



**Comisiwn Coedwigaeth
Forestry Commission**

**WALES
SCHOOLS EDUCATION SERVICE
SURVEY
2002**

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FOREST ENTERPRISE WALES

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INTRODUCTION

Following support from the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG), and the re-organisation of FE staff in Wales, a team of 12 Rangers working throughout Wales was set up in 2001, concentrating on the areas of Education and Health.

Although staff already worked with school groups and others across Wales, this team now had the opportunity to adopt a structured approach to Education. Education covers such a wide area, it was decided to begin with the ambitious aim of contacting every school in Wales with a view to offering an opportunity to visit a local woodland as part of the children's learning experiences.

Data from WAG shows there are approximately 2,000 schools in Wales – nursery, primary, secondary, special and independent. There are also just over 30 Pupil Referral Units: children in these units have specific requirements and the team agreed to tackle these once experience has been built up in the group by working with schools in the other sectors.

All 2000 schools are now being contacted systematically by phone to target the teachers with the most interest in Education for Sustainable Development, and offer a forest visit. These contacts will be completed by March 2004. Activities offered by the FE Wales Education Service are available in both Welsh and English, are closely linked to the National Curriculum, cover a broad range of subjects and can be tailored to a particular school's requirements. Ideally children come out to an FE forest, but, if that is not possible, to an area of woodland owned by a partner organisation or Rangers can go into school and work in the school grounds or the classroom. Schools in the most socially disadvantaged areas of Wales as defined by Communities First were the first to be targeted in this programme.

Additionally, both the Rangers and other FE staff have been involved in other educational projects and activities such as Forest Education Initiative and Forest School projects and events such as 'Crucial Crew' in the South Wales Valleys. Schools from England, Universities and other Educational establishments have also been provided with a service by the Rangers on a reactive basis: it is only with schools in Wales that a proactive stance has been taken. Although these represent a proportion of the numbers of children the team has worked with, the evaluation here consists of feedback from those involved in the more 'traditional' forest or school visit described above.

The data in this evaluation represents feedback from teachers we have worked with as part of our programme of contacting every school in Wales between the beginning of January and the end of July 2002. This data was collected by means of a Freepost questionnaire, given out at the end of each school visit: staff also keep quantitative records on the number of schools and children they have worked with. By the end of July 2002, we had contacted approximately 650 schools and worked with 260 of them. Since April 2001, we have worked with approximately 15,000 children in total.

This qualitative evaluation will help us monitor our performance and improve the service we offer to schools as the programme progresses.

Sue Ginley, Forest Enterprise Wales

SUMMARY

This report provides results from a Schools Education Service survey that took place in Wales. A total of 122 questionnaires were completed.

40 % of groups consisted of thirty or more children and with 39 % of groups consisting of between 21 and 30 children, there was an average of 34.6 children per group. The majority (94 %) of groups included children aged between 3-11 years, with only 6 % of groups including children aged 12 and over.

40 % of all groups were visited by the schools education service at their own school. 14 % had visited the site at Afan, 10 % the Garwnant site and 8 % Moel Famau. 15 % of groups had visited a site other than those suggested in the questionnaire.

Just under a third of groups (31 %) visited the Schools Education Service sites in June with 27 % visiting in July and 23 % in May. Less than 20 % of groups visited in March and April.

Almost a half of groups had found out about Forest Enterprise education through information sent to their school, with a further 12 % finding out from a friend or colleague. 20 % of groups had learned of Forest Enterprise education by an 'other method', which was predominantly a visit by a ranger.

One quarter of the interviewed groups had previously used the Schools Education Service and 96 % said they would use it again in the future. Almost all groups (94 %) felt they had received adequate information prior to their visit whilst 96 % said that they intended to make use of the paper support material provided and 89 % said they would make use of the material on the web. Two thirds of responding groups said they would be interested in undertaking self-led visits providing there was suitable support material available.

Groups were asked to rate a number of different aspects of the Schools Education Service, such as the organisation and the educational aspects. The ratings were consistently high or very high with the majority of groups giving 'very high' ratings in each category.

SCHOOLS EDUCATION SERVICE SURVEY 2002

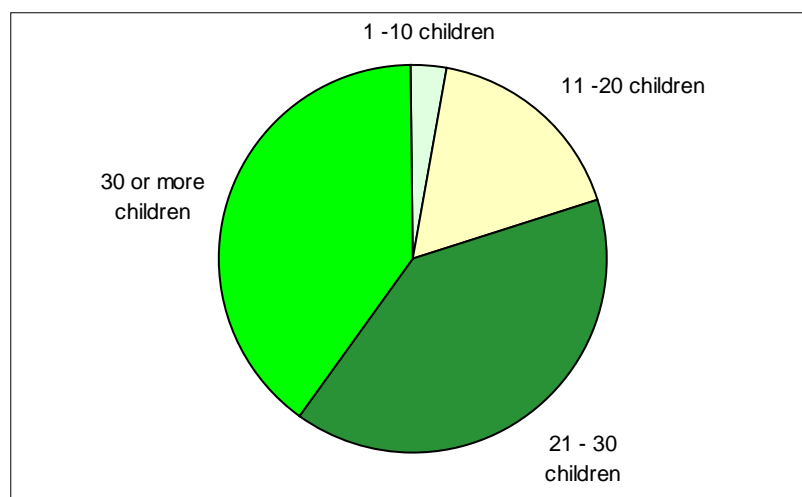
A Survey of the Forestry Commission's schools education service was carried out in Wales during March-July 2002.

Group Composition

There were a total of 4227 children in the 122 groups surveyed.

A large proportion of the groups (40 %) included 30 or more children, with 39 % consisting of between 21 and 30 children. A further 17 % of groups were made up of between 11 and 20 children, and only 3 % of groups contained 10 or less children. On average there were 34.6 children per group (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Size of groups using Schools Education Service

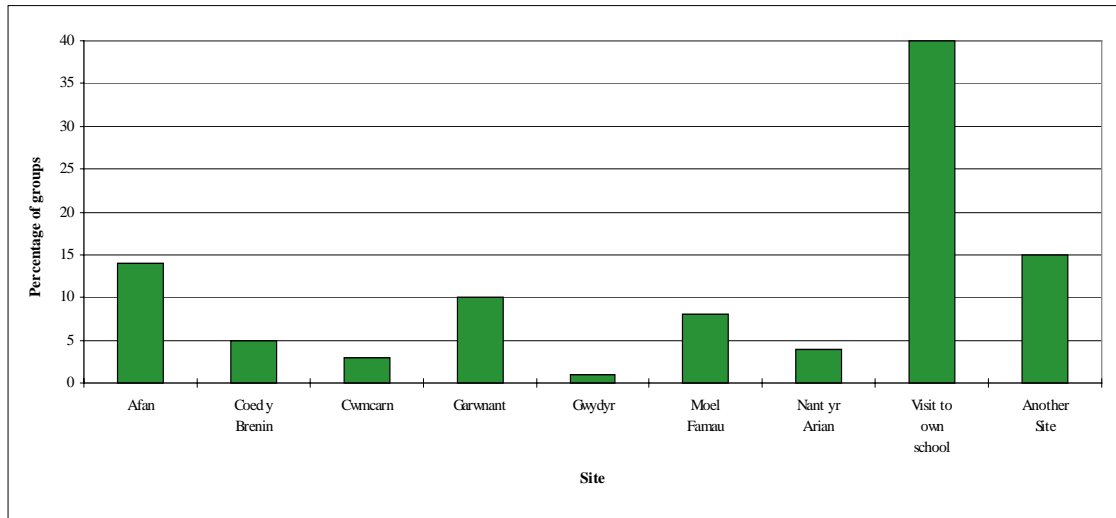


Almost all of the children in groups using the schools education service were aged between 3 and 11 years old with only 6 % aged 12 and over.

Site visited

40 % of groups had been visited in their own school by the schools education service. 14 % of groups had visited the site at Afan, with 10 % visiting the Garwnant site and 8 % the site at Moel Famau. Only 5 % visited the site at Coed y Brenin and 4 % the Nant yr Arian site, while just 3 % and 1 % visited Cwmcarn and Gwydyr respectively (Figure 2). 15 % had used the schools education service at a site other than those given in the questionnaire (Figure 2).

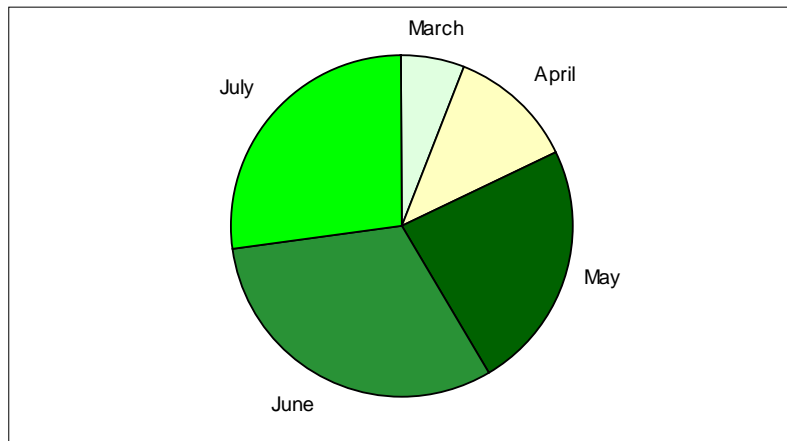
Figure 2: Sites visited



Month of visit

Almost one third of groups (31 %) used the schools education service during the month of June and 27 % of groups visited during July. Just under one quarter of groups (23 %) had visited the sites in May with a further 12 % having visited in April and just 6 % in March (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Timing of visits to schools education service

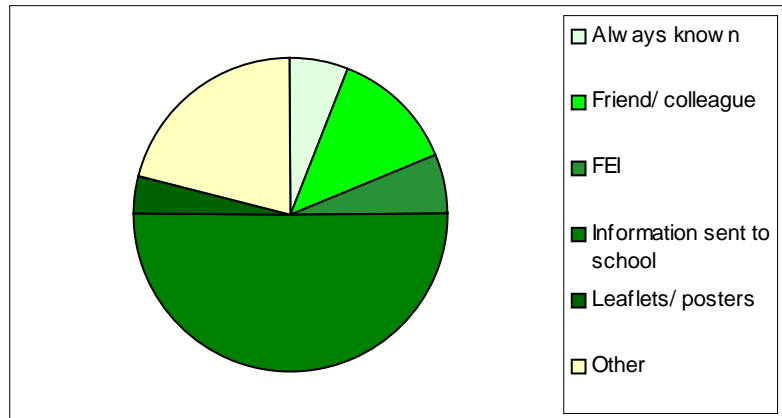


Finding out about Forest Enterprise education

One quarter of the groups interviewed had used the schools education services previously. Just under a half of groups using the schools education service said that they had found out about Forest Enterprise education through information sent to their school. A further 12 % had found out from a friend or colleague, with 6 % stating that they had always known, 6 % giving the FEI as their source, and just 4 % finding out from leaflets or posters. One in five groups had learned of Forest Enterprise education

by a method other than was suggested on the questionnaire. In almost all cases this 'other method' was a visit by a ranger(Figure 4).

Figure 4: How first learnt of Forest Enterprise education



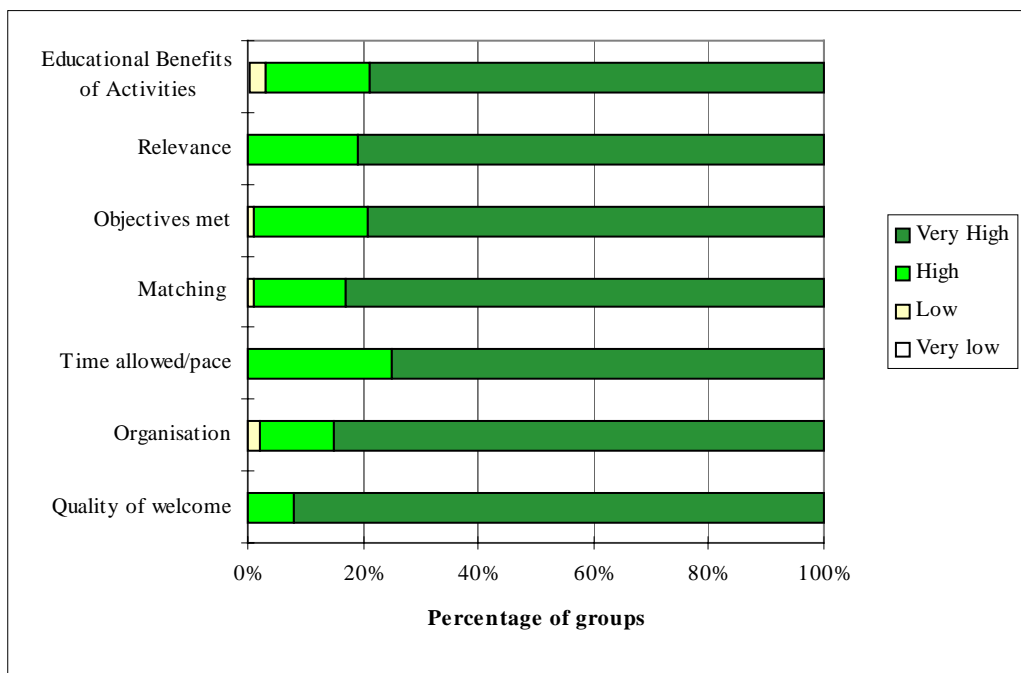
Prior Information

Of all groups who responded, 94 % said that they had received adequate information prior to their visit. Those who said that they had not received adequate information were then asked what other information they thought would have been helpful to have had provided before their visit. 6 groups wanted some kind of information sheet or pack which could help them to prepare the children for the visit whilst two groups at the Pembrey site thought that visiting parties should be informed prior to arrival that the site has no toilet facilities.

Ratings

Groups were asked to rate the following aspects of Forest Enterprise education: the quality of welcome provided by the ranger, the organisation of the visit, the time allowed and pace of activities, the matching of resources/activities to child ability, the degree to which their objectives were met and the relevance of activities to the national curriculum (Figure 5). Groups were also asked to rate the educational benefit of the three activities their group took part in, but as each group did different activities in different orders these three activity ratings have been put together in Figure 5 as one rating: 'Educational Benefits of Activities'. The ratings for all categories were almost entirely 'high' or 'very high', with the majority of ratings in each category always being 'very high'.

Figure 5: Rating Forest Enterprise education



Future Contact

96 % of groups said that they intended to use the schools education service again. 96 % of respondents stated that they intended to make use of the paper support material provided by the service, whilst 89 % intended to make use of the support material available on the web. Two thirds of responding groups said that they would be interested in undertaking self-led visits providing there was suitable support material available.

Improvements

All groups using the schools education service were asked what improvements could be made to the service. In total 39 groups responded, 14 of whom did not suggest improvements but instead used the space to praise the current service. The most popular of the remaining suggestions are listed here: 4 groups (16 %) reiterated their feelings that more information should be provided prior to visits (specifically about midges and toilet facilities) whilst 3 groups (12 %) suggested that more resources (e.g. maps and workbooks) needed to be provided. Another 3 groups thought that there should be more opportunities for regular future contact and 2 groups visiting Moel Famau suggested that an indoor area was required at that site. 3 groups suggested improvements be made to the unchangeable: midges and the weather.

Forest Enterprise Wales Schools Education Service

Thank you for using the Forest Enterprise education service. We hope that you found your visit enjoyable and of value. To help us provide a better service, we would appreciate it if you would complete this short questionnaire regarding your visit.

School Name		Ranger's Name	
Date of visit (dd/mm/yy)		No of children in group	Age range

1. Which site did you visit?

- Circle one*
- | | | |
|---------------|----|---|
| Afan | 1 | 2 |
| Coed y Brenin | 3 | 4 |
| Cwmcarn | 5 | 6 |
| Garwnant | 7 | 8 |
| Gwydyr | 9 | |
| Moel Famau | 10 | |
| Nant yr Arian | 11 | |
| Another site | 12 | |

Specify

2. How did you first learn of the Forest Enterprise education service?

- Circle One*
- | | | |
|----------------------------|----|----|
| Always known | 1 | 2 |
| Friend/ colleague | 3 | 4 |
| FEI | 5 | 6 |
| Information sent to school | 7 | 8 |
| Newspaper/ magazine advert | 9 | 10 |
| Leaflets/ posters | 11 | 12 |
| Internet | 13 | 14 |
| Other | 15 | 16 |

Specify

3. Have you ever used our services before this visit?

- Circle One*
- | | | |
|-----|---|---|
| Yes | 1 | 2 |
| No | 3 | 4 |

4. Did you receive adequate information prior to your visit?

- Circle One*
- | | | | |
|-----|---|---|-------------------|
| Yes | 1 | 2 | <i>Skip to Q5</i> |
| No | 3 | 4 | <i>Answer Q4a</i> |

4a. If no, what other information would have been helpful?

5. Please score the following statements from 1 to 4 where 1 is the lowest and 4 is the highest;

(circle one number in each row)

←low high→

Quality of the welcome provided by the ranger 1 2 3 4

The organisation of the visit 1 2 3 4

The time allowed and pace of the activities 1 2 3 4

Matching of resources/ activities to the ability of the children 1 2 3 4

The degree to which your objectives were met 1 2 3 4

The relevance of the activities to the National Curriculum 1 2 3 4

6. Please score the overall educational benefit of the activities, from 1 to 4 where 1 is the lowest and 4 is the highest (Please list activities);

(circle one number in each row)

←low high→

Activity1: _____ 1 2 3 4

Activity2: _____ 1 2 3 4

Activity3: _____ 1 2 3 4

7. Do you intend to use our services again?

Circle One

- | | | |
|-----|---|---|
| Yes | 1 | 2 |
| No | 3 | 4 |

8. Do you intend to make use of the support material we provide.....

(circle one number in each row)

- | | | |
|--------------------|-----|----|
| | Yes | No |
| In paper form | 1 | 2 |
| On the web | 1 | 2 |

9. Would you be interested in undertaking self-led visits with suitable support material?

Circle One

- | | | |
|-----|---|---|
| Yes | 1 | 2 |
| No | 3 | 4 |

10. If there is any way we could improve our service to you, please let us know here;

Thankyou for taking the time to complete this form

Please return the questionnaire to: Forest Enterprise Wales Education Service, FREEPOST, Bwlch, Nant yr Arian, Ponyerwyd, Aberystwyth, Ceredigion, SY23 3AD.

Schools Education Survey 2002

Number of children in group

Number of children in group	No.	%
1 - 10	4	3
11 - 20	21	17
21 - 30	48	39
30 or more	49	40
ALL	122	100

Age of children

Age of children	No.	%
12 and over	7	6
3 - 11	115	94
ALL	122	100

Month of visit

Month of visit	No.	%
March	7	6
April	15	12
May	28	23
June	38	31
July	33	27
Missing	1	1
ALL	122	100

School s Educati on Survey 2002

1. Which si te di d you vi si t?	No.	%
, Afan	17,	14,
, Coed y Breni n	6,	5,
, Cwmcarn	4,	3,
, Garwnant	12,	10,
, Gwydyr	1,	1,
, Moel Famau	10,	8,
, Nant yr Ari an	5,	4,
, Another si te	67,	55,
, Total	122,	100,

2. How di d you fi rst l earn of Forest Enterpri se educati on	No.	%
, Al ways known	7,	6,
, Fri end/ col league	15,	12,
, FEI	7,	6,
, Informati on sent to school	58,	48,
, Leaflets/ posters	5,	4,
, Other	24,	20,
, Mi ssi ng	6,	5,
, Total	122,	100,

3. Have you ever used our servi ces before?	No.	%
, Yes	30,	25,
, No	89,	73,
, Mi ssi ng	3,	2,
, Total	122,	100,

4. Did you receive adequate information prior to visit?		
	No.	%
Yes	108	89
No	7	6
Missing	7	6
Total	122	100

4a. If no, what other information would have been helpful?

Other helpful information

- WHAT NEED FROM SCHOOL
- WRITTEN INFO USEFUL
- PREPARATION PACK
- PREPARE FOR VISIT
- FACILITIES AVAILABLE
- TO KNOW NO TOILETS
- WHAT TO PREPARE
- INFO SHEET
- EXCELLENT DETAILS

5. Rating: Quality of welcome provided by ranger		
	No.	%
High	9	7
Very high	108	89
Missing	5	4
Total	122	100

5. Rating: Organization of visit		
	No.	%
Low	2	2
High	16	13
Very high	102	84
Missing	2	2
Total	122	100

5. Rating: Time allowed and pace of activities		
	No.	%
High	30	25
Very high	92	75
Total	122	100

School s Educati on Survey 2002

5. Rating: Matching of resources/activities to child ability		
	No.	%
Low	1	1
High	19	16
Very high	101	83
Missing	1	1
Total	122	100

5. Rating: Degree to which your objectives were met		
	No.	%
Low	1	1
High	24	20
Very high	96	79
Missing	1	1
Total	122	100

5. Rating: Relevance of activities to national curriculum		
	No.	%
High	22	18
Very high	94	77
Missing	6	5
Total	122	100

School s Educati on Survey 2002

„ff.....ffffffffff...ffffffffff†
 , 6. Rating: Overall educational benefits of activity 1 , No. , % ,
 ‡ff^ffffffffff^ffffffffff%
 , Very low , 1, 1,
 , Low , 1, 1,
 , High , 22, 18,
 , Very high , 91, 75,
 , Missing , 7, 6,
 , Total , 122, 100,
 \$ff<ffffffffff<ffffffffff€

„ff.....ffffffffff...ffffffffff†
 , 6. Rating: Overall educational benefits of activity 2 , No. , % ,
 ‡ff^ffffffffff^ffffffffff%
 , Low , 4, 3,
 , High , 14, 11,
 , Very high , 65, 53,
 , Missing , 39, 32,
 , Total , 122, 100,
 \$ff<ffffffffff<ffffffffff€

„ff.....ffffffffff...ffffffffff†
 , 6. Rating: Overall educational benefits of activity 3 , No. , % ,
 ‡ff^ffffffffff^ffffffffff%
 , Low , 1, 1,
 , High , 9, 7,
 , Very high , 37, 30,
 , Missing , 75, 61,
 , Total , 122, 100,
 \$ff<ffffffffff<ffffffffff€

