

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".)

Academic with expertise in a relevant subject

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).

Matthew Groves

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.

The life-long benefits of access to residential outdoor education can all too easily be swept under the carpet by new priorities and target-focused measures of education. The Bill will provide a much-needed

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

focus on these opportunities for all young people. My only caveat (not sufficient to reduce my level of support), would be that the Bill should be enacted in line with active new research to require this residential outdoor education model to be updated and brought into line with current educational theory. The work that outdoor centres do is invaluable, but the outcomes they produce may be less tangible than the "traditional" values expressed in the consultation document, and the pedagogies they adopt could be made more inclusive, accessible and enhanced to develop young people in ways beyond the assumptions such as "resilience" and "confidence building". They need to be more responsive to the school's and the young person's home place, global environmental values and sense of self-worth. The residential outdoor education needs to be better integrated with the wider educational experience, culture and values, with outdoor and adventure educational solutions that fit the needs of each community it serves. I hope that there will be room in the new model for better integration of services, research, and evidence-based practice, and a greater open-ness in the education to the values and benefits of education and adventure as a source of good for the wider world.

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 I do. I completely agree with the assertion in the consultation document that the current legislation provides too easy an exit for residential outdoor education provision, offering a back-door for low-key, local projects (which have intrinsic value), or just simple avoidance of outdoor adventure experiences in young people's lives. This work is not easy, and is currently not accessible to all young people, missing those who lack financial advantages.

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.

I have worked a great deal in outdoor education provision that has done great work with independent schools. The school culture in these establishments is often driven by values of exclusivity, high achievement and goal-oriented work, which can reinforce a certain simplistic and traditional attitude towards the outdoor work that takes place. There is room for the outdoors to be much more than that and to promote values beyond the self and the ego, which these schools seem to be less focused on. For these reasons, it might be good to see the Bill becoming a positive influence on a progressive culture and evolution of the sector, offering something that all can aspire to, regardless of means.

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.

I would like to see different solutions being made available at different stages of schooling (and life-long learning), driven by knowledge of the local populations, and following a more integrated model of education practice, where the residential has more meaning to the schools and populations themselves. If the obligation is incumbent on the local authority, that's fine, but it doesn't tell me how they will interpret or enact that obligation. There is a danger that the highest level of management is naïve to the benefits and models of practice.

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?

I don't think a model that rolls out OAE set to the lowest common denominator (as has happened in the past) is the right way forwards. It will simply lead to a repeat of the kind of critiques that emerged through the 1990's, speaking of the commodification and packaging of adventure, which ultimately led to demise of residential through the devaluing of their potential in the lives of young people (compared to the financial cost).

Let's not repeat the mistakes of the past.

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.)

This is stretching beyond the limits of my knowledge of public funding. To me, the goal of funding needs to be to ensure the values and ethics of good practice are met, so I have ticked "Scottish Government" because it would suggest the funding should grant-funded but linked to progressive educational standards that incorporate local models of best practice.

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?

no overall change 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.

Clearly, there would be a cost to the taxpayer. This would be offset by higher standards of health and wellbeing, reduction in social issues, especially if this is implemented in a progressive and relevant manner. On the delivery end, the sector would clearly get a strong boost, and would need to adapt and grow through both private businesses and existing "LEA" centres to meet increased demand.

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.

My responses so far have articulated a need for a progressive, evidence-led framework to accompany this Bill. This should be responsive to changing and evolving knowledge and evidence, and to local needs. OAE should be better integrated into the school curriculum and vice versa. Mostly, though, its values should be used as a positive influence in young people's lives throughout their education, not just for a one-week excursion.

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 opposed

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

OAE offers huge value to all ages, throughout the curriculum, but the model will differ.

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.

My comments so far have been very much centred around the need for OAE to be as inclusive as possible, precisely by being responsive to local communities, individuals, and a sense of place. The values of OAE have always been around non-competitive endeavour and discovery encouraging a cross-cultural learning environment that promotes the valuing of each other. this doesn't happen by accident, but needs care and critical awareness of the harm that the experiences can create as much as the benefits.

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

Funding. Local responsiveness. Educated professionals at all levels. Integration with communities and places. Sharing good practice. Sharing a common culture of understanding of OAE as integral to mainstream education.

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?

It is a force for good. I agree fully.

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)?

This is a golden opportunity to respond to decades of progressive worldwide research and understanding of the many therapeutic and educational advantages of this activity. The work should follow hand-in-hand with further research, and positive encouragement of Higher Education as a pathway into quality careers in this form of work. Salaries and career pathways have not been mentioned in this consultation or survey, but a sustainable, educated workforce capable of critical thinking and self-awareness is the key to making this happen. Outdoor centres (with parallels to the growing tourism industry) find themselves struggling to find quality staff, or to make a career in the sector feel of value, where a young person can develop a professional identity, beyond a transitory job. This should be included within the thinking process to make a difference for the future.