

Senedd Cymru | Welsh Parliament

Bil arfaethedig – Bil Addysg Awyr Agored (Cymru) | Proposed Outdoor Education (Wales) Bill

Ymateb gan Cyngor Sir Ynys Mon, | Evidence from Cyngor Sir Ynys Mon,

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?

Increases learners' life experiences

Develops reflective and inquisitive thinking as well as opportunities for problem-solving in 'real' situations

Encourages holistic development

Develops resilience and adaptability.

Develops social skills in children and young people.

Develops an appreciation of the outside world

Contributes to wellbeing and good mental health of children and young people

Promotes opportunities for fitness and health

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?

Yes

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

Financial constraints;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?

Barriers to taking children and young people on residential outdoor visits may include poverty, Additional Learning Needs and staff anxiety. The Outdoor Education Bill would ensure opportunities for all children to experience outdoor education, regardless of their situation. With regard to poverty, a fully funded visit would mean all children would have the chance to experience taking part in opportunities and not just those that are from more privileged backgrounds. Taking learners with additional learning needs, including behavioural challenges can be a barrier to taking them on outdoor educational visits. These challenges can increase staff anxiety and lead to opportunities not being given. This bill would ensure that opportunities for outdoor education would have to be provided. These opportunities would lead to all children and young people receiving the benefits of outdoor education

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?

Consideration would need to be given to children and young people with anxiety. This could be due to physical or social difficulties or additional needs. Any residential outdoor experience would need to be planned well and provide for these learners, ensuring opportunities that suit these learners including differentiated activities and adapting the provision.

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?

Year 6 (age 10-11)

It is possible for younger children to gain valuable benefits from outdoor education, however it may be more effective if just for a night or two if in Year 3 or 4.

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

No

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

The number of nights should be dependent of age. Schools report that two or three nights is perfect for primary aged school children while up to five is suitable for older learners.

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?

Agree

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

Cost to schools and / or Local Authorities needs to be considered. Outdoor Education is not cheap, including transport costs to and from provision sites. If every child has the right to a fully-funded outdoor education opportunity, financial implications have to be considered.