

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).

Field Studies Council is an outdoor learning charity, offering residential and day courses for all ages across England, Scotland and Wales including many curriculum based geography and biology fieldwork courses.

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).

Field Studies 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.)

Fully supportive

Please explain the reasons for your response.

Field Studies Council is fully supportive. High quality outdoor learning has multiple benefits for both academic development and personal growth. Connecting to nature has health and wellbeing benefits, giving learners a chance to develop their confidence outdoors which can develop into a beneficial life time habit.

The benefit of outdoor learning residential are well known, but their value can also be felt in dealing with some of the more recent emerging areas of concern in education. One is that after the disruption caused by covid, residential are a way to close the attainment gap by re-engage learners with education, their peers and their teachers outside a classroom setting and away from the usual school environment.

For Scotland, outdoor learning residential can link directly to the four purposes of the Curriculum for Excellence, the cross curricular themes of numeracy, literacy and health and wellbeing. All of the eight subject areas can be enhanced by being taught in an outdoor setting.

Outdoor residential play a pivotal role in the Learning for Sustainability Programme. We cannot expect people to care about the planet if they have had no chance to connect to it and experience it's wonders as well as the issues that it faces. Outdoor learning provides the hands on real life experiences in nature. It develops the key the scientific, ecological and geographical knowledge and skills at the in depth level needed by young people that they will need to deal with the global climate crisis.

Finally, all of the above benefits are so important that they should be available for all learners, not just those that can afford it. Disadvantaged learners are otherwise disproportionately adversely impacted because they are less likely to experience travel, time in high quality green and blue space, after school activities or young people's clubs and organisations. Unless a residential is firmly embedded as part of their school experience they are at an "experience disadvantage" when compared to their better off peers.

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.

If making provision a legal requirement is the only way to ensure that residential experiences are offered to all, that the funding follows that legal requirement and that space is also made available in what is quite a crowded curriculum then legislation is needed. It would give a very strong signal of the importance of such an experience. If however, there is a way of guaranteeing the same result without a change in legislation it should be explored.

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.

No Response

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.

As individual schools and teachers are expected to design the curriculum around the needs of learners,

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?

they are best placed to arrange residential provision in a way that best suits their particular needs, integrates with the school's approach rather than being seen as a one-off and include any additional needs of their pupils.

Funding

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

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.)

If residential are to become a required part of education, funding for that will be needed. Ringfencing using a similar mechanism that is used for Pupil Equity Funding would be a suggested way to ensure that it reaches every child and is not used for other purposes. This then does require funding in full by the Scottish Government.

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.

Ensuring universal provision will increase costs. Early engagement with the outdoor learning sector in Scotland will be essential as they will be able to advice cost effectiveness, for example making use of the times of year when there is less demand, exploring the idea of a number of providers working together under a national contract (for example as was done by London Challenge)

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.

Provision of residential at the public expense means that every effort should be made to ensure that 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?

experience is one of high quality. The sector has a number of quality marks which should be used and this checked by the inspection process. One area of quality that should be looked at is the ability to deliver the environmental education aspect of outdoor learning, as well as the outdoor activities. The residentials that are offered should be able to clearly demonstrate (to schools, parents and government) how their offer links to the Curriculum for Excellence and Learning for Sustainability, how it enhances subject knowledge and skills as well as personal development, team work and social skills. Being assured of a quality residential that delivers multiple benefits is helpful to combat concerns that they are just added extras or even distractions from school rather than being a properly integrated part of school learning.

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.

Ideally, learners would have already experienced a progression of experiences throughout their early and primary years as part of Learning for Sustainability, making the age range 12-16 an appropriate one for a residential, which would also allow them to undertake fieldwork, outdoor science and ecology as part of their curriculum courses. However, it would be sensible not to automatically discount the benefits of a residential for younger primary learners too and this is where individual schools and teachers would be well placed to make those decisions.

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.

No Response

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?

This proposal can only enhance the environment by giving all young Scots a school experience that connects them to nature by first hand. We cannot expect them to care about something that they have not experienced, but by spending time enjoying and exploring nature can increase the desire to protect it. Green skills and STEM skills will be a vital part of Scotland's economy, both of which can be developed on residential where learners get used to working and studying in a more unpredictable environment than a laboratory, becoming familiar with equipment and data gathering in the outdoors, overcoming practical problems and designing and redesigning experiments in the real world. Residential for those with little experience of spending time in nature may for the first time be able to see their horizons expand into possible careers in conservation and habitat management.

Early nature connection, giving learners confidence to access what the natural world has to offer can set them up for a lifetime of enjoyment and health and wellbeing benefits. Even learning that spending short amounts of time in nature is a way to boots of maintain good mental wellbeing is a valuable life lesson.

Making the provision of residential for all learners is one way of ensuring a more just society by removing the barrier of financial disadvantage which can otherwise hold learners back.

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