

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

Public sector body (Scottish/UK Government/Government agency, local authority, NDPB)

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).

Responding on behalf of The Highland Council. The terms of the response have been approved by the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Council's Education Committee.

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).

The Highland Council

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 opposed

Please explain the reasons for your response.

i. In the Highland Council area, we are fortunate enough to be able to offer outdoor education experiences for our pupils without necessarily having to take them on residential excursions. The proposal for schools to travel long distances to residential facilities would have a negative environmental impact. It would be better in many cases for Highland schools to make use of the outdoor environment we have on our doorstep.

ii. Decision on outdoor education excursions presently lie with Head Teachers. Local Authorities are not resourced to provide such a function, which in any case would run counter to the HT empowerment agenda.

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 Council considers decisions on this matter are best left to Head Teachers.

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.

As a local authority, we will confine our response to the state school sector.

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?

Neutral (neither support nor oppose)

Please explain the reasons for your response.

We do not support the overall proposal.

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.)

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

LAs have no financial capacity to fund the proposed activity, and given the current cost of living crisis a presumption that parents should pay presents challenges also. Any SG funding should be via block grant.

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?

a significant 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.

I refer to our previous responses. Within the Highland Council area, outdoor education can be provided without a requirement for residential stays.

Where the financial impact would fall would depend on decisions in relation to the previous question. Options include the Scottish Government, local authorities or parents.

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?

Neutral (neither support nor oppose)

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.

There would be a significant resource impact but it would fall on the proposed regulatory body. Thought would need to be given to whether, under this system, residential outdoor education excursions might be judged against school curricular aims. Not all centres will be equal in terms of how well they meet this criterion.

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.

There are arguments for extending any such provision to the upper stages of primary school.

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.

No Response

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

It would be vital to avoid costs falling on parents/families.

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 proposal could have a negative environmental impact in terms of forcing remote rural schools into long journeys to access residential facilities, especially when such schools have an excellent outdoor environment on their doorstep. Any legislation that involved additional costs for parents/families could also have a negative effect in terms of equity. There may be questions about the ability of the outdoor education sector to provide the required number of residential facilities. New builds might therefore be required.

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 Response