



New views

Lessons learned from the London Challenge residential courses





“

I've never left London before!

Do we need a passport?

Actually being able to see it makes it so much easier to understand

I've seen things I never expected to see

Is that a real view or a picture?

I did not know that life could be like that. I did not want it to end

”

Comments by 11-14 year olds
on *New Views* visits



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Introduction

In the UK there is a rich tradition of providing residential visits away from school and home for students of all ages. Many teachers and parents are convinced of the value of such educational experiences. However, the likelihood of young people being able to take part is still a matter of chance and opportunity, depending on many factors which vary in importance from school to school, and family to family. In these circumstances, the gathering of evidence that residential courses do have a strong and positive impact on the young people is critical – it may help to tip the balance towards providing more residential opportunities.

The London Challenge *New Views* courses provided a unique opportunity to gather this evidence. Between 2004-2008 nearly 35,000 of London's 11-14 year olds took part in government funded residential courses – branded *New Views* courses – as part of London Challenge (see www.field-studies-council.org/projects/londonchallenge for further information). Nearly three-quarters of London's secondary schools were involved in 850 courses at 42 residential centres located throughout the UK, covering a wide range of subjects ranging from pure adventure to curriculum-focused content.

The *New Views* courses represented the biggest single residential-course 'project' of its kind in the UK. Because of the numbers of young people involved, and the range of courses provided, a grouping of 10 residential providers (see page 22) were convened by the Field Studies Council (FSC). All providers agreed common operating procedures and quality standards – including health and safety protocols. The administration and booking of courses was through a single web site supported by just two staff in one administrative office.

The consistency of the *New Views* approach presented an opportunity to evaluate and compare the impacts of residential experiences and to get the views of over 4,000 people involved in the courses, including students, teachers, senior managers and parents. This booklet is not intended to be a formal research report. Rather it uses the personal statements and anecdotes of teachers, students and parents from 64 of London's secondary schools to paint a picture of what was achieved through the courses. They were chosen because they are representative of many others that could have been selected, and present intimate snapshots of the impacts that we have seen.



relationships



Developing friendships and relationships

Residential helped to build relationships which cut across ability, culture and previously established hierarchy. They also helped to nurture a better and more positive relationship between teachers and their students, and for teachers to share experiences with each other, and there is some evidence that this persisted in the schools for at least several months after the residential. The fact that parents were very enthusiastic and supportive, including in boroughs where a large majority had not had a similar experience during their own school careers, meant that a stronger relationship and 'affinity' was established with the school.



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With peers

The residential nurtured new friendships. Young people who were previously isolated or marginalised within their peer groups returned with new friends and are now more included because their qualities are better recognised; some more dominant students are more humble in their approach and more willing to accept others into their friendship groups. The students are more at ease and more natural in their relationships with the teachers and are markedly less worried about asking for help or about making mistakes. [Teacher, Cardinal Hinsley School](#)

There was a huge impact on student friendship groups (all positive!). [Teacher, Southfields Community College](#)

I now see the students interacting and the trip initiated that. [Teacher, Battersea Park School](#)

Students across the year group and from different form groups have lost some of the 'us and them' mentality. [Teacher, St. Angela's Ursuline School](#)





Children who were not friends at the beginning of the residential are now... being around the school now it is especially heart-warming to see. [Teacher, Islington Green School](#)

I made new friends from my school in different years, and, from near the centre too. [Student, Mellow Lane School](#)

Racial barriers were broken down through students sharing a room and activities. Greater understanding of cultures and links were made which continue outside school after the trip. [Teacher, Dagenham Park Community School](#)

With and between teachers

We learnt more about the children in the four days than we would have learnt in six months at school. [Teacher, Southfields Community School](#)

One of my inexperienced teachers indicated that he learnt an amazing amount about our students and himself within the challenging environment. [Teacher, Chessington Community School](#)

The relationship with the teaching staff is much better. They can't believe how their relationship with those pupils has changed for the better. Staff are now willing to help out with those pupils in school who were difficult or had 'issues' because they really feel that they will respond to their attentions. [Teacher, Norbury Manor College](#)

Some 'problem' students developed an improved relationship with the school and, especially, with the staff who attended the course. [Teacher, Hounslow Manor School](#)

From my point of view, one of the most important features of the trip was forming better relationships with the kids. It gives you a foothold. You can say come on, I know you can do better than that, I've seen you do that, you know how to deal with that and they know you know, and you know they know you know! [Senior Teacher, Connaught School for Girls](#)

Being away with the students for a week was a truly great experience for staff, which provided an informal setting for interacting with their students and helped them to develop a better understanding of their students. [Teacher, George Mitchell School](#)

This was an opportunity for staff to learn about each other as well as about the students. [Teacher, Dagenham Park Community School](#)

Beyond the school

An unexpected by product was how parents became more trusting of us, and of working together with us. [Teacher, Heston Community School](#)

It's a valuable chance for my daughter to work with friends away from the family and stress of school. [Parent, Connaught School for Girls](#)





team building

Developing team building and leadership skills

Sharing time and space with peers and teachers, particularly when carrying out team and group activities, outside the normal bounds of classroom, created a formal and informal learning environment which is impossible to replicate during a normal school timetable. The intensity of a residential experience provided an opportunity for peer groups and teacher-student relationships to develop and flourish. These impacts often involved young people who had not excelled or stood out in their schools. Teachers frequently commented on leaders who emerged from the background. The strongest impact seen in the students' own evaluations was the recognition that working together as a group, and seeking the opinion of others, may have been more productive than working in isolation. They often worked with peers from outside their normal friendship groups, with the mixes sometimes 'designed' strategically by their teachers. The evaluations showed that the impacts persevered into the classroom and schools after the visit and may also have 'rippled' outwards, affecting others in peer groups who were not involved in the residential.



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Initial impacts

“The activities offered and the day to day living arrangements gave the boys a range of opportunities to develop leadership skills. Being connected to real life situations inspired and motivated the students. The goals felt very real for the boys and so they experienced the importance of leaders getting it right, of including all team members, of taking and using ideas from the team, of expressing their ideas clearly to the team and of persuading rather than bullying others to follow instructions. Within the dormitories a range of leadership styles was tried out by the boys and by the end of the five days a lot of thought and reflection was going on amongst the boys about what works and what does not work in leadership style. [Teacher, Cardinal Hinsley school](#)

The amount of group work done in science in our school varies, so we really wanted a focus on that. They were certainly a more cohesive group by the end. [Teacher, Crofton School](#)

Building bridges

A main benefit has been cross-year co-operation and a better understanding between cultures. **Teacher, Holloway School**

Students found the team building activities especially enjoyable as they were in mixed groups and were able to work together and learn from each other. **Teacher, Kingsbury High School**

The key thing is that they start listening to one another. We selected all the hard working students recommended by science – so not Gifted and Talented or SEN – and the keen ones from PE, and the way they developed was fantastic. More timid girls just said a few things and problems were solved. **Teacher, Plashet School**

Back at school

Some want to return next year and adopt the role of leaders within the groups. **Teacher, Leytonstone School**

One of the main comments (from staff back in school) was on how some students seemed to have gained confidence during the trip which they maintained back at school. Some students who had previously had issues around behaviour seemed to emerge as excellent leaders and role models for others when they returned. **Teacher, Elizabeth Garrett Anderson School**



Students gained an understanding of how to work as a team and how to co-operate together. This transfers to their experiences in the classroom. **Teacher, George Mitchell School**

The most noticeable impact on the young people was their attitude to each other. When they moved into Year 10 they shared, worked as a team and there is far less of the petty in-fighting for chairs, equipment etc! **Teacher, St Thomas More School**

Students are more appreciative of others needs and have more patience. They are now working well together and encourage each other to achieve. It has had a positive effect and this is now spreading to others who did not attend. **Teacher, Langdon School**

We all supported each other really well in the caving, it was awesome. **Student, Thomas Tallis School**





development

Personal development... increased self-confidence, independence and self-esteem



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Throughout all of the evaluations, both through open-ended questioning, interviews and closed-response questionnaires, teachers and parents referred to increasing self-confidence, independence and self-esteem. It is notable that teachers were often taken by surprise by the impact on previously 'timid', quiet or reticent young people and how the experience helped others to 'come out of their shells'. Importantly, the influence of the residential continued when the young people returned to their schools and homes; teachers frequently noted a post-course change in group dynamics whilst parents also commented on a new-found independence and self-confidence.



At the time

I saw timid students lacking self-confidence really throwing themselves into activities even I did not know existed. [Teacher, Salvatorian College](#)

Quiet, shy pupils really opened up and had the opportunity to show their real personality. [Teacher, Finchley Catholic High School](#)

This was fantastic for building the confidence of female students in a boy heavy school. [Teacher, Islington Arts and Media College](#)

Quiet students gained experiences and a chance to shine. **Teacher, Bethnal Green Technology College**

This was a chance for the less academic children to shine. **Teacher, Valentines High School**

Keeping the dormitory teams working together was another challenge for our students. Arguments and difficulties most often arose among the dominant students and by the end of the course some of these boys were asking the quieter students for guidance and even wanting to move into their dorms. This provided staff with an opportunity to work on some individual and group issues that are not always apparent in day school. **Teacher, Cardinal Hinsley school**

After the event

Confidence has developed with some of the quieter boys. **Teacher, Norlington School**

I have seen students who are now more confident to get involved in class discussions. **Teacher, Welling School**

Students gained confidence and self-esteem and can/are now called upon to lead and innovate. **Teacher, Alperton Community School**

This gave recognition to pupils who are often left out (the quiet ones). **Teacher, Tom Hood Community Science College**



It was particularly good to see quiet and reserved children given an opportunity to express themselves successfully outside the classroom environment. There is no question that a number of activities we did will be lifetime experiences for many of the students. **Teacher, George Mitchell School**

Several students had re-identified themselves within their classes back at school and were now seemingly far more confident amongst their peers. **Teacher, Islington Arts and Media School**

Beyond the school

My son really enjoyed being outside and doing things he would not normally do. He gained a lot more independence, managing to look after himself on his own. **Parent, Thomas Tallis School**

My son now seems to have gained a willingness to try new sports; he seems more willing to be active and his shyness seems to have lessened. **Parent, Southfields Community College**





Improved motivation and attitude to learning



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Many teachers remarked on an increased level of motivation towards learning. As with the other educational impacts noted in previous sections, these changes were transferred, at least in the short term, from the residential centre into the classroom. Teachers also noted that the school's perceived 'status' in the eyes of some young people had increased. Senior managers highlighted the courses in their assemblies and school prospectuses, and parents mentioned their pride in their children having the opportunity to attend. For many parents (up to 80% in some areas) the residential experience was entirely new, never having had a similar opportunity in their own school careers.

Motivational impacts also extended to teachers, many of whom referred to the courses as being tiring, but also to their own eyes being opened to the potential of some of their students and how this had affected their relationship with these young people on return. One very strong statement – supported by others at a teachers workshop – was the re-energising effect on teachers who saw their pupils 'in a different light'. Some teachers applied teaching and learning approaches used on the courses on their return to school.

On the students

The course also helped to motivate students prior to the trip. The staff said that some of the students came back very settled and motivated. [Teacher, Haling Manor High School](#)

More students were more willing, more active. There was a much higher level of motivation. [Teacher, Heathcote School](#)

Students returned with a much more positive attitude to their own lives and also felt more secure with their education. [Teacher, Gunnersby Catholic School](#)

We have tracked some of the first year's attendees (then Year 7) very closely and they have proved to be at the centre of positive things in the school right through to now (Year 10). Staff often comment on this. [Teacher, Alperton Community School](#)

We have looked at the Year 9 results linked to motivation and believe that the London Challenge experience had a big impact. [Teacher, Selhurst High School for Boys](#)



We had a post course meeting to discuss each student. Some had really moved on in terms of confidence. Others had not been able to cope with the different lifestyle. Most had really benefitted from mixing in different social/cultural groups for an extended period. Students felt privileged and special and brought this back to school. It inspired others to work hard to be in the next course intake. **Teacher, Holloway School**

The course benefits the self-esteem and confidence of the students which has a knock on effect on their attitude to school and school life. **Teacher, Chace Community School**

The boys on the trip have not had any exclusions since – some were problematic before the trip but understand now that we are part of one big team. **Teacher, Stanley Technical High School**

One boy who really struggled to attend school found the course really challenging but thoroughly enjoyed it. He has now achieved two 100% attendance certificates. I believe the course contributed to this achievement. **Teacher, Highams Park School**

Whereas I am not convinced that such short experiences generally modify students' behaviour in the long term what they do is create an affinity with the school. **Teacher, Hounslow Manor School**

This has proved to be a key factor in motivating our students. **Teacher, Sir John Cass's Foundation & Red Coat School**

There has been a change in most pupils' persistence in learning. They are more confident and more willing to have a go. The possibility of failing is not so worrying for them. They see the connection between real life and academic subjects thus knowledge is demystified for them to some extent. **Teacher, Cardinal Hinsley School**

The course has enabled students to transfer (team building) skills on return to school which meant that many ended their first year at our school more positively than when they started. **Teacher, Lister Community School**

All students came back with a positive attitude and were definitely more confident in what they wanted to achieve. **Teacher, Highbury Grove School**

Things are very different with difficult kids now that they are back. They are sitting (in class) right in front of me, encouraging others. Other staff have noticed a difference. **Teacher, Islington Arts and Media School**

There has been better engagement in the three-four months after the courses. **Teacher, Lilian Bayliss School**

The experience re-energised pupils when they came back to school, an example of this was the reformation of Year 7 school council. **Teacher, Alperton Community School**

Wider impacts

This improves the perception of school by pupils, for example Year 10 students seeing trips happening that weren't available to them perceive that the school is getting better. **Teacher, Westwood College**

The staff still use the improvisation (drama) they learnt. **Teacher, Forest Hill Boys School**

One young member of staff had handed in his notice prior to the trip feeling that teaching was not the career for him. The experience on the course and the relationships built with the students caused him to retract his resignation and remain in the teaching profession. **Teacher, Dagenham Park Community School**





Learning new subject-specific ideas and supporting learning in the school curriculum



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Many teachers seized upon learning opportunities in their own subject areas and felt that students learning received a unique boost, in ways that are not always possible in urban schools. Students learned directly from practical and hands-on activities and recalled new ideas back at school. They could usually see the relevance of what they did in terms of its contribution to learning in school. As a result, students' confidence in their subject-specific abilities improved. Whilst most of the evaluations did not allow for the 'testing' of cognitive impacts (concerning knowledge, understanding and other academic outcomes) every teacher surveyed on a small subset (four schools) of science and geography courses identified some or considerable learning opportunities and saw academic gains. A substantial majority of the students involved in these courses recognised that they had learned 'something new'.

The interweaving of adventure and academic activity in the combined curriculum-adventure courses provided a boost in interest and motivation towards curriculum based activity which also persisted in classrooms after the groups returned to schools (see Types of Courses, pages 16 and 17). Often students' environmental awareness was raised at centres where eco-friendly policies had been modelled.

Because of the limited space available, the quotations provided below are linked to the science curriculum. They are representative of many quotes from other curriculum subjects, but also demonstrate the cross-curricular impacts in areas such as environmental awareness.

The course really brought the geography and science curriculum to life. [Student, Harlington Community School](#)

This was a positive influence in terms of extra study and has led to improved grades. **Teacher, Stoke Newington School**

Staff have mentioned how some of the things the students had seen meant that they are able to contribute more in lessons; e.g. Scenery/farming/cave formation/landscape (geography); poetry (English); and rockpools and habitats (science). **Teacher, Featherstone High School**

I had my best ever result in a science test after coming back from the field trip. **Student, Harlington Community School**

Science teachers have been very pleased with the knowledge of the pupils with regards to the impact of humans on the environment. **Teacher, The John Roan School**

I can't really hope that they will automatically be able to tell you the key words and ideas in science that they learnt, but I know that the ideas are in them somewhere and when it's reintroduced to them later on, they will be much quicker at picking it up. They had a working model for erosion and the rock cycle so it's there for them. **Teacher, Gladesmore Community School**

I was amazed at the impact of being on the rocky shore. The students were all there, bottoms in the air, discovering starfish and all sorts. Every single kid was totally focused on what they were doing, so different from being in the classroom. **Teacher, Mellow Lane School**

I think I like science more now since the trip because I know more now, like about the animals and plants. **Student, Parliament Hill School**

I think the opportunity for my son to do experiments in a natural environment is very important. **Parent, The Royal Liberty School**

I took away the KS3 recycling reps to enthuse them about looking after the environment and what happened exceeded my expectations. They've come back and they want to do things in school, take action on energy-saving ideas. We've been planting trees in the school grounds too, they want to help with addressing climate change! **Teacher, Kingsbury High School**

In school, I think it's quite wasteful in lots of lessons; it's a sunny day, we have the curtains open but we still have the lights on and we don't really need them. I'm saving electricity at home too, and telling my Mum to switch off lights as she goes from one room to another. **Student, Kingsbury High School**





Opportunity to explore new places and try new activities



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The only selection requirement placed on schools was that the young people would otherwise not have been able to go on a residential without the *New Views* funding. It is a common misconception that all contemporary society is highly mobile. This was not supported by the evaluations. Although up to 75% of London's secondary schools offer a residential experience to 11-14 year olds, many young people do not take part. Up to 80% of the students involved in City Challenge (London Challenge's successor project) had not been on a residential course before and teachers frequently commented that the *New Views* residential was the first time that their pupils had left London. Similarly, many parents (up to 80%) also confirmed that they had never had a residential experience in their own school careers. Yet, the response from students was overwhelmingly positive and this enthusiasm was shared by their parents and guardians who were very willing to let them go and many remarked on their pride that their children had been selected to go. Many of the young people selected were 'deserving' students who were being rewarded for a variety of positive behaviours and attitudes. Some students remarked that this unusual because it was usually the 'naughty kids that went away on the trips'.

Teachers

Inner city kids do not take this experience for granted. A wonderful life changing three days which has been a once in a lifetime opportunity for the students.

Teacher, Valentines High School

They are city kids, they are not terribly into nature, they aren't particularly experienced in being outside in an environment like that, and it was five days that took them completely into it, they loved it. The space, the views, the quiet, the independence. **Senior teacher, Connaught School for Girls**



Many of the students who went on the courses had never been on a trip before and neither had their parents. Parents were extremely happy for their children to be included in the trip and I was impressed by the trust shown by parents and children alike in taking part in this trip and adventuring into the 'unknown.' [Teacher, London Challenge workshop](#)

Avoid choosing the same students who are always chosen (because they could be relied on to do the right thing!). These opportunities really bring out hidden skills and talents of all students. [Teacher, Elizabeth Garrett Anderson School](#)

I watched in amazement as one boy asked me deadily seriously, "Is that an elephant sir?" pointing towards the top of a hill where the back of a cow pointed up to the horizon. [Teacher, Bow School](#)

It was obvious that the students, once they had overcome their apprehension of the unknown, relished the peaceful environment and the sheer physical space. [Teacher, London Challenge workshop](#)

One of the main benefits was appreciation of countryside and nature. They used most of their camera memories taking photos from the coach on the way there! [Teacher, Tom Hood Community Science School](#)

Most boys completed all the activities with varying amounts of encouragement and they felt a great sense of achievement but also gained a more realistic view of their own capabilities. [Teacher, Cardinal Hinsley school](#)

The learning mentor who came this year... who had never taken part in these activities... has now joined the canoeing club! [Teacher, Highams Park](#)



Students

I can't believe that guy has left his car window open. [Student, Kingsbury High School](#)

This is my first visit to a beach. [Student, Stanley Technical High School](#)

Parents

My child has seen places I may never have been able to take her. [Parent, Mellow Lane School](#)

There were no trips available when I myself went to school. So I am very happy for her. I wish her to have lots of fun and happy memories. She is very excited about going. I want her to experience everything life has to offer including different places and people. [Parents, Connaught School for Girls](#)

I am grateful that such trips are organised as I feel it enriches the life of a growing person, especially as some parents, for one reason or the other, are unable to give them such an opportunity. I think it is a good thing and also helps with maturity being away from home without family. [Parents, Connaught School for Girls](#)

We would like to thank (the school) for rewarding our daughter, this means a lot to us. Trips like these teach the children that if you aim high and achieve, you will be recognised and rewarded. [Parent, Mellow Lane School](#)

I was very pleased my son was selected for the trip – this is his first at secondary school. He's gained a lot in terms of news skills and knowledge about geography. [Parent, Thomas Tallis School](#)

We were really happy for our daughter to be on the trip. It was a wonderful opportunity for her to experience being in a different environment with her peers. [Parent, John Kelly Girls' Technology College](#)

The experience of being away from home and having to look after herself all the time helps with growing up and maturing for perhaps a time when she will be away from home and family for a longer period of time. Also the opportunity to partake in such activities, like climbing, canoeing and lots of walking which are not common everyday things, is a good thing and broadens her experience. [Parent, Parliament Hill School](#)





Types of courses



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In the introduction we referred to a rich tradition of taking students on residential. In the *New Views* pre-project survey of existing provision 75% of the responding schools said that they offered opportunities for Key Stage 3 (11-14 year olds). When asked what they do on such visits/courses there was a clear distinction between 'adventure/activity' and 'curriculum' courses. Teachers were interested in, and enthusiastic towards, the concept of 'combined' courses but had little awareness of their potential. The first *New Views* courses, therefore, reflected the traditional split between adventure and curriculum. Some combined curriculum-adventure *New Views* courses were offered at the outset but take up was slow initially. However, they became increasingly popular over the following three years. By the end, the popularity of the combined courses had outstripped the courses which offered 'adventure' or 'curriculum' separately. There is a clear message for the residential providers who still adopt traditional approaches, particularly for older children.

Thinking more clearly about the purposes of residential courses will also receive support from other important and influential groups. Parents were unanimously enthusiastic about the *New Views* courses and the opportunities that they provided. Their visions and hopes for their children were entirely 'holistic', including learning about and appreciating the environment, gaining self-confidence and independence, having fun and enjoying themselves and learning how to work well in a peer group.

“The first London Challenge trip I took was purely science and geography based so I chose this second one with a little more adventure in it and the mix worked really well. Students responded to the blend of river work, the mountain walk and then high ropes; they were much more enthusiastic. **Teacher, St Augustine's School**





When I was at school, we went on a science field trip. I remember catching field mice and letting them go. I got to know people in my class in another way. I think this is a really good experience for my son to try things he wouldn't get the chance to do otherwise. He's excited. I'd like him to feel a sense of responsibility and get a taste of adventure. I don't have any concerns about the trip, although safety issues always cross your mind, but I'm sure they will all be OK and he is sensible. The school has said they'll be building rafts and rafting, going on an overnight expedition and camping out – great. The low cost of the trip was very important for us. It's fantastic that London kids get to experience a rural environment. **Parent, Battersea Park School**

Interrelating curriculum, adventure and fun was really effective especially given the simplicity of the materials used. The low tech aspect of the activities was appreciated by most of the students. Many of our students cannot afford expensive hobbies and pursuits and much of what was done on the course can be carried on by the boys even in an inner city environment.

The boys began to appreciate that knowledge, skills and learning can be accessed in the immediate environment. They saw the link between science and their own experience, they saw how poets are ordinary people talking about their 'ordinary' experiences. This raised their confidence. They saw that learning is for everyone.

Many of the teachers have been on residential trips themselves as children and remember them as PE type trips. The curriculum link is a good way of persuading subject teachers to consider taking part in residential trips because they can use the trips to fulfill some of their learning objectives.

In the past I have taken students on funded adventure courses. These have been popular and enjoyable courses for the students and have impacted on character development and social bonding. Because of the greater emphasis on team work rather than individual competition in the *New Views* courses there is a built-in inclusivity and emphasis on the real need for co-operation in the combined course. Stronger bonds were built up amongst the boys. **Teacher, Cardinal Hinsley school**





People and administration

Committed and experienced teachers were vital in ensuring the success of the *New Views* courses. Building a strong working relationship with this cadre of enthusiasts ensured that courses were increasingly likely to succeed. The role of the teacher in the school was critical because they were at the hub of a complex communications network which involved many people both from within and outside the school. When asking experienced teachers for their 'top tips' for organising successful courses the following recommendations outnumbered all others:

- Book and organise the course as early as possible. Throughout all of the evaluations and surveys the biggest single weakness of the courses was the lack of adequate preparation time before the course.
- Choose your accompanying staff carefully and give them a job to do. Make everybody clear about their roles and responsibilities (including appointing a deputy leader).
- Communicate early, often and extensively... with everybody! Success of a course is strongly influenced by the quality and quantity of communication between staff and students in schools, and outside with parents and course providers.

- Be consistent, open and transparent about pupils' selection. The decision by the funders not to impose tight constraints on who should be involved in *New Views* courses was warmly welcomed by schools. But is also imposed a responsibility on teachers to be very clear to their pupils about how course selection was made, and subsequently for them to be applied fairly and consistently.

In the introduction, we referred to the UK tradition of offering residential. However, tradition can be a burden if it stifles change and at the outset of *New Views* it was clear that residential provision in London's secondary schools is sometimes based on habit rather than need. A major success of *New Views* was that it stimulated change. In particular, the simplified 'one stop shop' course booking system was a major success. The web-based booking, backed up by accessible standards and protocols which were common to all providers and dedicated real time support from two project staff, provided easy access to a range of providers and a diversity of courses. Schools were able to sample 'courses', sometimes leading to wholesale changes in their preferred choices presumably because they had discovered opportunities which were a better fit for the needs of their students (see pages 16 and 17).





Start early

Start organizing early. [Teacher, George Mitchell School](#)

Start planning as soon as the information comes in. [Teacher, Southfields Community School](#)

Give yourself plenty of time. [Teacher, Skinners' Company's School for Girls](#)

Allocate roles and responsibilities

Ensure that one person is clearly in charge and delegates jobs, rather than several people running around. [Teacher, Dagenham Park Community School](#)

Take advice from experienced staff members. [Teacher, Dagenham Park Community School](#)

Choose staff that are willing to take on extra responsibilities. [Teacher, Highbury Grove School](#)

Avoid taking staff who are not willing to have a go, or cannot cope with late nights... or don't like the outdoors! [Teacher, Dagenham Park Community School](#)

Provide as much information as possible... to everybody!

Produce an idiots' list of questions from students. Their concerns are not always what adults would ask [Teacher, Plumstead Manor School](#)

You can't communicate enough! Keep everyone in the loop even if you don't think that they're interested! [Teacher, Southfields Community School](#)

The all inclusive programme allowed for much easier organisation. [Teacher, Dagenham Park Community School](#)

Keep all parties involved with what is going on regarding the course. This has to include parents, students, staff, senior managers and the course provider. [Teacher, Gunnersby Catholic School](#)

All staff and students need to know beforehand what activities are involved. [Teacher, Highbury Grove School](#)

Make sure that you have a parents evening prior to the trip – showing photos. Difficult parents can mean difficult pupils! [Teacher, London Challenge workshop](#)

Make sure that all parents are fully informed. [Teacher, George Green's School](#)

Have good communication with the centre you are going to visit before you travel. [Teacher, Valentines High School](#)

Be consistent

Have clear criteria for selecting pupils. [Teacher, The Archbishop Lanfranc School](#)

Celebrate and start to 'market' the next courses straight away

We always celebrate their achievements on return with a mention and photos in assembly etc. [Teacher, Highams Park School](#)

Much of the positive feedback from the first course was published throughout the school magazine and photos were displayed prominently. This stimulated a lot of interest among other students and there was significant demand for subsequent courses. [Teacher, Hounslow Manor School](#)

Have a follow up event to bring the group together with parents/carers and their form tutors. [Teacher, Chace Community School](#)





funding

The importance of funding

New Views funding was intended to reach young people who would not otherwise have been able to go on a residential course. Grants were skewed towards disadvantaged schools and this was never challenged by any of the 307 schools involved. A very strongly expressed and recurring request in pre-project interviews with teachers in the most disadvantaged boroughs was that they should be given the freedom to select students from a frequently overlooked 'middle group' who came from borderline families who often just failed to qualify for hardship support, but also lacked the means to pay for residential visits themselves.

A third of the schools supplemented their grants with other funds including parental contributions which were often nominal and collected through savings clubs. These contributions gave a perceived 'value' to the courses and helped to reduce the number of last minute changes and cancellations. Post-course evaluations showed that the light touch approach to using funding appears to have worked very well. The *New Views* courses represented a genuine addition to the normal provision, and a great majority of the 34,500 participating students would have been unable to attend without the support – a fact confirmed by nearly nine out of ten teachers and three quarters of parents.

The cost of transport and supply cover is being cited increasingly by schools as significant barriers to sustained residential provision. School funds and parental contributions were often used to cover supply costs. Both the funding for, and the organisation of, transport reduced the burden on schools.



Enabling inclusivity

Funding makes it happen. With funding we could chase the students who would most benefit. There was something really special about the trip being free – we were able to take students who may not have been allowed (e.g. by some parents) but we were able to talk to them and change their minds. On a paying trip those students would not have come forward. **Teacher, Dagenham Park Community School**

The children that need the life experiences are normally the children who cannot afford to attend these types of trips. **Teacher, Heathcote School**

Without funding it would have meant students participating due to their ability to pay rather than merit. With funding we could chase the students who would benefit most. **Teacher, Rokeby School**

Funding allowed a wider selection of students to attend. If you were to look at who attends other residential it is usually the same kids. **Teacher, Mayfield School**

Each year there are a number of students who are excluded from trips because of family difficulties, cultural barriers and financial restrictions. This funding enabled inclusion for all. **Teacher, Norbury Manor Business and Enterprise College**

Funding makes every difference to choice in this school. Our boys cannot pay much for trips. This limits us to local day trips. The school has tried to organise these but there has been no success because there are so few (if any) boys whose families can afford this. To be offered a chance to access the trips was a great opportunity for our boys and one for which they are

extremely grateful. They went determined to enjoy every minute and most of them did. We were able to include a range of students including those with particular emotional, social or learning difficulties e.g. bereavement, family illness, EAL, etc., without financial considerations dominating the selection process. For most of the boys it was their first residential trip.

Teacher, Cardinal Hinsley school

Thank you for the funding towards the trip as he wouldn't have been able to go otherwise. **Parent, Cardinal Hinsley school**

I am grateful that such trips are organised as I feel it enriches the life of a growing person, especially as some parents, for one reason or the other, are unable to give them such an opportunity. I think it is a good thing and also helps with maturity being away from home without family. **Parent, Connaught School for Girls**

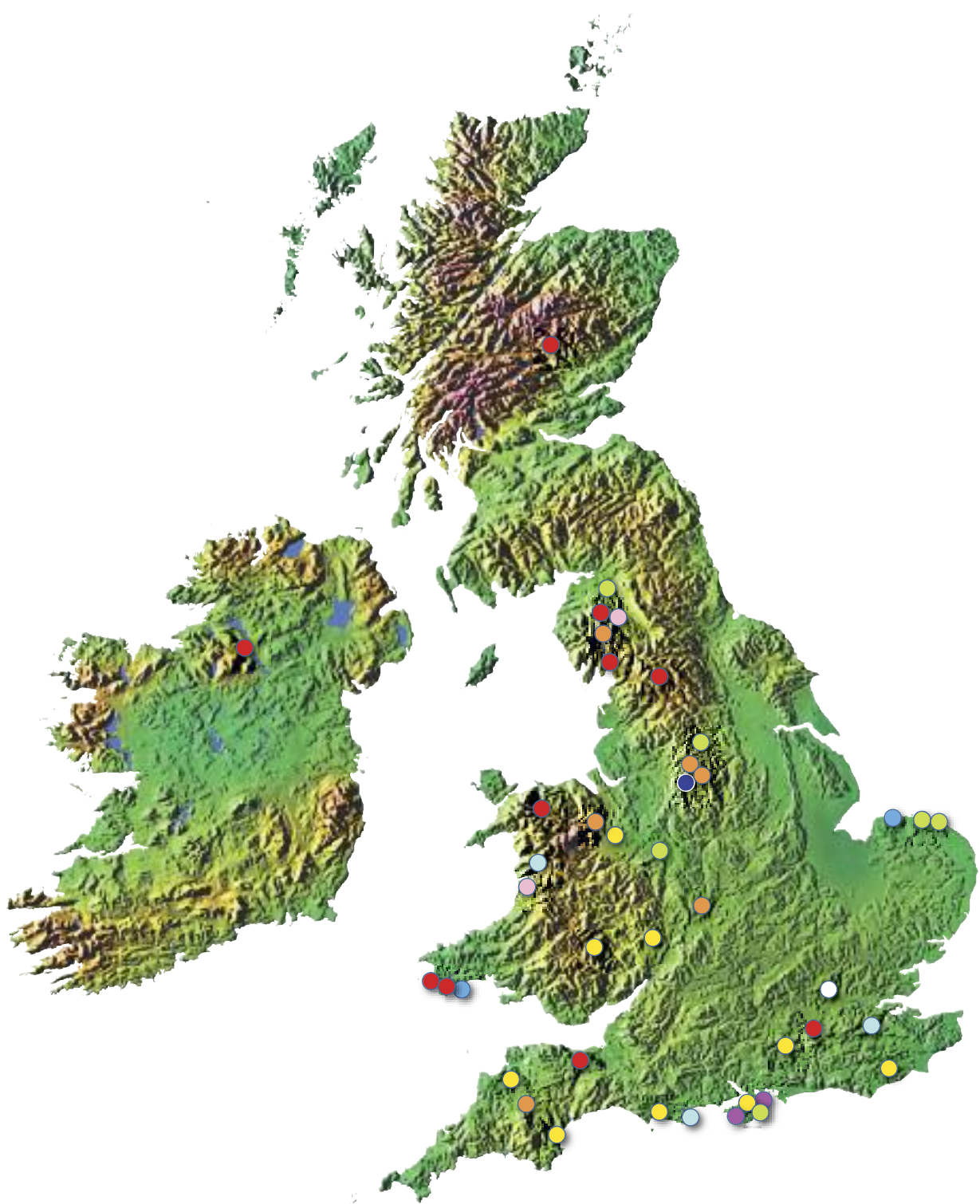
Providing leverage

In many ways the amount of subsidy was irrelevant. It was the fact that the funding stream was available that persuaded governors to release additional funds. **Teacher, Brentside High School**

Ensure that you take a deposit/contribution to ensure commitment. **Teacher, Hounslow Manor School**

Ask for an initial deposit of at least £10 from parents which is then refunded after the students have attended the trip. This ensures commitment. Exceptions can still be applied as usual for families in financial difficulties. **Teacher, Norbury Manor Business and Enterprise College**





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Locations and providers



Summary of teachers' responses

The main conclusions described in this report are based on evaluations which have been able to draw on over 4,000 separate data sources which include pre- and post-project interviews and questionnaires, school provision surveys, detailed teachers' reports, teachers' workshop feedback and course observations. The overall analysis is being carried out by Institute of Education who have agreed the contents of this report. Furthermore, at a plenary workshop involving 10 experienced teachers we 'tested' the main conclusions of this report by asking participants to assess their agreement with eight key statements on a six point scale.

The *New Views* courses have led to sustained impacts in the following areas

	Disagree totally	Agree totally
Cooperation and communication	100%	0%
Self-esteem and self-confidence (including amongst 'quieter' pupils)	100%	0%
Sense of independence	100%	0%
Leadership skills during teamwork activities	100%	0%
Relationships between teachers and students (which have endured for weeks)	100%	0%
Levels of physical activity, even amongst previously 'inactive' students	40%	60%
Levels of environmental awareness	100%	0%
Understanding (and interest?) of academic subjects such as science, geography and/or history	100%	0%



Text

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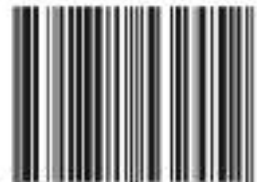
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The Field Studies Council (FSC) is an independent, registered charity with the aim of bringing environmental understanding to all. The FSC runs residential and day courses through its national network of centres, and also publishes supporting resources and manages training and professional development projects in the UK and overseas.



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