

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.

an individual

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".)

Professional with experience in a relevant subject

Optional: You may wish to explain briefly what expertise or experience you have that is relevant to the subject-matter of the consultation

Past member of SAPOE, AAIAC, MTS, MTUK, former Outdoor Education Co-ordination Fife Council, Head of Training Glenmore Lodge. Currently a member of the Royal Institute of Navigation, the Polar Academy, National Navigation Award Scheme,

Please select the category which best describes your organisation

No Response

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).

Nigel Williams

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.

Residential experiences had a great impact on me as a young person. Then later as someone delivering residential outdoor education I have and still do witness growth in confidence, Co-operation, communication, respect, concern and valuing the environment, developing a sense of adventure and risk management. In a more technical field there is increasing scientific evidence that exploring outdoors develops our spatial awareness and cognitive navigation skills. This in turn develops the brain in particular the Hippocampus which plays a part in memory. Increasing dependence on GPS bypasses these Cognitive Navigation processes. There is a socio economic concern here as well that girls in particular are less free to explore and thus develop the cognitive pathways than boys. Similarly those living in built up areas develop poorer spatial awareness due to the more uniform nature of their surroundings than those able to explore the countryside. Residential outdoor experiences are not expensive compared to some of the costs of interventions later in life. The timing of these experiences should also be considered. P7 is frequently the most common time for a residential outdoor experience. However, S1 or S2 when many children come together from different Primary schools and bullying seems to be at its peak an outdoor residential experience might have more impact.

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.

Legislation appears to be required otherwise it will simply be fudged. We have seen phrases in different parts of the UK from all children should have this opportunity, to all are entitled to it, to all must have a residential outdoor experience. Only the last of those seems to be a proper commitment to our young people requiring proper funding. It could be refined with a time frame E.g. between P7 and S2.

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.

Partially opposed

Please give reasons for your response.

Having worked with quite a few Scottish private schools most seem to offer these experiences and for them it will not be such a big leap forward if it is made a requirement through legislation - in general parents see the Benita and will pay additional fees for it. With changes to the charitable status of these schools the costs will rise and this could reduce the opportunities for pupils both in terms of the school provision and affordability for some parents.

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?

Fully supportive

Please explain the reasons for your response.

I think the responsibility needs to lie at a high level where the funding is managed and can be ringfenced.

Funding

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

In full by local authorities (for local authority-run schools)

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.)

It should be funded in the same way mainstream education is funded. I think a mix of the options being offered may work for instance; the Local authority cover the travel and activity costs directly through the residential centres with parents paying a contribution to food and accommodation and the cost of food and accommodation for children meeting the criteria for financial support is covered by the local authority. Scottish government however will need to fund the local authorities rather than asking them to find it from existing budgets.

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.

Increase in costs are inevitable as residential centres require 24/7 duties, the activity ratios are much smaller than class sizes and the equipment and centre overheads such as electricity mount up. It is about commitment from Government, millions of children across the UK missed out on this experience through COVID and by all accounts this has been evident through poor pupil behaviour developed through a lack of socialising, discipline etc.

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 need to evaluate the benefits that are sought from such programmes, establish a methodology framework so the delivery is targeted to meet the perceived needs. I would be in favour of an element of rigour. Centres are already inspected for their safety and risk management of the activities and staff training etc. However the delivery of learning outcomes is rather more variable. HMIE are probably the best placed to this but should perhaps be accompanied by subject matter experts.

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?

Fully supportive

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

I have mentioned this in previous responses P7 - S2

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.

Outdoor education by its nature can limit access for some disabilities and there are a few specialist providers. However, it is also probably the best environment to set aside differences and actually embrace them and learn to support those people with additional needs. Programmes based in nature can help people appreciate diversity.

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

Government commitment, funding and a measurable framework to support delivery.

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?

Yes outdoor experiences support all the above aspirations, look at in another way. If there were to be no outdoor education how would those aspirations be met?

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)?

No