

ORKNEY ISLANDS COUNCIL

Active Communities



OUTDOOR EDUCATION

ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT

2025

‘Learning Through Adventure’





OUTDOOR EDUCATION REPORT 2025



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OVERVIEW

Outdoor Education Advisor Planning Checklist

- Update new programme information for schools, leaders and parents.
- Finalise all programme costs and dates.
- Book and chair 21 pre-programme TEAMS meetings.
- Update Risk Assessments, Safety Guidelines and Staff Handbook.
- Complete a full inventory of outdoor equipment. Order replacement items and integrate new items into stores.
- Test and log all safety equipment checks.
- Manage minibus and trailer servicing.
- Book instructor dates, accommodation and Hoy Centre use.
- Oversee Visit Policy staff training and update EVOLVE software.
- Manage Senior Instructor post and take bookings for the new Winter Outdoor Education Programme 2025 / 26.

OUTDOOR EDUCATION PROGRAMME 2025

PLANNING AND PREPARATION

Planning for the 2025 Outdoor Education Programme started in October 2024 to coincide with the return back to school, after the Autumn Half Term break.

The short but focussed period of time (between the end of the primary 6 Outdoor Education Programme and the start of the Autumn half term), offered a limited time for the Outdoor Education Advisor to reflect on the last 6 months and then move ahead and plan, update, and produce the next year's Outdoor Education programme.

Information gathered and sent to all schools included a calendar of proposed dates, an updated food provision menu and cost, residential accommodation costs, general instructor costs, including a 'price per pupil' example sheet for each specific programme offered. All information was sent out to participating schools and could be shared with parents at the school's discretion.

At the end of December 2024, all participating schools were sent leader information packs and confirmed booking dates. In total 21 planning meetings were booked and completed with Heads and Leaders during February to March 2025.

Additional activity programme planning between April to June 2025 was completed with Island Development groups, as Outdoor Education provided an additional 14 days of activity during the summer school holiday period.

As in past years, it was important to ensure all programme planning was completed by the end of March 2025, as after this time, the Outdoor Education Advisor is fully focussed and involved in the Hoy Centre set up, instructor inductions and the safety management of the Hoy residential programmes from mid-April onwards.

Additional time was dedicated to producing job description details in relation to the advertising and interviewing for a new 12-month Full-Time Senior Instructor post, which successfully started in April 2025.

OVERVIEW

Equipment Management, Minibuses and Trailers

- All equipment stored in Hoy Centre Containers.
- Equipment annually updated, replaced, cleaned, and safety checked.
- 3 minibuses serviced.
- 7 equipment trailers serviced.



Visit Policy and EVOLVE

- Currently undergoing a full review and due to be updated in 2026.
- Training and bespoke learning offered to new school teachers.



Senior Instructor Post 2025

- Funding secured in early 2024.
- Postholder started in April 2025.
- To include Instruction and work throughout the year in conjunction with schools, charities and isles community groups.

WINTER MAINTENANCE WORK

Between October 2024 and April 2025 the Outdoor Education Advisor worked from an office base at the Kirkwall Town Hall, at Unit 4, Hatston Industrial Estate, and at the Hoy Centre.

Work included a variety of office and outdoor based tasks which included managing minibus and trailer maintenance; updating a full inventory of outdoor equipment; servicing bikes; testing safety equipment; collating pupil and staff feedback; producing an annual report and preparing documentation for all Outdoor Education Programmes in 2025.

MINIBUSES AND TRAILERS

The 2025 programmes between April to October made regular and full use of all 3 minibuses and the 7 equipment trailers available. All vehicles had a 3 monthly safety check and were annually serviced. All trailers were serviced by Orkney Motors.

A new replacement minibus was pre-ordered in early 2024. This arrived late in May 2025, causing transport issues with the start of the Hoy Outdoor Programme. We were very grateful to KGS for loaning their large minibus to us for the first 2 weeks, to cover the period of time required. This was an excellent example of using and sharing resources across areas within the Service.

VISIT POLICY

The Visit Policy continued to be updated and managed by the Outdoor Education Advisor and Education Office Team Leader (Resources) throughout 2025. It is hoped a full review, refresh and update will be completed in 2026.

Training for practitioners, leaders, teachers, and headteachers has continued throughout the year on a request basis. A new online training video resource will be updated in 2026, to align with new updates within the Visit Policy.

NEW SENIOR INSTRUCTOR POST

After securing match funding in early 2024 from the OIC Crown Estate Led Development Fund (OIC CECLDF), and after a successful interview, a contract was offered to Denny Moulds for the full time 12 month post starting April 2025.

The Senior Instructor worked closely alongside 2 contract instructors between April to October. From November 2025 to April 2026 the Senior Instructor will create and pilot a new outdoor learning programme in conjunction with schools, charities and isles community groups. The post and a new winter programme will aim to highlight the benefit, and the need to engage young people and adults in outdoor learning, throughout the year. A separate in-depth report on the Senior Instructor post will be completed in April 2026.

OVERVIEW

Programmes Offered in 2025

Primary 6 In-School Activities

3 day activity programme, up to 7 half day activities, opportunity to join smaller schools in one location.



Primary 7 Hoy Residential

4-5 day activity programme, up to 9 half day activities. Opportunity for pupils to make friendships with pupils from other small schools.



Secondary 2 Hoy Residential

3 day activity programme, 2 half day activities including a return journey by foot or bike to an evening and overnight camp.



OUTDOOR EDUCATION PROGRAMMES OFFERED

In 2025 there were minor changes to the programmes, as offered in 2024 . The programmes are outlined below:

- **Primary 6 In-School Outdoor Education Programme**

A 2 to 3 day programme based at school sites which was offered to all primary 6 aged pupils in the 2025/26 academic year during the autumn term.

The activity programme consists of up to seven (age appropriate) half day activities on land and water. The programme aims to offer new experiences; develop and nurture physical and emotional skills; promote personal wellbeing, and encourage a healthy lifestyle.

A wide range of transferable skills were incorporated into each activity. The programme was offered within the normal hours of each school day.

For smaller primary schools there was the opportunity to take part and learn in conjunction with other schools.

- **Primary 7 Outdoor Education Hoy Residential Programme**

The 4 or 5 day residential programme for primary 7 aged pupils was based at the Hoy Centre. In order to include all interested schools, smaller sized schools were requested to join together and share the Hoy Centre, and activities offered.

The programme included a wide range of up to 9 adventurous half and full day activities, on both land and water, within the Hoy environment. Pupils were given the unique opportunity to live together in a residential setting and work together as a social group. The residential programme enabled pupils to settle into a new, busy but positive routine, enabling focussed time for activity, learning and reviews which allowed time to make new friendships with other school pupils.

All pupils had the opportunity to complete a daily diary and were involved in group feedback and reflection sessions led by the instructors. All pupils were awarded a certificate on the programme completion.

OVERVIEW

'Summer Outdoor Adventure Programme'

■ Islands and Groups included:

- Hoy
- Shapinsay
- Sanday
- Westray
- Stronsay
- Orkney Young Carers
- Orkney Youth Café
- Hope and Burray Community Groups

■ Activities Offered:

- ◆ Canoeing
- ◆ Raft Building
- ◆ Bushcraft
- ◆ Archery
- ◆ Climbing Wall

'Duke of Edinburgh Award' Expedition Leader Training

- Leader skills training
- New Personal Skills and Navigation Day
- Supervisor Training and Assessment Programme



OUTDOOR EDUCATION PROGRAMMES OFFERED Cont'd.

• **Secondary 2 Hoy Residential Outdoor Education Programme**

The 3 day residential programme based at the Hoy Centre offers the opportunity for secondary 2 aged pupils to take part in a focused and challenging adventure activity programme which offers pupils a choice of two half day activities, plus an extended out and return journey by foot or bike to get to the overnight camp location at Rackwick.

This experience gives pupils the opportunity to complete chosen adventure activities, learn and practise new journeying and campcraft skills. These new skills give pupils positive, confidence building experiences, and an insight into the requirements of the Expedition section of the Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award which is offered to pupils at secondary 3 age.

SUMMER OUTDOOR ADVENTURE PROGRAMME

The Senior Instructor (assisted by the Outdoor Education Advisor) led outdoor activity sessions booked by a number of island development groups and youth clubs. The activities were aimed at all age groups and family groups during July 2025. This was offered to island groups as an option alongside the '2025 Island Games' which was hosted by Orkney and which took place at the same time, during 2 weeks in July. A total of 14 days of activity were successfully completed and highly appreciated by all taking part. 201 participants took part in a select number of activities offered and available

DUKE OF EDINBURGH AWARD

Support for the Duke of Edinburgh Award Expeditions within Orkney included the Outdoor Education Advisor offering on-going basic navigation and campcraft leader skills training.

A 2 day Supervisor Training Course was completed by the Outdoor Education Advisor on Sanday for 2 new leaders, who have now taken over the management of the DofE award group in Sanday. They are now able to offer Bronze and Silver expedition training to new participants.

OVERVIEW

Activities Offered in 2025

- 16 different activities available during the Outdoor Education Programmes on Hoy in 2025.
- Up to 7 activities were offered to Primary Schools during the Primary 6 in-school Programme.
- A select number of weather and environment suited activities are being offered to Schools, island groups and charitable organisations throughout the winter months.



ACTIVITIES AVAILABLE

A wide range of outdoor adventure activities on land and water were offered throughout the April to October period and a limited range of environment appropriate indoor and outdoor activities continue throughout the winter period

With all outdoor equipment being based at the Hoy Centre during the residential programmes, Instructors could be flexible in their choice of activities to suit the group's learning aims and outcomes and also match the environmental conditions encountered each day.

Activities offered during the primary 6 in-school Activity Programmes were chosen on the basis of them being age appropriate, the set-up time, equipment storage space and ease of transportation between schools, using trailers and minibuses available.

A reduction of water based activity availability during the 2025 / 2026 winter period, due to more inclement weather and lower water temperatures, has enabled scope for land based activity to continue.

The following activities were available during residential programmes based from the Hoy Centre from April to June:

Abseiling	Tyrolean Traverse	Hill-Walking
Orienteering	Bushcraft	Problem Solving
Team Games	Archery	Overnight Camp(S2)
Gorge Walking	Cycling	Canoeing
Kayaking	Raft Building	Coasteering
Snorkelling	Paddleboarding	

The following activities were available to the Primary 6 in-school Activity Programmes from August to October and the Winter Activity Programmes, this includes regular visits to outer isles community groups and schools:

Archery	Climbing Tower	Bushcraft
Problem Solving	Team Games	Canoeing
Orienteering	Raft Building	

OVERVIEW April—October

Instructors and Staffing

- The thirteenth year of working with Adelong Training to provide high quality experienced instructors.
- 94 Days of activity Instruction with 248 instructor work days.
- Maximum of 2 contract Instructors plus the OIC Senior Instructor supported by the Outdoor Education Advisor on each Programme.
- All 5 returning contract Instructors worked on school programmes in 2025.
- 6 Instructor Induction Days were offered by the Outdoor Education Advisor in 2025.



INSTRUCTORS AND STAFFING

Having high quality instructors who possess the relevant expertise, qualifications and experience, are a major key to the success of the pupil's outdoor learning and a positive outcome for each programme offered to schools.

This is the 13th year of utilising contract instructors for the outdoor instruction offered each year. Closely working with, and in partnership with Adelong Training was important to ensure we had access to appropriately skilled, reliable, quality instructors, who were current, professional, highly experienced and qualified across the broad range of activities we offer.

The 2025 contract involved 2 instructors working alongside the OIC Senior Instructor on all school programmes offered between April to October. Each contract instructor was required to work a minimum of 15 days and possess suitable experience and qualifications to deliver activities, including a having a suitable minibus driving licence. Each instructor received up to 2 days of staff training and induction at the start of their contract.

The staff contract included accommodation in either the Rackwick Outdoor Centre (April to July), or at the Birsay Outdoor Centre (August to October). Self-catering accommodation was utilised whilst visiting Outer Isles schools.

In 2025 there was 1 male Senior Instructor, 2 male and 3 female contract instructors employed for 94 activity days. This year all 5 instructors were returning instructors from past years work. Instructors worked 5 days per week, up to 8.5 hours per day, plus any additional overnight camps during the secondary 2 programmes. There was a total of 248 instructor work days completed between April to October.

On a day to day basis, the Outdoor Education Advisor managed, trained and actively supported the Senior Instructor and contract instructor team. This included leading staff meetings, managing staff and equipment, overseeing transport logistics, and producing activity programmes. Additional requirements (to comply with licensing requirements) included completing observation reports, In-house training and assessments and ensuring all operating procedures and activity risk benefit assessments were up-to-date.

Other important staff involved in the efficient running of the Outdoor Education Programmes, and who deserve mention and thanks include the wardens based at the Hoy Centre and Birsay Hostel, the office administration and finance staff based in council offices in Kirkwall, the 'Graemsay' ferry crew, and the catering team at Stromness Academy.

OVERVIEW

[AALA Licensing and Orkney Outdoor Education Facebook Page](#)

- 24 month Licence Awarded to OIC starting in May 2025.
- Next Licence Inspector Visit in April 2027.
- The 'Orkney Outdoor Education' Facebook Page included a daily diary of activities offered and pictures.



- There are currently 1563 Facebook Page followers. The Highest number of individuals who viewed or engaged with a single post was 2606 people.
- From April to October there are between 589 and 1275 engagements with followers each day.



ADVENTURE ACTIVITY LICENCE AUTHORITY

A 24 month Adventure Activity Licence was awarded to the Council in May 2025. This covers all outdoor adventure activity offered by Outdoor Education through until May 2027.

The style of licence inspection from 2025 onwards (for current activity licence holders) has now changed. This will now be in the form of completing a self assessment form and submitting supporting documents and evidence to an inspector, who will then decide whether an in-person inspection is required for the licence to continue.

OUTDOOR RESIDENTIALS Bill (Scotland)

The Bill has been given full support at stage 3 (The final vote in Scottish Parliament) and final details will be drawn up for it to become an Act. Once ready, the new Act will require all Scottish Local Authorities to offer a 5 day and 4 night Outdoor Residential for school pupils. It is envisaged to start no earlier than 2028 / 29 Academic Year.

This will have a positive effect and experience on all pupils across all of Scotland. Further details can be found on the regularly updated Scottish Parliament website at the web address below:

<https://www.parliament.scot/bills-and-laws/billss6/schools-residential-outdoor-education-scotland-bill>

OUTDOOR EDUCATION FACEBOOK PAGE

Relevant activity pictures and information was added to the 'Orkney Outdoor Education' Facebook page on a daily basis by the Outdoor Education Advisor.

Each post shows a summary of the activities offered, the school attending, and a selection of activity photographs. Each daily post was numbered numerically for each day that information was added.

In 2025 up to mid-October there were 98 daily activity posts added. To date there are 78 organisations and 1563 individuals following the 'Orkney Outdoor Education' page.

There was a highest daily single peak of 2606 people who interacted, looked at, or clicked on at least one or more of the day's posts.

83% of the people engaged and following the page were Scottish or Orkney based and linked to pupils or staff who have previously or currently attended a Programme. Followers are 77% female and 23% male.

OVERVIEW

Participating Schools & Groups

- ◆ Primary 6 In-School Activity Programme: 37 Activity Days, inc. 3 Outer Islands, 17 Schools
- ◆ Secondary 2 Hoy Residential Programme: 14 Activity Days, 4 Schools
- ◆ Primary 7 Hoy Residential Programme: 44 Activity Days, 14 Schools
- ◆ Summer Outdoor Adventure Programme: 16 Activity Days, inc. 5 Outer Islands, 10 organisations
- ◆ Charity Groups (Blide Trust): 3 days (on Hoy)



PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS AND GROUPS

The following schools and groups participated in an exciting variety of Outdoor Education and Activity programmes during 2025:

Primary 6 In-School Activity Programme, 37 days (August-October)

Westray JH School	Stromsay JH School
Papdale Primary School	Shapinsay Primary School
Glaitness Primary School	Eday Primary School
Stromness Primary School	Evie Primary School
Dounby Primary School	Orphir Primary School
Stenness Primary School	Firth Primary School
St Andrews Primary School	Burray Primary School
Hope Primary School	North Walls Primary School
North Ronaldsay Primary School	

Secondary 2 Hoy Residential Programme, 14 days (May, June)

Stromness Academy	Westray JH School
Kirkwall Grammar School	Sanday JH School

Primary 7 Hoy Residential Programme, 44 days (April-June)

Eday Primary School	Rousay Primary School
Shapinsay Primary School	Stromness Primary School
Evie Primary School	Orphir Primary School
Hope Primary School	Burray Primary School
Sanday JH School	Westray JH School
Papa Westray Primary School	North Walls Primary School
Dounby Primary School	Stenness Primary School
Firth Primary School	

Summer Outdoor Adventure Programme, 16 days (July)

North Walls Parent Council	Orkney Young Carers
Shapinsay Development Trust	Orkney Youth Cafe
Sanday Development Trust	Stromsay Development Trust
Westray Development Trust	Burray Community Association
South Ronaldsay Community Association	

C.L.D. Adult Education (rescheduled and completed in November)

Other Groups / Charities, 3 Days (April, June)

Blide Trust Adult Group
Blide Trust Young People Group
Young Carers



STATISTICAL SUMMARY OF 2025 (April to October)

Total activity days completed:	100 Days
Total activity day places used:	1737 Day Place
Participant day places unused / not filled :	171 Day Places
Total individual participants offered activity:	685 Participants
>Primary 6 aged participants engaged:	243 Participants
>Primary 7 aged participants engaged:	124 Participants
>Secondary 2 aged participants engaged:	101 Participants
>Charitable Organisations engagement	16 Participants
>Summer Outdoor Adventure Programme	201 Participants
Total visiting staff, residential programme:	36 Visiting Staff
Total islands visited (in-school and Summer-Adventure programme):	5 Outer Islands
Total number of overnight camping nights:	6 Nights
Total Hoy Residential nights completed:	32 Nights
Maximum staff / instructors on programme:	4 Staff
Total instructor induction / training days:	6 Days
Total number of Instructor work days:	252 Days
Maximum number of groups per day:	3 groups
% of programme requiring 3 instructors:	80 %
Total minibuses on programme:	3 Minibuses

APPENDIX 1.1

PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK

P7 AND S2 HOY RESIDENTIAL PROGRAMME

There was a total of **222 responses** to the questionnaire offered to **primary 7 and secondary 2 aged pupils** at the end of their Hoy residential programme.

The first 7 questions required them to circle the most appropriate answer.

1) Never 2) Some of The Time 3) Most of The Time 4) A Lot of The Time 5) All The Time

The pupils responses are given in percentages (Highest score in red):

Q1. I enjoyed taking part in the activities and being outdoors

1	2	3	4	5
0%	0%	2%	24%	74%

Q2. I feel more confident about myself and my abilities

1	2	3	4	5
0%	1%	10%	23%	56%

Q3. The instructors were friendly and helpful and encouraged me

1	2	3	4	5
0%	1%	6%	21%	72%

Q4. I worked with others and solved simple problems

1	2	3	4	5
0%	1%	7%	34%	58%

Q5. I listened to, and followed, the safety instructions

1	2	3	4	5
1%	1%	1%	26%	71%

Q6. I had the opportunity to offer ideas and share my opinion

1	2	3	4	5
0%	2%	10%	34%	54%

Q7. I would happily take part in outdoor activities in future

1	2	3	4	5
0%	1%	5%	18%	76%

APPENDIX 1.2

PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK P7 AND S2 HOY RESIDENTIAL PROGRAMME

Question 8 asked primary 7 and secondary 2 aged pupils which was their favourite, or most enjoyable activity.

The **top 4 activities are highlighted in red** with the number relating to % of Pupils.

Primary 7 and Secondary 2 Favourite / Most Enjoyable Activity

	%
Coasteering	41
Kayaking	14
Bushcraft	7
Cycling	7
Gorge Walking	6
Stand Up Paddleboarding	5
Tyrolelean Traverse	5
Canoeing	5
Archery	4
Overnight Camp	3
Hill-Walk	2
Orienteering	1



APPENDIX 2.1

PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK PRIMARY 6 IN-SCHOOL ACTIVITY PROGRAMME

There were over **1458 individual activity sheets** completed during the Primary 6 In-School Activity Programme by the pupils that took part.

At the end of the activity programme, up to 6 different activity sheets were completed by each pupil and collated by the instructor which were then sent to the participating school and class teacher.

The sheets are suitable for potential follow up activities in the classroom with the teacher, or for pupils to take home, along with their National Outdoor Learning Award Certificate presented to them in school.

At the bottom of each activity sheet completed, there was a review section to complete.

The activity review statements included the following statements:

- I enjoyed taking part in the activity
- I feel more confident about myself
- I solved problems and worked well with others in the group
- I listened to all safety instructions given by the instructor
- I would happily do the activity again

The statements were answered by circling the appropriate face, as shown below:



Feedback given in the form of the 'Smiley Face Review' completed by each pupil was peer-reviewed and formed part of a short instructor led review each day.

The activity review data completed by pupils for each individual activity were not collated, as it was personal to each pupil only, and not intended to be used for public feedback.

A final Activity Programme Review Sheet was completed by each pupil at the end of the programme.

The Results of this are shown within Appendix 2.2 to 2.4.

APPENDIX 2.2

PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK

PRIMARY 6 IN-SCHOOL ACTIVITY PROGRAMME

There was a total of **230 responses** to the Questionnaire offered to **primary 6 aged pupils** at the end of their activity programme.

The first 7 questions required them to circle the most appropriate answer.

1) Never 2) Some of The Time 3) Most of The Time 4) A Lot of The Time 5) All The Time

The pupil responses are given in percentages (highest score in red):

Q1. I enjoyed taking part in the activities and being outdoors

1	2	3	4	5
0%	0%	3%	9%	88%

Q2. I feel more confident about myself and my abilities

1	2	3	4	5
0%	0%	2%	21%	77%

Q3. The instructors were friendly, helpful and encouraged me

1	2	3	4	5
0%	0%	3%	10%	87%

Q4. I worked well with others and solved simple problems

1	2	3	4	5
0%	2%	4%	16%	78%

Q5. I listened to, and followed, the safety instructions

1	2	3	4	5
0%	0%	0%	10%	90%

Q6. I had the opportunity to offer my ideas and share my opinion

1	2	3	4	5
0%	1%	5%	17%	77%

Q7. I would happily take part in outdoor activities in future

1	2	3	4	5
0%	0%	2%	6%	92%

APPENDIX 2.3

PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK PRIMARY 6 IN-SCHOOL ACTIVITY PROGRAMME

Question 8 asked primary 6 aged participants which was their favourite, or most enjoyable activity.

The **top 4 activities** are highlighted in red with the number relating to % of Participants

Primary 6 Favourite / Most Enjoyable Activity

	%
Canoeing	23
Bushcraft	21
Climbing Wall	17
Archery	17
Raft Building	16
Problem Solving / Orienteering	4
Kayaking	2



APPENDIX 3.1

VISITING TEACHER AND LEADER FEEDBACK - HOY RESIDENTIAL PROGRAMMES

There were a total of 8 feedback forms completed by teachers and leaders representing primary 7 and secondary 2 schools.

The following 4 questions were asked:

Please rate the following 15 areas which relate to the Outdoor Education Programme offered to your school?

	TOPIC AREAS	% RANGE	AVERAGE SCORE
1	Booking Information and Ongoing Communication	80-100	93
2	Dates Offered to School	80-100	93
3	Pre-Activity Meeting with Outdoor Ed. Advisor	60-100	90
4	General Activity Length and Duration	100	100
5	Selection of Activities Offered	80- 100	97
6	Activity Safety Equipment and Suitability	100	100
7	Pupil Engagement in Activities	100	100
8	Pupil Skill Development	80-100	97
9	Instructor Safety and Professionalism	80-100	97
10	Management of Activity Logistics and Transport	100	100
11	Activity Relevance and Links To The Curriculum / Learning	80-100	93
12	Activity Follow-Up Sheets and Feedback	40-100	77
13	Activity Outcomes and Benefit to Pupils	80-100	93
14	Documented Evidence of Attendance, Learning and Success	60-100	87
15	Over-all Cost Effectiveness	80-100	90

Numbers highlighted in RED indicate a 90-100% average score

APPENDIX 3.2

VISITING TEACHER AND LEADER FEEDBACK

What were the most POSITIVE elements of the Outdoor Education Programme offered to you?

- ◆ The instructors allowed the children to try new things and build independence.
- ◆ The instructors really seemed to get to know each child in their activity group and could challenge each one to the extent of their abilities, and beyond - in a positive way.
- ◆ Instructors took the time to meet with school staff to flag up any potential issues before activities.
- ◆ Having all the necessary safety clothing, footwear and outdoor kit was great.
- ◆ The range of activities in a variety of environments was very good, there was something for everyone. The programme developed social and emotional resilience and skills to a high level.
- ◆ Everything was well organised and flexible to cope with any changes to forecasted weather.
- ◆ It was wonderful to be able to join in with the children as a staff member, and have all the required safety kit provided (as needed) too.
- ◆ Programme and activity organisation and the amazing instructors.
- ◆ The acquisition of skills, resilience, and self confidence.
- ◆ The instructors were excellent - fun but firm, and demanded respect. They were encouraging and supportive, all were really great examples.
- ◆ Outdoor adventure activity opportunities, the residential experience, the social experience of meeting new peers and adults.
- ◆ It's great for the children to meet, get to know and work with pupils from other schools.
- ◆ This is the best P7 transition type activity before secondary school, that the bairns could ask for.
- ◆ This experience should be a standard part of the P7 transition programme for all pupils in the summer term.
- ◆ The activities on offer give the children a wealth of skills and experience.
- ◆ A big positive is that the children learn to be responsible and independent in terms of looking after themselves.
- ◆ The programme met all our expectations including physical challenges, the opportunity for personal development and inter-personal skill development which were shown to be highly effective
- ◆ The instructors went well beyond their remit and ensured the pupils outcomes were effective and tailored to individual needs and learning styles.
- ◆ All participants were proud, happy and positive about their week away.
- ◆ Experiences and skills learnt were second to none!

APPENDIX 3.3

VISITING TEACHER AND LEADER FEEDBACK

If an Outdoor Education Activity Programme was offered to the school again, what would you like to see INCLUDED, CHANGED or IMPROVED in future years?

- ◆ Nothing to change, although it would be great if schools going to the same secondary could be kept together.
- ◆ I can't really think of anything!
- ◆ Possibly a more varied menu to include more healthy choices.
- ◆ I was concerned that the group were raft building again, however there was a build up of skills which was made clear and helped with the pupils ability to plan tasks and learn to work together.
- ◆ Nothing really!
- ◆ There's a question on the daily diary and evaluation sheet that they all found hard to answer - 'The activity and team skills I have practised today will help me in the future because...'. This might be better as a final review type question?
- ◆ I think the risk management of the overnight camp would benefit from there being staff on call on duty between 11.00pm and 06.00am
- ◆ Check with parents regarding handling medication. This should be handed in by the child / parent before they depart rather than them keeping it on themselves.
- ◆ Talk to the pupils about the school's expectations whilst on the residential, before departure.
- ◆ A better range of evening games for schools to share and use.
- ◆ Evening activities led by another provider / activity coach would take the pressure off visiting staff.

PARENT FEEDBACK

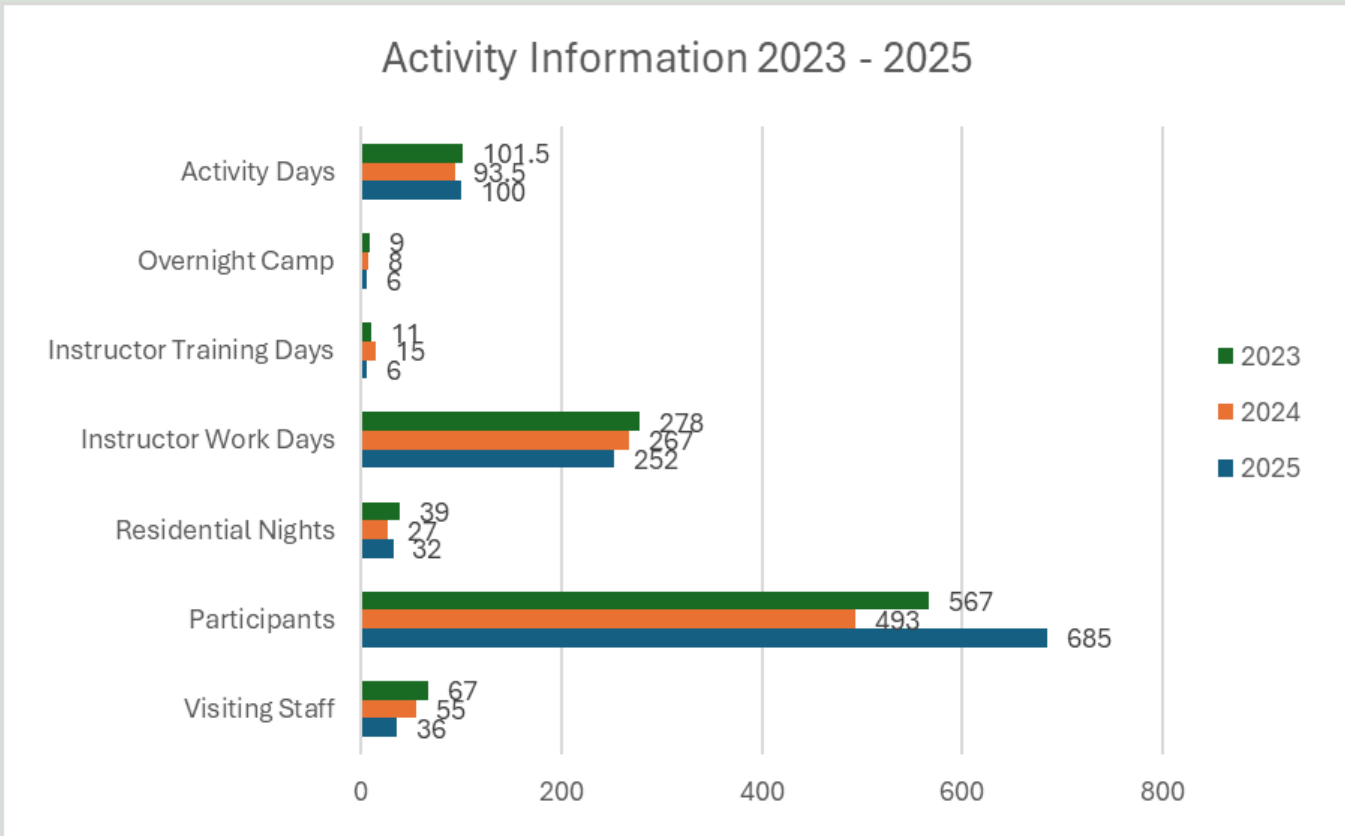
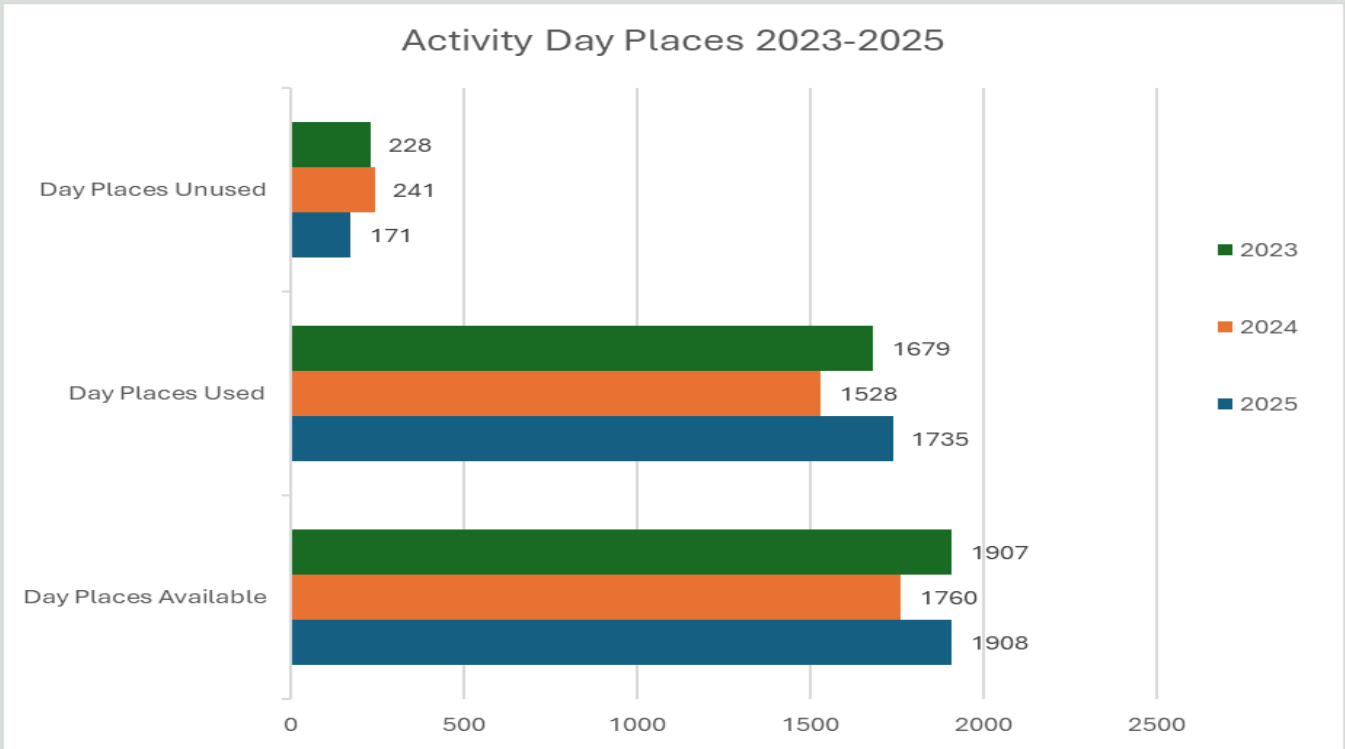
- ◆ just wanted to say thank you for giving my daughter the best few days with the outdoor activity's. She has had the absolute best time and she is wanting to do activities like this again for hobbies etc. Thank you for all the hard work
- ◆ As a parent I was amazed at my child's response on their return from a week on Hoy on their trip away. They are positive and motivated about school and learning, after returning they even tidied their room and put their own duvet on their bed without me asking!
- ◆ Thankyou for a wonderful experience you gave to my child. He was very worried about the staying overnight part of the programme, but came back full of enthusiasm and confidence and wants to be able to do it again. We are even planning of spending more time on Hoy and returning as a family to the Hoy Centre this summer.

APPENDIX 3.4

VISITING TEACHER AND LEADER FEEDBACK

4) Please feel free to add any other COMMENTS FEEDBACK or suggestions to help us provide an Improved Service in future years?

- ◆ Keep going and continue to do what you are all so passionate about!
- ◆ We felt that the costs to parents were high, comparative to what we used to pay for Nethybridge in the past. However, we realise that many costs have gone up in recent times.
- ◆ 50% of our group would not have been able to send their children had it not been for financial assistance from our school; we were lucky enough to have sufficient funds this year.
- ◆ I must include that the standard of activities, equipment, instructors, accommodation and food, etc. were excellent so we would not like to see cuts made in that way.
- ◆ Perhaps some kind of charitable trust, sponsorship or bursary type thing could be looked into, in order to ensure that the more disadvantaged families were always able to go.
- ◆ The instructors this year were particularly fabulous. Sorry to see Zoe isn't returning as she is fantastic.
- ◆ This might be out of your control but I think the quality of the food was poor - particularly the evening meal. I have been on many Outdoor Education trips with different operators, and catering wise the best was the one which basically said "we'll just feed them whatever they need as they use so much energy"
- ◆ Refuelling was seen as being more important for the 4 evening meals. The inedible balanced diet created too much waste.
- ◆ Once again, the absolute highlight of the year for me as a teacher and a wonderful chance to see the children in a different light, playing, smiling and realising their potential.
- ◆ The children take away so much from this experience.
- ◆ A fantastic range of activities and the facilities are excellent. Thank you all!
- ◆ Instructors and the Outdoor manager were able to provide invaluable new experiences in a context which will go on to have profound and positive effects on pupils throughout their lives.
- ◆ There was a great benefit to teachers and leaders by sharing past knowledge of the residential experiences, and whilst at the Hoy Centre having regular conversations, and learning to dynamically risk assess each day.
- ◆ It was great to see children working really hard to excel at being good citizens and being encouraged to push themselves, but also feeling comfortable in a new environment.
- ◆ I hope there is further funding for the Hoy Centre as it needs a bit of a spruce up. The heating / water pipes are still noisy. It would be great to have a comfortable area for staff in the evenings to relax.



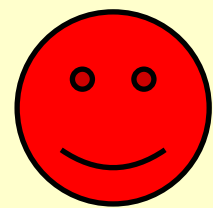
APPENDIX 5.1

SUMMER OUTDOOR ADVENTURE PROGRAMME PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK

1) Please circle the corresponding face to answer the following 5 questions / statements:

- A) I was happy and enjoyed taking part in the activity.
- B) I felt safe and supported during the activity
- C) Ther activity was of benefit to me and the community
- D) It felt good (in my body and head) taking part in the activity
- E) I would like to take part in activities in the future

The following table shows in % the results of all the responses given by the 201 participants that took part:



A)	0%	1%	99%
B)	0%	2.5%	97.5%
C)	0%	3.5%	96.5%
D)	0.5%	5%	94.5%
E)	0%	1.5%	98.5%

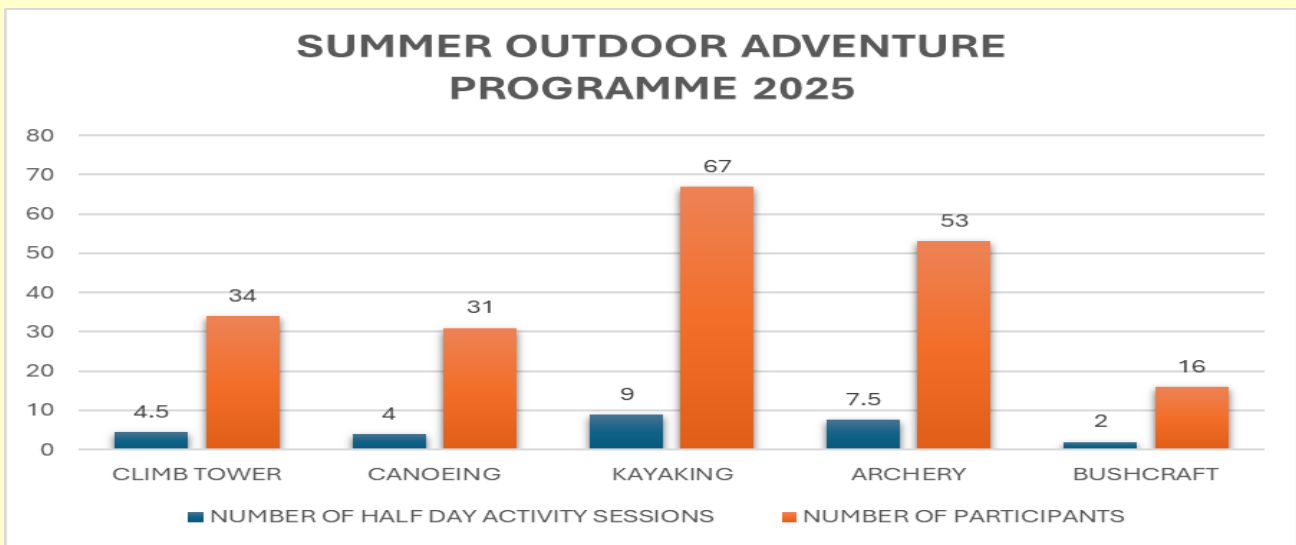


APPENDIX 5.2

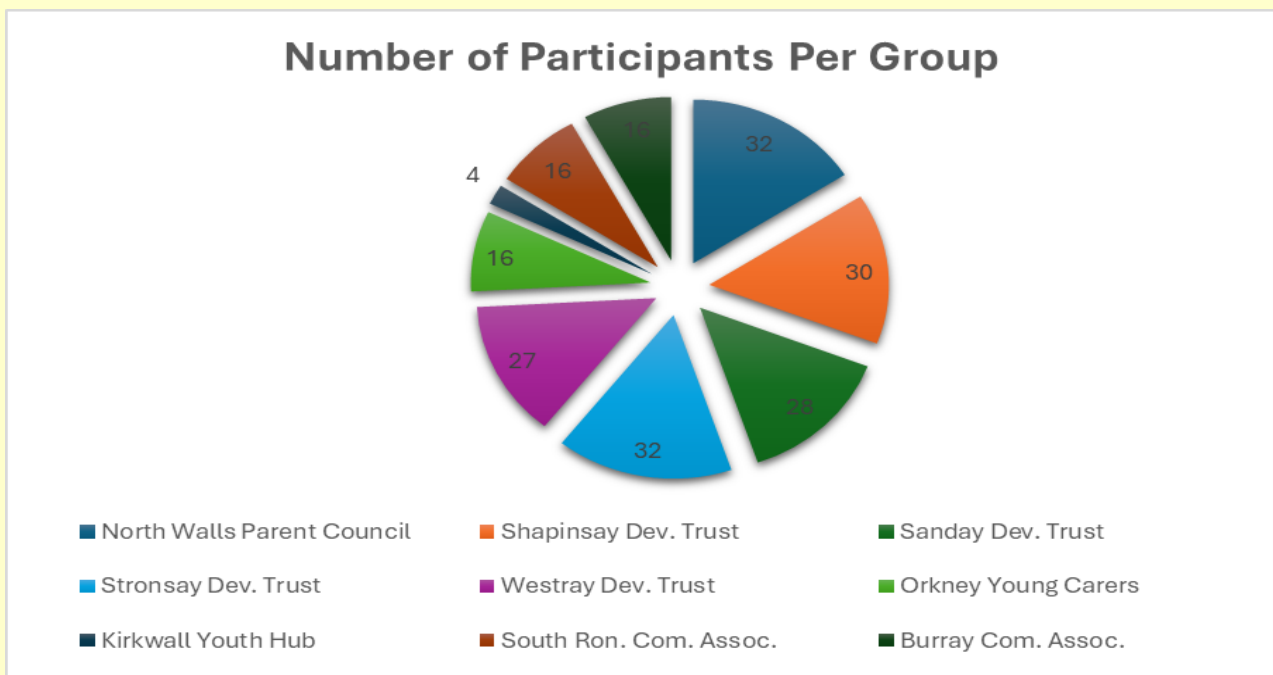
SUMMER OUTDOOR ADVENTURE PROGRAMME PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK

The chart below shows the following:

- ◆ **Activities Completed**
- ◆ **the Number of half day Activity Sessions offered**
- ◆ **The number of Participants per activity**



The chart below shows the names of each of group, and the number of participants per group, that took part in the Summer Outdoor Adventure Programme:



OVERVIEW

Future Plans for 2026

- 3 different Outdoor Education Programmes Offered.
- 3 contract Instructors and the Outdoor Education Advisor.
- Use of Hoy Centre for all Residential Outdoor Education Programmes.
- Use of Rackwick and Birsay Centres for contracted Instructor Accommodation.
- In 2026 we will aim to offer over 85 activity days to approximately 451 participants.
- We will aim to offer over 1800 participant activity day places.



LOOKING AHEAD TO 2026

The 2026 Outdoor Education programme aims to provide quality educational and holistic learning support to all Orkney schools and build upon the success of 2025. We will continue to offer two Core, and one optional, Outdoor Education Programmes:

(Core) Primary 6 2-3 Day School Activity Programme.

(Core) Secondary 2 3 Day Hoy Residential Programme.

(Option) Primary 7 4-5 Day Hoy Residential Programme.

It is envisaged that programmes will be staffed by up to 3 contract instructors. Management of the programmes and staffing will continue to be led and provided by the Outdoor Education Advisor.

The use of the Hoy Centre for all residential programmes will be used to continue to offer highly rated and excellent facilities for all programmes which require residential accommodation. Using the Hoy Centre also makes the most out of Hoy's unique geographical location in conjunction with a wide variety of adventure based activities on offer.

The primary 6 in-school activity programmes will be offered on the Orkney Mainland and Outer Isles. It will utilise the primary and secondary school locations and local outdoor settings for pupil activity and learning.

The use of both Rackwick Hostel and Birsay Hostel for contracted instructor accommodation will continue to enhance and compliment the Outdoor Education programmes during 2026.

Changes made to the primary 7 programme in 2025 and included in the 2026 programme included offering a full day walking activity. This was very well received by pupils and staff and was proven to add value to a busy activity week. The day provided a more focussed activity day, with lots of opportunity for instructor and pupil led reflection time.

A new instructor contract has been agreed and will continue to be provided by Adelong Outdoors between 2026 to 2028.

'All participants will be given the opportunity to learn new skills, discover new friendships and find a sense of belonging and place, whilst learning in the unique Orkney outdoor environment.'

OUTDOOR EDUCATION SUMMARY 2025

2025 was the 27th year of successfully and safely offering outdoor education programmes to Orkney schools and the local community. We have consolidated, listened, made positive adjustments, taken on feedback and feel we have now improved on the previous programmes offered.

The April to October period was amazingly dry and warm throughout. This had an amazing effect on positive learning outdoors. It enabled all planned activity to go ahead without changes. Lots of smiling red faces were in evidence this year!

The new 12 month Senior Instructor post was joined by a full compliment of returning contract instructors. All staff were highly motivated, professional and offered high quality outdoor education and learning to participants, Over 80% of activity days required all 3 instructors working with maximum group sizes of 24 participants.

Thank you to all who contributed to the success of the 2025 Outdoor Education Programme. In 2026 we aim to continue to provide high quality, memorable and amazing learning experiences to all participants who take part.

The Outdoor Residentials Bill was unanimously voted in, and was passed, late 2025. It is anticipated to have an earliest proposed start date by July 2027. Looking ahead, this will enable Orkney Outdoor Education to be in a strong position to continue offering amazing memories and outdoor learning to Orkney school pupils and teachers into the future.



Orkney Outdoor Education - 'Learning Through Adventure'

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