

Delight in the Woods

Evaluation Report
Academic Year 2018-19



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Delight in the Woods is delivered in partnership with:



Zoo Co Theatre Company

Zoo Co was established in 2013 and has since created critically acclaimed indoor productions, and external site-specific shows, that have toured to over 30 venues across the UK and internationally. Zoo Co aims to 'play lightly with things that matter deeply', and they are committed to creating valuable, meaningful engagement projects and opportunities alongside their touring productions.



National Trust

Box Hill National Trust

Box Hill, a Site of Special Scientific Interest, is looked after by the National Trust. It is special not only for its rare chalk grassland and ancient woodland but also for the diverse pool of visitors that have been attracted to its slopes and far-reaching views for centuries. The Education team at Box Hill have generously led outdoor education sessions for all participating schools, as well as kindly supporting Delight and Zoo Co to turn Box Hill's woods into a magical performance space.

Delight in the Woods funders



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ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND



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THANK YOU!

About Us

Delight exists to help children engage with learning in all its forms. Our programmes allow children to explore and develop skills, build resilience and confidence whilst enjoying new experiences.

Working in close partnership with selected primary schools across Surrey and outstanding arts organisations we deliver intensive arts programmes that increase the social, learning and artistic development of each child.

Building Strong Foundations

We recognise that some children – especially those affected by poverty, disadvantage and other challenges – face barriers to learning that negatively impact on their engagement with school, enjoyment in learning, educational attainment, wellbeing and personal development.

The Delight programmes broaden children's horizons through new and exciting opportunities, increase wellbeing, positive mental health, confidence and resilience whilst also sparking an interest in learning both academic and artistic.

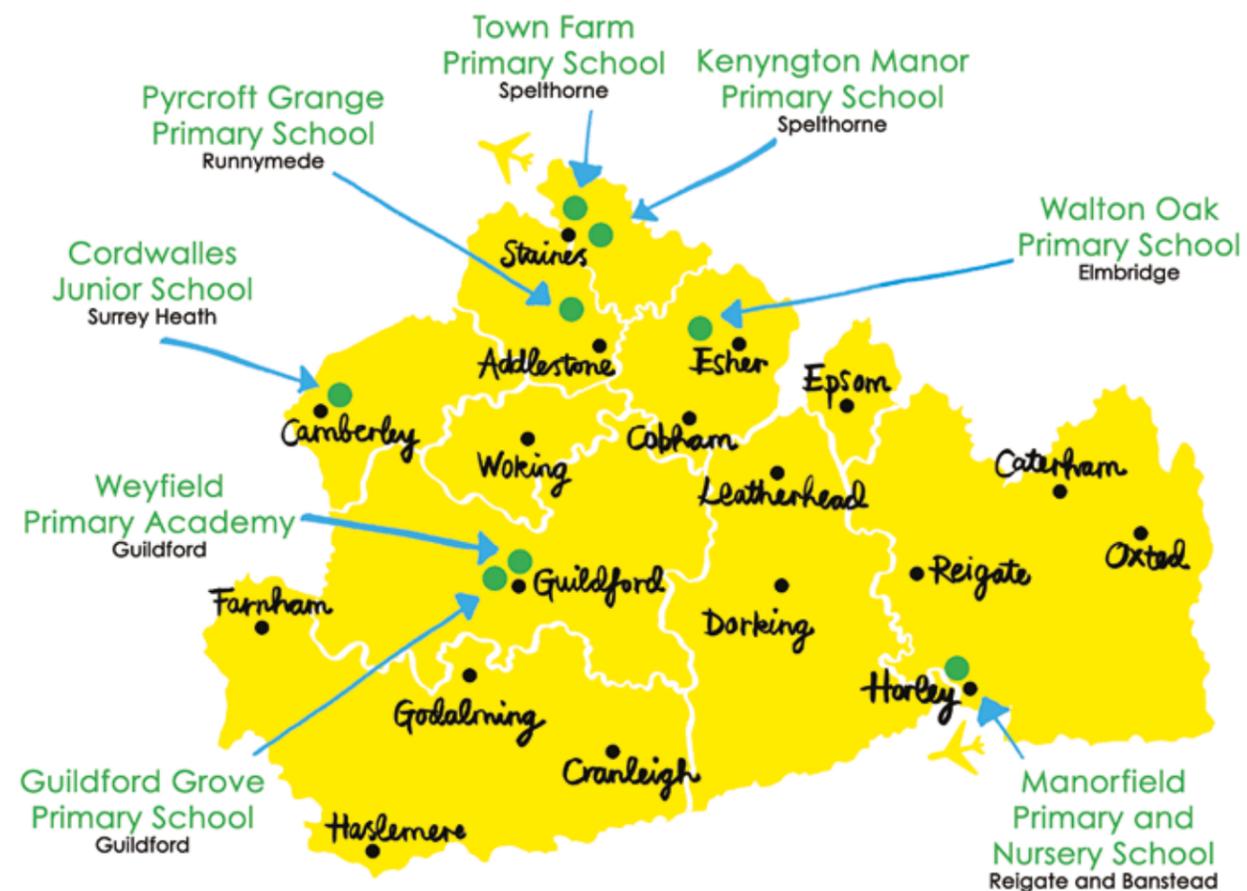
The Delight Partnership Approach

Whilst being carefully founded on targeted and evidenced outcomes our intensive arts-based programmes excite, enthuse and engage. But these outcomes can only be achieved by working in close relationship with teachers and arts professionals working towards shared goals.

Delight programmes inspire and support not only the children at their heart, but the adults who surround them: involving parents and carers in the learning journey is an integral part of our approach whilst enthusing and upskilling teachers ensures a legacy of learning through the arts for future pupils.

Together we can create a brighter future for all children

Delight partner schools



What is Delight in the Woods?

Delight in the Woods is a magical, immersive creative programme designed to strengthen the social, learning and creative outcomes of 7-8 year old children, and broaden their horizons.

The adventure starts unexpectedly on a nature trip at Box Hill. Following a ranger led nature walk through the woodlands of Box Hill the children bump into Ruby, a sparky young girl who has run away from home and is clutching a map that shows the fabled Enchanted Tree that only appears to 'the Best Storytellers in the World'...

Together they journey into Storyland where they encounter a host of intriguing characters deep in the woods. Can the children help Ruby find her way back home, and help the characters solve their problems?

In 2019 the magic of *Delight in the Woods* reached 413 children.

Delight in the Woods is built around 5 key elements

A 'wow' experience

The children's visit to Box Hill acts as an exciting and magical hook designed to inspire and engage. For many, the visit to Box Hill and the nature walk led by a National Trust Ranger is a new experience in itself, even without their surprising adventure in the woods. The magic is heightened when Trixie the Woodland Fairy reads out a list of their names, and when struggling poet William Wellington gives each of them a personalised poem, the children are left truly amazed.

The story unfolds at school

Back at school, the children learn that struggling poet William Wellington has gone missing from Storyland to find the inspirational storytellers who helped him finish his poem. Over the following four weeks, children find clues, design 'missing' posters, write letters of encouragement and think how they can cheer William up – and create their own unique outdoor promenade performance for William, friends, family and local community members.

Super Story Party

Sharing and celebrating children's creative achievements, and engaging their parents/carers, is central to Delight's work. Children invite family and community members to their 'Super Story Party' where they lead their guests on their own outdoor promenade performance and celebrate with homemade cakes and juice after. Everyone is invited to write on the children's comments sheet, which are later added to their Arts Award journals.

Arts Award

All children taking part achieve the Discover level of their Arts Award, a nationally accredited award and receive a certificate from Trinity College. The children complete activities that help develop their literacy skills and build on the excitement of the unfolding story. The bespoke Arts Award worksheets are designed by Delight in collaboration with our partners.

Building the support network

Delight in the Woods is designed to have a lasting impact beyond the life of the immediate project. We involve parents to help build home/school links, as low parental engagement is often an issue affecting the children we work with. And we provide high quality training and support for teachers, so that the project has a strong impact, and teachers develop new arts-based learning skills to share with other children.



Proving the impact of arts-based learning

We're passionate about creating high quality programmes – and proving their impact. We evaluate against target outcomes, so that we can find out what works, how to do better, and to share our learning with partners and the wider sector.

We do this by:

- carrying out before and after surveys with children and teachers
- tracking in detail 4-6 children of mixed abilities per class
- asking parents for their feedback at the end of project performance or exhibition
- holding in-depth evaluation meetings with all schools and project partners

For Delight in the Woods 2019 we obtained detail tracking for 88 pupil premium children across 8 schools, met with 8 head teachers and collected views from 359 children, 139 parents and 15 teachers.

Programme Specific Objectives

The outcomes of Delight in the Woods are evidenced around four key development area:

OUTCOME 1
Supporting children's social and emotional development

OUTCOME 2
Engaging children with learning

OUTCOME 3
Broadening children's horizons

OUTCOME 4
Developing a positive support network around each child

OUTCOME 1

Supporting children's social and emotional development

Children go on an enormous journey of development and learning during their primary years – from social issues such as friendship, empathy and understanding others, to building skills and traits such as confidence, teamwork and resilience that will support them in the years to come.

Delight in the Woods is designed to help children explore and develop these abilities, especially amongst those children who may be facing additional challenges or lack family support. Working intensively over a full half-term helps children to immerse themselves in the experience, providing space for growth and a catalyst for change.

Empathy

The initial performance at Box Hill and the story that then unfolds around William at school encourages children to empathise with others and think about how they can help other people when they are sad, or struggling with a problem.

"WE SAW WILLIAM UPSET AND GRUMPY. WE MADE HIM FEEL HAPPY AND THAT WAS THE BEST DAY EVER."

CHILD

Teamwork

United by a desire to help cheer William up, the children work together (supported by their teachers and Zoo Co actors in role as StoryLand characters) to create a story, write their own script, and then rehearse and stage their very own outdoor promenade performance.

"I love how the children worked in small teams to unleash their creativity. It was their own story and their performance showed passion."

PARENT

"Her ability to work in a group with her peers has significantly improved as a result of this programme. She now understands that a successful performance depends on co-operation and encouragement amongst her peers; listening to everybody's ideas and coming to a group decision. She has learnt to participate co-operatively without dominating. Well done! This was great to see."

TEACHER ON A TRACKED CHILD

Confidence

Feedback from children, teachers and parents highlighted how the different project elements helped children grow in confidence – whether performing in public for family and friends, or having more confidence in writing, reading or tasks they normally find tricky.

IMPACT

Based on data gathered from 88 pupil premium case studies



"Can't believe my child who always so shy to act did a brilliant job today."

PARENT

OUTCOME 2

Engaging children with learning

Delight in the Woods helps children who may be struggling or disengaged to re-discover their enjoyment of learning, increasing their engagement. Delight in the Woods doesn't deliver the National Curriculum, but we encourage teachers to explore links between the programme and other parts of classroom learning to enhance the experience for their pupils.

Immersive learning

Part of the project's power is its fully immersive nature, with children fully entering into and believing the story, providing a powerful stimulus for learning engagement. Live interaction, multi-media, and written and artistic Arts Award activities enabled all children to engage and achieve, whatever their starting point.

"THE BEST PART WAS WRITING MY LETTER TO WILLIAM"

CHILD

Children were supported to work together, sharing ideas and learning. Teachers noted children becoming more confident in joining in with classroom discussions, a greater enjoyment of and willingness to learn, and improvements in literacy (through script and letter writing) as well as performance skills and confidence.

"Offering her own suggestions and ideas, and performing in front of parents, is something that Harvinder would never have done before. I am so proud of her!"

TEACHER

Teachers also reported how some children with erratic attendance made a special effort to come into school on days they were working on the project.

"Nina made the effort to do some extra pieces of work at home, another poster for William and some drawings of the characters. This was surprising as it is often a struggle to get her to complete the tasks she is set."

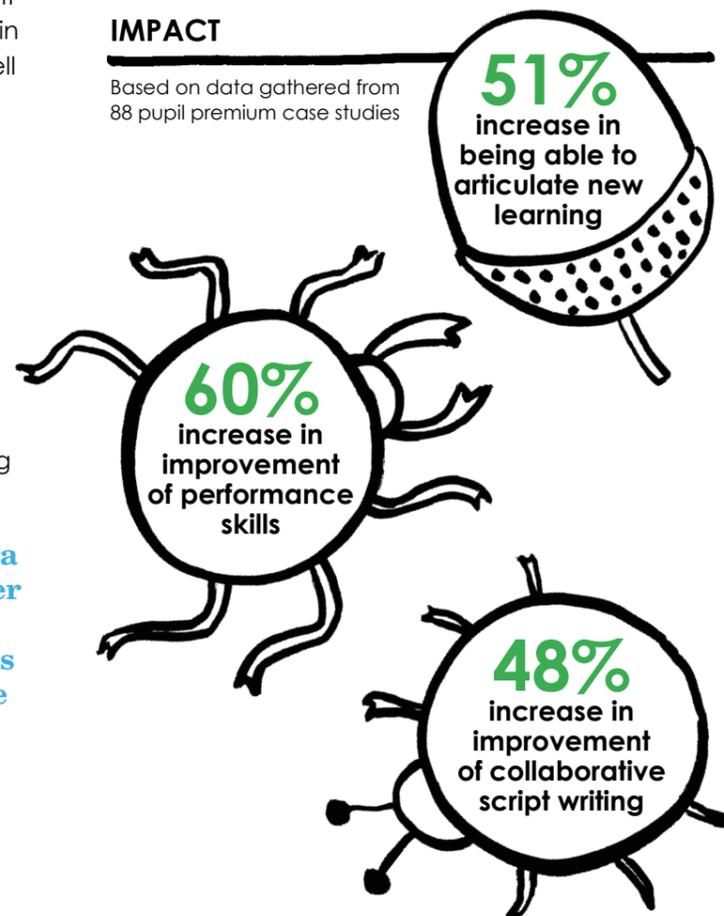
TEACHER

Arts Award

All 413 participating children achieved a 'Discover' level Arts Award, a nationally accredited award for the arts. Throughout the project, they completed specially designed activities – including designing a 'missing' poster for William, writing letters of encouragement, and creating posters and invitations to their Super Story Party. For many children, their Arts Award certificate (arranged by William, to maintain the story to the end) is their first ever formally certificated award – providing a huge confidence boost and a lasting reminder of their achievements, helping them to self-identify as successful learners.

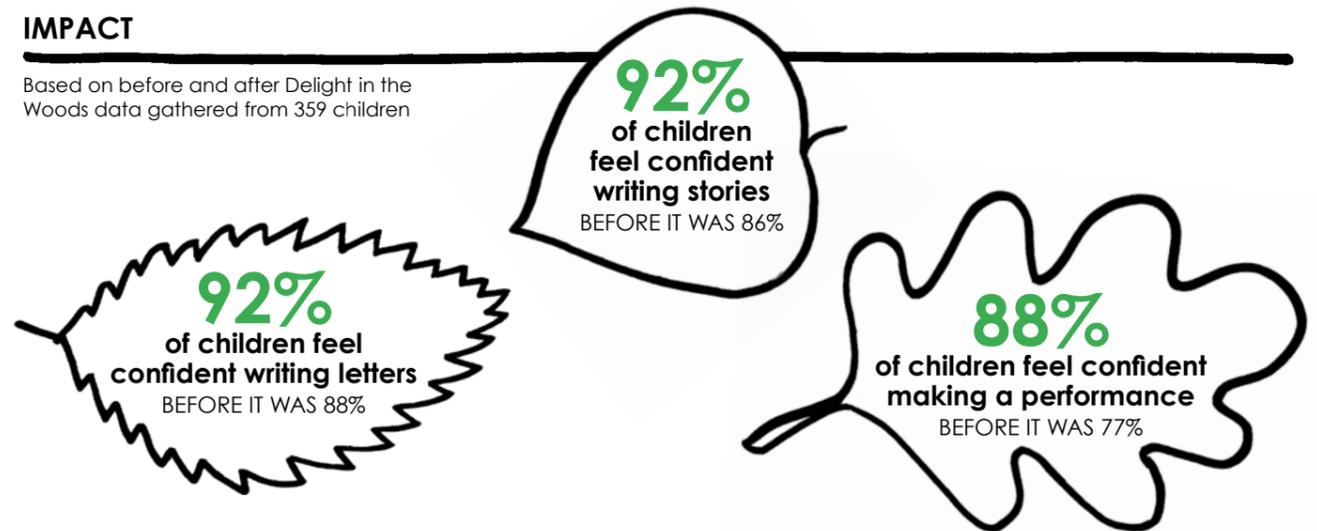
IMPACT

Based on data gathered from 88 pupil premium case studies



IMPACT

Based on before and after Delight in the Woods data gathered from 359 children



"This has been a life-changing experience for my son – never before has he wanted to write and since his visit to Box Hill and the work by Delight in school, he has chosen to write of his own accord. This experience has been extremely inspirational!"

PARENT



"WE LEARNED ABOUT BOX HILLS CHALK HILLS, (IT) IS REALLY COOL."

CHILD



OUTCOME 3

Broadening children's horizons

New experiences

Delight in the Woods provides children with lots of new creative and learning opportunities, centered around devising, scripting and performing their own outdoor promenade performance for family and friends. For many children each stage of the programme is filled with 'first times'.

Connecting with nature

Delight in the Woods connects children with Surrey's natural heritage. Thanks to the support of our partners the National Trust, in the morning of their day at Box Hill, all children enjoyed a 1.5 hour nature walk led by expert National Trust rangers. This introduced them to the different habitats at Box Hill, exploring its rare chalk downlands and mixed woodland (including its

iconic box trees and ancient yews). The rangers encouraged children to listen to the woods and enjoy the wonder of nature. For many children, this was their first visit to one of Surrey's most iconic natural heritage sites, and exploration of natural habitats. As well as widening children's horizons this nature walk complemented their science learning.

"WE FOUND A YEW TREE AND IT ATE STUFF!"

CHILD

"WE MET TWO RANGERS AND WE WENT INTO A FOREST AND WE LEARNT ABOUT FUNGI."

CHILD



Impact Case Studies

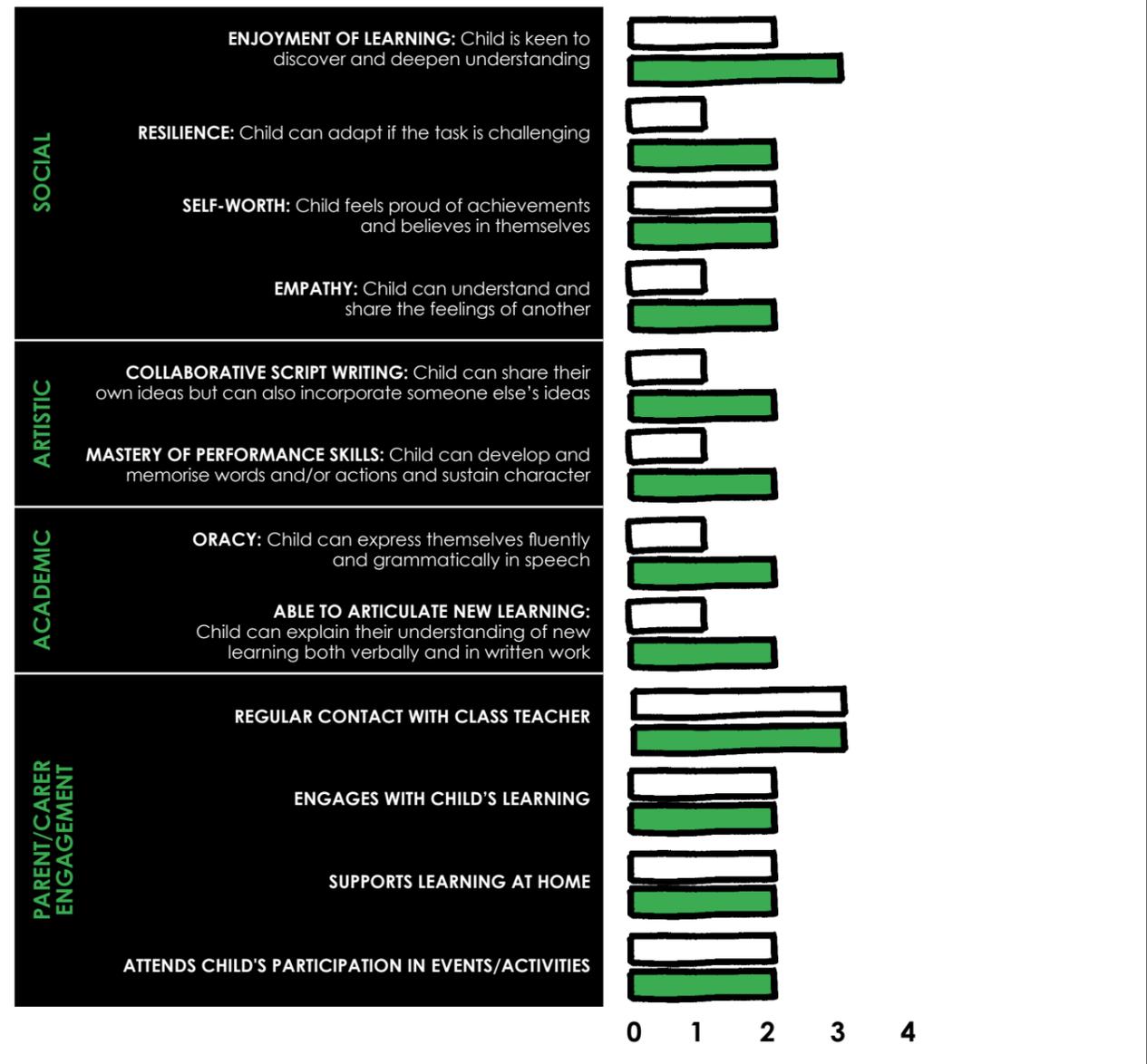
BEN GENDER: MALE

Teacher, before the project:

Ben is on the SEND register and requires a lot of adult support in most of his learning, especially reading and writing tasks. When he finds something challenging, he can find it difficult to see other children's point of view. Ben can at times be a confident child; however, I would like to see him improve his self-worth. I think that taking part in the Delight in the Woods project will help develop his performance skills and self-confidence.

Teacher, after the project:

Ben was fully engaged with the whole Delight in the Woods project. It was great to see him empathise with the character's problems (this is something that he finds difficult). Ben normally finds learning lines very difficult. However, he memorised his lines with ease for the Delight performance and was able to deliver many more lines than he would normally do so. I think Ben got a huge amount out of the programme. It was great to see him so immersed in a literacy-based task.



All names have been changed for protection purposes

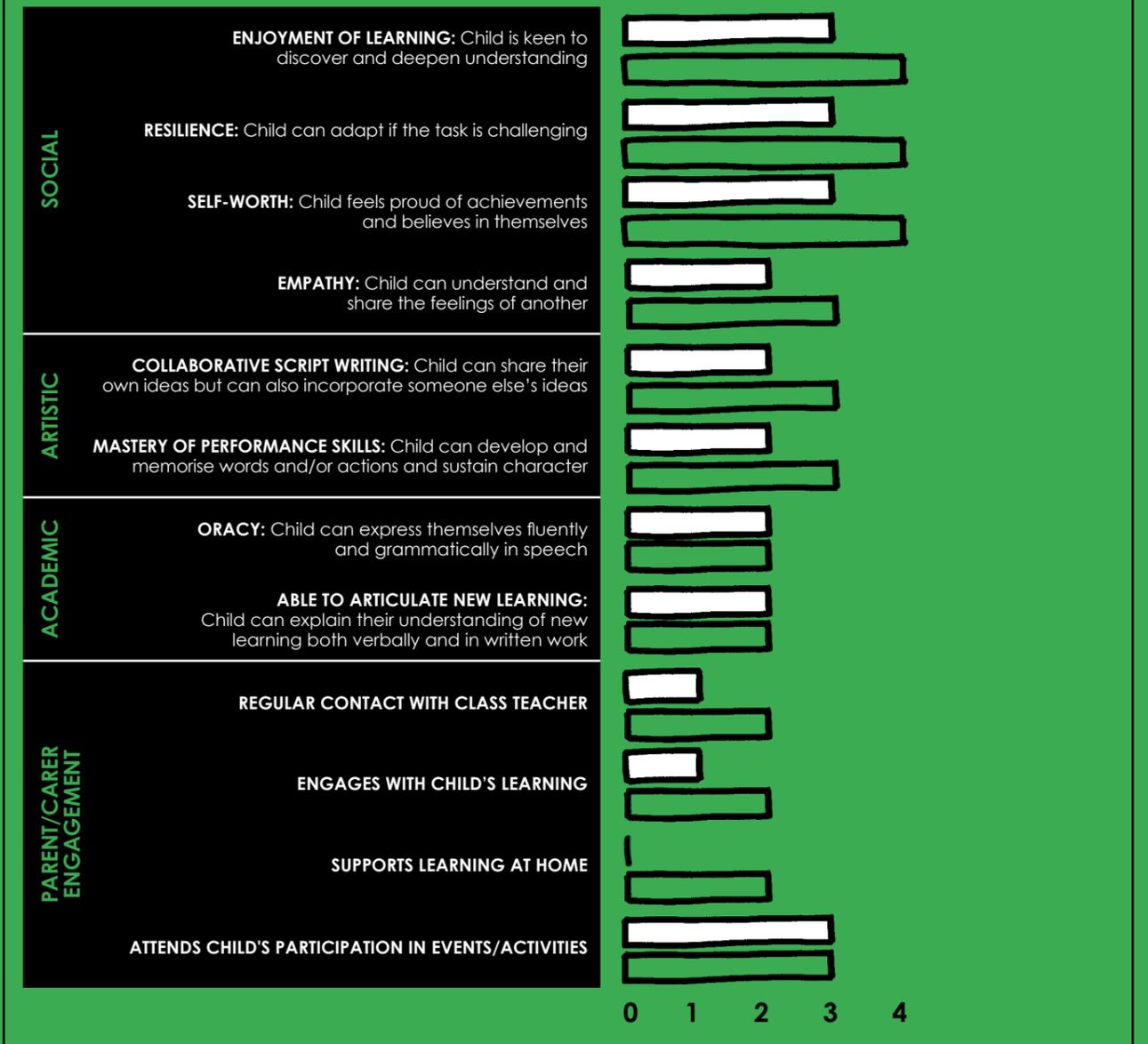
Before After

AMINA GENDER: FEMALE

Teacher's comment on a tracked child

Amina absolutely loved this programme and fully immersed herself in the world of story-telling. She was highly excited by the fact that we were going to help William and showed a huge level of empathy for his character. She was constantly asking questions about how William might be getting on and it was lovely to see her take on such a caring role. She definitely became more confident as the programme went on.

She was able to work well as part of a team, as well as memorise most of her lines for the performance. Speaking to her mum after the performance, she was completely hooked by the whole project and was always talking about it at home.



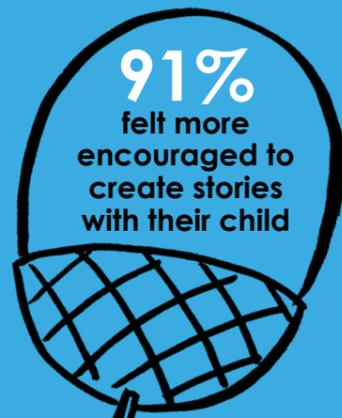
Before After

OUTCOME 4

Developing a positive support network around each child

Building engagement with parents

Low parental engagement is a constant challenge for our partner schools, impacting on children's learning at home. We support schools to build engagement by inviting family members to share in their child's creative achievements. In 2019, 399 parents and family members attended the children's Super Story Parties, with excellent feedback. **According to our parent survey completed by 139 adults:**



SUPPORTING TEACHERS

By engaging the class teachers in Continuing Professional Development (CPD) opportunities throughout the school year, we help embed skills and create a lasting legacy for future children.

Teacher CPD Day & Teacher Resource Pack

For teachers, the project started in January with a full CPD day at Box Hill. After walking the performance route, they were taken through each step of the programme, learned techniques for devising and scripting, and experimented with creating their own scripts, to experience it as the children would do. Our new Teacher Resource Pack provided a vital source of information throughout the programme, including a week by week guide. Delight's Co-ordinator remained on hand to provide additional support as required.

Working alongside professional actors

Observation and peer leading were both critical parts of teachers' development, cementing new skills and building experience. Teachers welcomed the chance to learn from professional arts practitioners, and reported they had learned techniques that they can now confidently use in all aspects of classroom learning, in particular the use of script writing and outdoor learning.



"My child had a fantastic time on the trip and we can't wait to visit [Box Hill] with the family"

PARENT

Self-evaluation by teachers before and after the project showed significant gains in knowledge and confidence. On a scale of 1-10, at the end of the project:

100%
scored 7 or more for confidence to use improvisation/devising to explore classroom learning
31% BEFORE

77%
scored 7 or more for knowledge of improvisation and devising
15% BEFORE

100%
scored 7 or more for likelihood of using improvisation and devising again with their class
15% BEFORE

Summary of achievements

Strong outcomes

Delight in the Woods has had an amazing reception amongst children and teachers alike, and performed strongly against target outcomes. Children have developed their skills, confidence and self-belief, whilst stretching themselves to create and perform their own stories. They have pulled together as teams, found joy in their own creativity, strengthened their own self-belief as learners and changed perceptions.

New teacher CPD day

Our new CPD day for teachers was very well received, who also commented positively on our new Teacher Resource Pack.

“Wow!!! Thank you all. You truly engaged all the children. I cannot believe that all the children were so eager, involved and believed everything. You excelled. We all are looking forward to your next visit.”

TEACHER

Improved Arts Award Journals

Building on teacher feedback from last year's pilot, Delight created several new pages for the Arts Award Journal to reinforce literacy links. This allowed class teachers more time to spend on Delight in the Woods, giving a fully immersive experience, and children enjoyed having a lasting memory of their experience.

A stronger focus on script writing

Supporting children to script write using their own ideas and characters helped them understand how to create stories better and feel real ownership for their performances. Greater use of script writing from devising was an important focus for Delight in the Woods, and proved largely successful, allowing greater creativity and participation from the children as well as strengthening their understanding.

Making performances a celebration

Children and their parents helped make each 'Super Story Party' special, with parents bringing in cakes, biscuits and drinks, as well as setting the hall up as a 'party' feel, celebrating the amazing work the children had done. William also attended, which was warmly welcomed and very rewarding for the children. Delight encourages schools to create a real sense of celebration around the performances, with some incorporating music and AV displays.

Parent feedback

Delight this year was able to gather parent feedback data which gave a new and important angle to impact evidence.

“The children had a fantastic day at Box Hill! It was so magical and a day that I am sure they will remember forever!”

TEACHER







Delight