 Pupil, Balornock Primary

***“It seemed to be the nicest show I have ever seen.”*** Amina, Primary 7, St Vincent’s Primary

***“The show made me feel happy and excited because the girl done gymnastics and was amazing. The show was excellent.”*** Primary 7, St Vincent’s Primary

***“I just love growing food it’s so much fun. I really love the ideas they made up to make a fabulous stage.”*** Primary 7, St Vincent’s Primary

***“I thought everything was spectacular.”*** P7 pupil, Corpus Christi Primary

***“It made me feel joyful and happy.”*** P5 pupil, Corpus Christi Primary



### KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING:

***“We need food to stay alive and growing your own is a lot healthier”*** Pupil P6/7 Aultmore Park Primary

***“The stage was outstanding and I learned so much.”*** Pupil P6/7, St Vincent’s Primary

***“I learned that some flowers are edible and not to eat chilli without milk!”*** P7 pupil Corpus Christi



***“You can grow plants anywhere, even in a shoe!”*** Primary 7, St Vincent’s Primary

***“If you grow your own food it tastes much better than buying them in packages from the shops”*** Pupil P7, Primary 7, St Vincent’s Primary

***“I learned that you can eat some flowers, that you can make some really interesting and delicious drinks from plants.”*** Primary 7, St Vincent’s Primary

***“I learned why we need to look after plants more and I saw how the actors made their hats.”*** P4 pupil, Corpus Christi Primary

**ATTITUDES AND VALUES; and ACTIVITY, BEHAVIOUR AND PROGRESSION**

***“It made me feel happy to see people care about our planet.”*** P6/7 pupil Aultmore Park Primary

***“It made me feel more active to grow my own fruits and vegetable”***, Primary 7, St Vincent’s Primary

***“The show made me feel motivated to be more Eco Friendly.”*** P6 Pupil, Balornock Primary

***“I felt inspired to grow my own food at home.”***  
P6/6 Pupil, Aultmore Park Primary

***“The show made me feel excited like I wanted to grow lots of things”***. Primary 7, St Vincent’s Primary

***“It was funny and it made everyone happy and think of the environment more.”*** Primary 7, St Vincent’s Primary

***“It makes me feel inspired to grow my own vegetable, herbs, fruits and flowers in my garden.”*** P7/6 Pupil, St Vincent’s Primary



Community audience feedback from the tour dates was likewise inspired:



***“Fantastic show, imaginative, musical, whimsical. Growing plants is the way forward. Thank you!”*** Audience Member – Merchant City Festival

***“Thank you for braving the ever so unpredictable weather yesterday! We loved the show. Full of charm and green goodness! A really important piece of work to help children and families feel close to nature and the food we eat.”*** Tanja Czajka, audience member - Merchant City Festival

***“Brilliant show today at the Merchant City Festival – my four year old loved it!”***  
Lisa Rourke

***“Thank you - it was great to see the garden full of people enjoying themselves in the sunshine! We are delighted to have hosted you.”*** Alisdair, Greyfriars Garden

























***“Kids really enjoyed it and have been asking when they can see it again. Excellent!”*** Tim Dyer

***“Watching this show has made me see plants in a whole new light. I’m a landscape gardener and until now I just saw them as plants. I didn’t realise their complexities, or that you could eat some flowers!”*** Audience member, the Children’s Wood

***“Well done, everyone! Keeping adults and kids enthralled is no mean feat. Drink was lovely.”*** Audience Member, Merchant City Festival

***“Wonderful, magical, bringing nature even more alive. We were enchanted throughout – even our dog Dixie Boo loved it. Thank you for a lovely afternoon.”***  
Donna

We also asked pupils questions which enabled us to collect quantitative data on the responses. Presented below are the full results calculated in percentages using all the data collected from **Aultmore Park, St Vincent's, Corpus Christi and Balornock Primary**.

It was exciting	 <b>78%</b>	 21%	 3%
I thought the show was very good	 <b>78%</b>	 17%	 5%
I felt inspired	 <b>66%</b>	 25%	 9%
I learned lots of new things	 <b>84%</b>	 14%	 2%
I understand that I can grow my own vegetables, herbs, fruit and flowers	 <b>82%</b>	 15%	 3%
I would like to grow more food in school	 <b>84%</b>	 12%	 4%
I would like to grow more food at home	 <b>75%</b>	 15%	 10%
I understand that growing plants helps care for our environment	 <b>90%</b>	 9%	 1%

- ❖ **76% of pupils** answered **YES** when asked if they liked planting and growing (17% **MAYBE** and just 7% **NO**)
- ❖ **90% of teachers** said they would like to do more growing with their class in future
- ❖ **94% of teachers** selected either **Excellent** or **Good** to express how well **Uprooted** complimented their pupils' learning in class
- ❖ **100%** of teachers selected either **Excellent** or **Good** when asked how well **Uprooted** linked with the curriculum and their Eco Schools programme.

***"Not to be missed! Fantastic, essential Creative Learning Experience. You will enjoy every minute and be entranced, amused and deeply moved by the experience. Thank you to all the stars!"*** Teacher, Balornock Primary

***"Staging of the show outside made it a bit more special. Outdoor atmosphere was calming and the set was beautiful – quite magical!"*** Teacher, St Vincent's Primary

## Conclusion – Uprooted

Participants displayed high levels of enjoyment, inspiration and creativity in relation to the performance. Both the qualitative and quantitative data suggests a very deep level of enjoyment with this unique outdoor performance, with a very large number of audience members expressing that it particularly made them feel *happy and calm* and that the performance instilled in them a new found *respect, awe and appreciation for living plants* and gave them a desire to grow more at home.

This strong connection to nature seemed to be instilled further by the outdoor staging of the play, the close proximity of the audience to the *living stage*, and the *opportunity to explore, smell and nibble on the set after the performance*.

Knowledge and understanding levels soared, with pupils suggesting that they had *learned lots of new facts*, particularly about plants and home growing. A high percentage of pupils expressed the *desire to grow more at school and home* and displayed a very marked *understanding that this was good for the environment*. Teachers also showed a very significant desire *to do more growing with their classes* in future and recognised the relevance that the production had in linking with the school curriculum.

Practitioners, designers and theatre-makers attending the Uprooted CPD displayed inspiration and enthusiasm to embed sustainability into the heart of their projects and productions, and so in future may develop more sustainable, ecologically focused arts practices.

Children & young people were given unique opportunities to grow their own plants and food in creative containers and have been encouraged to *develop these skills* at school and home. In particular, the Living Stage is now situated at Corpus Christi primary School playground, and will continue to provide a unique play space for growing and outdoor learning for the local children, young people and community for many years to come.





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