



Country Trust

Where children learn and grow

Countryside Discovery Residential Visits Evaluation Report 2019-20

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The Country Trust

For over 40 years The Country Trust has been quietly transforming lives. With the help of supporters and funders, we bring food, farming and the countryside alive for around 19,500 children each year through three key programmes: Farm Discovery day visits to real working farms, Countryside Discovery residentials immersing children in the countryside for up to 5 days and our Food Discovery programmes teaching children to grow, cook and explore all aspects of food across a school year. We are currently active in England and N Wales including London, Hampshire, the Home Counties, East Anglia, Lincolnshire, East Midlands, West Midlands, North Wales, Manchester, Liverpool, Lancashire, Cheshire, Yorkshire, Northumberland and County Durham. 2019 was full of our usual programmes and more, but 2020 has been a very different year.

The impact of Covid-19 on our work

As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, our programmes were put on-hold in the middle of March. However, we kept communication open with schools, farmers, third party providers and funders in order that we were prepared for a return whenever that was possible. We looked for opportunities to offer immediate support to schools and other groups, for example by supporting growing activities for children at school and at home and creating activity packs at the request of Barnardo's in the NW and Young Carers in Scunthorpe, Stockport and Wrexham.

Our workforce: Almost all our expert delivery team are self-employed, and the crisis hit at what would have been their busiest time of year. Not all were eligible for government support or were able to manage until that support was available. A priority was therefore to try and ensure a strong workforce was in place once schools reopened. At the same time, we reviewed all spend - some employed staff were furloughed for example - in order to conserve our resources.

Fundraising: It was a difficult time for funders to consider applications and for several months the focus for funders was quite rightly on those at the frontline. A steady flow of evidence emerged during the crisis however which confirmed that our programmes offer huge potential for schools as they prepare to help disadvantaged children to readjust, to reengage and to thrive.

Accessing opportunities and experiences outside the classroom is particularly important for children from disadvantaged backgrounds because they are much less likely to have such exposure elsewhere. This will be especially evident following the Covid-19 crisis, with many of the children we work with having little or no access to gardens or greenspace. Trying new things and learning from failure help young people to grow into confident, resilient and happy adults who have the skills and knowledge to make positive contributions to the societies in which they live and the world around them¹. The importance is such that Ofsted included new requirements in their inspection framework from September 2019, encouraging schools to look at the 'whole child', their interests, their character, their health and well-being and their access to cultural capital.²

¹ Social Mobility Commission State of the Nation 2018-19: Social Mobility in Great Britain

²

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/801430/Education_inspection_framework.docx

Countryside Discovery Residentials Context

Our residential programme enables pupils to spend extended periods of time immersed in the countryside taking part in a variety of activities which are delivered either by Country Trust Coordinators or third-party providers. A typical trip will involve a two to four-night stay at a hostel or bunk barn, and children will explore forests, farms, rivers and the seaside. Pupils have the chance to leave the stresses of everyday life behind, to fully awaken their senses to the countryside, to experience different weather, different times of day along with the opportunity to do a variety of new things for the first time. To challenge themselves and return home with many stories and lasting memories that will enrich them for some time to come. Our residential programme is well established in Yorkshire, Norfolk and Suffolk enabling children from disadvantaged areas of Yorkshire, Lancashire and London, many of whom would never leave the area where they live and go to school, to discover the wonders of the countryside.



The difference the CT is trying to make:

- Children, their parent helpers and teachers are more knowledgeable and more aware of food, farming and the countryside.
- More farmers are able to share their love and passion for what they do.
- Children are more engaged with formal education as a result of increased 'real world' and interactive learning experiences.
- Children are better able to make informed decisions about the food that they eat.
- Children feel more responsible for their own and the wider environment.
- Children have more opportunities to develop and display non-cognitive skills, to experience patience, wonder and success.
- Children feel more at home in the countryside and greenspace.
- More teachers see the potential of countryside as a learning resource and feel more confident to use it to enhance their teaching.

Executive Summary

The Country Trust Countryside Discovery Residential Programme enables pupils to spend extended periods of time immersed in the countryside experiencing everything from pony trekking to crabbing, charcoal making to den building and visiting a range of farmer hosts. The activities are delivered either by Country Trust Coordinators or third-party providers. We work with schools that meet our criteria of a higher than average percentage of pupils entitled to Free School Meals, using the EVER6 measure, or children with SEN/D. This ensures that the children accessing our residentials are those that are least able to access the countryside and may have had little experience outside their urban environment.

Between September 2019 and March 2020 11 residentials took place for 273 children. The restrictions put in place during the Covid 19 lockdown period meant that we were unable

to deliver 22 of our visits for an estimated 633 children, representing 66% of our planned residential programme.

Our 2019-2020 report aims to:

- Evaluate the quality of the Countryside Discovery residential programme that we were able to deliver.
- Determine the impact the programme has on children and teaching staff.
- Make recommendations for the future.

Key Findings

It should be noted that the findings in this year's report are based on a **very small** sample size.

- All teachers agreed that the children had enjoyed their visit, with 80% strongly agreeing.
- All teachers agreed that residential widened children's experiences and built self esteem, with pony trekking and the zipwire featuring most regularly in the children's feedback of things they did for the first time on the residential.
- All teachers agreed that residential improved children's wellbeing and that the residential had met their expectations fully.
- All teachers agreed that residential helped build relationships between the children and those needs had been met fully.
- All teachers agreed that residential enabled children to have fun. Enjoyment is acknowledged as a key component of learning.
- All teachers agreed that residential help foster children's independence and felt that the residential had met that need fully.
- All teachers felt that the residential had extended their children's vocabulary.
- All teachers rated our on-site organisation, and the quality of our activities as either 'Excellent' or 'Very good'.
- Amazing, fun, fantastic, peaceful, exciting and scary were the five top words used when pupils were asked to describe their countryside adventure with us.
- Activities which offer novelty (a first experience), a feeling of success and an aspect of challenge are the most popular experiences amongst pupils. This informs our thinking as we shape our residential programmes.

Methodology

This evaluation covers the academic year September 2019 to July 2020. It has been split into two halves:

- September 2019 to March 2020 -Pre-Covid 19
- March 2020 to August 2020 During Covid 19

Visits delivered pre COVID 19

Between September 2019 and March 2020 11 residential took place with 122 Key stage 2 (age 7-11) pupils from mainstream primary schools.

Based on low return rates last year we had robust plans in place to increase feedback to improve our evaluation this year. Unfortunately, as this was due to be rolled out for the summer term residential it was not able to happen. The return rate of feedback for the Autumn term was disappointingly low, made all the more frustrating because, with lockdown happening just as the summer season was about to get underway it transpired

that the Autumn residentials were our only opportunity to gather feedback for the year. In addition to this, return rates were low on session reports completed by our own Coordinators for the Autumn term so we weren't able to gain the more in depth insights into the residential programmes.

For the Autumn visits we continued to use Survey Mechanics to gather and collate information online. Three surveys are used:

- Pre visit pupil survey
- Post visit pupil survey
- Post Visit Teacher survey

The lead teacher/group leader post visit survey offered six quantitative areas including:

- A six-point rating scale to explore satisfaction around the activities provided.
- A space to define the three main reasons for bringing children on a CT residential.
- A 12-point question asking teachers to highlight how important a range of motivations for bringing children on a trip might be against a 5 point worded scale from 'yes and met needs fully' to 'no this is not why we bring children'.
- An area for suggested improvements.
- A section on pre and post work that may be undertaken with pupils in order to prepare them for and allow them to reflect on residentials.
- A qualitative space for teachers to highlight examples of how children may have developed following the residential and a chance to raise any other comments.

The pre visit pupil survey included;

- Two areas for qualitative responses on enjoyment and emotional responses,
- Two questions relating to 'firsts'.

The post visit survey included;

- A five-point scale quantitative question regarding enjoyment of activities,
- A quantitative question looking at 'firsts',
- A qualitative question asking for descriptive words of the countryside which, mirrored a question in the pre visit questionnaire so that we could look at trends and differences in the words used in each.

COVID 19 - March 2020 onwards

Between March 2020 and August 2020 during the COVID 19 lockdown period we were unable to deliver our planned residential programme of 22 visits for 258 children. Frustratingly this came at a time when we were intending to trial a different method of gathering data with the intention of significantly increasing the return rate of forms from both pupils and teachers. The last residential that took place in Norfolk before lockdown started to trial this new approach and the results from the teachers and pupils are analysed in this report.

Our new evaluation approach - increasing participation

Pre-visit surveys:

In Yorkshire and Suffolk our Coordinators now send a short film introducing themselves to the class. As part of this they introduce the 'before' survey and ask the class to write on a post-it note how they feel about coming to the countryside. These notes can even be completed on the coach and then passed directly to the Coordinator.

We prepared a slightly different approach to pilot for our Norfolk residentials. Paper copies of the pupil pre-visit survey were sent into school and collected back on the residential. Covid restrictions meant that we only had the chance to pilot it with one school rather than the two we had intended, and this is what the results in this report are based on.

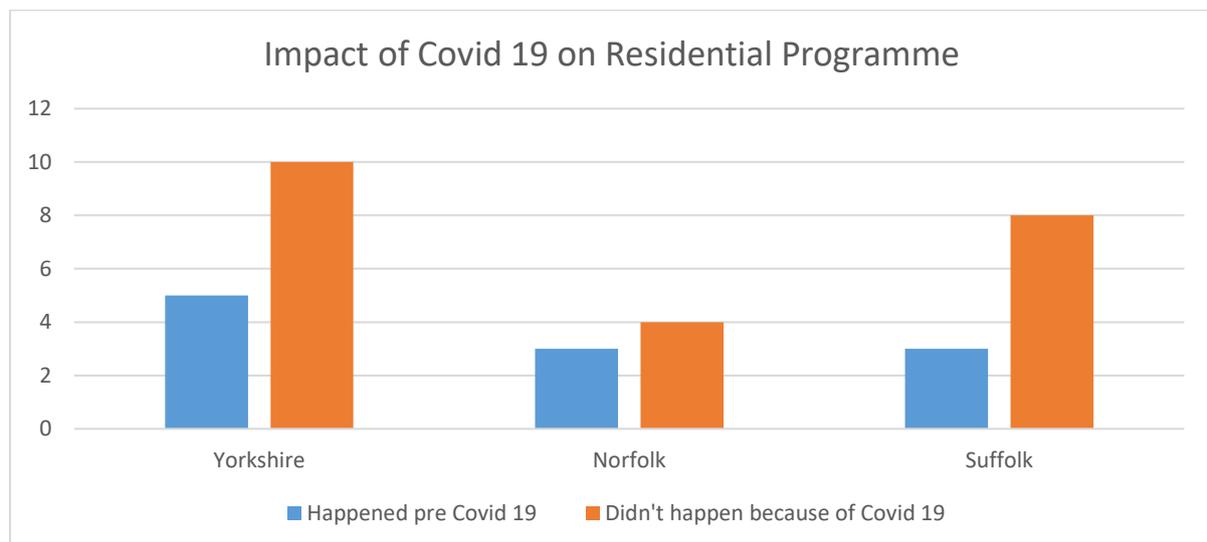
Post visit surveys:

In Yorkshire we were planning to trial handing out paper copies for teachers to fill in and hand back.

All areas were going to trial handing out two complete sets of paper copies for pupils to fill in at or towards the end of their residential. This was a successful approach for the one Norfolk visit that went ahead, and we will look to extend the trial to a slightly larger sample next year.

Results

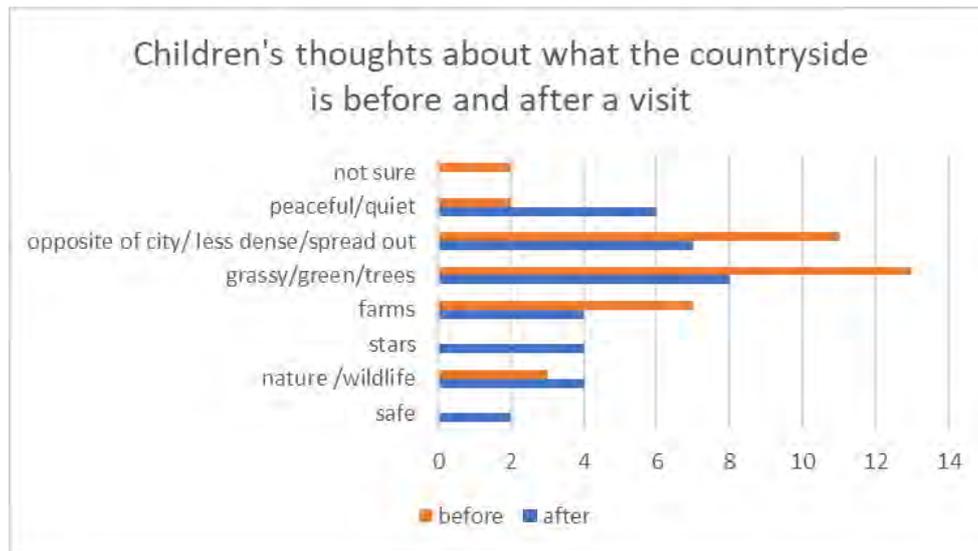
As the graph shows below, we were only able to deliver 33% of our planned Residential programme across the three delivery areas. This breaks down to 33% in Yorkshire, 27% in Suffolk and 43% in Norfolk, this last figure was boosted by a residential in March just before Covid 19 restrictions came into place.



We gathered feedback from 5 teachers across the 3 programmes and from one class of children from a Norfolk residential before and after their visit and one class in Yorkshire after their visit.

Amazing and fun were by far the most popular words chosen. Some of the less frequently used words like ‘different’, ‘beautiful’, ‘exhilarating’ and even ‘smelly’ give an insight into how the experience may be different to what they are used to. ‘Scary’ was mentioned a few times as was ‘adventurous’ although it is not clear if these relate to the experience of being away from home or some of the high adrenaline activities they took part in.

Pupils were asked what they thought the countryside was before and after a visit and their thoughts are summarised below:



Before the residential children’s descriptions tended towards more ‘textbook’ and generic descriptions such as the countryside being the opposite of a city and being characterised by grass/trees.

“I think the countryside is a place outside cities with a large amount of farms.”

“A place with no city.”

“Green land away from city.”

“A lot of trees and plants and grass.”

The children’s responses after the residential reflect the depth of understanding that personal experience brings. Peaceful/quiet and nature/wildlife are more frequently mentioned, and stars are a new addition, included by several children. Some comments from the children include:

“I think the countryside is a grassland with less houses and cars but more stars.”

“Quiet, less pollution, wildlife, seeing stars.”

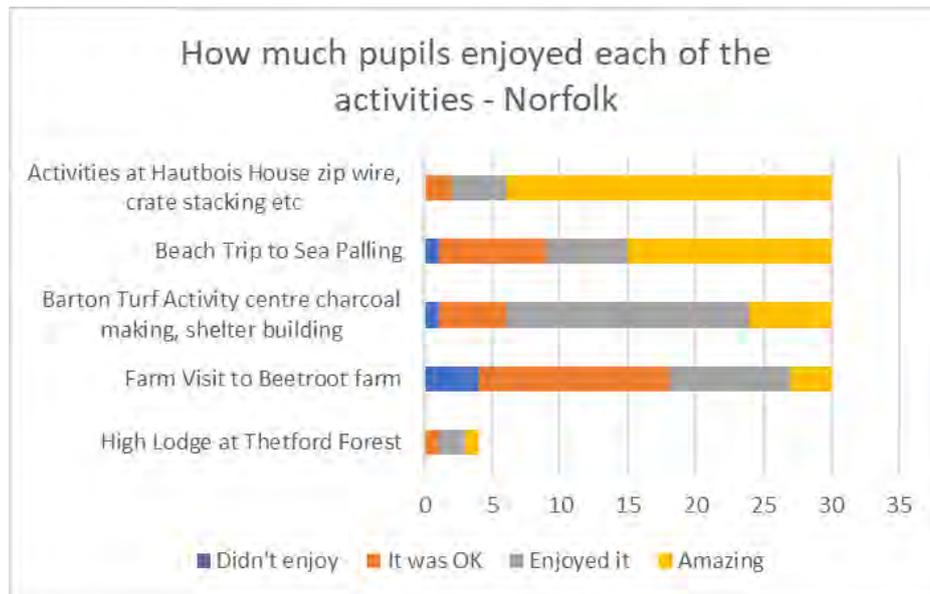
“A very safe place that’s not so dense.”

“A land with fields of grass, wheat and tractors.”

“A place to relax, see stars and have a nice time.”

We strive to give children experiences they would not otherwise have had. We asked children what they had done for the first time.

Though the responses above would seem to show that seeing the stars and experiencing wildlife and peaceful surrounding were new to the children, their answers to this question largely focused on the high adrenaline activities they had done at Hautbois House including zipwires, crate building, shelter building. A few children mentioned the charcoal making and the fact that they had been away from home for the first time. It would be good to explore further the differing impact of the varied experiences children have on a residential. Pupils were asked to rate different aspects of their residential and their thoughts are captured below



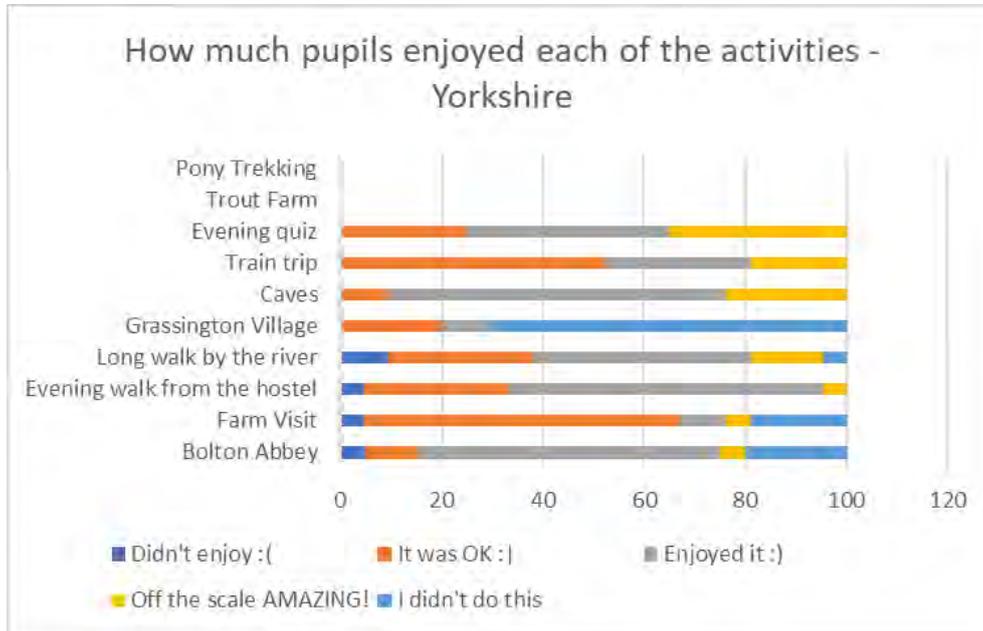
We are still in the process of reviewing our residential programmes to try and align the content as closely as possible with our mission of bringing the countryside alive for those children least able to access it.

The Norfolk residential differs from Yorkshire and Suffolk as they do two days of activities with us and two days of activities led by Hautbois House - the Girlguiding Centre where they also stay.

Children love exciting activities and gain a great deal personally from challenging themselves and succeeding. Our ambition is to move towards a programme that enables children to experience excitement and adventure whilst also exploring and gaining a deeper understanding of the countryside, rather than the excitement and adrenaline being an end in itself as might be the case with, for example, with a zipwire. So a canoe trip which enabled children to explore a lake - get a feel for the wildlife that is there, a sense of scale, a feel for how the weather effects their experience - would be more in line with our outcomes than a crate stacking activity. In Yorkshire, challenges like crossing stepping stones on a wide river offer a similar sense of achievement to high ropes but connect children to the landscape in a deeper sense. In Suffolk crabbing again offers a challenge to face and a sense of



Pupils were asked to rate different aspects of their residential and their thoughts are captured below. Unfortunately, there must have been a technical glitch as neither pony trekking (usually our top rated activity) nor the trout farm received any scores.

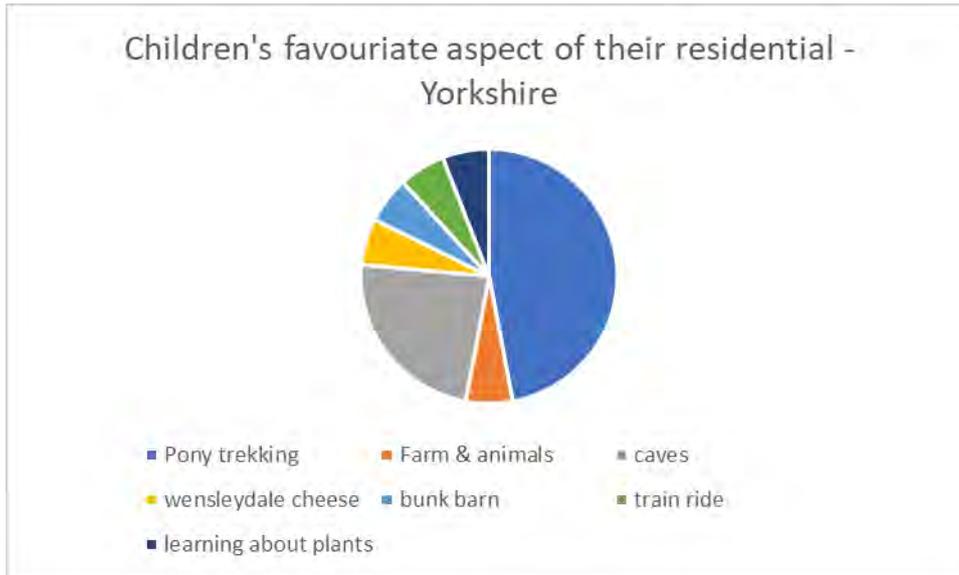


We were struck by the fact that some children reported that they hadn't done some of the activities, when we know the whole class participated in everything. We think that we need to see things through the eyes of the children more - for example what we call 'Grassington village' may actually be what they would recall as being 'having an ice cream'. We will address this in our surveys next year.

The trip to the caves, the evening quiz (which reinforces experiences from their residential) and the train ride seem to have had the biggest wow factor. From the comments children have made it is highly likely that pony trekking would have also been high on the list here. It is great that the mode of transport for getting to or from their residential has become a highlight for many of the pupils and this will hopefully sow the seed that they could use the train to access the countryside in the future.

Interestingly the activities with the broadest appeal are the simplest - the Bolton Abbey trip, the evening walk from the bunk barn and the long walk by the river.

When pupils were asked to share their favourite parts of the residential without being given a list of options, pony trekking was the most popular followed by the trip to the caves. Both of these activities offer a degree of challenge combined with an element of newness. They enrich the children's life story with new experiences, new sensations that they wouldn't otherwise have had.



A few children highlighted it was because they had done the activity for the first time:

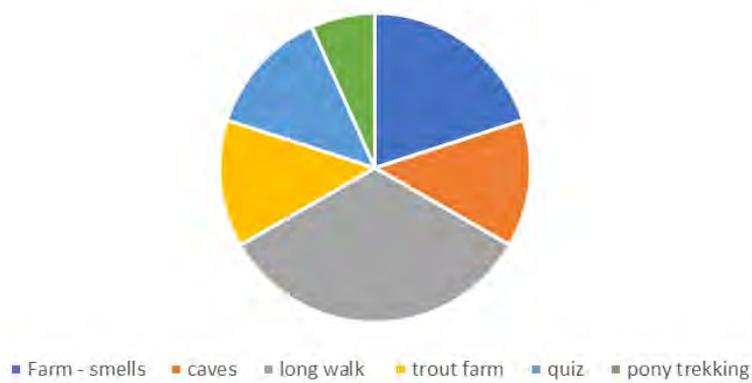
“Pony trekking because I’ve never done it before”

“My favourite activity was the caves because it was my first time going in the cave”

Pupils also reflected on their least favourite aspects of their residential which are summarised below:



Children's least favourite aspect of their residential - Yorkshire



A few children did not enjoy the long walk. One comment of “walking with no outdoor shoes” has raised the question of how we can do our best to ensure children are wearing appropriate clothing and footwear as this can have a real impact on their ability to engage with and enjoy their experience.

Things children did for the first time

Children from disadvantaged backgrounds experience poverty of opportunity and experience. Research published during the Covid crisis revealed that 253,000 children in England have no access to outdoor space for example, a number that is noticeably skewed towards BAME children and those living in poverty¹³. Professor Mick Waters said

“What children need is very simple. They need someone to go places with, somebody to talk with, to open their eyes, to create some new environments and plan experiences. Sadly, too many children lack this basic opportunity.”¹²

Our residential help to provide for those needs, we create opportunities for children to go places and do things with us. In terms of ‘firsts’, pony trekking was by far the most popular answer given here by more than half the pupils. Other answers included: staying away from home, visiting Bolton Abbey, walking across a river on a bridge, feeding a pig, visiting caves and cray fishing.



Post visit teacher findings

We ask teachers to rate all aspects of their residential to help us continue to develop the quality and impact of our programmes. The detail of the feedback also helps us to pinpoint and refine decisions in terms of the third-party providers we work with.

The table below shows the responses from 5 teachers, so a very small sample size, to the question ‘please rate each aspect of your visit’. This represented a 45% return rate something we had had plans to improve on until Covid struck.

	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
Country Trust administration prior to visit	0	20%	60%	20%
On site organisation of visit	0	0	40%	60%
Your perspective on the children's overall enjoyment	0	0	20%	80%
Links to classroom learning	0	20%	60%	20%
Overall value for money	0	0	40%	60%
Accommodation suitability	20%	0	40%	40%

We need to be cautious about drawing too many conclusions from such a small sample size as each teacher’s response represents 20%.

Administration:

80% of teachers rated the administration prior to their residential as 'very good' or 'excellent'. Scores are lower than last year especially in the excellent category which has fallen from 68% to 20%. It is likely this is down to a smaller sample size as it was only one teacher who rated the administration as 'good'. Significant improvements have been made to the confirmation paperwork which is sent out to confirm residentials, it has been streamlined, standardised across the three programmes and has clear content and layout. This was being rolled out for the summer visits which unfortunately couldn't go ahead. Improvements are still underway in how we communicate with schools prior to their visit.

Onsite organisation:

The quality of our residential coordinators is critical to the quality and impact of our programmes. All teachers rated the onsite organisation as 'very good' or 'excellent' with 60% rating it as excellent.

"Lee, Clive and Sam are very knowledgeable about all the places we visit. They needed to adapt the visit slightly due to the weather and I just want to say thank you for providing the children with such a valuable experience." **Yorkshire School**

"The Country Trust are a trusted charity we have worked with for years." **Harbinger Primary (Norfolk)**

Children's Overall Enjoyment

All teachers 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that the children had enjoyed their visit. With 80% strongly agreeing this is a slight drop from the 91% who strongly agreed last year although this is again likely to be explained by a small sample size. Here are some of the pupils' thoughts from **Harbinger Primary**.

"Enjoyable, amazing, fantastic!"

"Funnest trip ever."

"it was sunny and very fun."

"I want to come back."

Links to classroom learning

Schools have varying objectives in their Country Trust residential. When asked for their reason for bringing children on a residential, being away from home, fostering independence, experiencing the countryside all rated highly. Learning in a different environment was also mentioned.

"Link to our geography topic as we are learning about physical and human features." **Suffolk school**

"Before our residential we looked at the location on a map, and taught children about different counties, including Norfolk. Afterwards we did some Art with charcoal, physical and human features of geography." **Harbinger Primary**

It would seem from this limited feedback that some schools are looking to deepen the experience of the residential before and after their visit but that delivering the curriculum

through a residential is not one of the drivers. Some of the softer skills such as developing relationships with peers, and teachers seeing pupils in a different light can have a subtle knock on effect back in the classroom.

“The children worked together and gained an understanding of what country life is like.”
Teacher Yorkshire

Accommodation suitability

80% of teachers rated their accommodation as ‘very good’ or ‘excellent’ There was only one comment this year suggesting modernisation of the bunk barn in Yorkshire.

We will look to improve communication with the school in advance to let them know what to expect, it may be beneficial to produce some information about the accommodation to share with all staff who will be attending the residential so they have a realistic picture of what it will be like. It would be interesting to see how children found the accommodation too.

Value for money

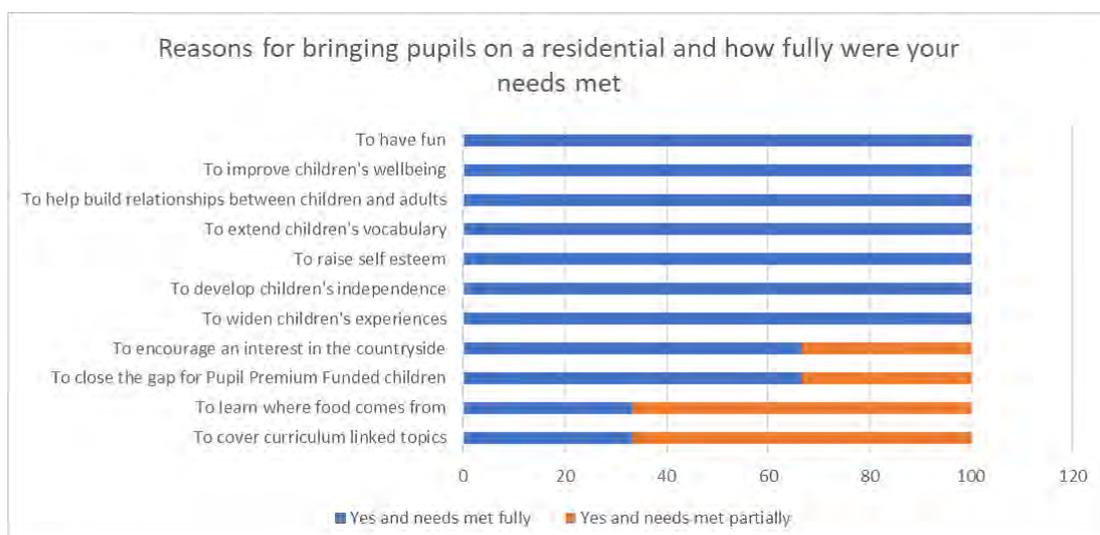
The Country Trust fundraises in order to subsidise the cost of a residential by at least 25%.

All teachers agreed that we were ‘very good’ or ‘excellent’ value for money. 60% rate us as excellent which is a reduction from the 73% last year although this is likely to be down to a small sample size. As schools return to bring their pupils on our residential year after year this demonstrates that they are finding our offer affordable.

Achieving Country Trust Outcomes

This section looks at how the residential programmes deliver our 8 outcomes. Year on year we are striving to adapt the programmes, so they align well with our mission and outcomes.

We ask for teachers’ feedback on how closely their objectives align to ours, this feedback is from a small sample size of 5. We have also used qualitative and quantitative feedback to reflect on how we are meeting our objectives.



More farmers are able to share their love and passion for what they do

We continue to strive towards including a farm visit as part of all residential. Some of the schools who come on a residential in Yorkshire have started coming on a farm visit before they attend their residential. This has given them the opportunity to meet the Country Trust Coordinator/s in advance and start to feel more familiar with the countryside. They can then build on that confidence and gain a deeper understanding during their residential. The ideal scenario here would be that they visit a contrasting farm on their residential however, historically it has been difficult to gain new farm hosts in the area.

Suffolk and Norfolk have continued to offer and include farm visits. Each area has three farms who are offering a visit as part of a residential however each farm is only able to offer one or two visits. We need to develop our network of farms in this area so we are able to offer this opportunity to all schools. Some of the Suffolk residential have visited the Suffolk Punch Trust which offers a great farm type experience with the opportunity to meet large animals up close. However, we would like to move these visits to real working farms as our network of hosts develops further.

It would be good to be able to capture the thoughts of the farmers who offer a visit to our residential programme. Capturing qualitative feedback in an informal way through the session reports would give us an insight into what they gain from the visits and may also yield ideas for improving future visits.

In Yorkshire the neighbouring farmers have continued to be invited to join the groups for dinner. This has been a really positive experience for the children and the farmers, giving the opportunity for more informal conversations and questions. The children also get an insight into the daily activities happening on the farm as they spend time outside the bunk barn and see quadbikes and tractors at work.

Children, their parent helpers and teachers are more knowledgeable and more aware of food, farming and the countryside.

Hands on visits to real working farms are at the heart of what we offer at the Country Trust giving children the opportunity to look through the window into another lifestyle and career path whilst opening their eyes to the complexity of the countryside as well as the feeling of wellbeing time outdoors can bring.

Teachers let us know that one of the key reasons they bring their children on a residential is so they can experience the countryside. All teachers agreed that they bring children on a residential to encourage an interest in the countryside and 66% agreed that those needs had been fully met. The fact that this is not 100% means that we could adapt our programmes further to ensure these needs are being fully met.

Pupils let us know they thought:



“The countryside was fun because there was so much space and we learnt a lot.”
Pupil Norfolk

“My favourite bit was the beetroot farm because you could taste beetroot.” **Pupil Norfolk**

“We got to learn more about the Countryside.” **Pupil Yorkshire**

“My favourite activity was going to the farm because we got to see the animals.” **Pupil Yorkshire**

Children have more opportunities to develop and display non cognitive skills, to experience patience wonder and success

For the second year running all teachers who responded agreed that widening children’s experiences was important to their residential and we fully met their needs.

“New friendships developed, children who hadn’t mixed previously more familiar with each other. Children are already talking about the fears they faced in the activities and how they overcame them.” **Teacher Harbinger Primary School**

Some of the children’s three words to describe their residential give a good insight

“Adventurous, fun, extraordinary.”

“Amazing, scary at first, fun.”

“New, fun, exhilarating.”

And longer

“I feel calm and relaxed.”

“I enjoyed Ziplining because I faced my fear and I really liked this.”

“I enjoyed Ziplining because at first I was scared but then I really enjoyed it and had fun.”

Some of the words that came through very strongly in our qualitative evaluation from children captured the sense of peace, quiet and calm that they felt in the countryside. Words such as fun and amazing were very popular and give an insight that the children appreciate the sense of freedom they had and the chance to try new things.

All teachers felt that their needs were fully met in helping children become more independent.

Children are more engaged with formal education as a result of the ‘real world’ and interactive learning experiences

We need to adapt the questions that are asked next year to gain teachers’ thoughts and experiences on this in a more consistent and comprehensive way.

‘Following on from our residential we did some art with charcoal having experienced how charcoal is made, we learnt physical and human features of geography linking back to what they had seen first-hand.’ **Harbinger Primary**

Children are better able to make informed decisions about the food they eat

All teachers who responded felt this was a reason for bringing their children on a residential, 66% felt this need had been partially met and 33% felt it had been fully met. We're on a journey towards strengthening this element of our residential offer, including a farm visit in all residentials and building this into the preparation work schools do before they visit. We are also keen to explore the scope for children being involved in an aspect of their food preparation or including some food from the farm they visited in one of the meals they eat.

Children feel more at home in the countryside and green spaces

All teachers agreed that encouraging an interest in the countryside was an important aspect of their residential, with 66% feeling those needs had been fully met. We will look to reword this question next year to align more closely with our outcome. It would be useful to find out more from teachers about what they were expecting and what elements fell short of their aspirations.

Pupils were asked how they felt about the countryside after their visit:

"The countryside is a place where I feel free."

"I feel like it's more fun now."

"I feel comfortable in the countryside."

"I feel that I should visit the countryside more."

"Happy, exciting and fun but kinda smelly."

"Children came away with an appreciation of the countryside. They want to go again and want to take parents to some of the places they went. Many children also overcame any fear they had of animals." Teacher Yorkshire

Children feel responsible for their own and the wider environment

In order to feel responsible for the environment you first need to have an affinity with it and some sense of ownership and this is just what a residential achieves. By being immersed in the countryside at different times of day and experiencing different weather, through actively learning about different aspects but also having time to relax and unwind and soak up the experience on a deeper level this gives children the building blocks for feeling it is special and for taking the next step to wanting to take care of it. When they return home there is the potential for schools to build on this and help children make connections with their own local green spaces or green areas within their school grounds.

"I really love the countryside because it's really spacey and beautiful." Pupil Norfolk



During lockdown we developed and successfully piloted Farm in a Box which includes short films, objects and products from the farm, as well as challenges and hands on activities for pupils in their school grounds and in the classroom. This opportunity is open to schools who take part in our residentials and should help children gain a deeper and more lasting connection with and understanding of their own and the wider environment.

More teachers see the potential of the countryside as a learning resource and feel more confident to use it to enhance their teaching.

All teachers felt it was important that their residential covered curriculum linked topics. This has not been the case in previous years and may be down to the small sample size. 33% felt that those needs had been fully met. We need to build discussion about opportunities for curriculum links into the conversations that happen with teachers before their residential. We have a wealth of experience of this in the farm visit team and best practice can be shared with the residentials team.

All teachers felt that extending children's vocabulary was an important aspect of their residential and that these needs had been fully met. Language and Communication has been a focus this year and with support from the Aldgate and Allhallows Foundation we have created a pocketbook full of ideas for focusing on language during our visits. All Coordinators have received training and have access to the resources.

The distance from the countryside for the majority of London schools means they are only likely to have limited opportunities for day visits from school. However, we could consider whether we could support teachers to take pupils out to explore their school grounds or a local park. We are testing the potential this approach could have with Farm in a Box and have also produced some outdoor learning CPD short films.

Conclusions

The feedback that we have received shows that our residentials are continuing to have a real impact for those children who would be least able to access these opportunities without our help. The low number of visits and limited data gathered makes it hard to draw robust conclusions but as it shows similar patterns to last year in many areas we feel confident that those residentials we were able to run were of a high standard and were well received by children and teachers alike.

We are a learning charity and actively seek to measure our performance, gather feedback and create opportunities to reflect. The main focus for next year is to embed the changes in gathering feedback from teachers and pupils that we had hoped to do during the summer



term when residential visits were unable to happen. Adapting some of the questions asked would enable us to explore more effectively how our outcomes are being met.

We will strive to significantly increase the return rate of session reports by building them into the teachers' feedback forms. This will enable us to gain an insight into residential visits from our Coordinators and may also provide a mechanism for hearing the voice of the farmers who support our residential visits.

We will look more closely at the aspects that are key to our work and haven't performed as well as we would have liked them to accepting that we had a small sample size for teacher feedback which may have skewed results.

We have carried out some much-needed streamlining of our paperwork and made progress with our new database which we hope will further aid communication and reporting. We will continue to simplify and streamline our booking process in Yorkshire.

Although 2020 very sadly saw a huge, but unavoidable reduction in the scale of our Residential programme we have been able to keep in active contact with our network of farms, schools and providers, supporting them where appropriate, and thanks to our funders have been able to support our workforce too where required.

Looking ahead to 2020/21, the current guidance is that schools should not be taking children on residential visits and our Autumn programme will not be going ahead. Working closely with our third party providers the majority of schools who had to cancel a residential visit in the Summer and Autumn terms transferred their booking to Summer/Autumn 2021 and we hope that these will be able to go ahead as planned.

We are extending the offer of our new Farm in a Box programme to strengthen the connection between schools who take part in our residential visits and the farms they visit, we hope this may assist in embedding the farm visit element of the residential further. Short films, objects and products from the farmers will start to build the relationship, and carefully targeted farm centred investigations, challenges and hands on activities in their school grounds and in the classroom will lay the foundation stones of understanding, generating enthusiasm and excitement to find out more when they are able to visit the farm on their residential.

Acknowledgements

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