

THE OUTWARD BOUND TRUST REPORT FOR THE JO WALTERS TRUST

OCTOBER 2014 - SEPTEMBER 2015



© 2014 THE OUTWARD BOUND TRUST



**THE
OUTWARD
BOUND TRUST**

THE OUTWARD BOUND TRUST IN SCOTLAND

SUMMARY OF SUPPORT

In **2015**, **The Jo Walters Trust** donated **£1,660** to The Outward Bound Trust and supported us in our mission to ‘unlock the potential in young people through learning and adventure in the wild’. Since 1941, we have offered residential courses designed to provide young people with challenging, adventurous and safe experiences in the outdoors, to help them develop the skills and attributes they need to thrive.

THE NEED FOR OUR WORK IN SCOTLAND

Scotland today is a challenging environment for children and young people to grow up in. **More than one in five** (210,000) of Scotland’s children are officially recognised as living in poverty¹, and this is known to have negative impacts on children’s health, cognitive development, social, emotional and behavioural development and educational outcomes². The confidence young people in Scotland have about the future is at its lowest level ever³, and in the year to June 2015, despite a slight improvement on the previous three years, employment among those aged 16-24 in Scotland was at just **55%**.⁴

THE OUTWARD BOUND INTERVENTION

Our variety of courses, which range from 3 to 22 days long and are delivered at our residential centres in Scotland, Wales and the Lake District, are designed to address some of the issues faced by young people. We challenge them and develop their ability to **co-operate with, rely on, encourage and support each other effectively**. Through our courses, they become **more independent, more self-aware, increase their confidence and resilience and develop a range of transferable skills** that help them to succeed in their education, their work and their personal lives. The ‘Outward Bound Learning Process’ underpins each course, with each activity designed to achieve a specific learning outcome. Our instructors use a range of methods to encourage the young people to reflect on their experience – an integral element of each course - and transfer what they have learnt to their home and school environment. In addition to being professional outdoor practitioners, our instructors are skilled, trained and experienced educators – and it is this, uniquely combined with our methodology and the locations in which we work, which enables us to achieve significant and lasting outcomes for young people.



¹ Relative poverty after housing costs. <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2015/06/7453/10>

² <http://withscotland.org/download/impacts-of-poverty-on-children-and-young-people>

³ https://www.princes-trust.org.uk/pdf/Youth_Index_2015_Report.PDF

⁴ <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Labour-Market/Publications/APSJJTables>

THE YOUNG PEOPLE WE WORK WITH

The young people we work with face challenges associated with adolescence, the pressures of academic achievement and/or the transition out of compulsory education. Many come from low income families, have low aspirations and expectations of life and/or lack self-confidence. For some, the Outward Bound course is the first time they have stayed away from home or left their local area, and the only opportunity they will have to experience genuine adventure, challenge and pride in their achievements outside of the classroom.

We strive to make our courses available to all young people, regardless of their background or financial circumstances. Over the past year, we have worked with around **20,000 young people** in the UK⁵, **4,300** of whom were from Scotland. **73%** of the total young people that we worked with were awarded a bursary⁶. Without the financial support we provide through our bursary scheme, and which we are able to offer thanks to our generous supporters like you, many of the young people who attend our courses would not have access to an Outward Bound experience. We work closely with school staff members to ensure that bursaries are allocated to those young people who are most in need.



Young people take part in a hill walking activity

In this report, we describe a typical Outward Bound experience, and go on to look at some of the learning outcomes achieved from this, and the evidence we have gathered around the lasting impact of the courses. The aim is to give an insight into the types of people your donation has allowed us to work with, what their Outward Bound experience was like, and the impact that The Outward Bound Trust has had on their lives.

⁵ This figure includes our work with schools, colleges, youth groups and individuals. It excludes our work with graduates and apprentices.

⁶ Bursary is allocated based on measures of disadvantage including family income and eligibility for free school meals.

COURSE CASE STUDY: ST MACHAR ACADEMY

THE YOUNG PEOPLE

St Machar Academy serves the largest catchment area in the City of Aberdeen and its multi-cultural population sees over 30 different languages spoken amongst the school roll. Within St Machar Academy's catchment area are a number of areas of social deprivation. In 2015, **23% of pupils** were registered for free school meals (compared to an average of **16%** for all secondary schools in Scotland)⁷.

The participants come from almost every background imaginable. Amongst the S2 pupils that were selected for the course, there were young people from affluent families alongside pupils from families where there is 2nd or even 3rd generation unemployment, some whose lives have been affected by alcohol or drugs, some from families with a history of violence, some who care for older or younger relatives and some who have experience of mental health issues, themselves or within their families. Approximately **54% of the participants** live in areas which fall into the most deprived fifth of Scotland⁸.

THE EXPERIENCE

In September 2015, **106 S2 pupils** from St Machar Academy took part in a high adventure five-day course at our centre in Loch Eil. They started the week with the Outward Bound signature 'jog and dip'⁹. They then pushed themselves to their physical limit during gorge walking, and overcame fears through 'high challenges', which involved relying on a peer holding a rope to support them at height. They felt the sense of achievement that comes with the successful completion of challenges such as reaching a summit (**68%** had never seen the view from the top of a mountain¹⁰), and stretched their problem solving skills as a group by building their own Tyrolean Traverse¹¹ using just pulleys, ropes and basic instructional diagrams. They connected with nature – a new experience for many, with nearly half (**46%**) reporting they saw the stars from the countryside for the first time during the course and nearly one in five (**18%**) even reporting that this was the first time they had seen a sheep. Alongside all this, they faced challenges associated with being away from home, being independent and supporting each other in a residential setting. More than a quarter (**27%**) had never stayed away from home before.



⁷ <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/School-Education/SchoolMealsDatasets/schmeals2015>.

⁸ Calculated through an analysis of participants' postcodes using the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation: <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/SIMD/SIMDPostcodeLookup/ScotlandPostcodeLookup>.

⁹ A short run to the waterfront before jumping into the loch from a jetty.

¹⁰ All figures based on a sample of 56 pupils.

¹¹ The Tyrolean Traverse involves crossing a gorge at height, suspended from a horizontal rope.

THE LEARNING

The pupils learnt how to tie knots that could hold their weight, belay a classmate safely back to the ground, check the safety of helmets and harnesses, paddle a canoe and read an Ordnance Survey map. All the while, they also learnt about learning processes themselves - how to plan effectively, the importance of reviewing their own performance, and how to set SMART goals (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic/Relevant, Time-bound). Each left the course having set themselves a goal for the future, after being given time to think about something that they would like to achieve when they returned home. The aim was to encourage pupils to consider what they can do if they put their mind to it, and to ensure their development journey continues when they return home after the course.

On the final day, each group gave a presentation to their year group, staff and instructors about what they achieved, what they found challenging, what they enjoyed, and how they think the experience will help them in the future. For many, the presentation was the biggest test of courage on the course – and they marked the end of a tough, rewarding, and memorable week.



A group from St Machar Academy on a canoe activity

The young people wished to express their gratitude to the funders who made it possible for them to attend an Outward Bound course:

“Thank you for what you have done this is the most amazing place I’ve ever been to and you paying to have me here is the most amazing thing that happened to me and it really helped me and my future.” **Rosie¹², 13**

“Thank you for this opportunity. It has been brilliant. It has helped me overcome a lot of fears, make new friends, do thing [sic] I would never do.” **Joseph, 13**

“I stepped outside my comfort zone this week. I really enjoyed it though. I tried many things that I thought I could never do. Thank you. I’ve had an amazing experience! ☺” **Matthew, 12**

¹² All the names of young people in this report have been changed to maintain participants’ anonymity.

THE LEARNING OUTCOMES

As an organisation, we continually evaluate our work to ensure that we have a full understanding of our impact. We employ multiple evaluation methods across our complete range of courses. Our findings consistently demonstrate that our courses help young people to develop a range of skills and attributes, and that this in turn helps them to thrive back in the classroom.

In order to illustrate the lasting impact of our work with young people, we present in this report a sample of information gathered from three sources:

1. Feedback collected from our teacher survey, sent to all teachers **one month** after their pupils attended a 'standard' Outward Bound course.
2. In-depth feedback from pupils and teachers who attended a sample of courses, collected **three months** after their course.¹³
3. Case studies of individuals who have significantly benefited from their Outward Bound experience, provided by teachers **up to three months** after their course.

The information gathered from these sources indicates that our courses lead to a variety of outcomes for participants, which continue to have a positive impact back in the classroom. Here, we offer a brief insight into the lasting effect of our courses by presenting a selection of findings around two key learning outcomes: **increased confidence** and **increased engagement with learning**.

INCREASED CONFIDENCE

Evidence collected 1 month after their course

One month after their pupils attended an Outward Bound course, teachers reported that the young people had grown more confident since participating:

- **95% of teachers** reported an increase in the extent to which their pupils were aware of their strengths.¹⁴
- **96% of teachers** reported an increase in the extent to which their pupils were aware of what they are capable of achieving.

"ONE PUPIL HAS CHANGED DRASTICALLY. HE WAS WITHDRAWN, UNKEMPT AND VERY QUIET AND WOULD COME TO MY CLASSROOM EVERY LUNCHTIME. I NEVER SEE HIM NOW, WHEN HE IS CLASS HE VOLUNTEERS TO SPEAK OUT TO THE REST OF THE CLASS AND HE HAS A GIRLFRIEND!" Shameen Syed, Teacher

¹³ We conducted an in-depth evaluation of a project in which 118 pupils from three schools attended a five-day Outward Bound course. Pupils attended one of three courses between October 2014 and May 2015.

¹⁴ We have received responses from 193 teachers since February 2014.

Evidence collected 3 months after their course

Feedback collected from pupils and teachers **three months** after their course indicates that this growth in the young people's confidence is lasting. **76% of pupils** reported an increase in their overall confidence¹⁵, while **5 of the 6 teachers** reported the same of their pupils. Pupils also reported feeling more confident in a range of other areas:

- **90% of pupils** reported feeling more confident about working in a team.
- **71% of pupils** reported feeling more confident about working independently.
- **66% of pupils** reported feeling more confident about speaking up in a group.

"[I ENJOYED BEING CHALLENGED] BECAUSE I WAS ABLE TO REALISE HOW GOOD I AM AT CERTAIN THINGS." **Natasha, 12**
(end of course feedback)

An individual's story: Georgie, 13

"[Before her Outward Bound course, Georgie] was very quiet and shy, [and] would often sit back in activities. During the course, I noticed how her confidence grew, especially in some activities where she excelled. Subsequently she had a more active role by the end of the programme and she voiced her opinions more boldly. Of late, she is [engaging] with more people, whereas before she would only speak to her close friends. I can also see how she stands tall and she looks comfortable when speaking to a group of people."

IMPROVED ENGAGEMENT WITH LEARNING

Evidence collected 1 month after their course

Back in the classroom, teachers reported that their pupils' engagement with learning had improved since their course:

- **81% of teachers** reported an increase in the level of interest their pupils show in their school work.
- **78% of teachers** reported an increase in their pupils' educational aspirations.
- **79% of teachers** reported an increase in the effort their pupils put into their studies.

"ONE PUPIL STATED "THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I HAVE COME BACK INTO SCHOOL AND THOUGHT I CAN DO ANYTHING IF I WORK HARD AND PUT MY MIND TO IT". HIS RECENT TEST RESULTS SHOW THAT HE HAS EXCEEDED EXPECTATIONS IN EVERY AREA OF HIS STUDY." **Steve Williamson, Head Teacher**

¹⁵ We received follow-up feedback from 78 pupils.

Evidence collected 3 months after their course

Our evaluation shows that improvements in the young people's engagement with learning are still in evidence in the medium term:

- **5 of the 6 teachers** reported that their pupils had taken greater responsibility for their learning.
- **5 of the 6 teachers** reported that their pupils had been working harder to achieve their goals.

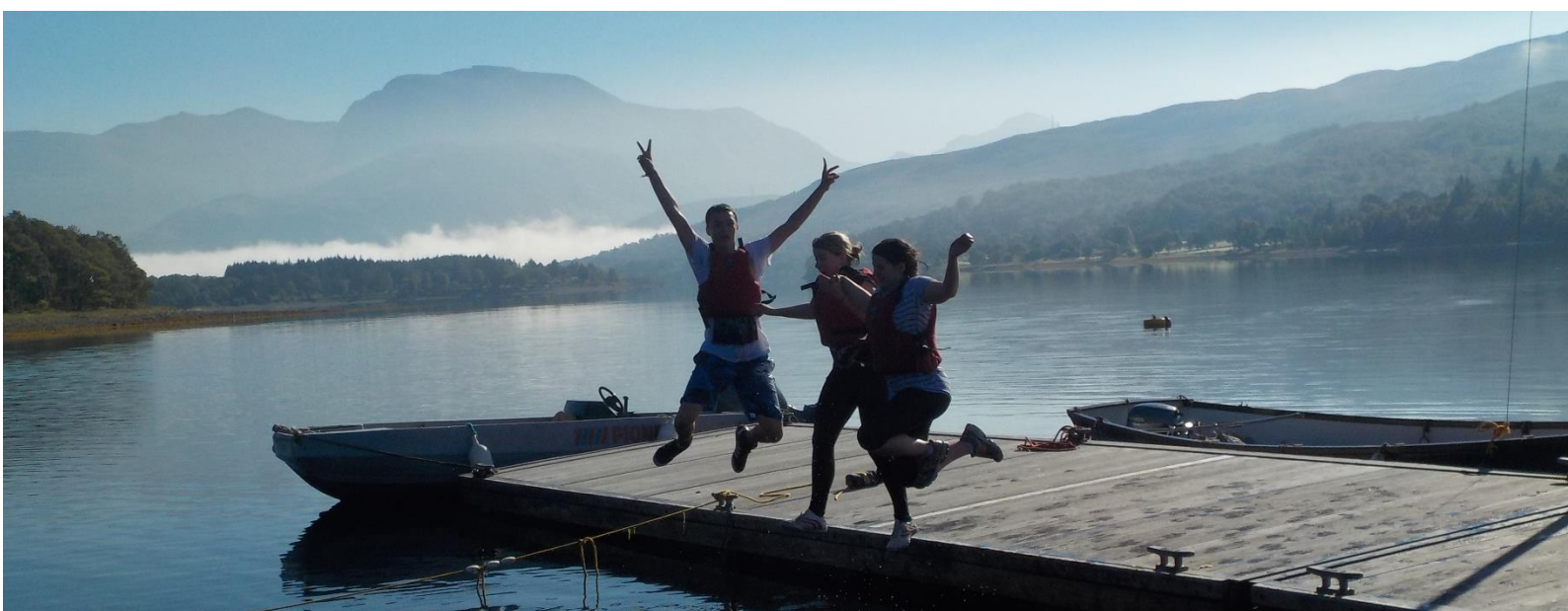
“[I ENJOYED LEARNING THAT THERE IS] NO SUCH THING AS LIMITS TO AN INDIVIDUAL.” Alya, 17 (end of course feedback)

An individual's story: David, 14

“[Before the course, David] didn't listen during lessons, which resulted in [him] finding certain topics difficult. Due to the nature of the course, David had to ensure that he listened at all times [while he was at Outward Bound]. This has increased his level of focus. David [now] focuses more in class and takes more information in. This has resulted in a better understanding of the topics being taught and hence an improvement in his work rate.”

LOOKING FORWARD

The challenges faced by young people in Scotland are not going to disappear overnight, and in 2016, our courses will remain highly relevant. At the Outward Bound Trust we want to work with more and more young people and help them to unlock their potential. Your support is vital to enabling us to achieve this aim, by allowing us to reach those who otherwise would not have access to an Outward Bound course. We hope that our loyal supporters will continue to help us provide opportunities for young people to develop and thrive - be that in their education, their work, or their personal lives.



Young people jump into Loch Eil during the 'jog and dip'

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

The Outward Bound Trust's Official Website

Our official website contains a wealth of information about The Trust, including information on our centres, the courses we offer, staff members and our upcoming events, as well as our latest news and additional case studies.

www.outwardbound.org.uk

The Outward Bound Trust Generations Website

At the end of 2009, we launched a new initiative called 'Generations' to reach out to the million+ individuals who have participated in an Outward Bound course since the creation of the Aberdovey Outward Bound Sea School in 1941. The stories that over 400 alumni have shared with us suggest that an Outward Bound course can have a positive and enduring influence on their lives.

www.outwardboundgenerations.org.uk

The Outward Bound Trust's Social Impact Report 2014

<http://www.outwardboundtrust.org.uk/social-impact-report-2014.pdf>

The Outward Bound Trust's Annual Report and Accounts 2013- 2014

<http://www.outwardbound.org.uk/media/382247/annual-report-2014.pdf>

The Outward Bound Trust Images on flickr

This site is full of photos from courses and of the stunning landscapes in which our centres are based.

www.flickr.com/photos/outwardbounduk/sets/

Further Information

Isabel Berry, Trusts and Foundations Manager

T: 01931 740027 M: 07964 111020 E: isabel.berry@outwardbound.org.uk

Lucy Tonkin, Trusts Fundraiser

T: 01931 740028 E: lucy.tonkin@outwardbound.org.uk

Hackthorpe Hall, Hackthorpe, Penrith, Cumbria CA10 2HX

