

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

I have been an outdoor education instructor at a local authority residential outdoor ed centre for 16 years. I also have a degree in psychology and have written a PhD proposal designed to study the psychological impact of adventurous outdoor education.

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).

Aileen Smith

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.

I know first hand how important it is to improve the reach of outdoor education to all young people in Scotland. I am privileged to see the benefits of outdoor education on the young people I work with every day.

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.

The Scottish Government has been brilliant at promoting the benefits of outdoor education, including a whole section on learning in the outdoors in the Curriculum for Excellence. However, it is very unfortunate that this does not filter down to the individual local authorities who are making the budgeting decisions which will ultimately determine whether or not young people are able to access an adventurous outdoor education residential trip. This has played out in recent years with the closure of Kilbowie Outdoor Centre and inexplicably, Glasgow City Council (an SNP council) voting to close Blairvadach Outdoor Education Centre. Thankfully the latter decision was reversed after some backlash from the citizens of Glasgow and the media. It is clear, therefore that legislation is indeed required, otherwise local authorities (who can seldom see further ahead than the next 12 months budgeting period) will continue to close centres as they have done for several decades (see "Residential Outdoor Education in Scotland: change over time and the impacts of socio-economic deprivation on access" by R. Davies (2018)).

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.

My opinion is that it is local authority funded schools which really require this provision to be legislated as per my previous answer detailing the problem with local authorities closing outdoor education centres. Compelling local authorities to place value in outdoor education would protect these centres and the vast amount of expertise of their staff from being lost.

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.

This will ensure education authorities are given the funding required.

Funding

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

By parents/carers, with costs being covered by public funding where children meet criteria for financial support (e.g entitlement to free school meals)

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.)

Many parents are more than happy (and able) to pay for their child's outdoor education residential. Many parents are unable to, the majority of these would receive funding via means testing. In my experience, school staff are excellent at identifying the children who fall through the cracks (i.e. dont meet means testing requirements for funding but are unable to find the money for such a trip). Schools, in my experience, are very good at finding funding from elsewhere for those children and/or fundraising for the trip (I have heard of parents doing sponsored runs to raise money for an outdoor ed residential for example, schools running bake sales etc).

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.

Local authorities will need to find (i.e. be given) additional funding for children to access outdoor education residentials and also to invest in local authority owned outdoor education centres. Without getting too political, there are plenty of areas where money is (in my opinion) wasted, which would be better spent on providing our young people with the opportunity to take part in adventurous outdoor education residentials. Developing a connection with the natural environment in an inevitable part of doing adventurous activities outdoors - this has been shown time and again to improve people's willingness to behave in pro-environmental ways (see "The NR6: a new brief measure of nature relatedness" by Nisbet & Zelenski (2013)). So finding the funding for providing outdoor education residentials could be argued as vital to help our young people, the next generation, to find the motivation and ability to tackle the climate crisis. Surely THAT is worth any cost?

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.

Ensuring high quality outdoor education providers are used is important to ensure the young people get the maximum amount of value from their residential. Outdoor "activity" centres are great for fun, splash and dash sessions but if we want to ensure a truly educational experience where every aspect of the

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?

residential is used to enhance learning and personal & social development, a clear quality framework would be helpful.

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.

This age range would target S1-4 in the Scottish school system. In my experience, 10-11 year olds benefit greatly from an outdoor education residential in P7 as it improves their confidence, independence and team work skills prior to their transition in to secondary school. I think widening the age range to 10-16 year olds would be helpful.

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.

In my experience, girls from certain religious backgrounds have not been allowed (by their families) to go on residential trips. Thankfully this issue seems to be reducing in recent years. Regardless, perhaps being able to offer female only residentials would help, particularly if parents understand that these trips are legislated for because they are so important.

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

Means testing of income (i.e. free school meals funding) could be used.

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, as detailed in my previous answer, any time spent engaging in outdoor adventures will inevitably lead young people to develop a deeper connection with the natural environment. This has been shown time and again to increase participation in pro-environmental behaviour as individuals suddenly have more of a reason to want to protect it. Please see "The NR-6: a new brief measure of nature relatedness" by Nisbett & Zelenski (2013) and Professor Zelenski's tedX talk "Nice in Nature".

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)?

I would love to congratulate Liz Smith MSP on proposing this bill and thank her for all the work she has done in support of getting young people out in to nature to discover it's wonders as well as the wonders of their own abilities & the depths of their resilience.