

Proposed Schools (Residential Outdoor Education) (Scotland) Bill

Introduction

A proposal for a Bill to ensure that young people have the opportunity to experience residential outdoor education.

The consultation runs from 29 April 2022 to 22 July 2022

All those wishing to respond to the consultation are strongly encouraged to enter their responses electronically through this survey. This makes collation of responses much simpler and quicker. However, the option also exists of sending in a separate response (in hard copy or by other electronic means such as e-mail), and details of how to do so are included in the member's consultation document.

Questions marked with an asterisk (*) require an answer.

All responses must include a name and contact details. Names will only be published if you give us permission, and contact details are never published – but we may use them to contact you if there is a query about your response. If you do not include a name and/or contact details, we may have to disregard your response.

Please note that you must complete the survey in order for your response to be accepted. If you don't wish to complete the survey in a single session, you can choose "Save and Continue later" at any point. Whilst you have the option to skip particular questions, you must continue to the end of the survey and press "Submit" to have your response fully recorded.

Please ensure you have read the consultation document before responding to any of the questions that follow. In particular, you should read the information contained in the document about how your response will be handled. The consultation document is available here:

[Consultation Document](#)

[Privacy Notice](#)

I confirm that I have read and understood the Privacy Notice which explains how my personal data will be used.

On the previous page we asked you if you are UNDER 12 YEARS old, and you responded Yes to this question.

If this is the case, we will have to contact your parent or guardian for consent.

If you are under 12 years of age, please put your contact details into the textbox. This can be your email address or phone number. We will then contact you and your parents to receive consent.

Otherwise please confirm that you are or are not under 12 years old.

No Response

About you

Please choose whether you are responding as an individual or on behalf of an organisation.
Note: If you choose "individual" and consent to have the response published, it will appear under your own name. If you choose "on behalf of an organisation" and consent to have the response published, it will be published under the organisation's name.

on behalf of an organisation

Which of the following best describes you? (If you are a professional or academic, but not in a subject relevant to the consultation, please choose "Member of the public".)

No Response

Please select the category which best describes your organisation

Third sector (charitable, campaigning, social enterprise, voluntary, non-profit)

Optional: You may wish to explain briefly what the organisation does, its experience and expertise in the subject-matter of the consultation, and how the view expressed in the response was arrived at (e.g. whether it is the view of particular office-holders or has been approved by the membership as a whole).

The Outward Bound Trust has been helping young people face challenges and manage uncertainty in their lives for 80 years. Our mission is to inspire young people to defy limitations, so they become strong, resilient, and curious: ready for the challenges of life.

We develop the life skills of young people aged 9-18 through powerful outdoor adventures on our residential courses, ranging from 3-19 days. Adventurous activities such as climbing, overnight mountain expeditions and a wide range of water based activities such as sailing are used to teach transferable skills to participants, including the confidence to take on new challenges, teamwork, and leadership skills. Courses in Scotland are run from our Loch Eil Centre, in the Scottish Highlands in Lochaber.

Partnering with over 100 schools, colleges, employers, and youth groups in Scotland, we teach the most important lesson young people can ever learn: to believe in themselves. We work with around 5,000 young people from Scotland every year and provide bursary support to 80% of our course participants, enabling us to work with disadvantaged young people from across the UK.

The Outward Bound Trust is one of the oldest providers of residential outdoor education, and the philosophy and pedagogy are renowned for the provision of high quality learning experiences that deliver significant outcomes for young people. The Trust prides itself in the research and evaluation of our work and recent reports can be found at <https://www.outwardbound.org.uk/our-impact-outward-bound>.

Please choose one of the following:

I am content for this response to be published and attributed to me or my organisation

Please provide your Full Name or the name of your organisation. (Only give the name of your organisation if you are submitting a response on its behalf).

(Note: the name will not be published if you have asked for the response to be anonymous or "not for publication". Otherwise this is the name that will be published with your response).

Martin Davidson; The Outward Bound Trust

Please provide details of a way in which we can contact you if there are queries regarding your response. Email is preferred but you can also provide a postal address or phone number.

We will not publish these details.

Aim and approach - Note: All answers to the questions in this section may be published (unless your response is "not for publication").

Q1. Which of the following best expresses your view of the proposed Bill? (Please note that this question is compulsory.)

Fully supportive

Please explain the reasons for your response.

- Outdoor residentials significantly improve, and in some cases transform, the lives of children and young people. The Outward Bound Trust has a ongoing programme of research into our work that corroborates this statement, details of which can be found at <https://www.outwardbound.org.uk/our-impact-outward-bound>. In particular I would draw your attention to the latest Social Impact Report: <https://www.outwardbound.org.uk/social-impact-reports>.

- Mental health and wellbeing of children and young people is lowest on record, and lower than many comparable counties. The Good Childhood Report(1), published by The Children's Society, has tracked young people's wellbeing over a period of 12 years, and has reported a significant fall in their overall wellbeing since the survey began. The OECD's PISA report(2) sets the UK within an international context and highlights worryingly low levels of wellbeing amongst young people in the UK. Comparing the wellbeing of students in the UK with students in 23 other European countries, students in the UK report some of the lowest levels of wellbeing: by age 15, they are the least satisfied with their lives, they rank the lowest for having a sense of purpose in their lives and have the second highest level of sadness.

- Outdoor residentials enable young people to feel good and function well. The Outward Bound Trust recently published a white paper on Wellbeing and how residential outdoor education supports positive wellbeing, see: <https://www.outwardbound.org.uk/assets/pdf/uploads/Impact/Feeling-good-and-functioning-well-Wellbeing-at-The-Outward-Bound-Trust.pdf>. Good wellbeing is at the heart of citizens living healthy lives and thriving throughout life, being active members of their community, and contributing to economic development. Good wellbeing is the foundation of young people succeeding in education and fulfilling their potential.

- Outdoor Residentials enable young people to connect with the natural environment and develop pro-environmental behaviours in an immersive way, something that is ever more essential for society to tackle the climate challenges.

- Currently there is not equity of opportunity to benefit from residential outdoor education. Access to a valuable part of education should not be a postcode lottery.

(1) The Children's Society (2020). The Good Childhood Report 2020. London: The Children's Society

(2) OECD (2019). PISA 2018: Insights and Interpretations

Q2. Do you think legislation is required, or are there other ways in which the proposed Bill's aims could be achieved more effectively? Please explain the reasons for your response.

- Yes

- Access to the benefits of outdoor residential experiences is very patchy currently, with local authorities

Q2. Do you think legislation is required, or are there other ways in which the proposed Bill's aims could be achieved more effectively? Please explain the reasons for your response.

not consistently recognising the value. There is not parity between other parts of a child's education and outdoor education. For there to be universal entitlement legislation is required.

Q3. The proposed Bill will cover residential outdoor education provision for local authority and grant-aided schools only. Which of the following best expresses your view that independent schools or any other education establishments should not be covered by this obligation.

Neutral (neither support nor oppose)

Please give reasons for your response.

- The Outward Bound Trust works in partnership with all types of schools, including independent schools. We believe outdoor residential are valuable learning experiences for all young people regardless of background.
- However the tradition of doing outdoor residential is often more universally embedded in private schools.
- And we are aware that often those young people who have least access to the benefits of outdoor residential are often those from lower and middle income backgrounds. This is why as an educational charity we raise and distribute charitable funding to support young people from disadvantaged backgrounds access our courses, and work hard to target schools in less advantaged communities.
- Pupils at private schools will most likely have the opportunities to do residential outdoor education without a bill and the subsequent legislation.
- Given independent schools are not in receipt of funding from the Government it is difficult to see how the obligation to provide a residential could be made a legal requirement.

Q4. The intention is that the obligation to ensure that residential outdoor education is provided would fall on those who are responsible for arranging the provision, e.g. education authorities and managers of grant-aided schools. Which of the following best expresses your view of this proposal?

Partially supportive

Please explain the reasons for your response.

- It is logical for local authorities and managers of grant-aided schools to have responsibility for ensuring that the entitlement is fulfilled as they have responsibility for the provision of all other aspects of education.
- However essential that this is not interpreted by local authorities as having to provide the provision. Whilst a small number of local authorities still retain their own outdoor centres most do not. 85% of the provision in Scotland is now run by third sector organisations (70% of total capacity), and the private sector (15% of total capacity). This provision is generally of good quality and local authorities should be directed to work in partnership with third sector/private providers to fulfil the entitlement.
- Doing so often brings added value, in particular partnering with the third sector providers often has the benefit of additional funding and resource those organisations can access.
- In addition a broad range of provision is important to ensure that schools have choice in provision that best meets the needs of its pupils.

Funding

Q5. Which of the following best expresses your view of how residential outdoor education experiences should be funded?

In full by the Scottish Government

Please explain the reasons for your response. (If you consider Scottish Government funding should be provided to local authorities, please set out the mechanism for such funding, for example through block grant, ring fenced funding etc.)

- Other statutory parts of education are funded by the Government, this should be no different.
- There cannot be a statutory obligation placed on local authorities unless there is appropriate levels of funding to enable local authorities to fulfil their legal obligation.
- Whilst there is school and parent contribution currently for many outdoor residentials this is on the basis of it being voluntary. For parents to have to pay for a compulsory part of education would effectively introduce a tax on families for a specific element of education.
- Without knowing too much about the funding mechanisms of local authorities it is difficult to comment on the mechanism required, however some form of ring fenced funding would seem sensible.

Financial Implications

Q6. Any new law can have a financial impact which would affect individuals, businesses, the public sector, or others. What financial impact do you think this proposal could have if it became law?

some increase in costs

Please explain the reasons for your answer, including who you would expect to feel the financial impact of the proposal, and if there are any ways you think the proposal could be delivered more cost-effectively.

- The unit cost of an outdoor residential may increase depending on what the resulting quality framework requires for providers and schools. However as much of the provision is currently of a good standard this should not be a significant increase.
- Clearly if the Government is funding a residential for every young person during their school career then there is an additional cost to the public purse. However as laid out in the consultation document this might amount to £24m, a mere 0.67% of a overall Scottish Education budget of £3.57 billion.

Standard/ Quality of provision

Q7. Which of the following best expresses your view on the proposal for a quality framework to ensure the quality of the education provision of outdoor centres?

Fully supportive

Please give reasons for your response, including whether this should be done by HMIE using a quality framework as part of their inspection of schools and the extent to which, if any, it should be statutory.

- We agree there needs to be a quality framework in place to ensure the intended outcomes and benefits of the bill are achieved.
- We agree HMIE should review the quality of this part of education given their responsibility for ensuring

Q7. Which of the following best expresses your view on the proposal for a quality framework to ensure the quality of the education provision of outdoor centres?

the quality of all other aspects of education.

- We agree that quality of provision is considered as part of HMIE inspection of schools. It is important that the outdoor residential is a fully integrated part of the learner journey, not an arbitrary, stand alone experience, and therefore inspection at school level will help ensure this is the case. In addition schools should be deciding which provider/centre they use based on the needs of their young people and therefore they should be considering aspects of quality as part of the decision making process.

Q8. Which of the following best expresses your view that the age range of 12 – 16 is appropriate for participation in the residential outdoor education experience?

Partially supportive

Please give reasons for your response, including whether you think other age ranges would be more appropriate.

- The majority of The Outward Bound Trust's work with schools in Scotland is with pupils of secondary school age. Whilst residential for young people younger than 12 years old have significant impact, particularly in supporting the transition from primary to secondary education, we believe that 12+ years old young people are more emotionally mature and therefore able to reflect on their values, their future aspirations/ambitions, and how they will transfer the learning about self, relationships with others, pro-environmental behaviours into their every day life.
- Central to The Outward Bound Trust's pedagogy is high challenge, high learning, ie the more young people can be stretched and taken out of their comfort zones, the greater, deeper and broader the resulting learning. Young people who are more physically and emotionally mature are more ready for, and open to being stretched and challenged in response to the adventurous experiences Outward Bound offers.
- However we recognise that there is a strong tradition in Scottish education of a residential in upper primary and so something to consider is whether the age range should be extended to allow local authorities and schools to decide the age and stage that would best meet local needs.
- In addition we would recommend defining who the entitlement is for by school year or Curriculum of Excellence curriculum levels rather than age.

Equalities

Q9. Any new law can have an impact on different individuals in society, for example as a result of their age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnership status, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

What impact could this proposal have on particular people if it became law? If you do not have a view skip to next question.

Please explain the reasons for your answer and if there are any ways you think the proposal could avoid negative impacts on particular people.

- The proposal is for all young people attending local authority and grant aided schools to benefit from the entitlement. It will be for local authorities and schools to ensure that no young person is excluded from the opportunity. Outdoor education providers will need to ensure that their provision is inclusive. However this is no different to the current situation where providers accommodate diverse groups of young people, and indeed are required to do so through the Equalities Act 2010.

Q10. How might equity of provision for all be ensured, regardless of socio-economic status? Please give reasons for your response.

- The most significant barrier for young people of lower socio-economic status is the cost of a residential experience. As stated above the Bill should be properly funded by Scottish Government and therefore the burden of cost to parents and families will be removed. However it should be recognised that cost is not the only barrier and that some young people and families will require support to ensure that young people who are anxious, or where there are cultural or religious concerns, are addressed.

Sustainability

Q11. Any new law can impact on work to protect and enhance the environment, achieve a sustainable economy, and create a strong, healthy, and just society for future generations.

Do you think the proposal could impact in any of these areas? [If you do not have a view then skip to next question]

Please explain the reasons for your answer, including what you think the impact of the proposal could be, and if there are any ways you think the proposal could avoid negative impacts?

- The proposed Bill will positively impact on environmental and economic sustainability, and help to create a strong, healthy and just society.
- Outdoor residential develop young people's environmental awareness and pro-environmental behaviours. The starting point for environmental sustainability is for people to emotionally connect with the natural environment, and outdoor residential experiences provide a perfect learning environment to achieve this. Whilst there is environmental impact of travel to/from a residential experience this is far outweighed by the resulting increased pro-environmental behaviour. In addition many outdoor providers are already taking action to reduce their environment impact (eg The Outward Bound Trust has made a commitment to work towards net zero), and there is a great opportunity to support organisations to progress faster with this.
- Outdoor residential develop the skills and attributes to be effective in the workplace, and will help contribute to a sustainable and thriving economy.
- Outdoor residential foster positive wellbeing and help young people become more physically active. Physically and emotionally healthy citizens help lead towards a strong, healthy and just society.

General

Q12. Do you have any other additional comments or suggestions on the proposed Bill (which have not already been covered in any of your responses to earlier questions)?

nothing further to add