

Impact and monitoring report for Q4: December 2021 - February 2022

1. Introduction

This is the second quarterly monitoring and impact report informed by the new evaluation strategy rolled out by Stomping Grounds from September 2021. For details of our evaluation strategy, see <https://tinyurl.com/Stomping-Grounds> Our delivery team continues to put their time and effort into implementing this strategy, with the support of the Lead Team.

Based on our experience of evaluation during Q3 and feedback received from our staff team, a range of changes have been rolled out for Q4:

- Request a post-attendance survey only from parents/carers
- Ask Team Leads to prompt their practitioners to send email and survey links to attendees
- Set up a database to track where data collection has occurred by provision
- Undertake peer observation on an annual basis, unless issues arise which require earlier intervention
- Embed Blob Tree evaluation within every provision to amplify the beneficiary voice e.g. children and young people
- Include observation data from practitioners within Q4
- Invite practitioners to use reflection time at the end of their sessions as an aspect of digital storytelling - record this with appropriate consent
- Encourage Team Leads to attend their allocated provisions to support digital storytelling on a termly basis.

One of the most significant recommendations implemented for Q4 was a bespoke CPD opportunity for practitioners delivering our Under 5s provision. 6 staff attended a 3 hour session to share good practice, discuss challenges, and identify areas for development; this resulted in our core model of forest school delivery for Under 5s which will ensure this provision is consistent across all our sessions [[to share with staff only https://docs.google.com/document/d/1hns9-qccSdYfB6-j-lfVXhGfq51XTQ-II8NIpCCBpQA/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1hns9-qccSdYfB6-j-lfVXhGfq51XTQ-II8NIpCCBpQA/edit?usp=sharing)].

Some of the recommendations in Q3 are medium term goals for the year ahead. This includes: collecting data on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion from our staff team; considering the views of our staff team in terms of their role and how it impacts their own wellbeing; increasing the uptake of positive action spaces; and requesting feedback from children and young people via online survey, via their parent/carer. We have begun to address these recommendations through discussion as a staff team, with some initial actions to set the goals in motion. See section 8 for more information.

2. How do we evaluate our provision?

For each provision we deliver, lead practitioners:

- Invite participants to complete online surveys (after attendance at a one-off session or block)
- Conduct observations of children/young people in their care (mid and end block)
- Collect feedback from children/young people using Blob Tree tools during sessions.

Our peer observation scheme will run annually whereby members of the Lead Team visit each lead practitioner to observe them delivering a session and undertake digital storytelling with participants there (a way to collect feedback from children/young people using video). Peer observation encourages practitioners and Lead Team to communicate, ensures consistency and quality across our provision and offers support to our delivery team where appropriate.

At the point of booking onto our sessions, participants complete a form including data on gender, ethnicity and disability. They can opt out of responding to this data request.

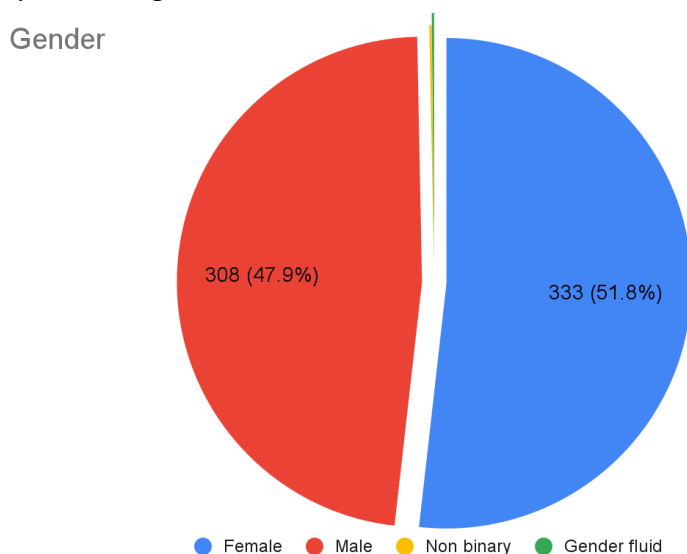
Data analysis is conducted by our Operations Manager. Findings are shared via quarterly reports and regular communications with our delivery staff.

3. Who is accessing our provision?

During Q4 (Dec 2021-Feb 2022), we delivered forest school at 9 sites across the region, reaching 947 people.

3.1. Gender

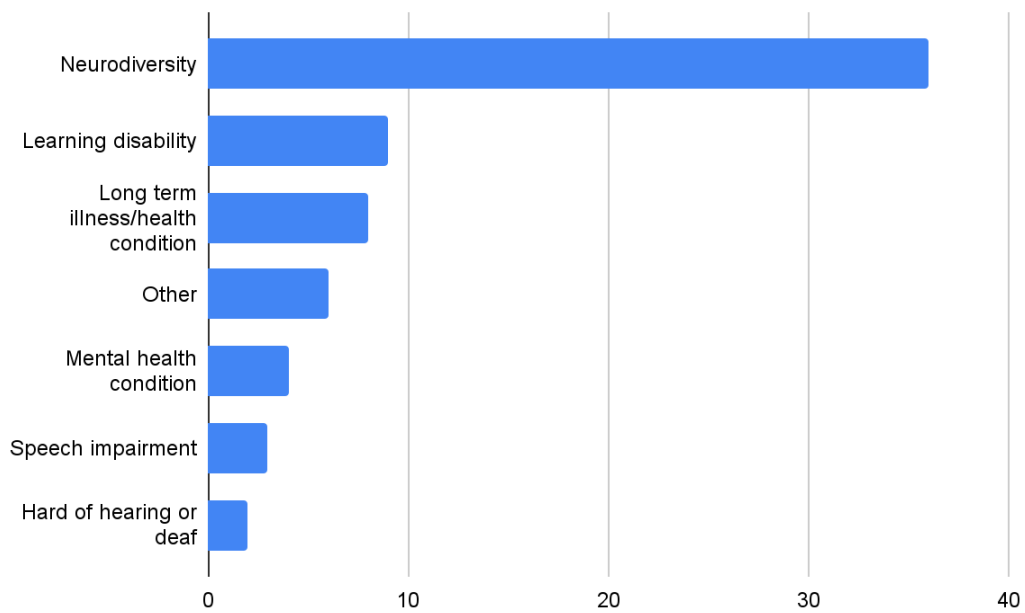
Of the 23 groups (704 participants) where data on gender was collected, there were 643 responses to gender.



Female	333
Male	308
Non binary	1
Gender fluid	1

3.2. Disability

Of the 18 groups (471 participants) where data was collected, 68 responses recorded a disability:

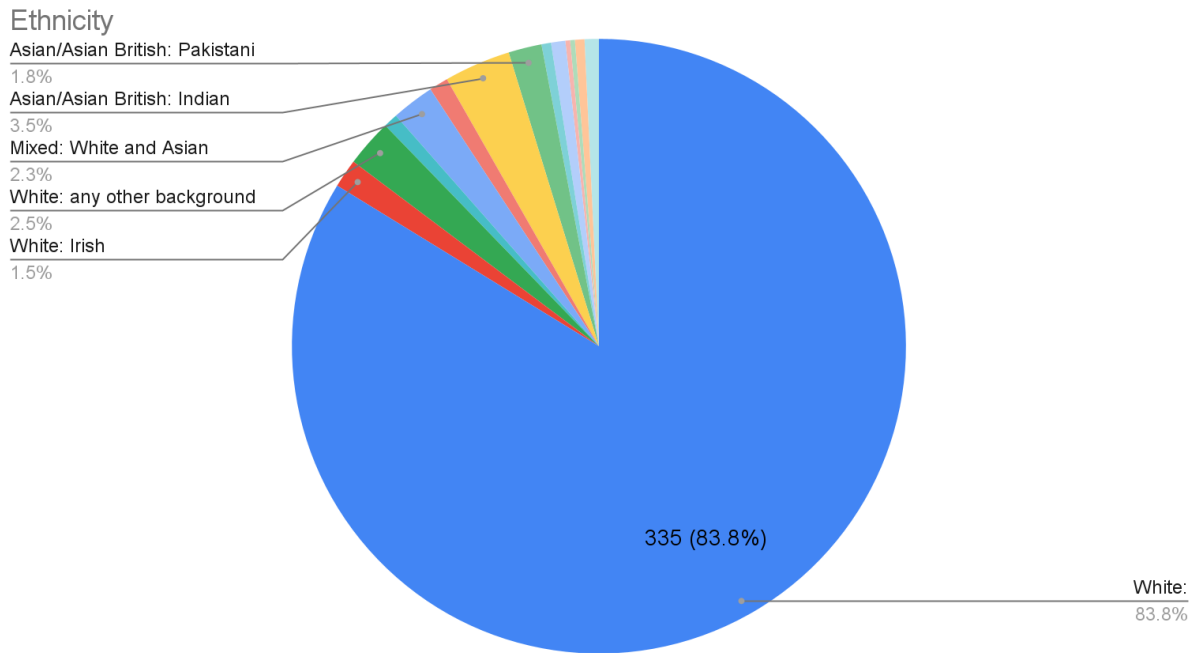


Neurodiversity	36
Learning disability	9
Long term illness/health condition	8
Other	6
Mental health condition	4
Speech impairment	3

Hard of hearing or deaf	2
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3.3. Ethnicity

Of the 18 groups (471 participants) where data was collected, 400 respondents recorded their ethnicity - the majority of our forest school participants are White British (83.8%).



White: English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British	335
White: Irish	6
White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller	0
White: any other background	10
Mixed: White and Black Caribbean	0
White and Black African	3
Mixed: White and Asian	9
Mixed: any other background	4
Asian/Asian British: Indian	14
Asian/Asian British: Pakistani	7

Asian/Asian British: Bangladeshi	0
Asian/Asian British: Chinese	2
Asian/Asian British: any other background	3
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: African	1
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: Caribbean	0
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: any other background	1
Other ethnic group: Arab	2
Other ethnic group	3

In Q3, 94.4% of participants were White British, compared with 83.8% in Q4. From Q3 to Q4, we have recorded an **increase of 10.4% in representation of all other ethnic groups combined**. In the North East region, 6.4% of our population are from minoritised ethnic groups ([Regional ethnic diversity - GOV.UK Ethnicity facts and figures](#)); **in our forest school community in Q4, 16.2% were from minoritised ethnic groups.**

This increase in ethnic diversity is a reflection of our commitment to and actions following Q3 data to improve representation of ethnic minority groups in our forest school provision.

- We sought to better capture the ethnic diversity of our forest school community at the point of booking onto provision by expanding the representation of ethnic groups in the form. Participants now choose from a longer list of minoritised ethnic groupings, hopefully increasing the accuracy of our data recording.
- We employed a Community Link Worker from a local community in which we sought to engage with families from minoritised ethnic groups. Their role is to help reduce barriers to engagement with forest school through their understanding of differences in culture and language, how they create barriers and how to overcome them, and their own lived experiences of being part of this minoritised ethnic group.
- We funded training for a member of this minoritised ethnic group to become a L3 Forest School practitioner; they now deliver forest school in and to their own community.

3.4. *Positive Action*

Our vision at Stomping Grounds is to encourage people from underrepresented groups to access rural spaces via our forest school provision and increase the diversity of minoritised ethnic groups attending our provision. We set up a positive action programme to work towards this, ensuring our trading profits benefit the community directly by offering free

and subsidised spaces to children and young people who are historically excluded from outdoor provision. During Quarter 4, we offered **15 positive action spaces** to children and young people, compared with 7 last quarter - **an increase of 8 spaces**. 5 attended our Big Kids event, 2 attended our Under 5s provision, 4 attended holiday club and 4 attended Forest Kindergarten at Gibside.

After Q3 reporting, we delivered on a number of actions to increase uptake of our positive action spaces, including:

- Employing a Community Link Worker.
- Increased advertising on our social media platforms of our positive action spaces.
- Making better use of existing links with local schools to advertise our positive action spaces.

4. Survey responses - pre and post attendance

All our participants (parents/carers) who booked onto forest school sessions were asked to complete a short survey via email following their attendance. We gathered 32 responses in total.

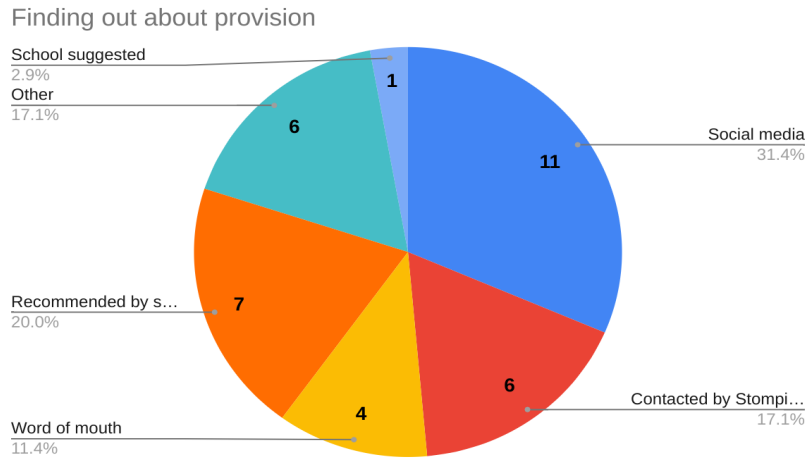
Those respondents had attended or had children who had attended 9 different groups including:

- Family Fun (FF)
- HAF Christmas holiday club (HAF DEC)
- HAF February holiday club (HAF)
- Leadgate February holiday club (LG)
- Holiday club (HOL)
- Saturday Club (SAT)
- Seasonal Celebrations (SEA)
- Taster sessions (TAS)
- 1-to-1 provision (1:1)

Of those respondents completing the survey 19 had attended Stomping Grounds forest school before, whilst 18 respondents had not accessed any provision with us until this quarter.

4.1. How did you find out about our sessions?

The main ways we reach our audience are through our **social media activity** and **recommendations by existing customers**.



4.2. Why did you sign up to these sessions?

Spending time outdoors (27.6%) and learning new skills (17.2%) were the most common reasons for parents/carers to sign their children up for our forest school sessions. Building self-confidence and resilience (16.1%) and meeting new people and making friends (16.1%) were also important. Other reasons included: to get some exercise, to spend time together (when attending with child), children having specific needs which can be met by forest school and needing childcare .

5. How did forest school affect our participants?

Qualitative data analysis offered some emergent themes regarding the impact of our forest school provision on the children and young people accessing it in Q4. The following data reflects the views of parents/carers whose child(ren) are accessing our forest school provision.

5.1. The whole forest school experience

The feedback we receive about the impact of our provision on our participants is often described as the entirety of the forest school experience, therefore it can be difficult to unmesh these interrelated influences for the purpose of evaluation. For example,

I think it's great for her social skills, mixing with people outside of her normal school environment. I believe being outdoors is a huge benefit on mental health. My daughter always comes back from the session with a new skill or new fact about nature. HAF DEC

Here the parent/carer is describing opportunities for connecting with peers, the benefits of being outdoors in nature, and potential for skills development. Similarly, the following parent/carer describes the various ways in which forest school has an important role in their child's life:

[It's] Something to look forward to after a week at school (which he doesn't enjoy). [He] loves to be outside and we try and facilitate this, but he is learning skills in a much more structured way at forest school and benefiting from the company of other children, even if he is a bit shy of some of them still. SAT

Another parent/carer describes our forest school provision as integral to their child's growing confidence, independence and resilience:

Forest school was the one positive setting that [child] was able to access and it has been the one thing in his life that has helped him make so much progress over the last few years, to gain back his confidence and independence, help him to start mixing with his peers again, help him make decisions for himself, help him feel comfortable getting wet/dirty etc. etc. 1:1

The children described here have attended different provisions (short and long term, funded and private), led by different practitioners and ratios, but all delivered within our specific ethos. Significantly, they provide evidence of the same means of achieving this impact - the advantage of time spent outdoors, the benefit of connecting with peers, the value of skills development in the outdoor environment and the role of a skilled forest school practitioner to support this. The associated benefits of this combination are linked to other positive outcomes, such as building self-confidence, developing resilience and positive mental health. The following section will focus on the key themes described here to provide further evidence of the impact of forest school upon our participants.

5.2. Time spent outdoors and connecting with the natural world

Of the 32 survey respondents, 8 commented (attending 6 different groups) on the advantage to their child of time spent outdoors and/or connecting with the natural world. This included its impact on positive mental health and physical health:

He has also developed a healthy connection with nature through consistent time in the woods. SAT

It was a very positive, calming experience for both myself and my children... Fantastic to see my children engaged in the outdoors. SEA

Children were exhilarated upon their return. Full of energy and ready to talk about their day. HOL

She was in a very good mood coming out, and is interested in being in the woods again (with friends). HOL

They all really enjoyed it, they had great sleep afterwards. LG

He loves being outdoors, it's just getting him outdoors. He loves learning new outdoor skills [...] I think spending time outdoors is very important for your mental health too. HAF DEC

Evident that the outdoor environment had a positive effect on our family. FF

5.3. *Connecting with peers*

10 survey respondents (attending 6 different groups) highlighted the benefits of forest school for connecting with their peers. Peer interaction was of particular importance to the children and young people who shared their views on forest school; see section 6 for more detail.

I think it is helping her so much with her socialising and is massively helping her overall development. TAS

[Young person] is home educated and this is a fantastic opportunity each week for him to connect with friends. This has really supported his social and emotional development. SAT

5.4. *Freedom, independence and building self-confidence and resilience*

Survey respondents (commenting on 8 different groups) highlighted the interrelated benefits of sense of freedom (7 responses), independence (5) and building self-confidence and resilience (5) of our provision upon participants.

Freedom

I like the freedom the kids have to play and explore TAS

I think the child-led nature of the sessions really made [child] able to feel comfortable in that environment. 1:1

LO loved being free to play in the woods and letting her imagination run wild. LG

When [child] has forest school at school he really enjoys being out of the class - he says he feels free because school is very stressful for him so he looks forward to it. [He] is always disappointed when forest school sessions end... HAF DEC

Independence

My daughter loves the independence these sessions bring. HAF Dec

She felt supported by the practitioners and comfortable enough to talk about her feelings which is a big step as she is struggling with emotional resilience in the school

setting. She struggles with academia and felt at the session she achieved so much which boosted her self confidence! Thank you! LG

Child led, no pressure. FF

Self confidence and resilience

He is more confident. He is happier in the fresh air and is learning to play with others. HAF DEC

When [child] first started forest school, he was really in the middle of a mental health crisis. He had many difficulties which the forest school setting helped him to work through in a suitable way. 1:1

Both children thoroughly enjoyed their sessions, getting outdoors and without having parents there. It gives them a sense of independence and improves their resilience. SAT

Also very impressed to see the children were encouraged to speak in a group of strangers with no judgement being made. Wonderful for their confidence. SEA

5.5. Skills development

There were 10 responses (from 3 groups) focused on the skills development achieved by our participants.

My child learned how to live off the land, make food and fires. HAF DEC

Fire lighting and cooking. HAF DEC

[Child] loved learning about fire lighting and the independent den building play. SAT

It sounds like she developed lots of new skills. HOL

5.6. Support from skilled practitioners

There were 6 responses (from 5 groups) highlighting the role of our skilled practitioners in the delivery of forest school and its impact upon the experience of participants.

The leaders were so friendly and kind. Hol

Susan and Ruby were very calm and informative and had just the right amount of input in the session. SEA

Every member of staff is so attentive, accommodating to [child]'s wishes, and understanding/supportive of [child]'s needs. 1:1

Our leader was very friendly and approachable. Activities were thoughtful and set out well. TAS

[Practitioners] were well equipped and knowledgeable. FF

5.7. *Experience of education in school settings*

There were 3 responses from parents/carers (from 3 different groups) focusing on the experiences of children and young people in school settings. This data has been presented above within other themes, but is worth highlighting here to illustrate their shared perspective:

She felt supported by the practitioners and comfortable enough to talk about her feelings which is a big step as she is struggling with emotional resilience in the school setting. She struggles with academia and felt at the session she achieved so much which boosted her self confidence! Thank you! LG

When [child] has forest school at school he really enjoys being out of the class - he says he feels free because school is very stressful for him so he looks forward to it. [He] is always disappointed when forest school sessions end... HAF DEC

[It's] Something to look forward to after a week at school (which he doesn't enjoy). [He] loves to be outside and we try and facilitate this, but he is learning skills in a much more structured way at forest school and benefiting from the company of other children, even if he is a bit shy of some of them still. SAT

Parents/carers describe their child finding the support they need in our forest school setting as our provision filling a gap left by their school. We have numerous examples of anecdotal evidence from parents/carers, often those whose children attend our specialist provision, describing negative experiences of the mainstream education system. The data gathered from children and young people via our Blob Tree tool provide further evidence of negative emotions surrounding school experiences. This will be explored in more detail in section 6. As a topic that has been raised by parents/carers and children alike, this will be an area for further consideration next quarter and beyond, particularly as we continue to shape our specialist and school provision.

6. **Beneficiary voices: What do children and young people think of our provision?**

This quarter we wanted to illuminate the voice of the children and young people accessing our provision. Last quarter we trialled the use of Blob Trees and digital storytelling; we continued with this approach in Q4, with some alterations to increase its uptake and delivery amongst practitioners.

We chose to use the Blob Tree as a tool (see appendix 1) to gather feedback from our direct beneficiaries - children and young people. Practitioners use this tool with accompanying prompts at the beginning of a block and end of a block with the purpose of assessing change as a result of forest school experience. The benefits of using the Blob Tree are:

- This tool does not rely on reading/writing to give feedback.
- It can be flexible and adaptable to the needs and preferences of the participant.
- It can be unobtrusive, lower demand: participants can say as little (nothing at all, only pointing at the Blob) or as much as they feel able (elaborating on which Blob they have chosen and why).
- It offers opportunities for practitioners to check in with participants about where they are at emotionally and in relation to being at forest school.

Practitioners at three groups conducted both sets of Blob Tree data collection (beginning and end of provision): Saturday Club (a long term, privately funded weekly provision for 5-12 year olds at our base in Prudhoe), Leadgate Holiday Club (a funded Holiday Activities and Food project, for 5-12 year olds, which occasionally runs during school holidays only when funding has been secured, in a public woodland in Durham) and RISE (a long term, funded weekly provision for 14-18 year olds at our base in Prudhoe). The offers differ from each other in their purpose, target audience and setting; as such, the use of Blob Trees to evaluate was shaped by this. At Leadgate, evaluation was conducted in the single day session and our practitioner asked 3 questions with the Blob Tree to reflect this - "How did you feel when: you arrived today? (start) And now? (noon) How do you feel in the classroom at school?". At Saturday Club and RISE, Blob Trees were conducted in week 1 then week 6 and our practitioner followed the questions included at appendix 1.

6.1. Saturday Club: Trying new things and connecting with peers

There were 19 children at Saturday Club; 13 completed Blob Trees at the beginning of the block and 15 at the end. For simplicity, the Blobs represented on the Blob Tree can be categorised broadly as showing positive or negative emotions. Data was analysed using this categorisation and responses recorded below:

When asked "Which Blob is how you feel about being with other people?", all participants at the beginning of the block (13/13) and at the end of the block (15/15) selected Blobs representing positive emotions. This supports the feedback from parents/carers who described their children enjoying forest school because of its opportunities to connect with peers.

There was a notable difference in responses to the question “Which Blob is how you feel when you try something new?”:

- At the beginning of the block, 7/13 selected Blobs representing positive emotions
- At the end of the block, 13/15 selected Blobs representing positive emotions.
- An increase from 54% to 87%.

With such a small sample size and no accompanying qualitative data, we cannot infer this is due to our forest school provision. However, we can observe that our offer provides children and young people with regular opportunities to try new, sometimes challenging, activities which could help develop their self confidence and resilience over time and when faced with trying something else that is new to them.

Data from Saturday Club also illustrated how the end of a block of forest school can result in negative emotions. They were asked “Which Blob is how you are feeling at the end of your time at forest school?” - 7/15 recorded a negative emotion. The practitioner collecting this data made a note that the children were recording negative Blobs as a reflection of them not wanting it to end, as opposed to forest school itself making them feel negative. This illustrates why context and additional information can be key to understanding what lies behind choice of Blobs.

6.2. *Leadgate HAF: Perceptions of school experience*

There were 11 children at Leadgate’s HAF club. Participants were asked to reflect on their experience throughout a single day session. For simplicity, the Blobs represented on the Blob Tree can be categorised broadly as showing positive or negative emotions. Data was analysed using this categorisation and responses recorded below:

<i>Question</i>	<i>Positive Blob</i>	<i>Negative Blob</i>
How do you feel as you arrive today?	7	4
How do you feel now? (noon)	10	1
How do you feel in the classroom at school?	1	10

Responses show that there was a positive change as more children identified with a positive Blob across the course of the day (beginning 7:4; mid 10:1).

Interestingly, in line with some of the comments shared by parents/carers, 10 of the children reported negative emotions when asked to share how they felt in the school classroom. Here are the Blobs chosen by 10 children:



The bottom 2 Blobs were chosen by 6 children. It is not within the scope of our evaluation to explore why children and young people express negative emotions around school attendance. However, it is relevant to our provision that they feel this way; we continue to see an increase in the number of referrals to our setting from parents/carers of children who are looking for an alternative to mainstream education and we need to understand how our offer can fill that gap.

For the next quarter, the evaluation lead will focus on supporting practitioners to use Blobs as a tool to gather richer, qualitative data (to be audio recorded) for a more detailed understanding of why participants are choosing specific Blobs and what they represent for that person. If we can gather feedback from a larger cohort, which is more detailed, this will support our understanding of what our beneficiaries gain from forest school and how we can improve our offer. For the year ahead, evaluation could focus on gathering evidence from those attending our specialist provision to explore why parents/carers are seeking out alternative provision, the impact our provision has had thus far and how we can better support them in meeting the needs of their children through forest school.

6.3. RISE: Reassess evaluation tools and observe change over time

Feedback about evaluation tools is important - we are unable to gather quality data which is representative of the beneficiary voice if the tools are not fit for purpose. At RISE, the practitioner shared reflections on how young people responded to the use of Blob Trees to gather their views; they felt the young people did not engage well with the process, found it difficult to see how it reflected their perspectives and sometimes checked out of the data collection process all together. As a result there were only 3 participants who completed Blob Trees at both beginning and end of the block. The Lead Practitioner at RISE suggested a tool referred to as a Mood Meter (see appendix 2), which they had successfully used in sessions at another provision, and agreed to trial this at RISE for our next quarter. The Mood Meter uses both colour and text to describe how a child/young person might be feeling. We

will continue to offer the Blob Tree tool, but where this does not suit some participants, we can now offer the Mood Meter as an alternative.

The data from the young people who contributed is useful to share, however, as it gives an insight into the potential impact of attending forest school with us. There were two changes to highlight:

- YP 1 noted a change in how they felt when they **failed at something**: at the beginning of the block they identified with this Blob, sat alone on a branch end, with a sad expression -



then at the end of the block, this Blob, climbing the tree with a small smile -



- YP2 noted a change in how they felt about **being with other people**: at the beginning of the block they identified with this Blob, with a cross expression, arms defensive, alone at the end of a branch -



then at the end of the block, this Blob, with a large smile, standing at the top of the tree -



Without the opportunity to discuss this change with YP1 and YP2 to gather further data, we can only speculate about why their feelings had developed over the 6 week block and cannot say if this is a direct result of forest school. However, it gives an insight into the possibility of positive emotional change in a forest school setting over time, and demonstrates the need to research for further clarification. Specifically the impact of forest school upon emotional resilience and making meaningful connections with peers are two areas for further consideration in future evaluation.

7. Ways in which we can improve

32 parents/carers rated the quality of the service they had received from Stomping Grounds - 24 considered it to be Outstanding and the remaining 8 rated it as Good.

Survey data also identified areas for consideration and development. There were a small number of comments about what parents/carers felt impacted negatively upon their child's experience. Some feedback focused on the weather (4) and peer interaction (2). Without accompanying feedback from the children themselves, it is difficult to say how they managed in adverse weather conditions, although in some cases the issue was due to unsuitable clothing and footwear.

Children were cold but this was down to how I'd dressed them. Hol

We are continuing to build our emergency clothing kit on site, which will be made easier with the upcoming fully enclosed shelter at Dukes Hagg main site. We also continue to share information with parents/carers in advance of their session about what they require kit-wise to stay comfortable at forest school.

Two parents/carers commented on the age range of forest school groups as being something that does not work well, albeit for the opposite reasons.

He is still a little apprehensive of some of the older children SAT

Too many younger children SAT

There is value in offering groups with the 5-12 age range, with the support of skilled practitioners. However, we also recognise that if the balance of age ranges is at the extremes (10 x 5-8 year olds and 2 x 12 year olds for example) then this can affect the child's forest school experience. Recent changes in our youth provision reflect our consideration of this concern, so we now deliver a group for 8-13 year olds and a group for 14-18 year olds. On this feedback from Q4, we will share it with the relevant practitioners for reflection and discussion.

Another parent/carer commented on the changing nature of our group compositions for each provision.

One challenge that [child] needs to still overcome is the changing of the children in the group sessions from one term to another. 1:1

There are a range of regular provisions where a core group of participants attend; inevitably some children/young people move on for a variety of reasons and we recruit new participants to join. Our practitioners are very aware of how this might impact newcomers to

existing groups, in addition to those already attending, and take time to try to balance this with the needs of the group as a whole. On occasion this has led to changes being made where needed, altering group composition by age and/or needs, for example.

We also received some feedback on the accessibility of our main site at Dukes Hagg.

Long walk from car to site, my son has only recently started walking and he couldn't manage, meaning I carried all the way (he's heavy!). Don't think it would be accessible by pushchair? TAS

This was a taster session for our Under 5s provision. Information about accessibility is sent to participants as part of booking, with follow up contact made by the practitioner delivering the session, opening up opportunities to discuss specific access issues if required. Our recent Under 5s CPD reinforced the need to support new participants to site at the beginning of each block and if they attend a taster session, so that we can offer physical support to parents/carers where needed e.g. navigating a buggy to site, helping a preschooler to site where their parent/carer also has a baby. We will revisit the information we share on booking about accessibility at Dukes Hagg to ensure it is clear and understandable.

We find feedback about our sessions valuable as it informs our practice and supports us to implement change across our provision.

8. Considerations for Q4 and the year ahead

8.1. Actions taken following Q3 evaluation

Following Q3 reporting, we set the actions below to address during Q4 and in the longer term. Where the action is highlighted, we have delivered or we are in the process of delivering during Q4 and beyond:

<i>Improvements to evaluation</i>	<i>Improvements to our provision, delivery, administration and organisation</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Request a post-attendance survey only ● Ask Team Leads to prompt their practitioners to send email and survey links to attendees ● Set up a database to track where data collection has occurred by provision ● Undertake peer observation on an annual basis, unless issues arise which require earlier intervention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Increasing the uptake of positive action spaces. How can we reach the audience who would most benefit from positive action spaces and how can we appeal to this audience to use our service? ● Developing and delivering CPD in the form of skills shares for specific provision e.g. Under 5s and family provision, youth provision, adult

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Embed Blob Tree evaluation within every provision to amplify the beneficiary voice e.g. children and young people ● Include data from practitioner observations of attendees at their provision ● Invite practitioners to use reflection time at the end of their sessions as an aspect of digital storytelling - record this with appropriate consent ● Encourage Team Leads to attend their allocated provisions to support digital storytelling on a termly basis ● Consider requesting feedback from children and young people via online survey, via their parent/carer ● Collect data on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion from our staff team ● Consider the views of our staff team in terms of their role and how it impacts their own wellbeing 	<p>wellbeing, school provision. This will be an invitation to attend a 3 hour session with fellow practitioners to share good practice, discuss challenges, and identify areas for development, with the purpose of delivering a core model of forest school delivery which is consistent across all of our provision.</p>
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In response to recommendations made in Q3:

- Members of the Lead Team designed and delivered a bespoke CPD package for our team of practitioners delivering provision for Under 5s and Families.
- We have seen an increase in the number of positive action spaces taken up across our provision - in Q3 there were 7 positive action spaces, whilst this quarter, we offered 15 positive action spaces.

8.2. *Recommendations to improve evaluation next quarter*

Whilst one of our actions from Q3 was to embed the use of Blob Trees within our practitioners' provision, we observed some limitations to the use of the Blob Tree during Q4. These include:

- It relies on the skills of the practitioner to gather feedback. Often the rich qualitative data comes from prompts and discussion around choices of Blobs, not the Blob choice alone. Practitioners are delivering sessions and do not have time to collect data for lengthy periods.

- The participants' Blob choice is open to interpretation by those who undertake data analysis (although this can be overcome where voice is recorded/notes are made around the Blob choice).
- Some children/young people may not recognise the Blobs as demonstrating emotions, or as representative of themselves.
- Some young people may consider the Blobs to be childish and do not connect with the tool.

In response to these limitations, we will:

- Plan and deliver evaluation training with 2 lead practitioners who have successfully used evaluation tools in their provision, with the aim in mind for those practitioners to share with the wider team about how to effectively collect quality data from participants.
- Support practitioners to use Blobs as a tool to gather richer, qualitative data (to be audio recorded) for a more detailed understanding of why participants are choosing specific Blobs and what they represent for that person.
- Offer the Mood Meter for use with our participants, giving practitioners the freedom to use the tool most appropriate for their group (see appendix 1).
- Revisit the use of digital storytelling to support children and young people to share their own forest school stories from their own perspectives.

8.3. Recommendations to improve our provision, delivery, administration and organisation

We will share this report with our staff team and other key stakeholders. Evaluation of Q4 will shape Q1 in 2022 by focusing on the following recommendations:

- Continuing to develop and deliver CPD in the form of skills shares for specific provision e.g. youth provision, school provision. This will be an invitation to attend a 3 hour session with fellow practitioners to share good practice, discuss challenges, and identify areas for development, with the purpose of delivering a core model of forest school delivery which is consistent across all of our provision.
- Ensure our provision is clearly divided into categories to ensure staff are appropriately deployed, marketing can be targeted and participants can better find the provision that suits them.
- Further increasing the uptake of positive action spaces.
- Employing a full time member of staff to manage our growing timetable of holiday clubs (delivery and personnel), further develop our partnership working with key stakeholders and oversee
- Develop and deliver a survey to collect the views of Head Teachers, teachers and community partners that we work with - what do we do well, what can we improve, what next?

- Move to bi-annual reporting (cumulative - so returning customers March-Aug aren't 'double counted' in the annual numbers). Set deadlines for the bi-annual report and quarterly mini reports.
- Continue to produce internal quarterly reports including data on attendance, gender, disability, ethnicity and positive action spaces, and brief qualitative data.
- Develop a short digest of each bi-annual report to share on social media and with funders.
- Develop case studies (campaigns highlighting our successes) to support funding bids and contracts - focus on cases where we have had a significant impact e.g. specialist provision, Benwell Families. These anonymised case studies would share their successes via digital storytelling, illustrating how we use our resources to have the greatest impact - to share on social media platforms, with existing stakeholders and to support new partnership working.
- Find and report regional disability data, include our data for comparison.
- Add results of staff survey on EDI and include recommendations for improving staff diversity.
- Plan and deliver evaluation training with 2 lead practitioners who have successfully used evaluation tools in their provision, with the aim in mind for those practitioners to share with the wider team about how to effectively collect quality data from participants.

Which Blob....

1. ...do you feel like when you wake up in the morning?
2. ...do you feel like when you go to sleep at night?
3. ...is how you felt when you arrived at forest school at the beginning of the week? OR ...is how you are feeling at the end of your time at forest school?
4. ...do you feel like when you're outdoors in nature?
5. ...is how you feel about being with other people?
6. ...is how you feel when you try something new?
7. ...do you feel like when you fail at something?
8. ...is least like you?
9. ...do you want to be?



Appendix 2: Mood Meter

MOOD METER

