

**HOW DO TEACHERS
BENEFIT FROM
ACCOMPANYING THEIR
PUPILS ON AN
OUTWARD BOUND®
COURSE?**



**THE
OUTWARD
BOUND TRUST**

INTRODUCTION

In 2013, we published a report on our research into how teachers¹ benefit from accompanying their pupils on one of our courses². Through analysing the qualitative feedback teachers gave following their participation in a 5-day Outward Bound course, we discovered that they derived a range of benefits from this experience. Professionally, the teachers reported benefiting from observing their pupils' progress and achievements during the course, improving their relationships with their pupils and increasing their understanding of their pupils' abilities. Some of them also reported that, as a result of working alongside our instructors, they had developed knowledge and skills that would help them to be more effective teachers.

In addition to the 'professional' benefits they highlighted, the teachers also reported that they had benefited on a 'personal' level; in particular, from having positive and enjoyable experiences in the outdoors, being challenged and achieving more than they had thought possible. Drawing on these findings, in 2014 we conducted further research into how teachers benefit from accompanying their pupils on an Outward Bound course. This paper provides a summary of the results of this research.

SOURCE OF EVIDENCE

Teachers' responses to our follow-up survey for teachers provide evidence of how they benefit from participating in an Outward Bound course. This survey is sent to teachers one month after their pupils have completed one of our courses³. Between February and November 2014, we received responses from 90 teachers who had accompanied their pupils on a course. We analysed their answers to the question: "If you believe that you benefited from your involvement in the course, either professionally or personally, please tell us how." The teachers were given pre-determined response options to report both 'personal' and 'professional' benefits⁴.

¹ Within this paper, we have used the term 'teachers' to refer to all members of school staff who accompanied their pupils on an Outward Bound course and from whom we have gathered feedback.

² This research involved an analysis of feedback provided by teachers between 2011 and 2013. Further details are given in the paper titled 'How do teachers benefit from accompanying their students on an Outward Bound course?' Please contact us if you would like a copy of this paper.

³ The follow-up survey is sent to teachers and other school staff members who booked an Outward Bound course for their pupils. The vast majority of the school staff members who responded to the survey between February and November 2014 were teachers.

⁴ These response options were chosen to reflect the key benefits identified when we analysed the responses teachers gave to qualitative questions related to 'personal' and 'professional' benefits between 2011 and 2013.

HOW TEACHERS BENEFIT 'PROFESSIONALLY'

All 90 teachers reported that they had derived at least one 'professional' benefit from accompanying their pupils on the course. Improved relationships with their pupils was the benefit that the greatest number (91%) of teachers selected. The vast majority of the teachers reported that they saw qualities in their pupils that the young people did not or cannot show in a school environment. The majority said that they had increased their understanding of their pupils' abilities. Over a quarter of the teachers believed that they had developed their teaching skills as a result of participating in the Outward Bound course (see Chart 1 below for a breakdown of the results). Ten percent of the teachers also identified an additional benefit that was not covered by one of the four pre-determined response options. These included developing professional relationships and rapport with colleagues and observing the pupils reactions to different teaching styles.

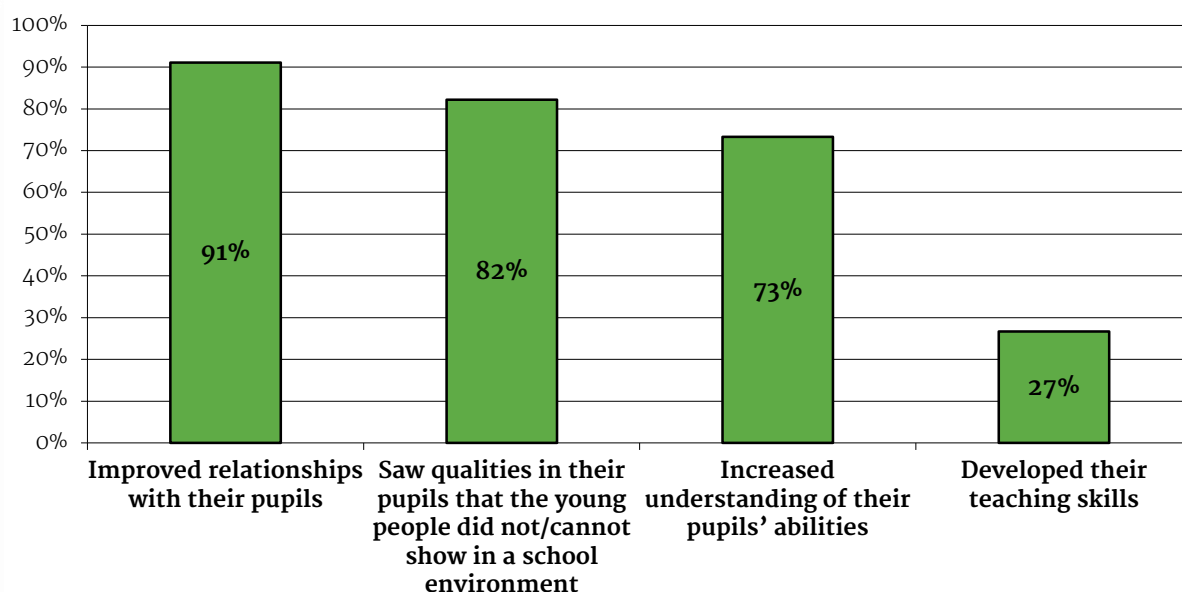
+ I KNEW THE STUDENTS QUITE WELL BEFORE AS I HAND PICKED [SIC] THEM BUT [I] KNOW SO MUCH MORE FROM BEING AWAY WITH THEM FOR A WEEK. +

Higher level teaching assistant

+ I HAVE LEARNED NEW APPROACHES TO TEACHING. +

Teacher

CHART 1: 'Professional' benefits teachers derived from accompanying their pupils on an Outward Bound course

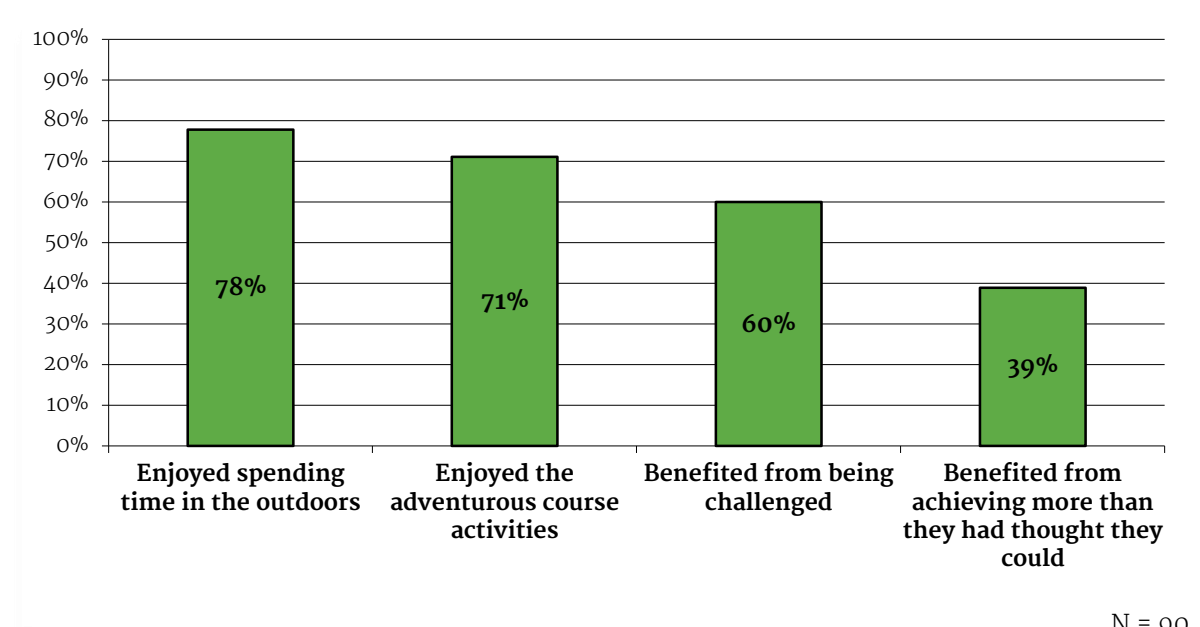


N = 90

HOW TEACHERS BENEFIT 'PERSONALLY'

Eighty-seven (97%) of the ninety teachers reported that accompanying their pupils during the Outward Bound course had brought about at least one 'personal' benefit for them. Seventy-eight percent of the teachers reported that they had enjoyed spending time in the outdoors. The majority reported that they had enjoyed the adventurous course activities and/or benefited from being challenged. Thirty-nine percent said that they had benefited from achieving more than they had thought they could during the course (see Chart 2 below for a breakdown of the results).

CHART 2: 'Personal' benefits teachers derived from accompanying their pupils on an Outward Bound course



Eight percent of the teachers identified an additional benefit that was not covered by one of the four pre-determined response options. A number of these benefits, however, could equally apply to their professional lives. The benefits they reported included enjoying working with professional staff outside their own organisations and being able “to reflect on how the [Outward Bound] instructors were getting the most out of the students and the various strategies they used with individuals.”

+ THIS WAS AN OPPORTUNITY I WOULD HAVE LOVED WHEN I WAS YOUNGER. THE CHALLENGES LIKE GORGE WALKING HAVE MADE ME MORE CONFIDENT WITH TEACHING EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES SUCH AS CANOEING WITH THE SCHOOL ECO GROUP. +

Teacher

+ [I] FELT A SENSE OF ACHIEVEMENT IN BEING INVOLVED IN ORGANISING SUCH A POSITIVE EVENT. +

Director of Key Stage 4

CONCLUSION

In 2014, drawing on the findings of previous research we had conducted, we gathered feedback from teachers to help us understand how they had benefited from accompanying their pupils on one of our courses. All of the teachers said that they had benefited ‘professionally’ from the experience. The vast majority reported that they had benefited from improved relationships with their pupils and observing qualities in their pupils that the young people did not or cannot show in a school environment. The majority of the teachers said that they had increased their understanding of their pupils’ abilities and over a quarter believed that they had developed their teaching skills.

Almost all (97%) of the teachers also reported that accompanying their pupils during the Outward Bound course had brought about at least one ‘personal’ benefit for them. The majority enjoyed spending time in the outdoors and/or completing adventurous course activities. More than half of the teachers reported that they had benefited from being challenged and over a third said that they had benefited from achieving more than they had thought they could during the course.

The evidence we gathered in 2014 provides support for our 2013 findings and indicates that our courses bring about considerable benefits for the teachers who accompanying their pupils.

This document has been produced by The Outward Bound Trust's Evaluation team.
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