



ECO DRAMA FINAL REPORT 2023-2024



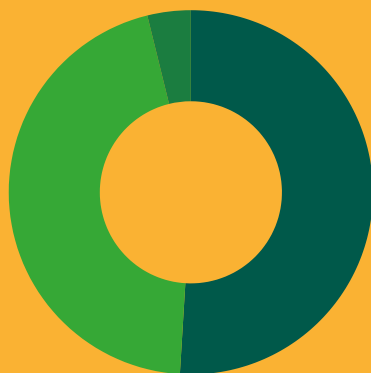
We are delighted to share our latest evaluation report, charting Eco Drama's work during 2023-24.

Our award-winning creative outdoor learning project Out to Play continues to be a well-established fixture in our project calendar and had yet more exciting developments through our ongoing Glasgow City Council Commission. Throughout autumn 2023, The Whirlybird theatre production headed back on tour across Glasgow and Scotland, and we ended the year with some exciting new project developments, plus the launch of our rebrand and new website.



In 2023-24:

We achieved over 50% of our annual revenue through earned income. A huge, first-time achievement for our charity, helping us to become more resilient & sustainable.



- Earned income - 53%
- Grants - 43%
- Donations - 4%

**1,463 pupils
& 236 teachers**

participated in **415**
Out to Play creative
outdoor learning sessions.

We launched our new branding & website, designed by Bold Studio & supported by Brand for Growth.

**1,440 children
& 367 grown-ups**

came to see The Whirlybird theatre show at **15 schools, 6 nurseries, 4 theatre venues & 2 community settings.**

Out to Play was a Nature of Scotland 'Health and Wellbeing Award' finalist.

Out to Play

Our award-winning Out to Play creative outdoor learning project brings together professional Drama Artists with partner primary schools, early years settings and Additional Support Needs (ASN) schools to explore and promote the role of drama, storytelling and creativity in outdoor learning and Learning for Sustainability.

A strong CPD element underpins the project, giving teachers and practitioners the skills and confidence to use drama and storytelling as valuable resources in delivering outdoor learning and play, helping to create a legacy beyond the life of the project.



Residency themes

Our 5-week Out to Play residencies for primary schools took inspiration from folklore and stories originating from Scotland and around the world - sparking a sense of wonder and awe for nature, as well as promoting global citizenship and supporting pupils to learn about different biomes and ecosystems. Sessions explored themes including Scottish forests, water conservation, and climate action and covered the curriculum areas of Social Studies, Literacy and English, Expressive Arts, Technologies and Health and Wellbeing.



935 Learners & 130 teachers

participated in 7
Out to Play residencies
across 5 primary schools
& 1 Additional Support
Needs (ASN) school.

Drama Artists wrote 6
new educator blogs.

Out to Play residencies took place at:

Pirie Park Primary School
Aultmore Park Primary School
Clyde Primary School (2x)
Craigton Primary School
Highpark Primary School
Hollybrook Academy (ASN)

Out to Play for Primary Schools

In 2023-24, Out to Play...

...sparked wonder & curiosity for our natural world

Pupils at Aultmore Park Primary School joined Drama Artist Ronan McMahon on a quest to solve some of nature's magical mysteries - classes braved the Forgotten Forest, the Sea of Sound and the Whispering Willows in their reimagined playground.



...valued individual learning styles

Out to Play sessions at Hollybrook Academy - a secondary ASN school - were highly sensory and flexible, to suit the individual needs of participants. Some learners took part as a group, whilst others participated in shorter, one-to-one sessions with the Drama Artist.

...connected outdoor learning to the Curriculum for Excellence

'It's so valuable, it hits so many important elements for Health & Wellbeing, Literacy, Social Skills - basically every area of building a strong class culture.'

Teacher, Craigton Primary School

...increased teachers' confidence in leading creative outdoor learning

'I enjoyed taking over for the teacher-led session - I felt confident to do so.'

Teacher,
Pirie Park Primary School

...addressed schools' outdoor learning needs

Teachers at Clyde Primary School participated in an end-of-residency CPD session focussing on the school's outdoor learning equipment. The session supported teachers to familiarise themselves with the equipment available, and how to use it in different ways.

Out to Play For Early Years

The Early Learning & Childcare department at Glasgow City Council continued to commission Out to Play in 2023-24 for more nursery settings across the city. Out to Play CPD Webinars, Mini-Residencies and Out to Play In a Day sessions engage and inspire 3-5 year olds and early years practitioners with an imaginative, play-based approach to outdoor learning. In-person experiences include group sessions for children as well as staff CPD, led by a Drama Artist from Eco Drama.

'All staff knew the expectation of them before they started which helped with any concerns/worries.'

Nursery Manager, Burnbrae Children's Centre

[The Drama Artist] was amazing with the staff and children. I learned so much from her that I will definitely be putting in my practice daily.

Nursery Practitioner, Flying Start Nursery (Darnley)

528 children & 86 early years practitioners

participated in Out to Play Mini-Residencies & Out to Play In a Day.



We loved meeting practitioners from Perth & Kinross at our Out to Play Early Years CPD Webinars in November 2023, commissioned by Perth & Kinross Council. Attendees participated in creative learning and nature connection activities, explored new games and techniques, and shared opportunities and challenges of creative Outdoor Learning and Play.

83 early years practitioners

participated in 2 interactive Out to Play CPD webinars in February.



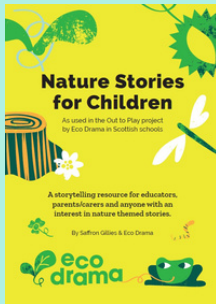
How confident do you **now** feel about using drama and storytelling during outdoor play at your nursery?

Out to Play

Development & New Creative Projects

We created a series of **digital training videos for early years practitioners** demonstrating the key approaches of the Out to Play project. The videos can be accessed quickly and easily via our website, allowing practitioners to readily implement arts-based outdoor Learning for Sustainability within their setting.

26 teachers
participated in our
new **Out to Play**
CPD webinar for primary
schools in February.



Our brand new **'Nature Stories for Children'** resource pack, written by Saffron Gillies, contains a selection of our favourite tales from around the world. Told often by our Drama Artists as part of Out to Play sessions, the stories contained in this pack can be shared with family - or used as part of drama sessions and lesson plans in a primary school setting.

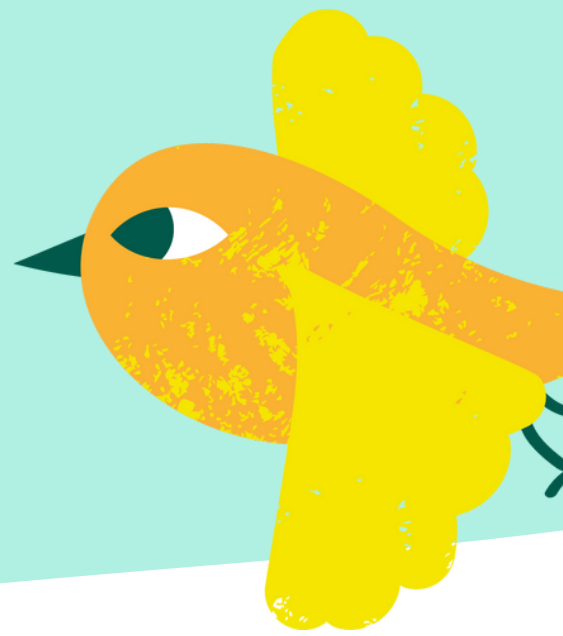
We loved Bonhill Primary School's Outdoor Day in May. Drama Artist Saffron Gillies delivered drama and storytelling sessions for pupils, tailored to fit with the day's sustainability theme and location.

We were delighted to be part of the International Play Association's (IPA) *Pop-Up Playday* at Glasgow Green, as well as Youth Theatre Arts Scotland's Regional Hub training in Inverness, where our *Climate Conscious Theatre Projects* workshop reached 14 arts practitioners.

Our new, interactive 'Harvest Stories' sessions for children use storytelling, songs, drama games and apples to explore Scotland's rich orchard heritage and the benefits of locally grown food. To date, Harvest Stories has delivered 17 sessions - successfully engaging 245 children across Scotland.

The Whirlybird

We were delighted to re-tour our funny, playful and uplifting theatre show The Whirlybird in September-November 2023. Featuring movement, music, birdsong and puppetry, this production celebrates the differences that make us unique, finding inspiration in nature and the wonder of flight.



Like all of Eco Drama's work, The Whirlybird was designed to inspire curiosity and care for the natural world through quality artistic experiences. The show relates well to the Eco Schools topics of Biodiversity and School Grounds, compliments Learning for Sustainability and makes links across the Curriculum for Excellence.

[Read a Case Study of The Whirlybird](#)

**1,440 children
& 367 grown-ups**

came to see The Whirlybird theatre show at 46 performances across 15 schools, 6 nurseries, 4 theatres & 2 community settings.

'It opened up conversations about us all being different and how we all learn in different ways.'

Nursery Practitioner

'If you feel you are different, it doesn't mean you are the worst.'

P1-P3 Pupil

'A delightful show... slips from hilarity to pathos with ease, and keeps the children transfixed.'

★★★★ The List



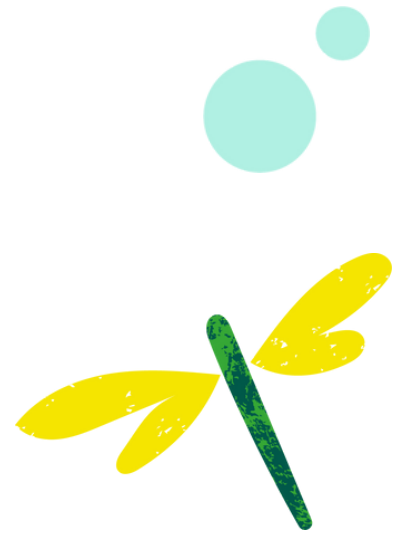
Conclusion

2023-24 has been the first year of a 2 year project which Eco Drama are delivering from 2023-25, supported in part by the Glasgow Communities & Place Fund. We are pleased to report we are on track with our project outcomes and are charting the community benefits of our creative outdoor learning and performance work. **We're proud to have worked in depth with 3,762 beneficiaries throughout 2023-24.**

The data we have gathered this past year illustrates developments in children's creativity, imagination and confidence, as well as improved health and well-being, literacy, emotional and social development, skills, knowledge and understanding, particularly within the realm of Learning for Sustainability.

2023-24 has been a year of growth for the staff team. **Towards the end of the year we have successfully restructured and created new roles in order to meet the growing needs of our small organisation and its projects.** We now have a staff team of 5, including our full-time Artistic Director/CEO who continues to lead the company along with a board of 5 Trustees. We've been pleased to work with 6 talented freelance workers to deliver the 2023-24 projects, including 3 Drama Artists, 2 Performers and a Stage Manager, as well as other occasional freelance staff.

We very much look forward to delivering on our second project year, which will involve several exciting new projects including a new community orchard in Pollok, an Apple Festival in Townhead and a tour of The Forgotten Orchard, which will leave a legacy of 20 school orchards across Glasgow.



With thanks to our 2023-24 funders

 Funded by
UK Government

