

Senedd Cymru | Welsh Parliament

[Bil arfaethedig – Bil Addysg Awyr Agored \(Cymru\)](#) | [Proposed Outdoor Education \(Wales\) Bill](#)

Ymateb gan Suzanne Hamer, Headteacher, | Evidence from Suzanne Hamer, Headteacher,

Are you (your organisation) currently a provider of outdoor education?: No

Your opinion

How important is outdoor education to children and young people's overall education and development?

Very important

What are the main benefits to children and young people from having a residential outdoor education experience?

Teamwork, independence, ability to problem solve, skills development

Should children and young people have a guaranteed opportunity to participate in a residential outdoor education experience, at some stage during their school years, if they wish to?

Yes

Should an opportunity to participate in a residential outdoor education experience, at some stage during their school years, be free of charge on one occasion to pupils?

No

What are the main barriers which you believe currently exist to children and young people accessing residential outdoor education experiences?

Patental anxiety / uncertainty; Child anxiety / uncertainty;

Equality Considerations: Could the proposed Bill have any positive impacts on some children and young people in particular? If so, who and why?

No - There are positive benefits from Outdoor Education opportunities but I don't believe the Bill makes a difference to that. There are other mechanisms and support that schools can offer to remove barriers to children taking part in these.

Equality Considerations: Could the proposed Bill have any negative impacts on some children and young people in particular. If so, who and why? What could this Bill do to mitigate any negative impacts?

No

What age do you believe is most suitable for children and young people to be offered an opportunity to undertake a residential outdoor education experience?

Younger (please state below)

It is for the schools and the parents to decide when children are ready for a residential, not politicians. Many schools provide overnight stays from Y3 up - this is dependent on the maturity of the children

Is four nights/five days the best length for a residential outdoor experience?

Don't know

Please explain your answer and highlight any possible implications from having a standard approach of four night/five day experiences (whether positive or negative).

Again - this is for the school to decide, not politicians, and will depend on time/type of activities/availability of staff/purpose of the residential/distance from school.

Do you agree there is a need for legislation to ensure all children and young people are given an opportunity to access a residential outdoor education experience, at some stage during their school years?

Disagree

Is there anything else you would like to say about this proposal?

I have many questions and comments around this proposal

1. 2) The intention is that the statutory obligation to ensure residential outdoor education is provided would fall on those who are responsible for arranging the provision, i.e. local authorities for maintained schools. This is incorrect, schools arrange the provision.
2. Schools already have other means to support families in need e.g. PDG Where is the evidence to suggest Primary Schools refuse pupils who can not afford it? Our charging policies state that payments for trips are voluntary and no child is excluded. Many schools will offer payment plans or pay for some children out of their own budget.
3. Where is the funding coming from for this? Will it be diverted from other areas of the school budgets?
4. Point 8 - The age that children can cope with this length of stay varies considerably, how will this be monitored to ensure opportunities arrive when the child is ready?
5. Point 9 - How will it be monitored to ensure all learners have the opportunity and others don't have it twice as they change schools?

In addition - What consideration has been given to the wellbeing of the staff who already give up their own time and time with their families? Will schools be funded for the agency staff costs when staff i.e. Year 6 residential with 30 children requires at least 3 members of staff - the class teacher and will have to leave their posts in school, that could cost a school over £2000 in agency staff to backfill these posts. Will the cost of the buses be included?

12:00:00 AM