

**THE NINEVEH
CHARITABLE TRUST**

**AND THE OUTWARD
BOUND TRUST**

Partnership report 2024/25



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SUMMARY OF SUPPORT

In 2023-24, The Nineveh Charitable Trust generously supported The Outward Bound Trust with a donation of £3500, playing a key role in supporting our mission to inspire young people to realise their full potential.

Your support is crucial in ensuring we can offer charitable funding to young people, many of whom face barriers to accessing such opportunities.

During 2023-24, we partnered with 315 schools and youth groups and provided 19,533 young people with Outward Bound courses.

At Outward Bound, young people develop the foundational social and emotional skills that support positive behaviours and attitudes, enabling them to thrive at every life stage, regardless of background or income.

We assess the impact of our courses by evaluating the attitudes, skills, and behaviours young people develop during and in the months after their experience¹. This report draws on insights and data from both young people and their teachers, informing the themes discussed;

- Building resilience
- Strengthening sense of self, capability and confidence
- An opportunity for Adventure, Freedom and Fun
- Nature connection
- Developing connections with others



There was one pupil who is from Ukraine who was fully funded [to go to] Outward Bound. He had only recently arrived in Scotland and the trip gave him an immense opportunity to really appreciate his newly adopted country. He established new friendships with other pupils he did not know before the trip and discovered new activities that he had not tried before. This gave a massive boost to his self-confidence and helped set him on a positive pathway in the school.

John Millar, Teacher, Lanark Grammar School, South Lanarkshire commenting two months after their course

1. Young people's names have been changed to protect their anonymity; school staff names and job titles have been used where we have permission to do so.

THE NEED FOR OUR WORK

In today's rapidly evolving world young people - our digital natives - seamlessly navigate the array of online networks in which they find themselves.

However, while they can easily communicate online, the nuances of face-to-face interactions, empathy, and emotional understanding often remain underdeveloped. Teachers frequently describe to us the resulting difficulties that young people face in building meaningful relationships, handling conflict, and managing emotions such as stress and anxiety in real-life situations.

Additionally, the disconnect from nature and the outdoors further exacerbates this issue. As young people spend more time indoors, they miss out on valuable opportunities to build resilience, confidence and self-awareness, all of which provide key foundations to an individual's positive self-identity and wellbeing.

Teachers observe that this reliance on the digital world is influencing young people's daily lives and highlight the importance of providing young people with **opportunities to develop foundational skills, behaviours and attitudes** that enable them to make positive choices as they navigate different stages of their lives.

Our courses, set in **inspiring and wild, natural environments**, provide a unique opportunity to **step away from their screens, and from the pressures, distractions, and routines of daily life.**

Outward Bound offers young people the chance to embark on an **adventure, discover freedom, and have fun.**

Our evaluation findings indicate that by **disconnecting, slowing down, and reconnecting with others and with nature**, they gain valuable insights about themselves and their surroundings which help shape their sense of identity.



In the longer term, teachers and young people begin to see a **positive impact on their social skills, engagement at school and their overall wellbeing.**

Most of the young people who participate in an Outward Bound course come from underserved urban and rural communities across the UK, where access to the outdoors and opportunities are far more limited compared to their more affluent peers.

BUILDING RESILIENCE: RESPONDING TO UNCERTAINTY AND CHALLENGE

Facing challenges, working through them to find solutions and experiencing achievement or success are key stages that a young person will journey through whilst at Outward Bound; physically, emotionally and both in an individual sense and also as a community.

Whilst out on the hill, paddling a river or during social time, an Outward Bound experience presents different challenges, at different times to different individuals. Overcoming challenge for a young person can feel daunting and scary, though as our evaluation shows, can also be transformative as they learn that resilience is something that can be developed when rooted in **optimism, determination and the support of a nurturing environment.**

Through facing individual and shared challenges, young people develop an awareness of **what resilience can look like for them** and others. They realise by setting **small, achievable goals**, by adopting a growth mindset and through the **support of their peers**, that they have the personal tools to navigate through challenging situations and also realise **they are not alone in their difficulties.**



80%

Young people reported increases in **resilience** and **emotional control** at the end of their course

Resilience N= 185
Emotional Control N=182



By the end of the week, their confidence was at a greater level, pupils were attempting tasks they would not have attempted at the start. They were definitely much more resilient [...]. The resilience shown will tap into them being able to effectively change the narrative at school - when things are hard, instead of the default 'I can't', now we should hopefully hear 'I can', or 'I'll try'.

Head of Operations and Logistics/PE.,
Graveney School, London

”

CASE STUDY: BUILDING FUTURE CITIZENS IN PUPILS FROM THE FEDERATION OF BLENHEIM ROAD COMMUNITY AND COED EVA PRIMARY SCHOOLS, SOUTH WALES

Paul Keane, Executive Head Teacher of the **Federation of Blenheim Road Community and Coed Eva Primary Schools**, shared how Outward Bound helps develop confident, capable young citizens in an often overwhelming world, where pupils may struggle to see beyond their local area. In December 2024, 72 pupils visited our Aberdovey centre.

“

We talk about growing good moral citizens of Cwmbran and Wales and the wider world, that we want our kids to be able to do the right thing to make the right choices.

It's a tough time to be a child ... you're underexposed to certain things and overexposed to others.

”

Paul noted that after Outward Bound, his pupils show **greater confidence**, **speak up for themselves** and their peers more often, and **work better together to solve problems**.

“

You see the benefits in the class who've been to Outward Bound. [It's] an anchor point, a reference point for the class to [use to] resolve issues ... it leads into our crew sessions [at school], there's an ability to solve those problems, to make a stand, to give praise to other people, to give gratitude.

”

Owen Lewis, Year Six Teacher at **Coed Eva Primary School**, saw one pupil's confidence and independence grow significantly during the residential.

“

To see him by the end of the trip just knocking about a campfire, making food independently with no need for adult help, that's real progression isn't it, that you can see that independence [and] that growth really starkly there.

”

Owen explained that recognising their capabilities **boosts confidence, advocacy skills**, and **independence in their education**, especially for vulnerable pupils.

“

Even if they're not at the stage where they're cognitively able to take on the full responsibility of someone of their chronological age, they're starting to take steps towards that.

It gives them [that] belief that when they go out on their own, they're going to be OK. They're going to manage ... it just gives them a bit of belief.

”



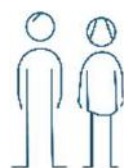
reported increased confidence that they could **achieve their goals**
(N= 48)

STRENGTHENING SENSE OF SELF, CAPABILITY AND CONFIDENCE

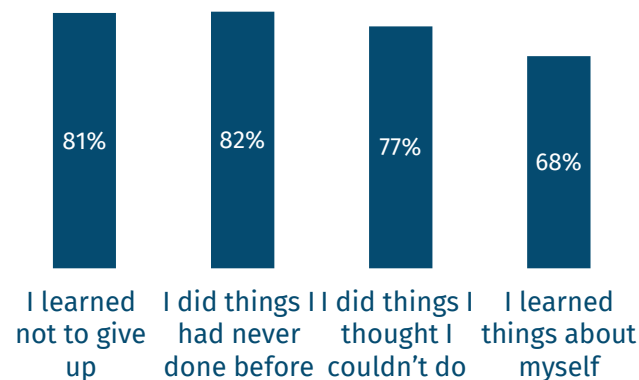
The desire for independence, agency and self-identity is what drives many of the behaviours and attitudes of our young people. Whilst dealing with a rollercoaster of hormonal and neurological shifts, young people at the same time are on the constant search for validation – an innate feeling of accomplishment, pride, competence and confidence, and also feeling accepted and valued by those around them.

At Outward Bound young people are provided with **repeated opportunities to explore where, with the right mindset, their capabilities and ambition can take them.**

They identify personal goals, work towards them, learn from mistakes and in doing so experience the results of their efforts, each time leaving them **feeling enabled, valued and sure of what they can do.**



At the end of their course, primary pupils reported...



N=306 - 308



85% reported increases in confidence (N=185)

75% are more confident to set themselves challenges and achieve their goals (N=439)



“

I know I am brave, and I can fight through things although they are hard.

Pupil, Northowram Primary School, Halifax

”

CASE STUDY: BUILDING RESILIENCE AND SELF-BELIEF IN PUPILS FROM NORTHOWRAM PRIMARY SCHOOL, HALIFAX, WEST YORKSHIRE

Meganne Green, Year 6 Teacher at **Northowram Primary School**, shared how Outward Bound helps pupils build resilience and confidence ahead of their transition to secondary school. 60 pupils visited our Ullswater centre in November 2024.

“The fact that they have to make their own beds and pack their own bags every day, it shows them that they can do things by themselves without always needing help from a parent or teacher.”

The experiences at Outward Bound can also **develop key interpersonal skills** and greater in contributing to **team decision making**.

“It helps that their voice can be heard as well, so that they gain more confidence to share their ideas in class discussions.”

She noted how Outward Bound can be seen as a **levelling experience** for some young people and help to break down social barriers.

“I like the way that they all have the same equipment and look the same in blue jackets and red trousers. It helps to even out that social hierarchy.”

For some young people, outdoor learning experiences can ignite a spark that may not always come to light in a school or classroom.

“There are a few children where school is not their happiest place. Having the opportunity to be outdoors and be practical, busy and active all the time is where they need to be. You get to see them in a different light, and they really get to showcase their skills.”

Meganne also highlighted how the pupils were able to **experience a sense of fun and freedom**.

“Pupils thrive from having a bit of downtime away from the routine of a school timetable.”

Having the opportunity to experience true freedom through sitting in a rowing boat in the middle of the lake in the pitch black. We could all see the stars and couldn't hear a thing.”

Two months after their course...



N=13 (goals) and 12 (challenges)

93% of pupils reported an increase in confidence in **achieving their goals**

86% felt more confident in **setting themselves challenges**

AN OPPORTUNITY FOR ADVENTURE, FREEDOM AND FUN

The 2024 Good Childhood report states that UK's 15-year-olds have the lowest average life satisfaction in Europe². At Outward Bound, we believe **adventure, freedom and fun play a crucial role in the personal growth, happiness and wellbeing** of young people.

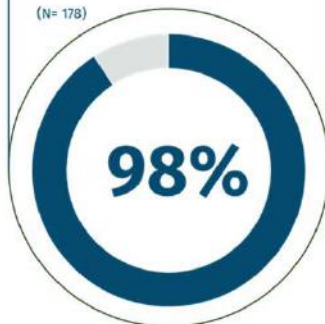
By engaging in memorable, often emotional experiences in the outdoors which are rooted in real-world conditions and consequences, young people are able to explore psychologically and physically.



Young people found their Outward Bound course adventurous
(N= 178)



Young people had fun during their Outward Bound course
(N= 178)



Through moments of fun, freedom and adventure, they **embrace and value who they are** as individuals, engage in their natural surroundings and build connection with others.

Facing their fears during an abseil, overcoming problems whilst raft building or experiencing a sense of achievement after jumping into the lake; these experiences **strengthen their sense of self**, and we begin to see **positive shifts in their behaviours** and mindsets which change how they think about themselves, others and their futures.



“

To have that opportunity to develop some independence, to be away from home, to stay with your friends, to take part in new adventures, it pushes them out of their comfort zones, it encourages them to take risks. That encourages their growth.

Sana Ali, Geography Teacher, Moseley School and Sixth Form, Birmingham.

”

CASE STUDY: A WELCOMED REALITY FOR STUDENTS FROM ANNAN ACADEMY, DUMFRIES AND GALLOWAY, SCOTLAND

Jamie Brand, Principal Teacher of Performing Arts at **Annan Academy**, shared how the experiences and adventure at Outward Bound offer a valuable contrast to the TikTok-driven lives many of his students lead. 16 pupils came to our Howtown centre in February 2025.

“

A lot of our students' lives revolve around what they see on TikTok, which doesn't reflect the reality they live in. There's a disconnect between their actual lives and where they imagine they want to be, but they often lack the understanding of what it takes to get there, or the effort required.

”

He further explained that Outward Bound provides his students with the chance to experience firsthand the effort and time needed to achieve success in real life—an experience far removed from the instant gratification of a six-second TikTok video.

“

[Outward Bound offers] young people a chance to turn their lives around and see a world beyond their own town. It shows them that with effort, success is attainable—even if the journey is challenging or uncomfortable at times.

”

A moment of clarity for the students came when they climbed Steel Knotts and were **rewarded with a breathtaking view** which one of the students likened to being inside a picture.

“

While the thrill of the moment was similar to the satisfaction of a TikTok video, the effort required to reach that point made it all the more rewarding.

”

“

The hit [of seeing the view] was just as good, but the effort to get the hit was so much greater than watching something on TikTok – [confirmed by the] ‘this is actually amazing’ moment and the smile and the enthusiasm on the faces.

”

Jamie went on to explain the power of such moments for a young person in **recognising their own capabilities** and the realisation of when they put effort in, what opportunities they have available to them.

“

But what is getting to the top of the hill? What do you [gain] from being able to see the view? What have all of these things done? It makes the young people recognise they can.

”

CONNECTING WITH NATURE

The Children's People and Nature Survey for England reported that 23% of children and young people feel a low connection to nature³.

The inspiring and natural environments surrounding our centres provide an awe-inspiring backdrop to a young person's course. The mountains, lakes and beaches allow **time and space to pause** and provide **moments of calm and connection** with their surroundings in a tangible way.

For young people whose lives are increasingly fast-paced and where experiences are often lived vicariously online, Outward Bound provides an opportunity to be fully present in the moment.



of young people reported an increased connection to nature at the end of their course (N=291)

Group and individual reflection time during their course allows them to **process their thoughts and connect with nature** on a level they may have not done before.

Young people leave Outward Bound with **a sense that they are part of something bigger** and with that comes an increased appreciation and awareness of opportunities that the world has to offer them, reshaping and influencing their actions, attitudes and aspirations.



[Before the course] they'd be in the woods, smoking, drinking, you know, doing what teenagers do - getting into trouble with the police for being in places they weren't allowed to be – all that has changed with them. Now, [after the course] it's more about being outdoors, having adventure, walking, exploring, just enjoying being in nature. [...] That's one of the beautiful things that's built into Outward Bound courses, the instructors instilling in them how we are all responsible for our own environment and as individuals, it's up to us to care for it.

Suzanne Moses, Youth Development Worker,
Ysgol Harri Tudor, Wales

3. The Children's People and Nature Survey for England: 2024 update - GOV.UK

A SHARED EXPERIENCE: CONNECTING WITH OTHERS

Despite being well connected online, many young people continue to feel isolated⁴. Relationships flourish at Outward Bound; **sharing the fun, the challenge, the responsibilities** and goals all lead to ‘real’, **meaningful connections**.

Outward Bound provides a ‘safe’ space. Young people are surrounded and guided by **positive role models, social barriers are broken down** and individuals are free to be their authentic, often vulnerable selves. This environment nurtures a young person’s **compassion, understanding and awareness of themselves and those around them**.

During their course, they hone the skills needed to navigate social interactions and to overcome their differences, and experience what it feels like to be supported by their peers. They return to school with an **increased sense of belonging**, acceptance and value of who they are.

At the end of the course, young people reported increased confidence in their social skills and sense of belonging when compared to the start of their course...



77% increased
confidence in their
interpersonal skills
(N=444)

79% increased
sense of belonging
(N=298)



“
My favourite shared moment was when one person got stuck in the mud and we all helped. This moment showed we all care about each other and are there whenever.

Mia, 13, Dixon’s City Academy,
Yorkshire

”

LASTING IMPACT: OBSERVATIONS FROM SCHOOL STAFF

The experiences and insights gained at Outward Bound remain with young people as they return to school and move through their education.

The information in this section is drawn from observations from school staff between two and three months following the course as well as from reflections shared by young people up to six months after their course.

Back in the classroom, school staff report noticeable improvements in **students' engagement with and attitudes towards their studies**. They have observed a marked **improvement in young people's interpersonal skills** along with a greater **willingness and confidence** in tackling tasks they perceive to be difficult – their **resilience**.



“

A female student who was completely out of her comfort zone on the Outward Bound course has really benefitted from digging deep and has applied that into her everyday school life across all subjects. She is about to sit her GCSEs and I feel her Outward Bound experience has had a profoundly positive impact on her approach to revision in and outside of the classroom.

Katie Simmons, Teacher, Walsall Academy, West Midlands, commenting 2-3 months after their course

”

Up to 6 months after their course, school staff report positive changes in the young people's **self confidence, awareness and resilience...**



95% Are aware of their strengths

93% Are aware of what they are capable of achieving (N=157)

92% Attempt things they believe to be difficult more often

93% Keep going when they encounter difficulties more often (N=151)

LASTING IMPACT : REFLECTIONS FROM YOUNG PEOPLE

Up to six months after their course, young people continue to experience impact from their Outward Bound course.

The connections and experiences they gained continue to shape their lives. Before their course, they may have shied away from social situations but with their deepened connections and friendships they feel a **greater sense of support and belonging** amongst their peers.

Outward Bound has inspired a **shift in their attitudes towards the outdoors**. They report encouraging others to spend more time outdoors.

Newfound confidence in their capabilities has allowed them to take on other aspects of life with a positive mindset. Rather than fearing failure, they now view it as an **opportunity from which to learn and grow**.

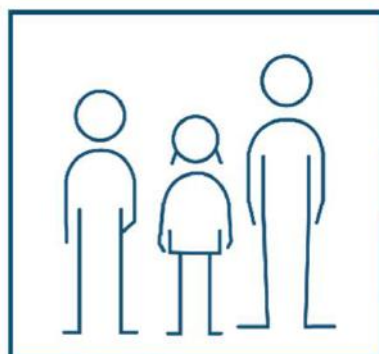
“

Outward Bound taught me to be more confident and independent [when] travelling. [...] I'm [also] more confident around others - I like to be more included rather than being quiet now..

Alice, St. Alban's Church of England Primary School, London, commenting 2 months after their course

”

Up to 6 months after their course, young people reported increased confidence in their skills when compared to the start of their course... (N=108)⁵



74% increased confidence in their **resilience**

89% increased confidence in **setting themselves challenges** and achieving their goals

85% increased confidence in their **interpersonal skills**



“

[I feel like my relationships with others have] changed a lot. I feel I have made connections with my peers have grown stronger and I found things out about my peers that I would have never found out anywhere else.

Evelyn, Coed Eva Primary School, Wales, commenting 3 months after their course

”

5. Percentages reflect those young people who reported an increase in at least one area of each skill.

ORGANISATIONAL UPDATE

Our People



Over the last year, Outward Bound has delivered over 6,000 hours of training to support and upskill staff including; Understanding Young People, Mental Health First Aid, Safeguarding and Psychology Awareness.

25 members of staff serve as EDI Champions who drive improvements for both the young people we work with and our staff; including providing more inclusive outdoor equipment, prayer mats for expedition use and weighted blankets to support those with neurodiverse needs.

“

“The water sports hijab made me feel much more confident to participate in water activities.”

Young person comment to instructor

”

In 2024, we launched our new strategy that sets out bold ambitions for the years ahead. **The Next Horizon** outlines our strategic intent between 2024- 2030. The strategy focuses on Our People, Our Charity and Our Capacity.

Our Charity

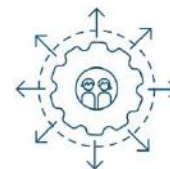


In 2024, a total of 24,473 young people attended Outward Bound; with 15,028 receiving funding.

Our Digital Transformation project is aligning all areas of the organisation into the same digital sphere; a new CRM and a new bookings system have been embedded, with a new finance system and a Programme Manager planned for this year.

With a strategic target to reach net-zero emissions by 2035, we are committed to reducing carbon emissions, so far, we've cut emissions by 65% since 2008 and have signed up to the Outward Bound International Environmental Charter.

Our Capacity



The culmination of decade long improvement works at Outward Bound Loch Eil has drawn to a close with the completion of the Clan Village which officially opens in May 2025. This is an ambitious and inspirational space for young people to plan and reflect on their Outward Bound experience.



LOOKING FORWARD

We know that the challenges faced by young people in an ever-changing and increasingly digital world will only continue to increase; impacting their wellbeing, social mobility and development into positive world citizens.

Outward Bound's mission to inspire young people to believe they can achieve more than they ever thought possible - to break down barriers and unlock opportunities for those who need it most - is more important now than ever.

In the coming years, in addition to delivering impactful courses in the wild, we will seek ways to innovate by piloting a non-residential schools' outreach project that will engage young people who face barriers to attending a residential and build partnerships with like-minded organisations to increase capacity through the development of a new centre that will deliver courses to an extra 3,000 young people each year.

Thank you for joining us on this journey; we couldn't do it without you.



The skills and behaviours developed at Outward Bound act as foundations and protective factors in times of adversity.

With your continued support we can provide young people with as positive a start in life as possible.

Thank you.

GET IN TOUCH

The Outward Bound Trust's Social Impact Report 2024: www.outwardbound.org.uk/our-impact/social-impact-report

Latest Annual Report and Accounts: www.outwardbound.org.uk/trusts-and-foundations

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