2024

MOUNT COOK THEORY OF CHANGE

PUSHING BOUNDARIES
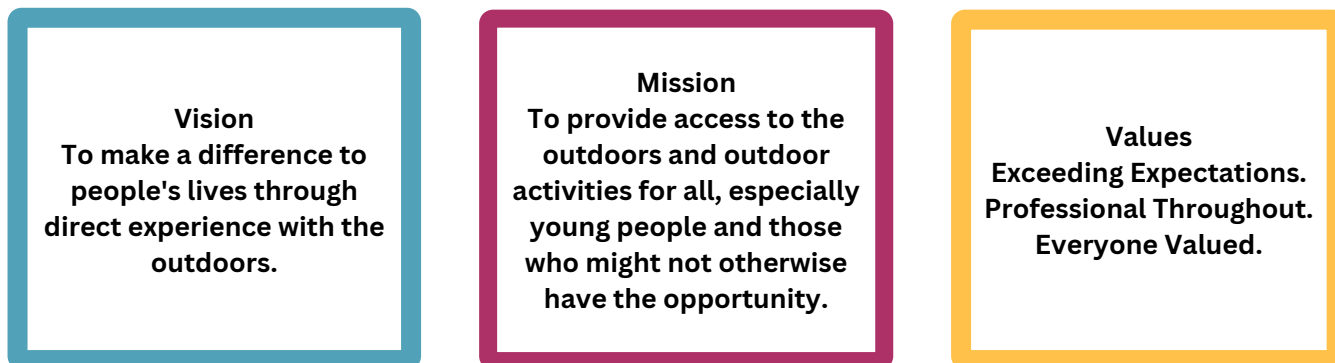## OPENING MINDS

Contents Page

Introduction

Mount Cook Adventure Centre wants to make a difference to people's lives through direct experience with the outdoors. We want every individual who comes to us, to go through a journey of social and personal development. Our theory of change identifies the outcomes we strive to meet.

Vision	Mission	Values
Vision To make a difference to people's lives through direct experience with the outdoors.	**Mission** To provide access to the outdoors and outdoor activities for all, especially young people and those who might not otherwise have the opportunity.	**Values** Exceeding Expectations. Professional Throughout. Everyone Valued.

Impact of residentials

Our aim is to improve children's physical health, build self-esteem, confidence levels, emotional health and well-being. School residential trips have been shown to have a positive impact on students' academic outcomes and their wider development.

'*Research shows that 99% of teachers felt pupils were more confident in their own abilities after a residential trip*' [1]

[YHA school residential impact survey 2016/17 report]

"*Learning Away has shown that a residential learning experience provides opportunities and benefits/impacts that cannot be achieved in any other educational context or setting. The impact is greater when residentials are fully integrated with a school's curriculum and ethos.*" [2]

[Learning Away Final Evaluation Report, 2015**]**

Benefits of Outdoor Education

Outdoor education has numerous benefits for children and young people. According to a report by Natural England, outdoor learning can make children more motivated to learn, happier, healthier and more engaged with learning. It can also help children to develop skills, knowledge and understanding in a meaningful context and to think critically and solve problems.

'*Taking the curriculum outside can improve attainment, increase engagement, and develop a wide range of skills including problem solving, communication and resilience.*' [3]

[Institute for Outdoor Learning, 2023**]**

What is a theory of change?

A theory of change explores why a 'desired change is expected to happen in a particular context'. [4] [The Centre for Theory of Change]

It develops our understanding of what happens between the desired outcome of a process of change and the activities and interventions that are delivered.

A theory of change should help challenge your assumptions and consider the enablers that influence your delivery. It should also help to set clear goals and intentions and explore how your process is supported by evidence.

A theory of change is often represented as a visual diagram and is developed through backwards mapping, from outcomes to activities, however it is not only a diagram but the whole process of thought of how a delivery or project should work.

**'A simplified theory of change model'
[Instituie for Outdoor Learning] [5]**

Why should we do a theory of change?

A theory of change is important because it helps to lay the foundation for evaluation, recognise and address any uncertainties.

According to the Institute for Outdoor Learning, 'a theory of change can:
- **Ensure a shared understanding** of how a programme or organisation is trying to make a difference.
- **Make explicit different views and assumptions** about the change process, especially seemingly obvious ones.
- **Help people focus on the programme purpose** and long-term aim rather than starting from, and maybe getting too caught up in, current activities.
- **Identify the key things to measure** that will show whether or not you are making progress towards the end goal.
- **Help when making a case for support** when making approaches to funders and major donors.
- **Enable a review** of why and how a programme or approach works and hence whether it is likely to work in other contexts.' [5]

It allows us to have a better understanding and insight into the impact we create.

This table shows reports and studies which outline various character traits as developmental goals. For more information please see the next page.

	Ofstead, School Inspection Handbook, Personal Development (Ofsted, 2023)	High Quality Outdoor Learning	Forestry Commission 'A Marvellous opportunity for children to learn'	Department for Education, Developing Character Skills in Schools (2017)	Early Intervention Foundation 'Social and Emotional Learning: Skills for Life and Work'
Activity Skills	Opportunities to be active	Activity Skills	Physical Skills		
Broadened Horizons	Readiness for the next phase of education, training or employment	Broadened Horizons			
Communication	Develop pupils' characters.. positive personal traits	Personal Qualities (Communication)	Language and Communication	Communication Skills	Social Skills including relationship skills and communication skills
Confidence	Confidence	Confidence and Character	Confidence	Confidence and self-esteem	
Enjoyment	Learn Eagerly, Positive attitudes to learning	Enjoyment			
Focus			Motivation and Concentration		
Knowledge & Learning			Knowledge and Understanding		
Motivation	Motivation	Increased motivation and appetite for learning	Motivation and Concentration	Perseverance and motivation	Motivation
Personal Qualities	Develop pupils' characters.. positive personal traits	Personal Qualities (problem-solving, creativity, critical thinking, leadership and co-operation)			
Positive Relationships	Equality of opportunity, Healthy Relationships			Tolerance, Respect, Empathy and Compassion	Social skills including relationship skills and communication skills
Positive Relationships (tolerance & respect)	Behave with integrity				
Resilience	Resilience			Resilience	Resilience and coping
Self-control	Reflect wisely		Social Skills	Self (or emotional) regulation	Self-control/self-regulation
Self-Perceptions/Self Awareness			Social Skills		Self-perceptions, self-awareness and self-direction
Skills for Life	Become actively involved in public life as adults	Skills for Life			
Social and Emotional Awareness	Develop pupils' characters.. positive personal traits	Social and emotional awareness	Social Skills		
Social Skills	Cooperate consistently well with others		Social Skills		Social Skills
Wellbeing	Physical & Mental Health	Health & Wellbeing			

The previous table shows the character traits which each body has outlined as a developmental goal. We have chosen to look at reports and studies from:

- Ofsted School Inspection Handbook (Ofsted, 2023)
- Institute for Outdoor Learning, High Quality Outdoor Learning (2015)
- Forestry Commission England 'A marvellous opportunity for children to learn' (2006)
- Department for Education, Developing Character Skills in Schools (2017)
- Early Intervention Foundation, 'Social and Emotional Learning: Skills for Life and Work', (2015)

After consideration, we've decided to focus on three main areas and have broken these down into further character traits
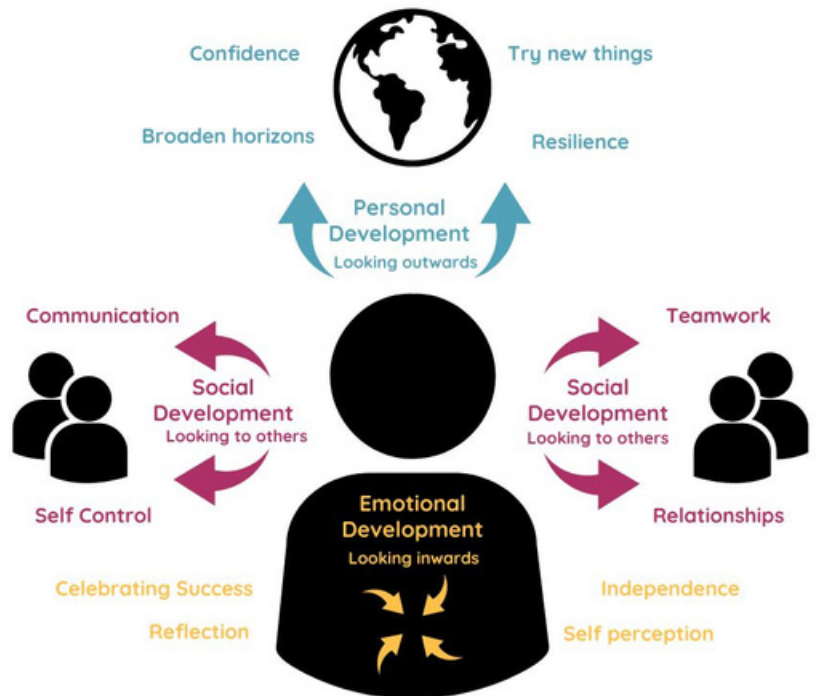
Resilience and Self-confidence
- Resilience
- Confidence
- Broadened Horizons

Teamwork and Cohesion
- Teamwork
- Relationships
- Communication
- Emotional Awareness

Independence and Self-reflection
- Independence
- Celebrating Success
- Social Awareness
- Self-control

"If I'm honest I was extremely anxious in the run up to our stay as it was my first time away from at least one family member for over a day. But I should not have worried as I was made to feel at home immediately"

Year 6 Student - Holywell Primary

Why are these character traits important in our development?

In the below sections we have found supporting evidence as to why these character traits are important to develop and how they can benefit people long term.

Resilience and Self-confidence

Resilience

"Resilience is described as the capacity to 'bounce back' from adverse experiences, and succeed despite adversity….Resilience interacts with, but is not 'created' by, characteristics of individuals. Rather, it is shaped and built by experiences, opportunities and relationships – what could be termed the 'social determinants' of resilience." [6]

[Public Health England. 'Local action on health inequalities: Building children and young people's resilience in schools, Health Equity Evidence Review 2', 2014]

Confidence

"When kids are confident and secure about who they are, they're more likely to have a growth mindset. That means they can motivate themselves to take on new challenges and cope with and learn from mistakes. They're also more likely to stand up for themselves and ask for help when they need it." [7]

[B. Cunningham EdM, *'The Importance of positive self-esteem for kids'*]

Broadened Horizons

'Time away from the confines of a traditionally structured classroom can broaden the horizons of children, conditioned to their standard routine. Attempting new challenges together can bring peers closer and give a feeling of unity and mutual respect. Neuro-diverse (and indeed all) learners need to be given opportunities to shine, fail, and leave their comfort zone; this cannot be fully achieved in a classroom.' [8]

[Down's Syndrome Association, C. Barnes, 'How Can Outdoor Learning Promote Effective Inclusion, Inclusive Education For All #14', 2022]

Teamwork and Cohesion

Teamwork

"The need to collaborate is evident, and beyond preparing children for the reality of adult life, ensuring that children understand the value of collaboration as well as the fundamentals of implementing it is a great way to prepare them to be empathetic individuals." [9]

[K Rymanowicz, Michigan State University, 2017]

Building Relationships

"There has been considerable research showing the importance of childhood friendships for later development, with the long-term outcomes of having a good friend cutting across social-emotional development and academic performance at school" [10]

[E. Fink and C. Hughes, *'Children, young people and families, Relationships and romance. Children's Friendships",* Feb 2019]

Communication

"Speech, language and communication skills are closely linked to educational attainment and future employment prospects; the ability to play a full role in society; and form lasting friendships and relationships" [11]

[National Children's Bureau, Closing the Word Gap with Jean Gross CBE, 2019]

Emotional Awareness

"longitudinal research in the UK has shown that good social and emotional skills—including self-regulation, self-awareness, and social skills—developed by the age of ten, are predictors of a range of adult outcomes (age 42), such as life satisfaction and wellbeing, labour market success, and good overall health" [12a]

[Improving Social and Emotional Learning in Primary Schools, Guidance Report Education Endowment Foundation & Early Intervention Foundation, 2019]

"I loved the zip wire because it was really high which made it really exciting and since I am scared of heights it challenged me to face my fears."

Year 5 Student - St Anselms School

Independence and Self-reflection

Independence

"Children who show a high degree of independence have higher confidence, self-esteem and motivation…Regular exposure to the natural environment provides children with opportunities to take risks and gain resilience, independence and confidence." [13]

[A. Cerino, 'The importance of recognising and promoting independence in young children: the role of the environment and the Danish forest school approach'   2021]

Celebrating Success

'Celebrating our success is important because it increases motivation towards goals, and it boosts someone's confidence so then they feel more empowered to continue to do what they are doing. When someone's efforts are recognised, it makes someone feel seen and when people celebrate together, it gives someone a sense of purpose, which leads to bigger and better goals being set.' [14]

[Sheffield Mind, 'Why Celebrating Success is Important]

Social and Emotional Awareness

'*Numerous large evidence reviews* indicate that, when well implemented, SEL [Social and Emotional Learning] can have positive impacts on a range of outcomes, including:*
- *Improved social and emotional skills;*
- *improved academic performance;*
- *improved attitudes, behaviour and relationships with peers;*
- *reduced emotional distress (student depression, anxiety, stress and social withdrawal);*
- *reduced levels of bullying;*
- *reduced conduct problems; and*
- *improved school connection."* [12b]

[Improving Social and Emotional Learning in Primary Schools, Guidance Report Education Endowment Foundation & Early Intervention Foundation, 2019]

Self-control

"*Self-control is crucial for the successful pursuit of long-term goals. It is equally essential for developing the self-restraint and empathy needed to build caring and mutually supportive relationships."* [15]

[W. Mischel, 'The Marshmallow Test', 2014]

Purpose of Goals

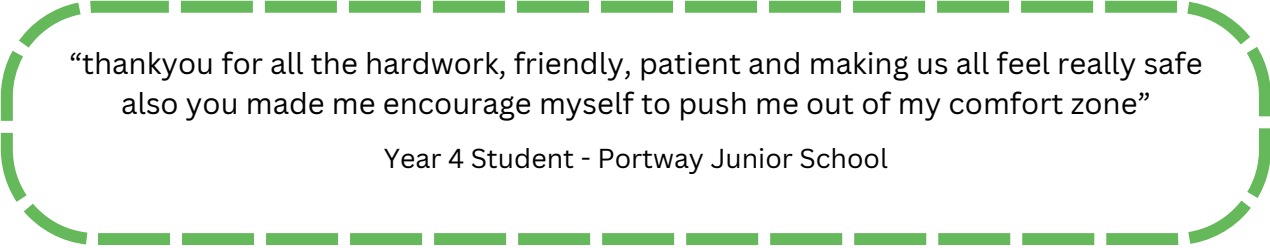### Resilience and Self-confidence

By focusing on each child's personal development, we encourage them to explore their own personal identities, increase their resilience and build their self-confidence. In doing this we are able to report back to teachers with data that meets criteria for OFSTED whilst also showing the importance of learning outside the classroom.

Teamwork and Cohesion

By encouraging teamwork, we can help children form positive relationships and develop their communication skills. Actively contributing and participating increases a child's self-esteem. This can help reduce negative behaviour both in and out of a school setting and build strong relationship skills.

Independence and Self-reflection

In helping children to celebrate success through shared goals, mutual encouragement and self-reflection, they can recognise their achievements, the work and perseverance they put into to achieve their goals and grow awareness of the steps and tools they need for future success. There is extensive research linking childhood social and emotional skills to improved adult mental wellbeing, employability and life satisfaction, for example the 2015 Government study titled 'Social and Emotional Skills in Childhood and their Long-Term Effects on Adult Life'.

> "thankyou for all the hardwork, friendly, patient and making us all feel really safe also you made me encourage myself to push me out of my comfort zone"
>
> Year 4 Student - Portway Junior School

Mount Cook Adventure Centre - Activities

There is much research to show that outdoor activities and learning have a positive effect on young people such as increasing confidence, communication, motivation, social skills [T. Gill] and self-confidence, knowledge and new perspectives [O'Brien and Murray]

Our activities are designed to encourage specific outcomes in young people, whilst making memories they will never forget.

Resilience and Self-confidence
Rock Climbing and Scrambling
Abseiling
High Ropes
Zip Wire & Traverse Cube
Via Ferrata
Guided Walk Offsite
Bushcraft
Archery & Onsite Orienteering
Fossil Hunting and Gem Panning

Teamwork and Cohesion
Archery Tag & Maze Cube
Game of Tribes
Low Ropes & Problem Solving
The Mount Cook Challenge
Team Challenges
Orienteering at Black Rocks
Rocket Building
Campfire & Bushcraft
Indoor Climbing and Landkarts

Independence and Self-reflection
A trip to Mount Cook also offers a shared residential experience, where children and young people sleep and eat alongside each other. The accommodation and dining space we provide helps to build a sense of community and belonging. Children are encouraged to develop their independence by making sure they have the right clothing for each activity, knowing their own schedule during their stay and clearing their trays at the end of meals.

As well as the benefits, there are also risks that come from outdoor learning due to the nature of outdoor activities.

'Getting to grips with a new challenge often bring a degree of risk; think of a child learning to take their first steps or to ride a bicycle. These risks can rarely be completely eliminated without also undermining the learning.' [16]

[T Gill, Balancing Risks and Benefits in Outdoor Learning and Play]

Hazards and risks need to be assessed and safety needs addressed to mitigate risks to acceptable levels. This is achieved through our practices and procedures, securing appropriate licensing and ensuring our staff are competent and qualified.

Narrative theory of change

Context -

- We are a not-for-profit organisation, providing access to the outdoors for all.

- Our Mission is 'to provide access to the outdoors and outdoor activities for all, especially young people and those who might not otherwise have the opportunity'.

- Our Vision is 'to make a difference to people's lives through direct experience with the outdoors.'

- Our adventurous activities are designed to; broaden horizons and push boundaries, encourage personal development, social development and social skills and create lasting memories

Assumptions -

- We create scenarios where children can face setbacks and are required to push their boundaries and broaden their horizons to succeed their goals.

- We encourage people to overcome adversity and build resilience during activities, whether this is from the task itself or even challenging weather!

- Visitors can be onsite alongside other groups, who may be different from themselves and require them to widen their world views.

- We provide opportunities for them to build confidence by succeeding in their goals, identifying personal strengths and finding their feet away from home.

- We create scenarios where communication and collaboration are required to meet objectives of set tasks, building their teamwork skills.

- We ask participants to be supportive of each other throughout their tasks and residential, building positive relationships.

- We provide opportunities for children to achieve goals and celebrate success for themselves, their group and each other.

- Our activities and residential experience encourages emotional awareness, as children observe and engage with the fears and joys of others.

- We build in regular reviewing and opportunities for introspection, asking children how their activity went, how it made them feel and what they achieved.

- Being away from home as well as trying new activities can be a challenging experience. We provide children with the opportunity to unite as a team, to encourage and support each other.

- Staying residentially requires young people to share space and live alongside each other, which is often a new experience. This situation can be a challenge for some, where they must communicate and build their self-control to find resolutions.

- We have created an environment for mealtimes with square tables which is inclusive for group conversation and discussion. Our shared residential experience helps build comradery and community cohesion.

- We give opportunities for children to be responsible for their own time management and personal kit and build their independence.

Evidence -

- 'An evaluation of the data carried out by Maynard and Lee (2018) for the AHOEC found strong evidence of participants achieving outcomes related to challenge and resilience, teamwork and supportive relationships with peers, communication skills, independence skills and recognising their own abilities, and positive relationships with teachers.' [17]

  [Dave Harvey, Outdoor Learning, 2023]

- "Learning Away has shown that a residential learning experience provides opportunities and benefits/impacts that cannot be achieved in any other educational context or setting. The impact is greater when residentials are fully integrated with a school's curriculum and ethos." [2]

  [Learning Away Final Evaluation Report, 2015]

- 'Ofsted has recognised that: 'When planned and implemented well, learning outside the classroom contributed significantly to raising standards and improving pupils' personal, social and emotional development' [18a]

  [High Quality Outdoor Learning Guide, 2015]

- Our preliminary data shows there is an overall increase in the development of primary aged children, across our targeted areas.

Enablers -

- External - People often don't have regular opportunities to engage with the outdoors or adventurous activities.

- Internal - Participants need to embrace activities and engage with their group and activity leaders.

- Internal - Staff must work with young people to create and environment of trust, honesty and openness, to allow activities to be delivered safely and for participants to gain the full benefit of the programme delivery.

- Internal - Successful delivery depends on the training and appropriate hiring of Mount Cook staff.

- Internal - Success also depends on securing the appropriate licensing and insurance, making sure activities are up to standard with relevant governing bodies.

- External - The UK Government has set outdoor learning as a requirement for schools. As not all schools are able to provide this onsite, this encourages schools to book residential and day trips to outdoor education centres.

- External - There needs to be the ability for groups to attend and for Mount Cook to secure bookings. A factor of this will be based on costs, affordability, and external grants available to low-income participants and charity groups for residential trips and outdoor activities.

> "I'm so thankful for all the staff that helped me when I was struggling with activities - thank you! And now I'm more determined to do more activities."
>
> Year 5 Student - Holywell Primary

The following page is a logic model displaying our theory of change.

Mount Cook Adventure Centre — Theory of Change

	WHAT WE DO	ACTIVITIES	OUTCOMES	LONG TERM
RESILIENCE & SELF-CONFIDENCE **PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT**	We create scenarios where children can face setbacks and are required to **push their boundaries and broaden their horizons** to succeed their goals. We encourage them to overcome adversity and **build resilience** during activities, whether this is from the task itself or even challenging weather! They can be onsite alongside other groups, who may be different from themselves and require them to widen their world views. We provide opportunities for them to **build confidence** by succeeding in their goals, identifying personal strengths and finding their feet away from home.	Rock Climbing and Scrambling Abseiling High Ropes Zip Wire & Traverse Cube Via Ferrata Guided Walk Offsite Bushcraft Archery & Onsite Orienteering Fossil Hunting and Gem Panning	Ability to overcome physical and emotional challenges. Awareness of their capabilities and limitations Ability to set themselves higher aspirations, knowing they can achieve their goals.	To increase their ability to manage and overcome challenging situations and adversity. To endow a positive outlook, built from self-confidence. To increase resilience which can 'increase achievement', 'support them through transitions' and 'promote better interpersonal relationships between people' [Public Health England, 2014]
TEAMWORK & COHESION **SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**	We create scenarios where **communication** and collaboration are required to meet objectives of set tasks, building their **teamwork skills.** We ask participants to be supportive of each other throughout their tasks and residential, building **positive relationships.** Our activities and residential experience encourages **emotional awareness,** as children observe and engage with the fears and joys of others.	Archery Tag & Maze Cube Game of Tribes Low Ropes & Problem Solving The Mount Cook Challenge Team Challenges Orienteering at Black Rocks Rocket Building Campfire & Bushcraft Indoor Climbing and Landkarts	Develop their communication skills Improve children's listening skills Strengthen relationships	To develop skills for cooperation, conflict resolution and celebrating success To build their social awareness of situations and the feelings of others To form healthy positive relationships which 'helps children and young people feel safe and supported as they grow up'. [NSPCC, 2021]
INDEPENDENCE AND SELF-REFLECTION **EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**	We build in regular reviewing and opportunities for introspection, asking children how their activity went, how it made them feel and what they achieved. We provide opportunities for children to achieve goals and **celebrate success** for themselves, their group and each other. Being away from home as well as trying new activities can be a challenging experience. We provide children with the opportunity to unite as a team, to encourage and support each other. Staying residentially requires young people to share space and live alongside each other, which is often a new experience. This situation can be a challenge for some, where they must **communicate** and build their **self-control** to find resolutions. We have created an environment for mealtimes with square tables which is inclusive for group conversation and discussion. Our **shared residential experience** helps build comradery and community cohesion. We give opportunities for children to be responsible for their own time management and personal kit and build their **independence.**	Staying away from home overnight Eating together in our dining hall Clearing away after mealtimes Checking their own schedule and manage their own time keeping Having the correct kit for activities (clothing, water bottle, suncream/waterproofs etc.)	Strengthen problem solving skills Learn how to manage responsibilities and their consequences Develop critical thinking skills Encourage self-control and how to self-manage	To take accountability for their actions. To have a good awareness of and skills to ensure good time keeping To develop their understanding and empathy towards others as well as understanding their own emotions To build aspirations and seek new challenges To develop self-control which 'is critical for the successful pursuit of long-term goals. It is equally essential for developing the self-restraint and empathy needed to build caring and mutually supportive relationships." [W. Mischel, 2014]

How we are measuring our theory of change

We are measuring our theory of change through questionnaires on arrival and departure. These are delivered by our instructors and completed in their activity groups.

Each child will be asked to circle the smiley face which best describes how they feel about each statement, ranging from a very sad face (strongly disagree) to a very happy face (strongly agree). We have used images as responses to create a child accessible questionnaire, giving us the most reliable data.

Children will be asked to rate how much they agreed with the below statements, which score 1 - 5, visually represented with a smiley face rating scale.

Strongly Disagree (1) / Disagree (2) / OK (3) / Agree (4) / Strongly Agree (5)

Q1. I am willing to try new things

Q2. I have a positive growth mindset

Q3. I am a resilient learner

Q4. I work well as part of a team

Q5. I have a positive relationship with my friends

Q6. I am good at waiting my turn

Q7. I can share my thoughts and feelings with others

Q8. I can recognise when I have done something well

Q9. I am comfortable being away from home overnight

Questions 1 - 3	Resilience and Self-confidence	Resilience Confidence Broadened Horizons
Questions 4 - 6	Teamwork and Cohesion	Teamwork Relationships Communication Self Control
Questions 7 - 9	Independence and Self-reflection	Independence Celebrating Success Social and Emotional Awareness

Sharing the results

We will share the results with schools in a separate report which will show the percentage change between arrival and departure.

(the table below uses randomised results and is an example)

		% Change	Arrival Total	Departure Total	Max Total	Total % Change
Personal Development	Q 1	14%	647	722	795	12%
	Q 2	14%				
	Q 3	7%				
Social Development	Q 4	3%	699	712	795	2%
	Q 5	2%				
	Q 6	1%				
Emotional Development	Q 7	8%	596	645	795	8%
	Q 8	8%				
	Q 9	9%				

By building a database of these results, we hope:

- It will be helpful to schools, giving them supporting evidence that meets Ofsted criteria and encourage outdoor education.

- To show the larger, positive effect outdoor education and activities have on the development of young people

- To help monitor our effectiveness, making sure we are always delivering an experience which makes a difference to the lives of young people

We'd hope that every young person would increase their scores on their questionnaire from arrival to departure to show the positive impact that Mount Cook can have on children's lives. However, in some cases, we may see negative results (a decrease in scores). If this is the case, we're able to investigate why, this could be done in a number of ways:

- Speaking directly with instructors who worked with them to identify any issues
- Speaking directly with school teachers to identify any ongoing issues
- Looking into how challenging the activity was for the group
- Identifying if the session was well suited to the age range

Negative results could also show how young people have developed their self awareness during their residential. By the end of their stay we hope that they have a better gauge of their emotions, which may be reflected in a negative but more realistic score.

Positive Indicators

As well as our data results, there are also other indicators that can help us identify if young people enjoy participating and are feeling some of the positive effects of outdoor learning and adventurous activities. These have been outlined by the English Outdoor Council and High Quality Outdoor Learning guide [18b], below is a brief overview of these long and short term indicators.

Enjoyment

- enjoy being outdoors – smile often!
- want to repeat experiences either now or after review and reflection
- opt into activities and participate fully
- talk about their experiences, positively and with enthusiasm
- take a full part in all aspects of a residential experience

Building confidence and character

- overcome their apprehensions to take part in challenging activities
- want a second go at things they find challenging first time
- develop resilience through perseverance where before they felt they could not succeed feel proud of what they have achieved
- talk openly about their successes, and their failures
- display more social confidence – 'come out of their shell'

Health

- have a positive self-image
- talk about the benefits to their health through participation in physical outdoor activities
- adopt a healthy lifestyle, including healthy eating appropriate to the demands of their activities
- want to continue their interest in outdoor activities beyond school and into adult life
- are aware of the links between physical and emotional well-being

Social and Emotional Awareness

- are learning to recognise their own and others' strengths and current limitations, valuing the contribution of others
- willingly trust others and accept their support, while also recognising when others need support and willingly offer theirs
- treat others with tolerance and respect, challenging intolerance when necessary
- recognise and applaud the achievements of others, regardless of how these compare with their own
- developing and valuing friendships

Activity Skills

- develop physical skills that they adapt and apply effectively in outdoor activities
- develop relevant mental skills (e.g. determination, co-operation, resilience)
- acquire and develop appropriate technical knowledge and skills
- know how to dress appropriately for outdoor activities
- understand how to keep themselves comfortable when outdoors in a variety of environments

Personal Qualities

- arrive on time, properly equipped and prepared for activities
- undertake appropriate tasks with minimum levels of supervision and increasing independence
- demonstrate initiative in overcoming obstacles to their progress
- set realistic targets for themselves over an extended period, and keep focused until they succeed
- take on positions of responsibility (e.g. as junior committee members)

Skills for Life

- come up with ideas and are able to express them
- understand the importance of listening to the ideas and opinions of others
- work co-operatively in planning activities and solving problems
- are willing to try out a variety of ideas in order to find out what will work
- understand how team members take on different roles to achieve success

Increased motivation and appetite for learning

- are, or are becoming, self-motivated learners
- show a desire for new challenges and learning experiences
- have good or improving relationships with teachers, youth workers or adult leaders
- display good or improving behaviour
- draw inspiration from their outdoor activities in other subjects (e.g. creative writing or art)

Broadened Horizons

- are exposed to, and are becoming, more aware of different environments and cultures
- are becoming more open-minded
- continue to participate in outdoor activities, independent expeditions or travel, after they leave your school or club
- always aim higher, and aspire to achieve in life to their fullest potential

Next Steps

Collecting and sending data to each school is not the end of our theory of change. It is a tool which we will continue to review to ensure we are meeting our goals and that our system for measuring and sharing data is effective and useful to schools and teachers.

At the end of our phase one period, we ran a focus group with Middleton Community Primary (our local school), where we asked a data set of children about their questions; what they thought the questions meant, how they felt about answering them, if they understood the answering system and if they had any suggestions for improvements. We also sent the questions to a selection of teachers from various schools to get their feedback on wording and if we could better support and reinforce any vocabulary schools were encouraging.

From the feedback we had, we developed our questions and questionnaires into the ones they are currently. We are looking to gain more data from schools to see how results vary and spot any trends before perhaps reviewing and making further amendments.

We hope to:

> Collate a large data sample which shows the benefits to outdoor learning and how these are achieved.

> Review our data at set stages to make sure we are seeing the positive change we have set out to create, and follow up with changes and development where needed.

> Engage with groups so that the opportunity to learn and grow isn't wholly dependent to being onsite, but encompasses pre-arrival and post visit and intergrates the curriculum.

> Look to gain qualitative data through a comments section on the questionnaires, allowing children to leave their own notes or feedback. This may help interpret some of the results we receive and be beneficial to add to the report back to schools.

End summary

We have created a theory of change to clarify our goals and gain a better understanding of what we are trying to achieve and how the development in young people is happening over the course of their residential. We have set ourselves targets to develop specific characteristics in young people which will benefit them long-term. We have categorised these into personal development, social development and social skills.

We are collecting data to measure how effective out theory of change is. This is being done through questionnaires before and after residential activities. We are initially measuring our theory of change through primary school residential trips.

We believe school residentials are an extremely important experience in the lives of young people. They promote personal development by pushing students out of their comfort zones and offering experiences which can't be replicated in the classroom. This also aids social development allowing them to create strong bonds with their peers and build on social skills, such as independence, communication and self-control. It is often the first time a child has been away from their parent or guardian.

Outdoor learning and adventurous activities allow children the opportunity to try something new, celebrate their achievements and build their resilience. We want to be able to make sure the experience we offer is beneficial to young people and helps them develop skills that they can carry long-term.

Sharing the data and personalised reports with each school gives them supporting evidence on the benefits to learning outdoors and residential stays, in a document they can provide to Ofsted.

We began developing our theory of change in 2021 and our trial period ran from February to April 2023. After this we entered phase one (May - July 2023) after which we reviewed the results we received so far, how our staff were finding the delivery and their understanding of the project and how the questions were being understood by children.

Collecting data before and after a residential allows us to report on the change of a child's development whilst at Mount Cook. This data coming directly from children gives us an insightful view into how they feel. It is a useful data set in addition to observational changes in young people (like the identifiers outlined by the High Quality Outdoor Learning Guide).

By collating this data, we can for the first time, clearly analyse how we are making a difference to people's lives through direct experience with the outdoors.

Our theory of change and how we measure it's effect will also continue to grow and develop as we do.

Everyone remembers their first school residential, so let's make it worth remembering.

Arrival Questionnaire

School Name: _____

Your Name: _____   Age: _____

Please circle   Prefer not to say / My Own Words: _____

Please circle the faces below	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	OK	Agree	Strongly Agree
I am willing to try new things	🙁	🙁	😐	🙂	😄
I have a positive growth mindset	🙁	🙁	😐	🙂	😄
I am a resilient learner	🙁	🙁	😐	🙂	😄
I work well as part of a team	🙁	🙁	😐	🙂	😄
I have a positive relationship with my friends	🙁	🙁	😐	🙂	😄
I am good at waiting my turn	🙁	🙁	😐	🙂	😄
I can recognise when I have done something well	🙁	🙁	😐	🙂	😄
I can share my thoughts and feelings with others	🙁	🙁	😐	🙂	😄
I am comfortable being away from home overnight	🙁	🙁	😐	🙂	😄

Departure Questionnaire

We hope you enjoyed your time at Mount Cook!

Comments box:

Please circle the faces below	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	OK	Agree	Strongly Agree
I am willing to try new things	🙁	🙁	😐	🙂	😄
I have a positive growth mindset	🙁	🙁	😐	🙂	😄
I am a resilient learner	🙁	🙁	😐	🙂	😄
I work well as part of a team	🙁	🙁	😐	🙂	😄
I have a positive relationship with my friends	🙁	🙁	😐	🙂	😄
I am good at waiting my turn	🙁	🙁	😐	🙂	😄
I can recognise when I have done something well	🙁	🙁	😐	🙂	😄
I can share my thoughts and feelings with others	🙁	🙁	😐	🙂	😄
I am comfortable being away from home overnight	🙁	🙁	😐	🙂	😄

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