

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 John Muir Trust is a community focused conservation charity dedicated to the experience, protection and repair of wild places across the UK. The Trust launched the John Muir Award in 1997. It is a national environmental award to inspire people to raise awareness of the value of wild places and encourage them to take responsibility by caring for them. Across the UK 458,000 people have achieved their John Muir Award, with 25% of people experiencing disadvantage. These have been achieved in partnerships with thousands of John Muir Award Provider organisations including schools and outdoor residential centres.

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).

John Muir 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.)

Partially supportive

Please explain the reasons for your response.

The John Muir Trust broadly supports this Bill to ensure that young people have the opportunity to experience residential outdoor education because we believe outdoor residential centres:

- can help inspire people about the benefits of wild places and showcase how wild places tackle the climate crisis and reverse biodiversity loss (including Learning for Sustainability, Sustainable Development Goals)

- offer experiences to participants and staff that contribute to learning and teaching in Scotland that help create a fairer and more equitable world (including Scottish Attainment Challenge, Developing the Young Workforce)
- often provide significant employment opportunities and career pathways for people living and working in rural communities.

We recognise risks to successfully implementing the provisions of the Bill, primarily risks of funding and capacity, therefore we believe there is a need to carefully consider:

- Capacity of Education Authorities to implement duty
- Number of centres available to cope with increased demand created
- Availability of staff to deliver residential Outdoor Education
- Confidence from Education Authorities and teachers that the Bill will provide quality and impactful education experiences for young people.

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.

We believe that a number of channels could be explored to ensure an entitlement for every young person to have an opportunity to experience residential outdoor education. This entitlement could, for example, be part of:

- Schools Inspections
- Learning for Sustainability Action Plan
- Initial Teacher Education
- COSLA reporting

However, all these channels will require each education authority to share data on their residential experiences provision. We believe that accountability and reporting is as important as legislation.

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.

We believe that independent schools follow and can contribute towards best practice, and that residential outdoor education provision will be part this.

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.

We believe that the obligation to ensure that residential outdoor education is provided should be the responsibility of those able to measure, monitor and support the implementation of change as required, such as education authorities. This of course will be subject to adequate funding being provided to enable them to do so.

Funding

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

In some other way

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.)

The Trust believes that social circumstances shouldn't exclude people from experiencing wild places – the Trust is working hard to keep the John Muir Award free to participants.

We recognise that currently local authorities provide residential outdoor education experiences through different funding models - different parents and carers pay different amounts for residential experiences across Scotland.

We also recognise that the providers of residential outdoor education also operate through a variety of models (such as council operations, private businesses and charities).

A Bill would need to ensure equal opportunity across Scotland. Alongside this would be the need for a quality framework that sets a high standard across the country.

We ask if there is a role for resourcing between national and local government, and business sector investing in young peoples' skills development? Can other, sustainable funding models be explored too?

Given we recognise that we have a lack of resources in outdoor education centres this Bill helpfully highlights a need to review how we use Outdoor Learning as an approach to learning across the whole education and learning sector and including residential is one key component to this.

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 Response

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.

Residential outdoor education needs to continually demonstrate good practice operating within a quality framework to ensure that activity delivers for Scotland. We would support a Schools Inspection HMIE role in this, as well as clear connections with GTCS standards required to teach in Scotland and Initial Teacher Education (teacher training) standards.

In addition, we believe the Bill should include continued research on the long-term impact of residential outdoor education (e.g. Learning Away: Brilliant Residentials) to best understand impacts on:

- participants – health, wellbeing, attainment, positive destinations, pathways, nature connectedness
- education practitioners – confidence, wellbeing, professional development
- communities – such as employment, promotion of rights and responsibilities / outdoor access
- our environment – environmental impact analysis, climate nature-based action, carbon footprint assessments.

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?

Neutral (neither support nor oppose)

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

We believe that residential outdoor education providers should be able to evidence significant impact across a range of learning levels. We also note that many existing outdoor centres are currently equipped to target the primary/secondary transition audiences and that the impact of any changes to their audiences needs to be considered such as infrastructure, existing contacts and repeat clients, equipment, and existing staff skills.

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 Trust believes that there will be valid reasons why not all young people choose to experience residential outdoor education. However, all young people should have an entitlement to make that choice.

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

Provision should also be made for alternatives such as peripatetic non-residential outdoor education provision that meets a quality framework. The Trust is aware of this practice already working across a number of education authorities.

We also ask that the Bill considers support for broader Outdoor Learning to provide an increased equity of provision. This would include a commitment to invest in training our teachers.

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?

We believe that residential outdoor education can help inspire people about the benefits of wild places and showcase how wild places tackle the climate crisis and reverse biodiversity loss (Learning for Sustainability). Research demonstrates that the more people (particularly aged 12 and above) feel nature connectedness, the more they exhibit pro-environmental behaviours essential for living on a sustainable planet.

Outdoor education providers can also lead on sustainability by promoting sustainable travel options such as public transport provision as a means of access to outdoor centres. Many already have, or strive towards, high sustainability principles and practices, for example, on heating, drying facilities, re-cycling. We suggest outdoor education providers strive towards low carbon sustainable operations which could inform part of the learning experience and each centre should have a carbon action and credibility plan (please see response to Question 7 about evaluating impact).

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)?

Research is needed to ensure understanding of the capacity of beds needed to meet any new law, and that these are available and accessible (physically and geographically) to all young people across Scotland.